

**Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond membership;
army, religion, and energy**

Kenan Aksu

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Politics, Goldsmiths College
University of London

I, Kenan Aksu, declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

To my wife Aylin and my children Seyhun İdil and Timur Kenan for their
endless support

Abstract

This thesis examines the impact of Turkey-EU relations on Turkey's domestic political evolution in the 1990s and 2000s, with a focus on the evolution of the religious political parties, the changing position of the military and Turkey's new energy politics.

Although Turkey-EU relations resemble non-progressive affairs to many, in reality, they are as productive as any other relations that have resulted in the expected goal. Both Turkey and the EU made significant gains from this long lasting relationship. However, this thesis focuses more on the impact of these relations on Turkey. While engaging with the EU, Turkish domestic politics underwent a major evolution especially concerning the religiously motivated political parties; they were founded on anti-Western and pro-Islamic principles. However their attempt to come to power was continuously prevented by the secular forces, most importantly the army. In 2000s, realizing the importance of Europeanisation to help avoid the military's intimidation, they became the real champions of Westernisation, contrary to their founding principles. Under Erdoğan's leadership they started the accession negotiations with the EU.

While Islamic political thinking was evolving, the position of the Turkish Armed Forces, who, directly or indirectly, drove Turkish politics since the 1960s, was also changing in favour of civilian control. Thanks to the EU initiated reform programs which were implemented by the religiously rooted JDP after 2002, the Turkish army's heavy presence in civilian politics was reduced almost to zero.

Again, close relations with the EU encouraged Turkey to become proactive within Eurasian energy politics. As well as the good relations with the West, Turkey also started utilizing its geostrategic positioning by trying to become the energy bridge, and perhaps energy hub, between the energy producers on its eastern borders with energy hungry Europe on its western borders.

Acknowledgements

PhD experience was once of the most important event in my life as it helped me to become a more patient, a better researcher and a better analyst of the world affairs. However, I could never be able to complete the research without the help, support and guidance of the amazing people that surrounded me during the process.

I would like to start by thanking my supervisor Dr Anca M. Pusca, for her endless patience, help and support during my long lasting research process. I do not even have the account of how many times she has read the same chapters and gave me feedback. Without her encouragement and guidance it would have been very hard to come to this point. Moreover, I would really like to thank my examiners Dr Farhang Morady and Dr Eric Gordy for their time and effort to sit in my viva as well as giving me feedback on my work.

I would like to thank also to people who gave me their valuable times during the interviews. Without their views and ideas I could not bring this thesis together. Their social and political experiences and knowledge enlightened the way I proceed with my work. However, needless to say that I take the responsibility for any errors and oversights that may arise in this thesis.

I am also thankful to Professor Süleyman Kızıltoprak, Professor Ahmet Taşağıl, Dr Shirin Akiner, Dr Jasna Dragovic-Soso, Dr David Martin, Dr William B. Womack, Dr Zafer Yörük, Aytaç Odacılar, Romain Abdul Rahim Muhammad, Behar Sadriu and Dr Geoffrey King for their support and encouragement before and during my research. Without their reassurance, inspiration and advice I could not possibly see the completion of this thesis. Thanks are also due to staff of the Politics Department, the library and the Graduate School at the Goldsmiths who tirelessly answered my calls and had to deal with my research related problems.

I would also like to acknowledge the importance of the help I got from my friends at Goldsmiths especially Dr Katarina Lezova and Aya Hino. Katarina was always there when I needed help and guidance. In many occasions she has given up her personal time to support me. Also the support of my friends Rhys Burton, Gemma Gilroy, Catharine Tookey, Clare Tubridy, Lisa Emerick, and Musellem Adem at work has been extremely crucial for the completion of this thesis. Especially robust criticism I got from Catherine with my evaluations and intellectual discussions with Lisa and Musellem were great source of inspiration and quest for the faultlessness. As well as my students, the support of, Günay Torun, Adem Cetingok, Aysun and Caner Yildirim, Gary Donnelly, Irfan Kilicoglu, Oner Savas and Razi Ashraf was central to my completion.

Although I have never met him, I am also grateful to my grandfather Recep Kethüdaoğlu Yahya, who died during World War One in Erzurum in 1916, for being an inspiration to me by sacrificing his life for his country at a very young age. Again I would like to thank my late father Kamil Aksu for his passion for history and support during my secondary school years and my mother Reşide Aksu for her earnest support for all my life. Needless to say I felt much stronger during the research thanks to the support of my father and mother in laws, very dear eleven sisters and brothers as well as more than 40 nephews and nieces.

Finally, my greatest thanks go to my immediate family members; my wife Aylin, my daughter Seyhun İdil and my son Timur Kenan. Without Aylin's emotional support this thesis would never come to life. She has endured days and nights of my stress and moaning. In fact she nearly completed the PhD course with me with her immeasurable patience and understanding. Again without my daughter's steady company in my study room and constant questioning of every word I typed, I would have not been the tolerant man I am now with everything in life including the PhD. Lastly, I have to appreciate Timur Kenan's contribution to this work. Even the first sign of his arrival hastened the completion of this thesis which would otherwise take longer to finish.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Association Agreement
APG	Associated Petroleum Gas
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline
CEEC	Central and Eastern Europe
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPE	International Political Economy
JDP	Justice and Development Party (AKP or AK Parti)
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MP	Motherland Party (ANAP)
NAP	Nationalist Action Party (MHP)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NOP	National Order Party (MNP)
NSC	National Security Council
NSP	National Salvation Party (MSP)
NWP	Nationalist Working Party (MCP)
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PDP	People's Democratic Party (HDP)
RPP	Republican People's Party (CHP)
RVNP	Republican Villagers Nation Party (MKCP)
SPO	State Planning Organization
TANAP	Trans Anatolian Pipeline
TPP	True Path Party (DYP)
UN	United Nations
VP	Virtue Party (FP)
WB	World Bank
WP	Welfare Party (RP)
WP	Washington Consensus

Chapter 1

Introduction

The main aim of this thesis is to examine the impact of Turkey-EU relations on Turkey's domestic political evolution in the 1990s and 2000s, with a focus on the position of the military, the religious political parties and energy politics.

While it may seem like an endless road or an unprogressive relationship, in reality, Turkey-EU relations are progressing. There is no doubt that during this long lasting relationship, where the weight of historical memories is felt greatly, the EU is having a major influence over Turkey's domestic politics either directly or indirectly. Of course, Turkey has also impacted the EU in some ways. More than anything the EU became a tool of Turkish domestic politics. However, all these issues cannot be evaluated under one study alone and, therefore this thesis will focus on certain key aspects only that are linked to each other. These include:

- 1- The impact of Turkey's relations with the EU on Turkey's domestic politics, with a focus on civilian-military relations
- 2- The impact of Turkey's relations with the EU on the ideological evolution of the religious political parties and leaders in Turkey
- 3- The impact of Turkey's relations with the EU on Turkey's economic transformation, with a focus on the energy sector

So far there has not been a study conducted that specifically focuses on these topics with the goal of identifying the EU's, and to an extent other external agencies, impact on them. The external agencies including the EU, US, regional actors such as Iran and Russia as well as financial agencies like the IMF and WB, rather than putting pressure on Turkey, which is what these actors are usually perceived to do, were actually seen as an opportunity and in fact an excuse to justify internal reforms that certain political factions in Turkey already wanted to push for. For example, the long-term negotiations with the EU provided the longer framework need to not only justify but also implement some of these reforms. Although it is often described as a long term EU candidate with few chances for getting in, Turkey has in fact been incredibly successful at using the negotiation process as a way to build up power, regionally and reform itself internally.

As mentioned in detail below, end of the Cold War was seen as a direct threat to Turkey's position as a western ally. However, after 1990s, regional dynamics, including the end of the Cold War dynamics, were such that Turkey found itself in a particularly powerful position. In 1990s, economic and political forces came together in a very unique confluence to make it possible for Turkey to reform and grow in a particular direction that otherwise may not have been possible. It should be noted that Turkey did majority of this economic, political and social manoeuvres by its own choice, in many ways, instead of being necessarily forced in that direction. However, it should also be noted that, without the guidance, close cooperation and financial assistance of the external agencies these changes would not take place.

Apart from the choice of topics, what makes the research unique in the field is that while the majority of prior studies that focus on this relationship consistently identify the problems, while offering no solutions, this thesis is dedicated to explaining the impact of the EU on key issues in Turkey without leading a 'witch-hunt' into the causes of the problems and delays that have come to define Turkey-EU relations. In many ways, this thesis is trying to identify the progress made within the relationship – especially on the Turkish side – that may seem to have not moved fast enough, while asking and of course answering the question: “if it is not a properly accomplishing and progressive relationship, then what do Turkey and the EU really want from each other and how much impact has this relationship had on the evolution of domestic politics in Turkey?

This study, which sees the historical legacies as major catalysts at the fore front of the advancement of Turkey-EU relations will deliberately avoid plunging into those well-known policy issues and topical debates such as religion, security dimensions, immigration, human rights, the Armenian and Cyprus issues, and Greek-Turkish disputes. Instead, it will try to identify and explain the impact of this endless relationship on Turkey's domestic political evolution, an issue which was identified as a gap in the literature. While explaining the chosen topics the research will also try to answer the main question mentioned above, as well as to conclude whether the relationship is in fact a negotiation over membership, or something else entirely. Therefore, one of the main reasons for the choice of the topic was to fill a gap recognized in this field of research.

One of the main hypotheses in this study is that historical perceptions on both sides, as well as the rhetoric deployed by political leaders, has had a great impact on Turkey-

EU relations. Due to increasingly problematic discourses and actions by political elites who are fed by negative historical memories, already thorny issues between the EU and Turkey have become more complicated. During national elections especially, the rhetoric deployed by the politicians both in Turkey and the EU member states generally undermines the accession process. However, it should be noted that during the last decade in particular, the Justice and Development Party Governments (JDP [Tr.: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi] sometimes referred to as the ‘AKP’ or AK Parti) have cleverly outmaneuvered at least some of the negative perceptions against the Turks and Turkey on the way to opening up formal accession negotiations.

The second hypothesis is that religious political parties in Turkey underwent a great identity shift in order to fit in with the criteria that ‘secularist’ (and ‘Kemalist’) forces in Turkey, such as the army, demanded; this placated their ability to intervene in politics on the grounds that JDP were “too religious”. This ideological evolution was observed when the prominent religious political leader Necmettin Erbakan’s Welfare Party (WP [Tr.: Refah Partisi, RP] split in the late 1990s, giving birth to Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s reformist JDP which had a more modern stance. Between 1970 and 2000 Erbakan’s parties were dissolved several times. Each time the Islamist party was dissolved, its successor claimed to be more moderate and less Islamist.¹ Once in power, the JDP and Erdoğan adopted a more Westernized outlook; a move that weakened one of the most important arguments in the hands of the secularists. After this, EU reforms were passed one after the other, bringing major Turkish institutions up to EU standards which directly helped the civilian authority to subdue anti-religious establishments such as the military and focus on other major international dynamics such as energy issues which are closely connected to the development of the domestic institutions.

In light of the above hypothesis, this thesis believes that the successive JDP governments wanted to remove the Turkish army’s customary heavy presence in civilian politics using EU regulations. As a result – and contrary to many of their members’ traditional positions – during the last decade they acted as the main champion of EU membership, due to their need for the EU as cover and protection against possible aggression from the military. They have been very successful in doing this, as the military’s presence in politics has been reduced almost to zero at the time of completion of this thesis. However, this was a beneficial change for the majority of the

¹ Feroz Ahmad, *Turkey: the Quest for Identity*, (Oxford: One World Publishers, 2003), p.172

people in Turkey, as the reforms forced on Turkey by the EU gave people more rights and increased their standard of living. In fact, the continuing process of “peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue” program would never have been put in place in Turkey if the EU backed reforms did not ferment vital changes in public opinion towards the “Kurdish issue”, something which has been traditionally seen as a security problem. This is now seen as a political matter and the guns are almost silenced.

The military’s stance against religious and conservative parties has not been welcomed by the majority of the Turkish public, 99% of which is considered Muslim. The majority of them saw the army’s presence in politics as anti-religious and oppressive. In 2002 the religiously motivated JDP won the elections, though they were initially worried about what the military would do when they tried to run the government. This study argues that JDP’s solution was to take the army’s main instrument from it – the notion that it was the only proper “westernizing force” – by getting closer to the EU than any of their predecessors had ever done. This obviously encouraged the EU to establish warmer relations with Turkey as it had wanted the departure of the army from civilian politics since the beginning. This clearly suited the JDP but not the army. In that sense many comments arose indicating that the JDP were using the EU to implement its own agenda.² For example, Mehmet Kılıç, a Green Party MP in Germany, argued that:

[The] JDP used the EU reforms to strengthen itself and now it does not need the EU as it is moving away from it.³

The EU clearly states that it wants Turkey to be a modern, democratic, secular republic that respects human rights and the rule of law. But the EU does not want Turkey to be modernized by the army, which had long been seen as the leading modernizing power in Turkey.⁴ As Yıldırım states:

² Erol Manisalı, Bekleme Odasında İgfal, (Istanbul: Derin Yayınları, 3rd Edition, 2007), p. 58, Şule Toktaş and Ümit Kurt, ‘The Turkish Military’s Autonomy, JDP Rule and the EU Reform Process in the 2000s: An Assessment of the Turkish Version of Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DECAF)’, *Turkish Studies* Vol. 11, No. 3, Sept. 2010, pp. 387-403 and Ozgur Muftuoğlu, ‘AKP, ‘AB’yi ideolojik aygıtı olarak kullanıyor..!’’, *Evrensel*, Feb. 14, 2013.

³ RPP EU Representation Bureau, ‘Avrupa’da ‘AKP bizi kullandı’ tartışması!’ (In Europe “the JDP used us” debate), Oct. 10, 2012

<http://chp-avrupabirligi.org/2012/10/10/avrupada-akp-bizi-kullandi-tartismasi/>, retrieved Nov. 8, 2012. National news channels in Turkey Jul. 6, 2012.

⁴ European Commission, Turkey Progress Report 2011, pp. 12-17, <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/keydocuments/2011/package/trrapport2011en.pdf> retrieved Mar. 23, 2013.

One of the crucial political factors stipulated by Brussels for obtaining full membership has been the democratic control of the military.⁵

Therefore, intentionally or not, the impact of the EU on the changing identity of the religious parties and their leaders, as well as the process of removal of the army's presence from politics, is considered to be crucial.

The third hypothesis is that military's intervention into civilian politics on four different occasions was backed up by Western allies, most importantly by the US, either directly or covertly to keep the country secular – especially during the Cold War – and therefore it should be evaluated within the merits of the time. Turkish coups were totally different from many other coups. As explained in detail in Chapter 3, the Turkish military saw itself as the guardians of the secular nature of republic. When it perceived that the civilian government was unable to protect it; they gave themselves responsibility to deal with the threat by taking over the authority from the civilians.

The superpower rivalry after the Second World War divided the world into two ideological camps where Turkey remained on the side of the USA by becoming a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952. Throughout this period, the Turkish army was heavily supported by the USA in case of Soviet aggression. During the coups in Turkey, the USA kept quiet, or even supported, the army. To a certain extent, European countries also remained quiet when there was a military takeover due to the hysteria over the communist threat, thanks largely to the influence of the USA. Therefore, it was very difficult during the Cold War for the Turkish civilian authorities to tackle the army's presence in politics. The end of the Cold War can be seen as the key turning point for the EU's support for civilian politics against the military's presence there. Consequently, the JDP took advantage of the contemporary political situation where the West did not need the Turkish army as much as they had done during the Cold War, and also the EU's political conditionality requirements, whereby the army's presence in politics was seen as an obstacle to the progress of relations.

The fourth hypothesis is that Turkey, where since late 1990s religious political parties stopped being openly anti-Western and then the civilian politics freed from army's dominion, has been trying to utilize its geopolitical position to become an

⁵ Çağrı Yıldırım, 'The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics and European Union Membership Negotiations', Dec. 2, 2010, <http://www.balkananalysis.com/turkey/2010/12/02/the-role-of-the-military-in-turkish-politics-and-european-union-membership-negotiations/> retrieved Jun. 18, 2012.

energy corridor between energy rich regions of the Middle East and the Caucasus and energy hungry Europe. This was only possible if Turkey has Europeanised its financial and political standards as well as it has good relations with Europe and the Energy producer countries.

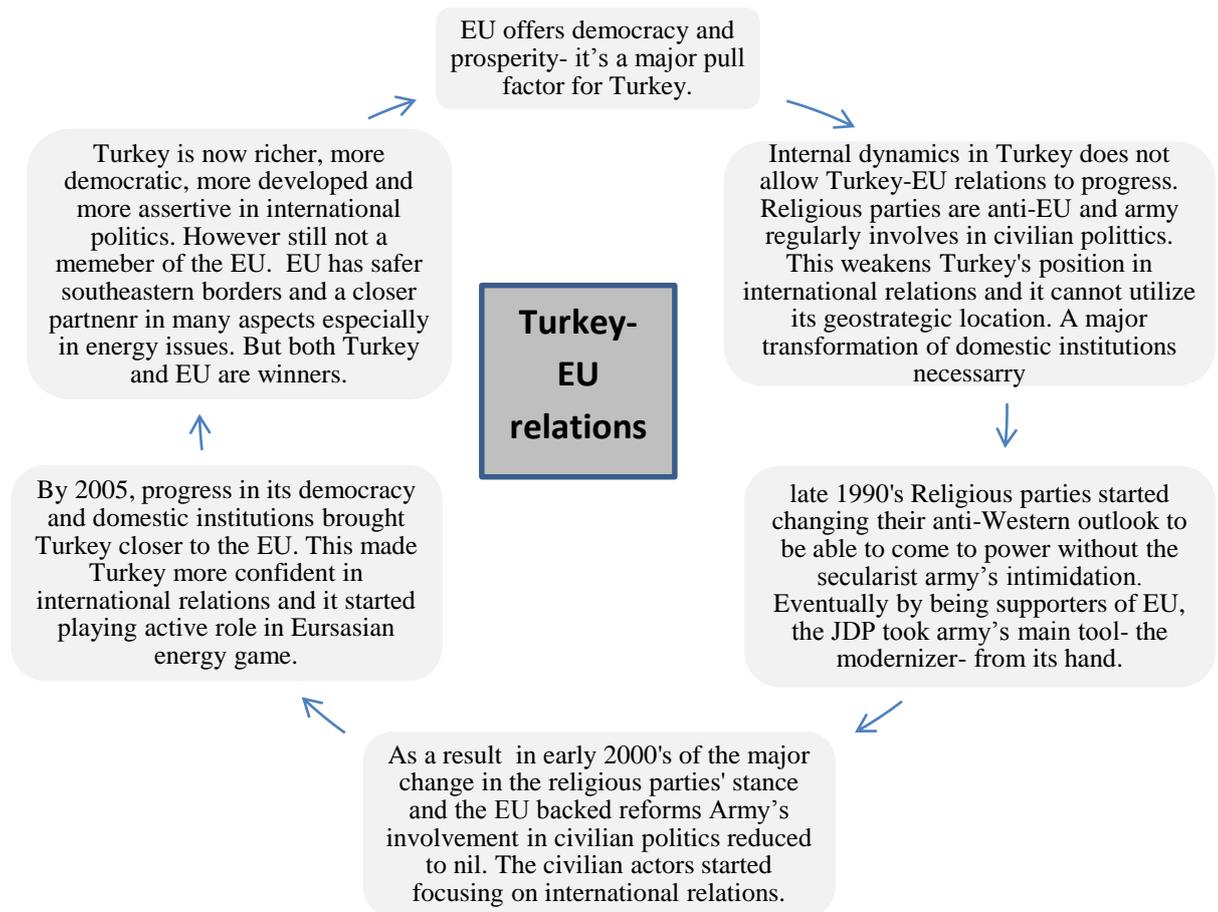
When the Cold War ended in 1991 there was a sense that (in the West at least) Turkey's location has become more important than its army. After getting closer to the EU in the late 1990s and again in the 2000s, Turkish foreign policy has changed dramatically and is now trying to define itself as an internationally active, model democratic Muslim country. Due to this new-found confidence in its foreign affairs, thanks to the EU backed reforms and domestic political stability that followed those reforms, Turkey is moving from being an almost "neutral"⁶ country to a dynamic regional player in political and economic issues.

The successive JDP governments, having freed themselves first from the religiously motivated anti-western mindset and then the fear of army's involvement in its businesses, try to utilize Turkey's geostrategic positioning by getting closer to EU. To the JDP, Turkey being close to EU would boost democratisations of Turkey and therefore this would open up new alternatives in Turkey's international trade especially concerning the energy sector as internal developments are closely linked with its international relations. Firstly producer countries would not be afraid to sign hefty deals with a democratic Turkey that has a westernized outlook and a candidate to the largest economic union in the world. Secondly, Turkey, a close partner of the EU would equally not be afraid to undertake substantial energy projects that links producers with the consumers such as Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline (BTC). Of course, at the epicenter of this ideal of Turkey being a key country in international energy games by becoming both an energy corridor and an energy hub stands the continuous EU backing. As explained in detail below, after 1999 Turkey-EU relations developed significantly positive. Consequently Turkey took serious steps to assert itself as an important player in Post-Cold War Eurasian energy politics.

⁶ Peace at Home Peace in the World (in Turkish '*Yurtta sulh, cihanda sulh* ') was the foreign policy vision of the founder of the Republic Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. During the process of building the New Turkey, Atatürk wanted to keep Turkey away from international conflicts thus promoting it to be neutral. This became the official motto for Turkey almost until the end of the Cold War. Especially with Erdoğan and Davutoğlu Turkey started following an active politics in international stage. For more information related to Turkish foreign policy after 1923, see William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002).

This thesis strongly believes that the three developments mentioned above are closely linked to each other and these progressive changes should be credited to Turkey's desire to become full member of the EU. It is very clear from the findings of this research that the developments within these three dynamics are interlinked and complimentary to each other which mean that if one did not take place the others would not occur. If the religiously motivated parties did not change their rhetoric they could not come to power and get the EU backing to reform Turkey's domestic institutions. Closely linked to this, if it was not for the EU backed reforms the military would not go back in to their barracks and religiously motivated parties could not effectively be in charge of Turkish politics. Moreover, if it was not for the reforms that brought Turkey closer to the EU membership and the achievement of domestic stability, Turkey could not effectively participate in Eurasian energy games.

After reading the available literature, following the media closely, exploring public opinion and interviewing people, it has become clear that Turkish-EU relations are about much more than a political relationship based on EU membership. This idea is in opposition to what most people think. The main hypothesis, therefore, is that this relationship has a major impact, especially on Turkish domestic politics, and both Turkey and the EU are using each other to achieve independent goals. The EU wants Turkey to develop further and become more democratic and remain a Western ally, while Turkey, especially under JDP governments which are portraying themselves (or to some people pretending) as Muslim Democrats, wanted EU guidance to overcome the army's influence and also to become an energy bridge between the West and the East. Therefore, in reality, the EU does not really want Turkey to become a full member; Turkey also knows this to be the case. Thus their relationship is only ostensibly about the accession process while in reality about something else entirely. Therefore Turkey is not expected to become a member of the Union in the near future. However their relationship as mentioned above have a great influence on Turkey's domestic and international affairs. This impact and the dynamics between the major actors and agencies within this relationship therefore can be illustrated in this diagram to be able to clarify what the thesis is trying to achieve as a whole:



This thesis, which tries to explain the impact of Turkey-EU relations on Turkey's domestic political evolution and to clarify the arguments put forward and to assess the validity of the hypothesis mentioned above, strongly asserts that without seeing the underlying historical reasons, one cannot understand Turkey-EU relations and/or public opinion in Europe towards Turkey.

Undoubtedly, history plays a great part in Turkey-Europe relations. Due to its culture and religion – while ignoring the history of relations – Eurosceptics see Turkey as an “alien country”. As Aurélie Lacassagne argues, the peculiar relationship between Christendom and “the Turk”⁷ is a key element in understanding the reluctant behavior of Europeans in accepting Turkey in the EU.⁸ Although, a deeper understanding of this complex relationship requires a recounting of historical issues since the Middle Ages, it

⁷ Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977), p.120, Cited by Aurélie Lacassagne, *Cultures of Anarchy as Figurations: Reflections on Wendt, Elias and the English School*, Laurentian University, Vol.1, No.2, Jul. 2012, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.11217607.0001.207>, retrieved Jan. 18, 2013.

⁸ Ibid.

is impossible to go beyond twentieth century within this research as it would occupy such a vast space. Therefore this thesis will only give a brief account of Turkey-Europe relations in the twentieth century to be able to clarify at least some of the misconceptions.

A Historical Background to Turkey-Europe Relations in twentieth century

With the abolishment of the monarchy in 1922 and the creation of the modern Turkish Republic in 1923, Mustafa Kemal, who took charge of Turkey, decided to take the country entirely westward. He carried on with reforms initiated by the Ottoman sultans in terms of westernization of the country. Finally, in 1926, the Republic of Turkey was declared a *secular state*, with religious and state affairs fully separated. Following that, the Latin alphabet replaced the Arabic one and the Swiss civil code was adopted. Many other reforms were introduced to make Turkey “a European country” during Kemal’s (later to be known as the Atatürk or ‘Father of the Turks’) time as president.

Turkey stayed neutral during World War II almost until the end. Finally, just before the war finished, it symbolically entered the war with the Allied Powers, thus making known its stance against the Axis Powers. This was a choice that kept Turkey on the side of the Western powers for many decades, as the Cold War followed World War II and Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This cemented its desire to side with United States and its allies against the communist Soviet Union.

However, the unique historical interaction between Turkey and Europe since the Middle Ages helped create a very particular, often threatening (the “Muslim invader”) view of Turkey as “the other”.⁹ However, importantly, after Turkey became part of the Western alliance system this was translated into merely a ‘religious and backwardness’ threat as opposed to a military and security threat. After the 1950’s though, some decision makers in Europe who wanted to keep the country away from Europe, deployed rhetoric that was related more to Turkey’s religion and history (such as Armenian Question and Islamic revivalism)¹⁰ as they did not expect any military threat

⁹ Mark Coppenger, *Moral Apologetics for Contemporary Christians: Pushing Back Against Cultural and religious Critics*, (Nashville and Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), p.225

¹⁰ It is widely accepted that Armenian genocide claims became an issue only after Turkey signed the Ankara Agreement. The leaders of Europe such as Valeria d’Estaing who were against Turkish entry at the time thought this could be a good catalyst in front of Turkey. Later on Cyprus and then the human rights issues were added to this debate.

from Turkey. Therefore, so far among a good chunk of people, Turkey-sceptics have successfully built an image of Turkey as a threatening ‘other’ that needs to be contained and kept away from ‘Europe’.

Nevertheless, relations were not always thorny between Turkey and EU. When the Cold War begun to heat up in the 1950’s, the two sides realised that it was a good idea to have closer relationship as both felt threatened by the same enemy, namely the communist Soviet Union. Moreover, other engagements, such as Turkey’s decision to contribute to the Korean War with a major force and then deciding to join NATO in 1952, also helped Europe, and especially the USA, to consider that Turkey was no longer a threat to Europe but instead was a reliable ally.

During the Cold War the USA stood as the defender of Western democracy against the ‘Communist threat’. Turkey, one of the receivers of funding as part of the Marshall Aid program was pushed by the USA to take a more active part in Western European affairs. During the heated times of the Cold War, the Soviet threat also pushed Turkey to have closer relations with the West. Put simply, Turkey begun to get closer to Europe and Europe reciprocated, something that was seen as the mutually beneficial thing to do. As a result of the positive perception, the media and the public also supported the relationship and the ‘otherness’ was put aside until the Cold War had ended!

Turkey-EEC relations:

With the creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958, Turkey’s relationship with Europe took another turn. As can be seen from the aforementioned summary, Turkey had been part of European affairs since the early medieval period. It had very close relations with European countries before and after World War II Turkey first applied for associate membership of the EEC in July 1959, shortly after the its creation. The EEC responded by suggesting the establishment of an association as an interim measure leading to full accession. This led to negotiations which resulted in the signature of the Association Agreement (commonly known as the Ankara Agreement) on September 12, 1963. It was the beginning of Turkey’s never ending official relationship with the EEC and is considered to have been the first step on the path to full membership.¹¹

¹¹ <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/eu-turkey-relations-links dossier-188294> , retrieved Aug. 29, 2011.

The agreement, which was in force from December 1, 1964, had three stages:¹²

- a preparatory stage
- a transitional stage
- a final stage¹³

Although the Association Agreement did not mention democracy, human rights or even politics¹⁴ during the signature ceremony, the president of the commission, Walter Hallstein, strongly suggested that in the future Turkey was going to be a full member of the EEC. He said:

Turkey belongs to Europe. One day the final step will be taken as well. Turkey tied its destiny and future to the European Community.¹⁵

The Ankara Agreement “determined to establish ever closer bonds between the Turkish people and the peoples brought together in the European Economic Community”.¹⁶ The same agreement also recognized that,

The support given by the European Economic Community to the efforts of the Turkish people to improve their standard of living will facilitate the accession of Turkey to the Community at a later date.¹⁷

Article 2 of the Association Agreement stated that in order to attain the objectives of this agreement, a customs union would be progressively established between the European Community and Turkey.¹⁸ According to this agreement, the Customs Union was to be established within no less than twelve years. The Association Agreement was supplemented by an Additional Protocol, which was signed on November 23, 1970, and came into force on January 1, 1973, establishing a timetable of technical measures to be

¹² Ayse Ceyhan, *Avrupa Toplulugu Terimleri Sozlugu*, (Istanbul: Afa Yayınları, 1991), p. 23.

¹³ Official Journal of the European Communities, Vol. 16, No. C113/4, Dec. 24, 1973, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/association_agreement_1964_en.pdf retrieved Dec.16, 2011.

¹⁴ Thomas W. Smith, ‘The Politics of conditionality: the European Union and human rights reform in Turkey,’ in Paul J. Kubicek (ed.), *The European Union and Democratization*, (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 111.

¹⁵ Michael A. Rupp, *AB Mevzuatına Uyumun Ekonomik, Sosyal ve Siyasi Yasama Etkileri: Türkiye’nin Avrupa birliğine Katılım süreci*. (Istanbul: IKV Yayınları, 2001), Vol.1, p.1.

¹⁶ Official Journal of the European Communities, No. C113/4, Dec. 24, 1973, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/association_agreement_1964_en.pdf retrieved Aug.29, 2011, p.3.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.3.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.5.

taken to attain the objective of the customs union within a period of twenty-two years.¹⁹ However, EEC-Turkey relations did not work out well during the 1970s and for most of the 1980s due to a variety of reasons, such as military coups and Turkey's Cyprus policy.

As a result of political and economic crises, the 1970s are considered, like the 1990s, to be troubled and "lost" years for Turkey.²⁰ There were student demonstrations and deadly clashes between opposition groups, as well as financial crises and weak governments bringing chaos and hardship. The army's intervention in 1971 was therefore welcomed by the Turkish public as they expected it to end the chaotic atmosphere. It also reinforced the officers' own sense that they were the guardians of the secular republic and that the people were behind them. By the end of the 1970s, Süleyman Demirel's government was in charge, but economic and social hardships were rising significantly. However, some bureaucrats such as Turgut Özal were working very hard to find the core roots of these problems.

Turgut Özal and the New Turkey:

Özal worked in the State Planning Organization (SPO) between 1967 and 1971 for the Demirel government. During his time in the SPO, Özal began to think that Turkey needed to reorganize its economic structure according to the rules of Western economies. In January 1980, a package of economic stability measures known as the "January 24 Decisions" was adopted to overcome the worsening problems that had emerged in the late 1970s.²¹ In addition to restoring the Turkish economy, the "January 24 Decisions" also introduced radical changes in economic modeling and preferences.

With those decisions, Turkey switched its economic policy from an "import substituting industrialization" (ISI) to an "export-led growth strategy" which brought about the introduction of liberalization in financial markets and more emphasis on foreign trade. These reforms associated with the free market economic ideas of the Washington Consensus (WC) that is supported by prominent economists and international organisations, such as the IMF, the World Bank, the EU and the US

¹⁹ Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession, 1998, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/1998/turkey_en.pdf, retrieved Aug.5, 2011.

²⁰ Chris Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, (London: Granta Books, 2005), p.2.

²¹ Andrew Mango, *The Turks Today*, (London: John Murray, 2004), p.79.

intended to integrate the Turkish Economy to the world economy through WC.²² Özal perhaps looked at the successful examples of export led growth strategies as export driven growth has a better track than ISI. For example ISI failed in Latin America in 1970s while export driven growth has worked very well for the Asian Tigers.²³ In this context, the import regime was liberalized to a great extent, export-promoting incentives were initiated, and supply and demand systems in foreign exchange markets were put into practice.²⁴ Thus the Turkish lira became a convertible currency and it was allowed to float in a controlled monetary environment. Previously, a Turkish citizen could be arrested if he/she carried foreign currency. Now people could open dollar accounts at home or abroad.²⁵

Since Turkey was restructuring its economy according to Western models, joining the EEC was seen as favorable. In Turkey it was considered that this would stimulate economic growth. Again it was largely seen as a win economically for both as the EEC was keen to get cheaper Turkish exports while Turkey wanted to move towards a producing and exporting economy.

Nevertheless, before these decisions gave any fruition, the coup d'état of September 12, 1980, took place. The high command of the armed forces suspended the constitution, dissolved the parliament and all political parties and substituted itself as the government.²⁶ All political leaders were imprisoned and later on banned from active politics. As a result, the EEC first decided to curtail and then in 1982 to completely freeze relations with Turkey. The EEC expected the army to respect human rights, treat political prisoners well and transfer power to the civilians as soon as possible. Relations were gradually normalized after the restoration of a civilian government in 1983.

The National Security Council (NSC) headed by Kenan Evren declared at the time that the goals of the military intervention were to stop the fighting “between brothers”²⁷ to prevent a possible civil war, guard the secular republic and re-establish the state’s

²² Rana Eskinat, ‘Application of post-Washington Consensus policies in Turkey’ http://www.asecu.gr/files/10th_conf_files/eskinat.pdf retrieved July 29, 2015.

²³ John SL McCombie, ‘Criticism and Defences of the Balance of Payments Constraint Growth Model: some old some new,’ in Elias Soukiazis and Pedro André Cerqueira, (ed.), *Models of Balance of Payments Constrained Growth: History, Theory and Empirical Evidence*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.69

²⁴ Brief Historical Background for the Turkish Economy, *Business Guide to Turkey*, Foreign Economic Relations Board, Turkey (DEIK), http://www.taccsoutheast.com/pictures/Historical_Background.pdf retrieved Aug. 29, 2011.

²⁵ Mango, *ibid.*,

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.80.

²⁷ Referring to the violent left and right wing fights taking place across the country.

lost authority.²⁸ About a week after the military intervention, on September 20, 1980, a new government was formed and Özal was chosen as minister of the economy as well as the deputy prime minister.²⁹ This was a clear sign that the army was also happy with the new model of market economy. Evren toured the country to justify his intervention in politics. In his speech in Izmit on November 2, 1982, he also clarified that his intervention had stopped a possible Marxist and Leninist takeover of the country. In Izmit while praising Western democracy, he strongly denounced Communist regimes.³⁰ In his other speeches Evren clearly stated that Turkey would continue with the grand ambition of westernization during his time while promising to transfer the power to civilian authority as soon as calm was established.

Finally, when the army chiefs felt confident that whichever political party they supported would win the elections, the election date was announced for November 6, 1983. However political parties supported by the military regime could not gain much support. Conversely, the newly established Motherland Party (MP [Tr.: Anavatan Partisi or ANAP) of Özal, which had a conservative program and contained many politicians with different political backgrounds, won the election with an overwhelming majority.

However, the army's control over the civilian authority, human rights violations and Greece's fearsome opposition to Turkey's membership delayed the progress towards EEC accession. Relations between Turkey and the EEC were progressively normalized by 1986, after the MP scored a win in the 1983 general elections. Distancing itself from Turkey during military rule, the EEC clearly signaled that it did not want the army to be the modernizing power in Turkey. The decision to restart relations with Turkey in 1986 also clarified that the EEC had nothing against Turkey or the Turkish people but that the way Turkey was run needed to meet European standards in order for the relations to continue as normal.

Under Özal's leadership, Turkey was applying for full membership. Nevertheless, West Germany opposed removing restrictions on labor movement which was, according to former agreements, supposed to be given to the Turks in 1986. Greece was also blocking any rapprochement between Turkey and the EEC, especially regarding bureaucratic meetings that were planned to discuss Turkey's relationship with Cyprus.

²⁸ Kenan Evren's intervention speech on Sept.12, 1980, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQvBM8cziok> retrieved Mar.18, 2013

²⁹ Mango, *ibid.*, 82.

³⁰ Evren's Izmit speech, Nov. 2, 1982, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MUBCx6cMdY> retrieved Mar.18, 2013.

On the other hand, the accession of Portugal and Spain to the EEC encouraged Turkey to carry on with the reforms required by the EEC. Finally, on September 16, 1986, the EEC-Turkey Joint Committee met and reactivated the process of the relations which had been almost completely frozen since September 12, 1980.

After that, Turkey hastened its reform programs and organized a mass campaign both within and outside the country to prepare Turkey to apply for full membership. However, leaders of European countries such as Helmut Kohl and Margaret Thatcher were warning Turkey not to rush its application. They were (Germany especially) worried about the freedom of labor and a mass migration of workers from Turkey to their countries. Of course political bans on former politicians and human rights violations were also commonly mentioned in their rhetoric. On the other hand Özal, who strongly argued that Turkey had always been part of Europe because European civilization was born on its territory³¹ (referring to the ancient Anatolian civilizations), was determined to make the application while Leo Tindemans (Belgian's foreign minister) was the president of the EEC's Council of Ministers, as he was known to be rather friendly towards Turkey. Disregarding the advice of the German Chancellor Kohl that neither Turkey nor Europe was ready,³² on April 14, 1987, Ali Bozer, Turkey's minister in charge of relations with the EEC officially handed Tindemans Turkey's request for membership in the ECC, under article 237 of the Treaty of Rome³³ rather than according to the Ankara Agreement.³⁴ The decision was taken despite objections from the Greek government, with Tindemans insisting that the Treaty of Rome required the twelve EEC countries to refer every new application to the commission for study.³⁵ Özal was proven right about the Belgian minister. Mehmet Ali Birand, a prominent Turkish journalist, thanked the Belgian foreign minister in his column by stating, "We should thank Tindamans for the EEC's decision."³⁶

Although the political leadership in Turkey knew that they were not ready for the application they were making, Özal realised that the end of the Cold War meant a lot for Turkey. Since the end of World War II and especially with the Truman Doctrine in

³¹ Mango, p. 89.

³² Ibid., p. 89.

³³ Ramazan Gokbunar et al., *Avrupa Birliğinin Türkiye'li Geleceği: umutlar ve korkular*, (Ankara: Nobel Yayınları, 2008), p.5.

³⁴ Serdar Palabiyik and Ali yildiz, *Avrupa Birliği*, (Ankara: ODTU Yayıncılık, 2007), p. 75.

³⁵ <http://www.etcf.org.tr/EN/Genel/BelgeGoster.aspx?17A16AE30572D313AAF6AA849816B2EF60E8C60D83DBA36D#aa> retrieved Aug.29, 2011.

³⁶ Mehmet Ali Birand, *Milliyet*, Apr.29, 1987.

1947, Turkey was part of the Western alliance acting as a buffer state between the United States' interests and those of the Soviets.³⁷ The US kept some of its nuclear missiles on its base at Incirlik, Southern Turkey. Turkey was also allowed to join NATO – the only Muslim nation during the Cold War – due to its contributions to the Korean War on the side of the US and the United Nations (UN). For all of these reasons, Turkey became an important ally to the West. However, by the second half of the 1980s it was very clear that the US was winning the Cold War and the Soviet Union was about to collapse. Perhaps Özal thought that the importance of Turkey for the West would reduce with the end of the Cold War as the West would no longer need a buffer state. He wanted Turkey to apply for EEC membership before the superpower rivalry ended so some distance would be covered towards becoming a member. He was not proven wrong with his predictions about the end of the Cold War as it ended with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.³⁸ However, what he did not predict was that the US would need Turkey in other ways, such as to reach Central Asia's energy resources and, most importantly, he did not anticipate the scale that international terrorism would reach by 2001, a development that would secure Turkey's key place among Western powers.

As pointed out earlier, the accession process was used by Özal for a political purpose rather than to reach the accession goal itself. His aims included repositioning Turkey at the end of the Cold War by utilizing its strategic location, speeding economic liberalization reforms and creating an export led economy. This could only be achieved if Turkey stayed close to EEC. He knew very well that the Turkish application would be rejected but he also knew that it was better to make it clear that Turkey wanted to stay within the Western alliance system. It was purely a strategic choice.

On April 27, 1987, in Luxembourg, the foreign ministers of the twelve EEC countries agreed to refer Turkey's application for EEC membership to the commission for a protracted study of the problems involved. This reconfirmed Turkey's eligibility, given that the EEC had turned down a similar application by Morocco on the grounds that Morocco was not a European country.³⁹ This was a clear indication that the EEC

³⁷Nicole and Hugh Pope, *Turkey Unveiled: A History of Modern Turkey*, (New York: The Overlook Press, 2004), pp.3-4

³⁸ David R. Marples, *The Collapse of the Soviet Union 1985-1991*, (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2004).

³⁹ Martina Warning, *Neighbourhood and Enlargement Policy: comparing the democratization impact of the European Union in Morocco and Turkey*, University of Florence, CIREs, WP4/2006, http://www.cires.unifi.it/upload/sub/PUBBLICAZIONI/WP/Warning_4_06.pdf, retrieved Aug.31, 2011.

was officially recognizing Turkey within European geographical borders. However, the commission was not convinced. After taking two years to examine the Turkish application, it adopted its opinion on December 18, 1989, and the council accepted it on February 5, 1990. It concluded that, “Even though Turkey has legitimate reasons to become a member, at the present time, Turkey and the community cannot be easily integrated.”⁴⁰ The commission gave both economic and political reasons. It also noted “the negative effects” of the dispute between Greece and Turkey and “the situation in Cyprus.”⁴¹ However, it promised to reassess the Turkish application for full membership in the future by stating:

The opinion states that the Commission does believe, however, that the Community should pursue its cooperation with Turkey, given that country’s general opening towards Europe. The Commission also considered that the Community has a fundamental interest in intensifying its relations with Turkey and helping it to complete as soon as possible the process of political and economic modernization.⁴²

Özal was disappointed but not surprised. As it put off Turkey’s accession to an indefinite future date, Europe had at least recognized that Turkey was eligible for membership. Özal’s finance minister, Adnan Kahveci, on the other hand, analyzed the result differently when he spoke to Andrew Mango, by stating that:

The reason we applied for membership was to attract foreign investors who would be more likely to come to Turkey if they believed that we abided by European business rules and practices.⁴³

On February 5, 1990, the Council adopted the general content of the commission opinion and asked it to make detailed proposals developing the ideas expressed in the opinion on the need to strengthen EEC-Turkey relations.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Mango, *ibid.*, p.89, and Palabiyik and Yildiz, *ibid.*, p.75.

⁴¹ Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession, 1998, p. 5, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/1998/turkey_en.pdf , retrieved Apr.11, 2011.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.5.

⁴³ Mango, *ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

⁴⁴ Turkey Progress Report 1998, *ibid.*,

Turkey-EEC relations after 1990:

On June 7, 1990, the Commission adopted a set of proposals called “the Matutes Package.”⁴⁵ The package was purely designed to contribute to the modernization of Turkey’s economy and to allow Turkey to move as close to the community as possible. Following this, the Association Council meeting in November 1993 agreed on the completion of the Customs Union by 1995.⁴⁶ It also included the resumption and intensification of financial cooperation, the promotion of industrial and technological cooperation and the strengthening of political and cultural ties. This package was not approved by the Council.⁴⁷

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, many people thought Turkey would lose its significant geostrategic position for the West. However, the energy resources of the newly independent Turkic states of Central Asia assured Turkey that it would remain an important country for the Western world – especially for the US. Even though many people complained that Turkey would be the “Trojan Horse” for American policies in Central Asia and perhaps, in the future, in the EU as well, Turkey did become one of the most important actors in the region.⁴⁸ With clever steering by Özal, the end of the Cold War did not push Turkey aside but rather positively affected relations and brought it closer to Europe.

Furthermore, the worry about Turkey’s declining importance for the West after the Cold War was lessened with the Turkish involvement in the first Gulf War against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, where Turkey actively participated in liberating Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion. The end of the Gulf War did hurt the Turkish economy severely, but allowed Turkey to ask for American support for the policies it pursued in Central Asia and in Europe. As a result, the BTC, one of the greatest political and engineering achievements for Turkey in the 20th century, received full American support.⁴⁹ As explained in Chapter five, Turkey now uses the successful case of BTC as a model when it pursues its grand aim of being an energy corridor for the West transporting the eastern hydrocarbon resources via a network of pipelines.

⁴⁵ Ibid.,

⁴⁶ Harun Arikan, *An Awkward Candidate for EU Membership?*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p.73.

⁴⁷ Turkey’s Progress Report 1998, *ibid.*

⁴⁸ Ian Lesser, ‘Turkey in the EU Means a New Kind of US-Turkish Relationship’, <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/turkey-the-eu-means-new-kind-us-turkish-relationship>, retrieved Sept.12, 2011.

⁴⁹ Richard Morningstar, ‘The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline: a retrospective and a look at the future,’ issue of the CACI Analyst, Aug.23, 2006 <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/4113>, retrieved March 10, 2011.

On the other hand, Turkish domestic politics did not vary much from those of the 1980s. For decades, elite of “White Turks”⁵⁰ were indisputably in charge of politics, business and, in particular, the military. And throughout most of the 1980s and 1990s, as global forces began to change the lives of ordinary people beyond recognition, the “system” remained resolutely the same.⁵¹ Özal, who was trying to change the way Turkey functioned, from politics to economics and from social life to the army’s position, died unexpectedly and one could say suspiciously, on April 17, 1993.⁵²

The heavy presence of the military in civil politics in Turkey worried the EU far more than anything else, as it was definitely against the values and norms of Western democracy. However, the military’s position in Turkish politics is complicated. Moreover, its direct interference in civilian life on three occasions is very different from other examples of similar situations in Europe such as those in Greece, Italy and Spain. The major difference is that the army in Turkey is considered a “secular” nationalist body with left wing tendencies rather than just nationalist right wing. It also sees itself as the guardian of the secular republic, and whenever secularism is threatened it feels the responsibility to protect it.⁵³

Nevertheless, this attitude is contradictory to the EU’s understanding of democratic values and norms. Therefore, although the EU wants Turkey to be a secular and modern state, it does not want Turkey to be modernized through the hands of the military. But the current European norm here is that armed forces are unambiguously subordinate to the lawfully elected government-in-office and the armed forces’ leadership has no voice in public affairs beyond its professional domain.⁵⁴

As mentioned above, the army’s presence in Turkish politics was substantial and it did not satisfy the conditions set out by the Copenhagen Criteria. Again, Turkey’s economy was weakening and Kurdish separatism – at times manifesting in terrorist attacks – grew in size and scale, with the army’s response resulting in major human

⁵⁰ Richer part of the Turkish society who has a better living standard than most of the people.

⁵¹ Morris, *ibid.*, p.5.

⁵² Monika Graff, ‘Ozal death suspicious’, *UPI News*, Jun. 13. 2012, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2012/06/13/Report-Ozal-death-suspicious/UPI-61021339596864/ retrieved Apr. 22, 2013 and Mango, *ibid.*, p.93.

⁵³ Soner Çagaptay, ‘What’s really behind Turkey’s coup arrests?’, *Foreign Policy*, Febr.25, 2010, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/02/25/whats_really_behind_turkeys_coup_arrests?wp_login_redirect=0, retrieved Jan.7, 2013.

⁵⁴ David Greenwood, ‘Turkish Civil-Military Relations and the EU: Preparation for Continuing Convergence’, *Centre for European Security Studies*, the Netherlands, Nov.2005, pp.3-4.

rights violations that had to be resolved. As a result, practically the EU and Turkey could not have closer relations in the first half of the 1990s.

However puzzling the domestic politics in Turkey were, the Customs Union, which was one of the main goals of the 1963 Association Agreement, was finally established with the Turkey-EU Association Council Decision 1/95 of March 6, 1995.⁵⁵

On March 4, 1998, following the request of the Luxembourg European Council, the European Commission adopted its Communication on a European Strategy for Turkey. The main elements of the pre-accession strategy for Turkey included the approximation of legislation and the adoption of the *acquis*. The Communication also contained initial operational proposals for implementing the strategy. The strategy was welcomed by the Cardiff European Council, which was held on June 15 and 16, 1998, where it was felt that the Communication, “taken as a package ... provides the platform for developing our relationship on a sound and evolutionary basis.”⁵⁶

The Cardiff European Council of 1998 welcomed the commission’s confirmation that it would submit its first regular reports on Turkey’s progress towards accession at the end of 1998. “The Report on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession,” published in November 1998, followed the same methodology as that used for the opinions on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs).⁵⁷

Finally, the groundbreaking event for Turkey-EU relations took place during the Helsinki summit in December 1999. There, the European Council gave Turkey the status of candidate country for EU membership, following the commission’s recommendation in its second Regular Report on Turkey. This was a major achievement for Turkey as it had been rejected as a candidate country in the 1997 Luxemburg summit. However, many political analysts insist that this progress would never have occurred if it were not for US support for Turkey.

Even though the US backing was perceived as a cunning American policy to use Turkey to reach the former Soviet Republic’s rich energy resources, the US’s genuine support for Turkish candidacy cannot be underestimated. On a personal level, President Clinton’s visit to Turkey and Greece after major successive earthquakes hit both countries in the summer of 1999 showed Western solidarity with Turkey.

⁵⁵ Palabiyik and Yildiz, *ibid.*, p.76.

⁵⁶ Turkey’s pre-accession strategy,

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/enlargement/ongoing_enlargement/community_acquis_turkey/e40113_en.htm, retrieved Aug.11, 2011.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Both Greece and Turkey, forgetting the ongoing political crisis between them, rushed to help each other with sincerity which led to significant improvement in Turkish-Greek relations. The so called “Earthquake diplomacy” calmed tensions between the two, who were on the brink of a war on many occasions such as in 1987, 1995–96 and again in 1998. Consequently, Greece lifted its policy of vetoing any real approachment between Turkey and EU. This momentous change in Greek attitude towards Turkey led to the above mentioned Helsinki decisions that paved the way for the formal accession negotiations to be started with Turkey in October 2005. Therefore, 1999 can be identified as a watershed year in Turkey-EU relations as it signaled for the new millennium to start with a “real” and conceivable hope for Turkey to become a full member of the EU.

Turkey-EU relations after the 2000s:

The years between 2000 and 2012 have been seen by many scholars as transformative years in Turkey’s history in terms of political, economic and social developments. In the 2000s, the push for EU membership strengthened. As a result, reform packages were passed one after another, trying to bring Turkey ever closer to EU norms and regulations by enforcing democratization in almost every aspect of life. For example, capital punishment was abolished even though the majority of Turkey’s public was in favor of it and, most importantly, the military’s presence in politics was lessened and religiously rooted parties changed their rhetoric towards the EU. This boosted Turkey’s involvement in international affairs especially concerning energy issues.

While democratisation was taking place, economically speaking Turkey was also doing much better than most other countries in the world; it moved from being the twenty-sixth largest economy in the world to number sixteen by 2011.⁵⁸ It also started utilizing its geostrategic positioning by trying to become an energy corridor between the energy producers of the east and the consumers of the west with the aim of finally becoming an influential energy hub. Additionally, politically speaking Turkey’s sphere of influence expanded significantly as it started pursuing multidimensional and independent –of western dominated- international policies by forming good bilateral relations with other influential regional and global powers like Iran, China and Russia.

⁵⁸ Mustafa Koc, ‘Food Banking in Turkey: Conservative Politics in a Neo-Liberal State,’ in Graham Riches and Tiina Silvasti (ed.), *First World Hunger Revisited: Food Charity Or the Right to Food?*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, Second edition, 2014), p.154

Nonetheless, it started acting like an appropriate regional power which dedicated itself to safer international trade, human rights, peace and democratization.

When Erdoğan's moderate Islamic JDP came to power in 2002, progress towards Europeanization gained further momentum in Turkey. Some experts perceive the JDP as a new force that is trying to take over the role of the army as the sole secular-modernizing power. They thought of the JDP as doing this in order to get rid of the military's traditionally heavy presence in Turkish politics so that they could pursue their own agenda. These analysts do not think that the JDP is trying to modernize Turkey to get into the EU; they believe that the party is using EU support to keep the generals quiet while secretly working towards the Islamization of Turkey. Most secular republicans share this distrust.⁵⁹

However, others see the JDP as the only political party after Özal's MP that truly wanted to modernize Turkey in line with EU standards. They claim that it is impossible to bring democracy to a country when the military is considered superior to civilians. These writers also claim that Turkey's good relations with the Eastern world do not mean that Turkey is becoming an "Islamist country". They argue that it is becoming a regional power and every regional power pursues multi-dimensional politics.⁶⁰ What made the JDP controversial was the fact that a few years before forming the JDP, leaders from this party were completely against Turkey joining the EU, calling it a Christian Club. They also did not believe that the EU would ever accept Turkey as a full member.

As mentioned above, under the JDP, Turkey-EU relations developed much faster than anyone could have anticipated. The commission reported that Turkey had successfully fulfilled the Copenhagen Criteria and therefore should be given the go-ahead with negotiations. This was a major breakthrough after the 1999 Helsinki Council which recognized Turkey as an EU candidate country on an equal footing with other candidate countries.

Following the recommendations of the European Commission, EU leaders agreed on December 16, 2004, to start accession negotiations with Turkey from the October 3, 2005.⁶¹ On December 17, 2004, the European Council defined the conditions for the

⁵⁹ Secular writers and columnists including Ilhan Selcuk, Erol Manisali, Murathan Mungan and Ümit Zileli

⁶⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratjik Derinlik, Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, (Istanbul: Küre Yayınları, 41st edition, 2010) and columnists such as Ali Bayramoğlu, Fikri Akyüz and Mehmet Barlas

⁶¹ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/questions_and_answers/turkey_en.htm, retrieved Jan. 12, 2012.

opening of accession negotiations with Turkey after long discussions. This decision led to a major debate to take place across European political spectrums.

The Austrian People's Party claimed that Turkey would cost as much as "the recent accession of all ten new members and [that] someone needs to explain this to our citizens."⁶² Then the German Christian Democratic Union offered only "privileged partnership status", something which was obviously less than full membership. Despite all of these negative developments, EU accession negotiations –which are conducted over thirty-five chapters – continued and were officially launched on the October 20, 2005. This began a process of analytical examination of EU legislation (the so-called screening process). The screening process, which is the first phase of the accession negotiations, was completed on October 13, 2006. During this process, sixty-six Turkish delegations held explanatory and bilateral meetings with European Commission officials in Brussels. At the explanatory screening meetings, the European Commission briefed Turkish delegations on the EU acquis for each chapter and at the bilateral screening; Turkish delegations explained Turkey's level of alignment with the relevant acquis under each chapter. Thus, by comparing the EU acquis with Turkish legislation, the level that Turkey reached concerning the adoption, enforcement and effective implementation of the above-mentioned acquis was identified.⁶³

Although everybody was fascinated with how fast relations between Turkey and the EU had progressed during the first six years of the new millennium, the same cannot be said at the time of completion of this research as relations have almost entirely frozen for a variety of reasons. These reasons include weakening support for the EU in Turkey and anti-Turkish sentiments in Europe.

Hence, since the 1950's there have been different phases in Turkey-EU relations. There may have been increasing disillusionment with the EU but also some positive political and economic consequences that have come about as a result of this. Although historical legacies play a great part and the support for Turkey's EU membership has fallen both in Europe and in Turkey, when one mentions noteworthy developments inside Turkey during the last two decades, one cannot underestimate the significance of the EU's role.

⁶² Der Spiegel, Aug.21, 2005.

⁶³ Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/eu-accession-negotiations.en.mfa>, retrieved Apr. 22, 2013.

A major change in the identity of the religious political parties was one of the key impacts relations with the EU had on Turkey. Once fearsome anti-EU political leaders – including Erdoğan and Abdullah Gül – realized that being anti-Western was the main reason why the army had always stopped them getting very far in Turkey’s political system. These leaders also realized the value of Western democracies when it comes to freedom of thought and speech. Their survival within Turkish politics was only possible within a state which adopted Western style democracy which the army claimed to be the guardian of. As a result of this realization and change in strategy, the JDP finally came to power in 2002.

Removal of the army’s presence from civilian politics was another direct impact of the EU on Turkey. Keeping the army under civilian rule was not possible without the civilian government taking total control of the Westernization process in Turkey. This was only possible by adopting a very pro-EU stance. When it came to power, and with a westernized outlook, the JDP would go on to adopt an even more modern and European outlook than the army. This was a clever move designed to take away one of the military’s main tools which allowed it to interfere in politics. The JDP subdued the army by introducing one EU reform package after another. Finally, in 2007, it had become clear that the army was now mainly in the hands of the civilian government, perhaps for the first time since the foundation of the Republic in 1923.

Giving Turkey confidence and credibility in its surrounding regions which allowed it to become an energy bridge and perhaps an energy hub was another impact the EU had on Turkey. By getting closer to the EU and further earning the trust of the West, Turkey adopted an active policy of becoming an important actor in energy politics which sought to link the energy rich East and the energy hungry West. Utilizing its geostrategic positioning, especially after several Ukraine-Russia gas crises which are explained in chapter 5 in detail, where Europe felt vulnerable to Russia’s control over its energy needs, become one of the most important foreign and domestic policy agendas for Turkey. Using its closeness to the EU and the Western markets, Turkish politicians successfully secured major energy deals with Azerbaijan, Iraqi Kurdistan and other Middle Eastern countries. Construction of major oil and gas pipelines such as the BTC and Trans Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) were also begun. Thanks to EU support, Turkey – which does not possess enough energy resources to fuel its own domestic needs – is now on the way to becoming one of the most important countries in global energy politics.

Improvements to its human rights record, noteworthy developments in education, progress in transportation and technology, increase in trade, tourism and agriculture, and increasing income from exports will also be remembered as major positive aspects of Turkey's relations with the EU. However, these aspects will not be studied in much detail in order to keep the focus of the thesis on the three aspects as mentioned previously.

It is apparent that the multifaceted debates and arguments surrounding Turkey-EU relations will continue until the day membership is – if ever – granted to Turkey. Thus, the literature related to this long-lasting process is as complex as the relationship itself. The biggest handicap of the literature is that it focuses on well-known subjects and arguments, identifies the problems repetitively but offers limited or no solutions. Furthermore, the progressive manner of the relationship is underrated as it has been considered mostly in terms of a cost-benefit relationship. Moreover, the impact of historical memories on current affairs, something which this thesis pays much attention to, have also been neglected and not considered important enough by the literature. Hence these are the areas identified as gaps in research. This thesis attempts to fill in at least some of the gaps.

The literature in this study is divided into three schools of thought. These are studies that are either generally against, in favor, or balanced in their views regarding Turkey-EU relations. This chapter positions the thesis among the available literature before moving on to the methodology section.

As well as the literature, the theoretical framework for this relationship is also composite. In the second chapter the methodological framework of the research is explained. In this section, theories of external agency impact on domestic changes are evaluated. Following this, the methods used during the research process will be elucidated. The third chapter analyses the impact of the EU on the normalization of the military's role in Turkey.

In the third chapter, the impact of EU on changing the role of Turkey's military from the 1990's and 2000's will be evaluated in depth. This chapter will first analyze and evaluate the underlying causes of the military's intervention into politics. After this, each military intervention since 1960 will be explained briefly. After understanding where the army stood in Turkish politics, the chapter will then evaluate the impact of Turkey-EU relations on the role of the army in civilian politics, especially during the new millennium when the EU negotiation process began to gather momentum. The

thesis will then move on to the fourth chapter, where the change in the identity of religious political groups due to the impact of the EU will be examined in detail.

The fourth third chapter aims to explain the impact of Turkey's relations with the EU on the ideological evolution of the religious political parties and leaders in Turkey and the changes in their identity. Firstly, it will look at the history of these groups and analyse their rhetoric towards issues of Westernization throughout the history of the modern Republic. It will also briefly touch upon the place of religion in the EU. Next, the chapter will focus on explaining the change in the ideology and identity of the major religious parties due to the process known as Europeanization⁶⁴. Here the underlying causes of the changes and the impact of the EU, especially during the 1990's and the 2000's, will be assessed.

The fifth chapter, which can be considered as the economic outcome of the developments explained in chapter three and four, will look at the impact of the EU on Turkey's aim to become an energy corridor between the East and the West, and its impact on Turkey-EU relations more broadly. It will briefly explain the energy politics of the Eurasian continent while elucidating the energy problems faced by the EU and Turkey's possible contribution towards solving these issues. In this respect, Turkey's strategy of using energy as a political tool by connecting Europe with energy rich regions such as the Caspian and the Middle East through pipelines that cross its territory will be examined in detail. While focusing on the proposed TANAP (or smaller Nabucco) which will bring natural gas from the east to European markets, this thesis will use the already running BTC as a case study to explain the political power of such pipelines.

The sixth chapter is dedicated to the overall conclusions of the thesis, where the work will refer back to the research question and the hypothesis. The overall and undeniable impact of the EU on Turkey's domestic issues, from reforming religious political groups, the military's role in politics and the energy politics, will also be accounted for. This thesis proposes that Turkey-EU relations should not be considered as merely an "accession process", but must be evaluated from different angles as both Turkey and the EU have different strategic goals and, accordingly, they want different things from each other.

⁶⁴ The idea of Turkey meeting the European democratic standards in social, political and economic aspects.

Chapter 2

Literature review and methodology

Literature review

It is not hard to find sufficient accounts written about Turkey-EU relations because of the span and the topicality of this affair. However majority of the work produced on this topic does not look in to the impact of this relation on Turkey's domestic evolution and they do not seem to acknowledge the importance of global economics and its actors⁶⁵ on this relation to a greater extent as they tend to focus mostly on the accession related issues. This was something the thesis identified as an issue and a gap in the literature. By offering a discussion of the role of external actors in the transformation of domestic political dynamics and linking three important issues under examination to one another, this thesis tries to fill at least some of the gap identified in the literature.

As mentioned before, due do international and domestic social, economic and political demand, religious parties in Turkey underwent an ideological change to be able to bypass the intimidation of the military. When the army's chief instrument, 'the Westerniser force', was taken away from its hands, by using the EU candidacy as a tool, civilian politics started playing more proactive role within the global economics by offering to become an energy bridge between the East and the West. Thanks to EU membership aspects and the reform process that took place especially after 1999, increasingly more confident civilian authority wanted to utilize the power and influence of economic tools in foreign policy which is considered as one of the key dimensions of IPE.⁶⁶

Due to the immensity of information available for researchers, it is vitally important to conduct a critical evaluation of such information in order to find answer to the hypothesis and the research question posed above, as well as to be able to come to a logical conclusion. Therefore, this thesis used a variety of different resources from Europe and Turkey to create the sense of balance in its analyses of the relationship

⁶⁵ That includes international organisations such as IMF, WTO and domestic organisations like Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association (TÜSİAD) in Turkish: Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği.

⁶⁶ Michael Veseth, What is International Political Economy? <http://www2.ups.edu/ipe/whatis.pdf> retrieved Jul.19.2015.

between Turkey and EU. Mainly sources written and spoken in English and Turkish are employed while conducting the research, as well as translations of some other resources from different languages.

During the research phase, numerous books, journals, internet resources and newspapers were consulted. This included consulting the major libraries containing nearly all the books and journals published on this relationship and the key universities with access to journals that have many articles related to Turkey-EU relations. Most of the newspapers consulted also have an online version that helps to ease the research process. Overall, research suggests that the English language works are largely skewed towards a type of Turkey-scepticism, while the Turkish language works largely favour entry into the EU.

As mentioned above Turkey-EU relations generally evaluated from the accession angle and the interaction between EU and Turkey were not particularly analysed in terms of three important factors such as interests, institutions, and information, but they rather focused on benefit cost calculations of the relationship. This is another thing the thesis realised was an issue in the literature. Frieden and Martin noted that:

The interests of economic and political actors are a driving force behind economic (and political) policy decisions. How interests are translated into outcomes depends on the strategic environment, especially institutions and information. Interests are aggregated through institutions, which also delegate responsibility for decision making to particular actors. The structure of the information similarly influences bargaining and policy choice.⁶⁷

In Turkey-EU relations all three of these factors are important as key domestic institutions in Turkey such as the army, the ruling parties in government, religious organisations and economic corporations affect the way the EU and the international information available about the EU is presented to Turkish people and vice versa. This thesis tries to avoid aforementioned way of studying Turkey-EU relations due to the fact that it believes that this relation is something more than membership negotiations.

After a careful evaluation, the thesis identified that the existing literature on Turkey-EU relations focuses on a series of relatively narrow, yet well-established debates that can be grouped under three different prominent schools of thoughts. These are:

⁶⁷ Jeffrey Frieden and Lisa Martin, 'International Political Economy: Global and Domestic Interactions.' In Ira Katznelson and Helen V Milner (ed.), *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003).pp.120-121

- 1- Studies against Turkey's entry into the EU: This group does not see Turkey as "European" in terms of religion, history, culture, society, with its huge population and underdeveloped democracy. This threatens to derail the EU and, therefore, Turkey should not be allowed in.⁶⁸ The EU will never accept Turkey as a full member as it is a "Christian club". Moreover, historically speaking, Europeans wanted to throw Turkey out of Europe. Another group of scholars - though from a different perspective - also argue that by enforcing new rules and regulations on Turkey, the EU, that has a secret agenda, aims to ethnically divide Turkey⁶⁹
- 2- Studies in favor of Turkey's entry into the EU: To them, Turkey can offer great benefits to the EU, including a secure energy supply and a young workforce. By allowing Turkey in, the EU will have a new and inclusive image. Turkey has also been part of European affairs for many centuries and a reliable partner of the West since World War II, and therefore, Turkey must be allowed in.⁷⁰
- 3- Studies that have a balanced view towards Turkey's entry into the EU: Here, there are both benefits and problems connected to the possible Turkish entry. They must both be appreciated equally. If Turkey can fulfill the criteria of membership, it will surely be allowed to join the EU. However, the EU must ensure that it approaches Turkey in the same way as it approached previous candidates. Close relationship between Turkey and EU will boost Turkey's international image and therefore allow it to economically prosper which in return is good for EU trade and energy security.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Karlsson, (citing from de Gaulle) *ibid.*, p.2 and Sedat Laçiner, 'Possible Impacts of Turkey's Full Membership to EU's Foreign Policy,' in Sedat Laçiner et al. (ed.), *European Union with Turkey: The Possible Impact of Turkey's Membership on the European Union*, (Ankara: ISRO publication, 2005), p.15.

⁶⁹ Yiannis Papanicolaou, 'Realities and Perspectives: A Greek view on Turkey's European ambitions', in Michael Lake (ed.), *The EU and Turkey: A Glittering Prize or a Millstone?*, (London: Federal Trust for Education and Research, 2005), p.157, Ali Resul Usul, 'Justice and Development Party and the European Union: from Euro-skepticism to Euro-enthusiasm and Euro-fatigue', in Ümit Cizre (ed.), *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey: the Making of the Justice and Development Party*, (New York: Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Politics, 2008), p. 181, and Gulhan Demirci, 'The Question of Turkey: Contested Forgotten and Remembered Memories', in Chrisje Brants et al. (ed.), *Transitional Justice: Images and Memories*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), pp. 15-33.

⁷⁰ William Chislett, 'Socio Economic Arguments for and Against Turkey's EU Membership,' in Christiane Timmerman et al. (ed.), *European and Turkish Voices in Favour and Against Turkish Accession to the European Union*, (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2008), p. 73 and Defne Gunay, 'EU Candidacy and Turkey's Foreign Policy Toward the Middle East,' in Belgin Akçay and Bahri Yilmaz (ed.), *Turkey's Accession to the European Union: Political and Economic Challenges*, (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2013), p. 270.

⁷¹ Karlsson, *ibid.*, pp.2-3.

Although these debates are well established and there is enough literature to support each one of them, when analyzing these work some noticeable issues have become clearer. These include: long established cultural prejudices, over emphasizing controversial subjects, involvement of sponsors with biased political agenda, influence of public figures and leaders, sole use of official documents or use of sources from one side and subordinating certain topics.

It is very clear that academia, journalists, popular public figures, leaders and policy makers dominate these discussions and that the arguments are skewed in a particular direction, serving as a tool in altering public opinion and constructing alternative perspectives. The current literature therefore has a major dosage of prejudice, as many works are produced solely for the purpose of fulfilling a prior, set agenda or producing profit for their companies (especially in the energy sector). As the relationship between Turkey and the EU is very delicate, often biased work plays an important part in representing this relationship.

However, it should be noted that there is also a major cluster of literature that is produced out of joint ventures of academics with more balanced views about the relationship between Turkey and the EU. Additionally, the work of some renowned academics, journalists and other interested parties that take inspiration from a variety of different resources produced both in Turkey and in Europe is also utilized by this thesis. The aforementioned three schools of thoughts will be explained in detail below.

School of thought against the Turkish entry to the EU

As Turkish entry into the EU generated a heated debate, most writers located themselves among one of the school of thought mentioned above. However, it is not difficult to identify that the majority of the work published align themselves with the cluster that is against Turkish accession into the EU. The supporters of this group, both in Turkey and in Europe, are against Turkey's entry for a number of different reasons that span social, political and economic concerns. In Europe, the first school of thought that accounts for the majority of the works available, is against Turkey's entry due to problems it perceives this relationship would create for the EU. The literature that falls into this category tends to consider the costs and benefits of accession, as well as possible Turkish migration into EU countries, lack of real democracy in Turkey, underdeveloped economy and Turkey's predominantly Muslim population. This is

because of the argument that there would be a flood of immigration from Turkey if it joined the EU, something which is accentuated by fact that more than five million ethnic Turks already living in Europe.⁷² In their conclusions, the costs of Turkish entry outweigh the benefits for the EU in general. This tendency also focuses on other well-established debates which centre on Turkey's human rights record, as well as the Cyprus issues and which generally sees Turkey as a Muslim country with an underdeveloped democracy that is not fit for the EU.

Focusing exclusively on these common subjects perhaps creates the illusion that there are no other subjects or ways to approach Turkey-EU relations. The supporters of this perspective tend to not realize the importance of other issues, such as energy concerns, as they state that Turkey should not be offered full membership in the EU due to a variety of different reasons mentioned above, but instead be offered a "privileged partnership". As one of the fiercest supporters of this school, Paul J. Welfens states:

Think neighbor instead of family. With the expected Turkish immigrants, by 2050 the share of the Turkish population in Germany will reach 10 % in the long run. If Turkey is admitted in to the EU this would undermine political and economic stability in Germany. Again, Turkish membership in the EU will be a plain invitation for all manifestations of radical fundamentalism to move towards the Bosphorus and from there to Western Europe.⁷³

This school sees Turkish entry into EU as an economic disaster for the EU 28, believing that Turkey could absorb about one-half of all agricultural funds and one-third of the structural funds under current rules. To them, bringing Turkey in line with EU standards is beyond the absorption capacity of the EU. They further claim that:

The country's economy is too far below European standards to integrate comfortably with other members.⁷⁴

Moreover, Turkey's geographical positioning is also a worry for this group, as they believe that Turkey is not "in Europe". The idea of Turkey not being European is promoted in different platforms. For example, another strong supporter of this school is Tom Spencer, a Turkey-sceptic, former Conservative politician and Member of the European Parliament for Surrey West, writes that:

⁷² Refik Erzan and Kemal Kiririsci, *Turkish Immigrants in the European Union: Determinants of Immigration and Integration*, (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp.1-9

⁷³ Paul J. Welfens, 'Just say no: regarding Turkey's bid for EU membership, think neighbour instead of family', *The International Economy*, Vo.18, No.4, 2004, pp.72-75.

⁷⁴ Damien McElroy, 'Angela Merkel win ends Turkey's EU hopes', *Telegraph*, September 29, 2009, <http://telegraph.co.uk>, retrieved Apr.10, 2010.

Turkey is not in Europe. The Treaty specifies that only European countries can be admitted. Therefore, it would be much better to end a generation of diplomatic dishonesty by giving the Turks a simple 'No' now and starting work on the creative task of how Turkey and Europe together can bring security to the regions which they jointly care about.⁷⁵

The literature that sees geography as important includes former Dutch EU Commissioner Fritz Bolkeshtein and former French President, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The latter is helping to shape the future EU Constitution and a known "Turkey-skeptic". He once argued that,

Turkey's capital is not in Europe. Ninety-five % of its population lives outside Europe, and it is not a European country. Admitting predominantly Muslim Turkey would mark the end of the European Union. People who backed Turkey's accession are the adversaries of the European Union.⁷⁶

Some European leaders who gave themselves specific roles to keep Turkey out of Europe include former French President Nicholas Sarkozy, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt⁷⁷ also contributed to the development of an anti-Turkish literature in Europe by stating that

Turkey has no place in Europe its place is in Asia and Turks are not European, they should only be offered a privileged membership not a full accession"⁷⁸

In fact leaders such as Sarkozy went so far with their anti-Turkish rhetoric⁷⁹ that they openly promoted a referendum on Turkish EU membership. These leaders were not convinced of Turkey's cultural, historical and political compatibility with Europe. As a result, much was written promoting the idea of a referendum on Turkey's accession in European countries. This aspect of the impact political leaders have on the literature reminds one of E. H. Carr's statement "individuals in history have roles; in some sense the role is more important than the individual."⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Tom Spencer, 'Good reasons for saying no to Turkey', Aug. 19, 2004, www.publicaffairs.ac retrieved May 2, 2010.

⁷⁶ BBC News, "Turkey entry would destroy EU" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2420697.stm> , retrieved May 21, 2010.

⁷⁷ Helmut Schmidt who was a known Turkey-sceptic is a German Social Democratic politician who served as Chancellor of West Germany from 1974 to 1982.

⁷⁸ Soner Çağaptay, "Sarkozy's Policy on Turkey's EU Accession: Bad for France?", *The Jewish Policy Center*, 1:3, Winter 2007, <http://thejewishpolicycenter.org>, retrieved Apr.11, 2010, Onur Bilge Kula, *Avrupa Kimliği ve Türkiye*, Buke Kitapları, İstanbul, 2006, p. 65 (cited from Helmut Schmidt "Turks are not European").

⁷⁹ Ridvan Karluk, *Avrupa Birliğine Evet mi Hayır mi?* (İstanbul: Beta, 2008), pp 169-173

⁸⁰ Edward H.Carr, *What is History*, (London: Palgrave Macmillian, 2nd Edition Reprinted 2001), p.lxviii (68)

In addition to the above, there is also an historical and religious aspect in the literature, whereby “the Turks” are identified as a quintessential “other” or “invader”, but certainly not “European”. These writers are preoccupied with culturally prejudiced claims that Turkey has been, historically speaking, “the enemy of Europe”, with the invasion of Cyprus only the most recent manifestation of this; moreover, its unfair treatment of Kurds is also mentioned, as is its democratic deficit and overwhelmingly Muslim population that possesses, according to this literature, unsophisticated social standards when compared to EU criteria. It is clear that the idea of linking the past with the present is most prevalent in countries that were once at war with the Ottomans, countries such as Austria, Hungary, Malta, Italy (especially the Vatican), Greece and Bulgaria. Many in these countries argue that Turkey’s EU membership would be an affront to the very cultural base upon which the EU has been constructed.⁸¹ This school of thought holds that Turks are not European due to the fact that, historically speaking, ever since the times of the Seljuk’s and the Ottomans, they have tried to invade “their” continent and expand Islam into Europe. They believe that due to this long lasting historical enmity the two sides are not compatible. The main problem with this literature is that it underestimates the importance of the Turks in the building process of “European identity”, as well as Turkish reforms imposed by late Ottoman Sultans and then the great reformer, founder of the modern westward looking Turkey (rather than one which looked towards the Islamic world), Mustafa Kemal. This literature also paid great attention to the lack of democratic progress in Turkey due to military’s heavy presence. As mentioned by Tekin, to the French for example;

the active role Turkish army plays in politics has been widely assessed as the primary reason for Turkey’s democratic deficiencies and weak human rights records. In the debates about Turkish entry to EU, Turkey is considered as having a highly fragile democracy; under constant pressure from its strong, politically active army.⁸²

Therefore they think the Turkish democracy is not complying with European standards. However they seem to not acknowledge the fact that the recent reform programmes imposed on Turkey by EU has minimised the influence of the army in civilian politics.

The literature presents Turkish entry into the EU as cause for concern owing largely to social and religious issues, is in fact, quite wrong in its portrayal of the identity of

⁸¹ Welfens, *ibid.*

⁸² Beyza C. Tekin, *Representation and Othering in Discourse: The Construction of Turkey in the EU Context*, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2010), p.122

Turkey as not “fitting in” the European cultural mould and the idea that Turks will eventually try to convert Europe to Islam. For example, as cited by Levin, under the shadow of historical memories, Fritz Bolkeshtein expressed his concerns that the admission of Turkey would lead to the “Islamization of Europe and thus that the deliverance of Vienna in 1683 will have been in vain.”⁸³

However, this literature forgets the fact that the majority of the people in Turkey also do not want Turkey to be radically Islamized. Therefore, Turkish and European seculars share the same concerns about radicalisation of Turkey. But rejection from Europe does not help the secular people in Turkey to broaden the support they receive. To compliment this point Huntington sarcastically writes in his well-known work “Class of Civilisations” that:

Having rejected Mecca, and then being rejected by Brussels, where does Turkey look? Tashkent may be the answer.⁸⁴

Some reputable scholars also intensify the debate about Turkey’s religious suitability for the full EU membership. For example a well-known and highly respected orientalist Bernard Lewis, who told the German newspaper *Die Welt* that “Europe will be Islamic by the end of the century”⁸⁵, observes in his *Emergence of Modern Turkey* that religious freedom in Turkey today may be still less than during Ottoman Empire.⁸⁶ While alarming Europe from a possible Islamisation, Lewis also warns that there is no religious freedom in Turkey. In a sense he contradicts with his long standing view regarding Modern Turkey.⁸⁷

Within the same cluster, it is also not difficult to identify works that are against Turkish entry due to the fact that they see Turkey as a ‘Trojan Horse’ for US interests in the EU.⁸⁸ Being part of US led NATO alliance system since 1950s is rather seen as an obstacle than a positive aspect for Turkey. Therefore, US support for Turkish policies over energy resources and political issues in the region does not add anything positive

⁸³ Paul T. Levin, *Turkey and the European Union: Christian and Secular images of Islam*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.5.

⁸⁴ Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 43.

⁸⁵ Philip Jenkins, *God’s Content: Christianity, Islam, and Europe’s Religious Crisis*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.4

⁸⁶ Bernard Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Third edition, 2002).

⁸⁷ Bernard Lewis is highly credited among Turkish academia for being objective about Turkey and its history. For example Lewis stood against the claims that Ottomans committed genocide against the Armenians. He responded his critics with evidence based arguments which still furies many westerners.

⁸⁸ Eric Faucompret and Jozef Konings, *Turkish Accession to the EU: Satisfying the Copenhagen Criteria*, (New York: Routledge, 2008), p.140

to Turkish hopes of becoming a member for this school of thought, as they look at the US aims regarding the EU with suspicion.

Moreover it is important to state that although this school is against Turkey's accession to the EU, they do not want to push it too far away so that it forms an alliance with the Islamic world. This school would clearly prefer to see Turkey as a modern democratic nation outside the EU. To them, if Turkey were to turn its face to the East and pursues an Islamic regime, it would create a security gap on Europe's eastern borders. Therefore, their primary concern is not the welfare of Turkey, but the security of Europe's southeast borders.

Although it occupies less space in the literature there is a good amount of work produced in Turkey that falls under this category of being against Turkey's entry to the Union. This group is against EU accession for similar reasons. To them, the EU will create problems rather than prosperity for Turkey since it is never really going to allow Turkey to become a full member.

According to this tendency in Turkey, where religion and history plays a great part, the EU is seen as a Christian Club who still has this ancient aim of kicking Turkey out of Europe. To them, the ultimate goal of EU is to split Turkey into sectarian and ethnically based units to make it weaker. Turkish accounts consider that this ambition was established among the ruling classes of European heads since medieval times.⁸⁹

The majority of religious writers also fall under this Eurosceptic category in Turkey as they think that Turkey should align itself with the Islamic world, rather than with Europe. They argue that 'Europe has been the enemy of the Muslims ever since the time of the Crusades and in fact recent developments in the Middle East, Iraq and Afghanistan show that this war continues'. To them, the aim of EU is to cut the historical link Turkey has with the Muslim world. They also see EU as a "Jewish Masonic organisation" that aims to destroy Islam and therefore Turkey.⁹⁰

This group also argues that the issues between Turkey and EU can be seen as historically inherited. They think that while prejudice plays a great role, the historical and psychological background clashes with the reality of EU-Turkey relations:

⁸⁹ Mustafa Soykut, *Papalık ve Venedik Belgelerinde Avrupa'nın Birliği ve Osmanlı Devleti*, (Istanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2007), Fevzi Samuk, *Atilla Sendromu: Batı Hıristiyanlığının Suur Otesi*, (Istanbul: Kubbealtı Nesriyatı, 2007), p.198 and Nevzat Yalcintas, *Avrupa Birliği ve Türkiye: Avrupa Topluluğu bir Hıristiyan Kulübü müdür?* (Istanbul: Nokta Kitap, 2006)

⁹⁰ Former Prime Minister Erbakan was the promoter of this view for many years. His followers still believe in the same idea. Zürcher, *Türkiye, A Modern History*, 3rd Edition, (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), p.299.

Anytime there is an opportunity the European leaders and intellectuals talk about internationalism and pluralism. However, when it comes to Turkey they start bringing up the identity and Christian foundations of Europe.⁹¹

Moreover, some of the writers in this school of thought in Turkey argue that the EU has a secret agenda when it pushes for more reforms in Turkey. According to them, the ultimate aim is the destruction of Turkey by enforcing non-compatible rules and regulations on the country. As one prominent Eurosceptic, Professor Erol Manisali,, a writer and journalist, writes:

People are put to sleep in Turkey while the EU is exercising its civil invasion through the Islamist fundamentalist government we currently have. They will be keeping Turkey in the waiting lounge perpetually to turn her into a new Yugoslavia.⁹²

Another argument within this cluster is that the EU has over expanded in a very short period of time. Therefore, it has not got the economic, political and social capacity to absorb yet another big country like Turkey. Ortayli, a prominent historian and a public figure in Turkey argues along the same line when he says:

[The] EU is portrayed badly in Turkey. People are made to think Turkey's problems will be over when it joins the union. That is not true. It is awkward to expect the EU to solve Turkey's internal and external problems. It has grown too much and too fast. It is not as strong as USA and Turkey will not be destroyed if we stay out of it. We need to think a lot before approaching this entity that cannot even guarantee its existence for another next twenty year.⁹³

Overall, we can say that in this school of thought there exist much difference between European and Turkish writers when it comes to skeptical views about Turkey's EU accession, opposing as seen in the case of Welfens and Manisali. They tend to only realize the negative impacts and bypass the positive effects this relationship might offer to both sides. On the one hand, European writers focus on immigration, economic disadvantages, religious exploitation of Western values, the large population of Turkey, and the crises on Turkish borders that the EU might be pulled into – as well as the possible US impact on EU policy that could be had via Turkey. On the other hand, Turkish Eurosceptics focus on the length of the negotiation process, the negative impact of EU regulations on the internal affairs of Turkey, EU bias against Turkey when

⁹¹ Davutoğlu , *ibid.*, p.547.

⁹² Manisali, *ibid.*, pp.3-14.

⁹³ Ilber Ortayli, *Türkiye'nin Geleceği Avrupa'ya Bağlanmamalı*, *Yeni Çağ*, Jun. 5, 2006 and interview of the author with Ortayli, London, Oct,23/24, 2009.

dealing with Cyprus and Armenia, and the EU's secret agenda to break Turkey from its Islamic roots.

These fears are expressed and exploited in different platforms via diverse methods (via conferences, TV debates and newspapers and nowadays via social media) by academics, think tanks, political parties and many other public figures including politicians and journalists – all serving to influence public opinion. But the biggest issue is that apart from reading and citing from each other's works (only some of it due to the language barrier), most of these writers have no direct communication with each other. Although it is becoming a common practice to co-author papers and present work in conferences, there is still miscommunication among scholars. Works published in English are mostly read in Turkey, but it is not possible to say the same for the opposite – European writers rarely read works published in Turkish. Therefore, one of the main catalysts in order to make a better judgement related to this relationship is the language barrier, as they cannot read each other to a greater extent. Hence it is clear that there are fears and hurt egos on both sides.

This school's major worries are based on financial and political concerns but when Turkish immigration, religion and Germany are mentioned together one cannot avoid thinking about common stereotyping problems in Europe, especially in Germany and France. They clearly miss the point that religious fundamentalist terrorism⁹⁴ hits Turkey more than any other European country and, having accepted secularism since 1923, for many years, Turkey sends its troops across the world to deal with this issue. Thus, it becomes a target of extremists since it allies itself with the Western countries when combatting international terrorism as seen in the case of recent terror attack in Suruc and again Istanbul terror campaigns in 2003. In a sense Western literature is not clearly aware of the fact that the more extremism hits Turkey, naturally, the closer it gets to the West. Although they recognize the aging and declining population of Europe, the possible contributions of a young Turkish population seems to be ignored.

While only focusing on the negative effects of Turkish EU entry, one of the most important worries of the EU today is energy security, though Turkey's possible contribution in this regards do not occupy much space in this literature. This is certainly

⁹⁴ Here fundamentalist stands for a person or a group who favours strict observation of the chosen religious teachings among everyone. In Turkey's case the so called Islamists (as this thesis do not believe they represent true Islam) target Turkey since they classify the country as enemy of Islam due to the fact that Turkey is secular and allies itself with Western countries and institutions such as NATO.

an issue which is identified here as a weakness in the overall literature on EU-Turkey relation.

School of thought in favour of Turkish entry to the EU

Although it occupies less space in the literature, the second school of thought in Europe is in favour of Turkish entry to the Union due to the prospects of this bringing benefits to the EU. This school considers Turkey's culture, geopolitical status as well as its growing young population as an asset to the EU. This school also sees the impact of EU on Turkey's domestic political and economic evolution positively and vice versa. To them Turkey-EU relations help Turkey become politically more democratic and economically more prosperous.

Official documents of the EU also make up a good bulk of the literature on this subject. These documents represent the EU's stance on the issue. Since 1999, EU papers have painted a constructive and supportive picture of Turkey's membership bid. In line with the EU's positive approach to Turkey since 1999 – and especially after 2004 – some of the main European leaders, as well as US presidents, have also made statements that influenced some of the literature on Turkey-EU relations. For example, in his welcome note to the first edition of the *Turkey in Europe* magazine former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair argued that,

Over the past decade, I have been proud to champion the case for Turkey's membership of the European Union because I passionately believe that it is in the economic and strategic interests of both Turkey and the EU.⁹⁵

President Obama also openly supports Turkish entry into the EU, frequently referencing the mutual benefits for the parties involved and also for the wider world:

The United States and Europe must approach Muslims as our friends, neighbors and partners in fighting injustice, intolerance and violence, forging a relationship based on mutual respect and mutual interest. Moving forward towards Turkish membership in the EU would be an important signal of your commitment to this agenda and ensure that we continue to anchor Turkey firmly in Europe.⁹⁶

They think, especially after accepting all other Eastern European countries EU needs to be fair on Turkey and issues like Cyprus must not be seen as an obstacle. In this sense

⁹⁵ Tony Blair, "A message from Tony Blair," *Turkey in Europe*, 1:3, 2009, p.3.

⁹⁶ Barack Obama, "A message from Barack Obama," *Turkey in Europe*, 1:3, 2009, p.2.

literature in Turkey and in Europe agree that otherwise this would send a wrong message across the Islamic world. As Stone who also criticises EU's visa regime against Turkey writes:

The real problem has been the absurd EU visa regime, in which professional-class Turks are humiliated, filling in huge forms for a three-day visit, as if they were drug smugglers. Turkey is a large and growing market, the only preponderantly young population in Europe, many of them well trained. The effort to match conditions for joining Europe has also been beneficial in prising open sleepy monopolies and making the country more open to foreign investment. Prosperity has obviously been increasing. But with the ever-closer union Europe that we now have, the Turks are simply opening themselves to ridiculous rebuff, being told that they have to wait because of some pimple like Greek Cyprus.⁹⁷

Within this school it is also argued that Turkey will create a bridge between the East and the West, particularly in relation to energy issues. Especially after the Russia-Ukraine crisis over gas prices, EU policy makers and some academics have pushed intensely for the development of alternative European energy supply routes.⁹⁸ In their quest for a safer fourth artery for the energy hungry EU, Turkey has emerged as the safest and the most reliable option. This school also promotes a closer partnership between Turkish and European energy policies. It sees Turkey-EU rapprochement as a good indication for Turkey to confidently undertake major energy projects. As a result, a good bulk of literature has developed around this particular topic.

The rhetoric of the European leaders fuelled the amount of work published about this topic, and developed into supportive statements for a quest for alternative routes. Indeed, the former leader of the European Commission José Durão Manuel Barroso said, "We must not sleepwalk into Europe's energy-dependence crisis. The EU wants different sources of supply."⁹⁹

The EU's official documents that also make up a good bulk of the work in this school imply that Turkey is critically important to safeguarding its future energy security. For example, the Green Paper of the European Commission on the strategy for the security of energy supply published in 2000 clearly stated the importance of diversification of energy supply routes and hinted at Turkey playing a part:

⁹⁷ Norman Stone, "Should Turkey Join the EU? Should the UK have a referendum on leaving it?", *The Independent*, Dec.28, 2012.

⁹⁸ Nathalie Tocci, *Turkey's European Future: Behind the Scenes of America's Influence on EU-Turkey Relations*, (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011) pp.166.167

⁹⁹ Ian Traynor, EU Unveils energy plans to reduce dependence on Russia, *Guardian*. Nov.13, 2008.

Security of supply aims to reduce the risks linked to such dependence. Among the objectives to be pursued are those balancing between and diversifying of the various sources of supply (by product and by geographical region).¹⁰⁰

Within this school of thought there are also Turkish writers and they account for the majority of the works available on this topic. This school perceives that Turkish entry would be mutually beneficial for both Turkey and the EU. In this category, Turkish literature sees EU entry as part of a long term modernisation process. While paying less attention to the social and cultural aspects, this tendency focuses more on the economic, political, scientific and technological aspects of the relationship.

Again, the tendency that falls under this category includes the work of Laçiner, Bal and Karlsson who all see EU-Turkey relations as related to modernisation and identity building processes. According to this group, the EU will transform Turkey into a modern westernized nation once it fulfils all the requirements of the EU. For this group, which embraces constructivist ontology issues such as democracy, an established justice system, no presence of the army in politics, secularism and human rights all come in to play. They also argue that if Turkey is accepted as a candidate it will have a positive impact over the region and among other Muslim majority states:

Turkey's accession process into the EU will not only ameliorate the political stability and prosperity in Turkey, but with a domino effect, it will also actuate the conditions providing political stability in this most unstable region of the world. Consequently, a strong tendency towards democracy will emerge in the region's totalitarian regimes.¹⁰¹

In addition to his, they also think that if Turkey joined the EU, this would create a positive environment for a better dialogue between EU and Turkey's neighbouring regions, as former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi once argued:

This resistance has arisen from the fact that not everyone understands that Turkey's crucial role is not just to make the EU as competitive as other major areas of the planet, but also to ensure a dialogue with the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia and thus counteract any possible fundamentalist influence.¹⁰²

This school disagrees with Turkey-skeptics' arguments centred on geography, or the idea that Turkey is not really "in Europe". They argue that,

¹⁰⁰ Green Paper, *ibid.*, p.2.

¹⁰¹ Laçiner, Ozcan and Bal, *ibid.*, p.131.

¹⁰² Silvio Berlusconi, "There is a seat for Turkey at the EU table", *Turkey in Europe*, 2:4, 2009, pp.10-11.

It is often said that Turkey has been in Europe but that it is not of Europe, but is there a European history without Turkey? There are more Greek ruins in Turkey than in Greece. Herodotus, the father of history, was born in today's Turkey as well as Strabo, the first geographer. It was in Antakya that the followers of Jesus first called themselves Christians; Saint Paul was born in Tarsus and made his first travels to spread the new faith in Anatolia.¹⁰³

To them, the EU is a way forward for Turkey and therefore Eurosceptic Turks should stop seeing either whole or some parts of Europe as a threat to Turkey's unity as "Turkey applied to the EU by its own conscience."¹⁰⁴

School of thought balanced in its views about the Turkish entry to the EU

This school of thought takes a more balanced view towards a possible Turkish membership of the EU and the impact of this relation on Turkish domestic politics as it evaluates the positive and negative aspects fairly. Although it occupies less space in the overall literature, in these studies debates and arguments from both sides are represented equally. This group may be said to be generally more useful to academics than the other two schools. This school considers the benefits and problems of social, political and economic aspects equally. The majority of the work that falls under this category belongs to the joint ventures of academics. For instance Ruben and Çarkoğlu's work¹⁰⁵ fall in to this category where sources from both EU and Turkey are effectively used in an objective manner. While appreciating the benefits and problems of membership, this school sees the Turkey-EU relationship as a great challenge for not only politicians, but also academics.

Turkey's possible accession to the EU generates debates among politicians, policy makers and academicians because the issue of Turkish membership carries significant challenges for EU policy making as well as theories of integration.¹⁰⁶

Like the other previous two, this school also uses official documents of the EU and Turkish institutions. But rather than encapsulating formal stance of EU or Turkey towards each other, this school tends to bring forth a balanced perspective by taking views from both sides into consideration.

¹⁰³ Karlsson *ibid.*, pp.3-4

¹⁰⁴ Davutoğlu, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin, *Turkey and the European Union: domestic politics, economic integration and international dynamics*, (London: Frank Cass, 2003)

¹⁰⁶ Meltem Müftüleri-Baç and Yannis Stivachitis, *Turkey-European Union Relations: Dilemmas, Opportunities, and Constraints*, (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2008), p.1-2.

According to this school, the Turkey-EU relationship has mutual effects on both sides and needs to be developed according to the global needs. The opinion of this school is more objective and more academic in their assumptions as they look at the long term impact of this relationship on regional and global issues such as, energy security, peace and social, economic and political stability. They argue that,

Joint Turkey-EU actions and the contributions that Turkey and the EU could make to one another on a wide scale ranging from economics to politics, culture and foreign policy are very significant not only for the two sides, but also for regional and global peace and stability.¹⁰⁷

The mutual benefits for both sides are expressed by this school in the different social, economic and political spheres:

While accepting Turkey as a full member of the EU would demonstrate that the process of European integration and its enlargement operates on the basis of universal norms rather than religion or geography, the project of Europeanization in Turkey makes a significant contribution to the process of democratic consolidation and societal modernisation. With its secular modernity and the Muslim cultural traditions of the majority of its population, Turkey can contribute to the reshaping of the political identity of Europe as a multicultural space governed by the universal norms of democracy and a modern socially-caring market economy. With the strengthening of such a political identity, Europe will for its part, help reshape international relations in the direction of more democratic world governance.¹⁰⁸

Security aspects of relations are also covered by this cluster, as it considers the relationship to have a positive impact on both parties, as well as the greater Middle Eastern region, including the Caucasus. To them, an EU which includes Turkey could challenge the dominance of Russia and Iran in the region by having the historical and cultural links with the region (via ethnically Turkic people living in Caucasus, Central Asia and Iran) that Turkey brings in to the Union. Indeed some scholars have argued that one crucial outcome of Turkey's membership in the EU would be the guarantee of stability in the Greater Middle East.¹⁰⁹

Moreover the recent nuclear deal signed with Iran will open up a new era in terms of regional and global security as well as economic and political cooperation. Turkey would directly benefit from an increased trade with Iran as it is a natural bridge between

¹⁰⁷ E.Fuat Keyman and Senem A.Duzgit, 'Transforming Turkey-EU relations: Ground for Hope,' in E.Fuat Keyman et al., (ed.), *Global Turkey in Europe: Political, Economic and Foreign Policy Dimensions of Turkey's Evolving Relationship with the EU*, IAI Research Papers, May 2013, p.280.

¹⁰⁸ Kemal Dervis et al., *The European Transformation of Modern Turkey*, (Brussels: Center for European Policy Studies, 2004), p.25.

¹⁰⁹ Birol Yesilada, *EU-Turkey Relations in the 21st Century*, (New York: Routledge, 2013), p.119.

the West and Iran, especially concerning the transportation of natural gas. This is the main reason why Erdogan was trying his outmost to establish peace between the West and Iran. Iran on the other hand would benefit from a stable, more democratic and a richer Turkey as a trade partner and a reliable neighbour. In simple terms EU membership for Turkey would improve the whole Eurasia's prosperity further.

While mentioning the benefits of the relationship, problems are also identified within this cluster. Although Turkey is located in strategic location in the sense that it can aid the EU's energy security problems, it must also be noted that Turkish membership brings burdens with it. As Constantinos Koliopoulos, an expert in international politics and strategic studies writes that:

The claim that the EU needs Turkey to become a global actor is groundless. The EU is already a Goliath: It has a population of 485 million and constitutes the world's biggest single economic unit. However a highly important feature of Turkey's possible EU membership is that the EU will find itself bordering with the Middle East and Transcaucasia, plus acquiring increased stakes in Central Asia.¹¹⁰

However, even within this tendency there are some gaps in knowledge, due to the fact that sources from different languages, including Turkish, are not always deployed effectively. Therefore, conclusions are overwhelmingly affected by the materials employed during the research process. Realizing the importance of this, this thesis tries to use both Turkish and European sources equally.

Where does this thesis locate itself?

While most authors locate themselves clearly on one of the sides mentioned above, a more critical literature takes a guarded view that is somewhere in between all three. As Ranke has noted in his *On the Epochs of Modern History* "the truth lies possibly in the middle."¹¹¹ Therefore, although this thesis feels more affinity to the last school of thought, it also pays attention to the elements of other schools, too.

The debate on Turkish accession to the EU needs to be understood in light of a number of important local, national and regional policies, including energy, militaries

¹¹⁰ Constantinos Koliopoulos, The Strategic Implications of Turkey's EU Membership, in *Müftüler-Baç and Stivachitis (ed.), ibid.*, pp.102-103.

¹¹¹ Cited by Andreas Boldt, The Role of Ireland in the life of Leopold Von Ranke (1795-1886): The Historian and Historical Truth. (Lampeter, The Edwin Mellen Press, 2007). The original work was also mentioned by Andreas Boldt, Leopold von Ranke, Aus Werk und Nachlaß – Über die Epochen der Neueren Geschichte. vol.2. (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1971).

position, transformation of political thinking in Turkey and constitutional reforms. And all these policies must be evaluated within historical context. However, it is not easy to find detailed research that focuses specifically on these three areas as they are outside the scope of the well-established topics mentioned previously. Therefore, this is something that the thesis identified as the weakness or “gap” in the literature which needs to be addressed. It should be noted that although there are some weaknesses with the last school in terms of the aspects that makes up the back bone of this research, the thesis found more materials supporting its evaluations during the course of research and fieldwork within this cluster than the other two.

One of the most important benefits of this cluster for the thesis is that as well as using literature produced in Turkey and in Europe, they also gave reasoned and well-balanced arguments throughout to explain the key issues concerning Turkey-EU relations. Therefore, even though some issues are not fully addressed by this school, this research can nonetheless be located within this category, which tries to pay equal attention to studies done both in the West and in Turkey and uses literature written in different languages, including Turkish.

The main reason why this research identifies itself within this category is that this school is balanced in its views, avoids prejudices, is independently produced via use of materials from different sources, evaluates the benefits and problems of the relationship equally, and is not guided by any foreign policy goals dictated by particular institutions.

Since the focus of the thesis is the impact of the EU on Turkey’s domestic issues such as the military’s involvement in politics, energy policies and the identity changes in religious political parties, a wide range of areas had to be covered during the research process. Therefore, while conducting the research both positive and negative impacts had to be evaluated without any preconceptions. Sometimes authors had to be loyal to their institutions’ official stance towards Turkey-EU relations-as seen during the review process-, something which makes the outcome thorny. While producing this thesis there was no conflict of interest for the author to influence the objective of the thesis. The research did not have any pre-set agenda or prejudice towards either side.

While paying equal attention to both sides of the arguments, the relationship between Turkey and the EU is not only examined in terms of the accession issue. Cultural and historical matters are taken into account, too. That is something that the third school also tries to do to a certain degree. Therefore, the intentions of this school match with the main objective of this thesis which is to be balanced and impartial.

Prior to this thesis, the topics covered in this research have not been studied comprehensively and objectively. As a result, this thesis tries to fill the gap in the literature by being unique and original.

Theoretical Framework

Although theories can account for unstable identities, in terms of rapid changes in their nature, it is very hard to approach Turkey-EU relations with a precise theory due to the unpredictable nature of their relationship. Both the EU and Turkey behave differently under different leaders, different governments and in different historical periods. Therefore, the identities of both are unstable. This thesis believes that this relationship is a strategic instrument for both Turkey and the EU to achieve different goals and it is, in fact, a co-constituted relationship where two institutional cultures exist in a complex semi-autonomous relationship relative to one another. Therefore it was necessary for this study, which relies on empirical research, to use a multi-disciplined approach to come to its conclusions.

Due to its unique location, history, ethnic, religious and cultural links with broad areas and people and as well as its desire to become part of the Western world, Turkey is undeniably a key state in its region. As a result of this geostrategic importance, external actors including the EU and US, regional actors such as Iran and Russia, as well as financial and security agencies like the IMF, WB and NATO have always played major impact on Turkish domestic and foreign policy choices.

Thomas Risse-Kappen has analysed domestic structures to understand policy making in different states and in this context also discussed the possible impact of international actors on domestic politics which he called the ‘transnational coalitions’.¹¹² Moreover, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier developed a rationalist bargaining model called ‘the external incentive model’ which follows logic of consequences and is driven by the external rewards and sanctions that the EU adds to the cost-benefit calculations of the rule-adopting state.¹¹³ Both the ‘transnational coalitions’ and the ‘external incentive

¹¹² Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), Thomas Risse-Kappen, ‘Ideas do not float freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures and End of the Cold War,’ *International Organisation*, Vol.48, No.2 (Spring 1994), pp.185-214; Thomas Risse-Kappen, ‘Public Opinion, Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies,’ *World Politics*, Vol.43, No.4 (Jul.1991), pp.479-512.

¹¹³ Frank Schimmelfennig, and Ulrich Sedelmeier, *The Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe*, (New York: Cornell University Press 2005).

model' certainly account for the selective and overall moderate degree of Europeanization process in Turkey especially during the last three decades. Therefore this thesis will make use of the approaches adopted by Risse-Kappen and Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier and others to explain whether external actors, most importantly EU, had the desired impact on transformation of Turkey's domestic political dynamics.

According to former USA National security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski Turkey - and Iran- are influential geostrategic players in their sensitive location and they have the capacity and the national will to exercise power or influence beyond their borders in order to alter the existing geopolitical state of affairs. But he notes that domestic problems prevent Turkey from becoming an active regional power. To him if Turkey resolves its internal concerns and develop its capacities then it could become a geostrategic player in its region.¹¹⁴ Turkish political authorities also identified this issue especially after 1980s with Özal and pushed for more liberalisation and further democratisation. However settings of the internal dynamics in Turkey did not allow domestic civilian politics alone to overcome the challenges they faced. They realised the need of external assistance. This thesis argues that after WWII, being a reliable ally of the West, especially during the Cold War, allowed Turkey to use the international actors mentioned above as a tool to improve its domestic economic, political and social standards.

For example, the USA, as long as they do not abandon their pro-Western stance, is always keen to support any Turkish government in Ankara because of Turkey's unique geopolitical position, its membership of NATO, its strong ties with the Muslim world and the Central Asian Turkic republics.¹¹⁵ For instance Turkey successfully utilised strong US support especially during the debates related to the Caspian Energy pipeline routes. It is very well known that the BTC was built thanks to the USA and EU support. Again US's assistance was critical in order for Turkey to become a candidate country for the EU. Similar claim can be made for the EU as it has a substantial impact on the candidate countries' internal and external relations too. As Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier noted,

¹¹⁴ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, (New York: Basic Books, 1997).

¹¹⁵ Gareth Winrow, 'Pivotal State or Energy Supplicant? Domestic Structure, External Actors, and Turkish Policy in the Caucasus,' *The Middle East journal*, Vol.57, No.1, (Middle East Institute, winter 2003), pp.76-92.

the desire of Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) to join the EU (in our case Turkey), combined with the high volume and intrusiveness of the rules attached to its membership, have allowed the EU an unprecedented influence on the restructuring of domestic institutions and the entire range of public policies in these countries.¹¹⁶

Turkey, which is a unique case compared to other candidate states, has effectively used the EU candidacy as a tool to improve its domestic political and economic standards. However domestic changes in Turkey have been selective, depending on the ideological aspiration of the government at the time.¹¹⁷ For example during the last decade EU conditionality which Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier explains as ‘a bargaining strategy of reinforcement by reward, under which the EU provides external incentives for a target government to comply with its conditions,’¹¹⁸ have been used as a tool to minimize the military’s role in politics, extend Turkey’s role in international energy games and soften the secularist stand against the religious political parties. As noted by Noutcheva and Düzgit:

Turkish policy-makers introduce domestic reforms that conform to EU demands, but are driven by their own political agenda as in case of the constitutional reforms in 2010.¹¹⁹

EU and other external actors provide democratic assistance to domestic actors in Turkey in order to promote democratisation as well. Certain aspects of EU policy were aimed at directly promoting democracy and human rights, such as the PHARE Democracy Programme.¹²⁰

Transnational actors and various states do this by providing support to the institutions or individuals who favour democratisation, and by weakening the power of the regime that might be opposing democratisation.¹²¹ In Turkey’s case Erdogan’s JDP, who openly declared that it will turn Turkey’s face to West and continue with the

¹¹⁶ Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, ‘Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe,’ *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.11, NO.4, (Aug. 2004) 669-687.

¹¹⁷ Tanja A. Börzel and Digidem Soyaltin, *Europeanization in Turkey: Stretching a Concept to Its Limits?*, KFG Working Paper Series, No.36, (Berlin: Feb. 2012).

¹¹⁸ Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, *ibid*, p.670.

¹¹⁹ Gergana Noutcheva, and Senem Aydın, Düzgit, ‘Lost in Europeanization? The Western Balkans and Turkey,’ *West European Politics*, Vol.35, No.1, 2012, pp.59-78.

¹²⁰ John O’ Brennan, *The Eastern Enlargement of the European Union*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p.164

¹²¹ Michael Randle, *people Power: The Building of a New European Home*, (Stroud: Hawthorn, 1991), Cited by Fidel Aksoy, ‘Significance of External Factors in the Democratization Process: Case of Turkey, the European Union, and the Kurdish Problem,’ PhD Thesis submitted to Department of Political and Social Sciences of Freie Universität Berlin, 2012, p.26

harmonisation programs, was heavily supported and openly promoted at the same time by the EU officials and the heads of states in key European countries like the UK even before he became the Prime Minister.

In order to promote democracy the EU not only requires institutional conditionality but also sets up a series of assistance programs aimed to facilitate transition and condition periods of the potential members.¹²² According to Tanja Borzel and Thomas Risse democracy promotion has become a centrepiece of the EU's foreign policy and it is backed up by considerable financial resources.¹²³

Again the support from the international financial and collective security agencies such as the IMF, WB and NATO were also critically important for the Turkish economic and political developments. For example, in Turkey after a devastating financial crisis in 2001 the JDP was elected. The newly elected government pushed ahead with economic reforms in close collaboration with the IMF and became very successful in the long run. Most economists link the strength of the Turkish macro-economic stability of the last decade to the strict IMF backed reforms imposed after 2001 crisis.¹²⁴ Additionally, taking part in NATO led operations such as Kosovo and Afghanistan, on a regular basis, improved Turkey's international image as reliable ally of the Western powers.¹²⁵

According to Risse-Kappan there are four domestic structures; state controlled, state dominated, stalemate and society dominated.¹²⁶ Arguably, in the case of Turkey, what has been a state dominated domestic structure appears to be exhibiting features more in line with that of society-dominated one, in which the influential social organisations such as powerful business lobbies have emerged (Like TUSIAD). In part, this would appear to be the product of the liberalisation of the Turkish economy, which commenced in the 1980s.¹²⁷ In this context the impact of secular and western minded business lobbies supported by the western governments including the US and the EU

¹²² Aksoy, *ibid*, p.26.

¹²³ Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse, *One Size Fits All! EU Policies for the Promotion of Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law*, in: paper presented for the Workshop on Democracy Promotion organized by the Center for Development, Democracy, and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, Oct. 2004.

¹²⁴ Burcu Aydin and Deniz Igan, *Bank Lending in Turkey: Effects of Monetary and Fiscal Policies*, IMF Working Paper, WP/10/233, Oct. 2010.

¹²⁵ Bill Park, 'Turkey's New (De) Security Policy: Axis Shift, Gaullism, or Learning Process?,' In Andrew Dorman and Joyce Kaufman (ed.), *Providing for National Security: A Comparative Analysis*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), p.263.

¹²⁶ Risse-Kappen, *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In*, pp.23-25.

¹²⁷ Winrow, p.86.

countries in Turkey are critically important. For example during the BTC negotiations important international energy companies were able to access the Turkish political system and strive to build winning-coalitions by cultivating this with government officials and local businesses.¹²⁸ Again during the EU candidacy negotiations, media organisations and big businesses significantly influenced the Turkish public opinion by forming the coalitions mentioned above.

Even though external actors have been critically important in Turkish domestic evolution, their role on the improvement of political system and spread of economic prosperity for the wider society in Turkey only become significant after the Cold War as prior to that, due to the organization of the Turkish domestic structure, mostly the military and the secularist political elite were the beneficiaries of the continuous Western support. After 1990s, with the substantial changes in Turkish domestic political structures, EU reforms were implemented more thoroughly and reached wider ends of the social spectrum. This has enabled a majority of people in Turkey to enjoy the benefits of a Westernised political and economic system. Therefore, the EU conditionality has, undeniably, been a driving force behind recent reform waves in Turkey, referred to as the “silent revolution” by the former president Abdullah Gul.¹²⁹ Decision on Turkey’s candidacy in 1999 Helsinki Summit has been a turning point for Turkey’s reform process, exemplifies the role of international institutions, particularly the EU, as a catalyst for domestic political changes.¹³⁰

While Risse-Kappen and Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier’s above mentioned approaches made up the backbone of this research Ranke’s empirical view of history, which widely relies on primary resources¹³¹ (although heavily criticized by Carr¹³²) and focuses on ‘what actually happened’¹³³ has also influenced this thesis. After evaluating prior studies and approaches, this study, which also uses history as an analytic tool to explain Turkey-EU relations, argues that to find the main reasons why this relationship is unstable, one need to look back to the historical interactions that took place between the two powers over the course of a thousand years. The majority of the literature has

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Heather Grabbe, ‘European Union Conditionality and Acquis Communautaire’, *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 23, No.3, 2002, pp.249-268. Cited by Fidel Aksoy, *ibid.*, p.23.

¹³⁰ Paul Kubicek, *The European Union and Democratization*, (London: Routledge, 2003).

¹³¹ Angelika Epple, ‘Questioning the Canon: Popular Historiography by Women in Britain and in Germany (1750-1850) in Sylvia Paletschek (ed.), *Popular Historiographies In The 19th And 20th Centuries: Cultural Meanings*, (USA: Berghahn Books, 2011), p.24.

¹³² Carr, *ibid.*, pp.8-13.

¹³³ Stern, *ibid.*, p.57.

assigned history, as Ranke said, “to the office of judging the past, of instructing the present for the benefit of future.”¹³⁴ In this respect this thesis also holds that without understanding past relations between the two sides, it is impossible to understand how the current state of the relationship has come to be the way it is today as ‘history is sometimes defined as the working memory of society or the collective memory’.¹³⁵

As well as the approaches mentioned above, this thesis also believes in the idea that “rules form institutions and institutions form societies.”¹³⁶ Therefore, the institutionalist approach was also used to support and find answers to the hypothesis outlined above.

It can be argued that by reforming its fundamental institutions with the help of external Actors, most importantly EU, such as the judiciary and the military to meet the Copenhagen Criteria, Turkey will offer its citizens a better standard of living. People value the rule of law and enjoy the freedom it gives to them. This brings them closer to the norms the EU are trying to impose. This, in turn, takes Turkey closer to the EU itself. Here the formal institutions such as the EC, the EP and the ruling JDP in Turkey play a large role. Good examples of the role of institutions in building new identities are the mutual student-exchange programs, such as the Erasmus Programme initiated by the European Commission.¹³⁷

Additionally cooperation among the institutions will also help form new identities and norms on both sides. For example creation of consortium among big energy companies including the Turkish companies enhance international trade norms and standards as seen in the case of BTC. In support of the assumptions mentioned, Peters quotes from March and Olsen that:

¹³⁴ Fritz Stern, *The Varieties of History from Voltaire to the Present*, (New York: Vintage Publishers, 1973), p.57.

¹³⁵ Geoffrey Cubit, *History and Memory*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p.39

¹³⁶ Nicholas Onuf, ‘Constructivism: A user manual,’ in Vendulka Kubálková, et al., (ed.), *International Relations in a Constructed World*, (Armonk NY: M. E. Sharpe 1998). p. 12.

¹³⁷ The Erasmus Programme is considered as the most successful student-exchange program in the world and undeniably has played a positive role in Turkey-EU relations as more than two million European students (including Turkish students) were allowed to participate in this exchange scheme. The program offers students from thirty-three countries cultural and academic experiences while living in another European country. A Turkish and a German Erasmus Programme student were informally interviewed during the research to gauge the social impact of the program. From the interviews, it became evident that both students changed their perceptions about the country and its people after visiting and living there during the course of the programme. This has shown the impact of the “fear of unknown” in Turkey-EU relations; if more people travel to one another’s countries, they will likely lose the fear of the ‘other’.
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/erasmus_en.htm, retrieved April 23, 2013 and Turkey: New flagship of EU’s Erasmus Programme,
http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=199033, retrieved Apr.28, 2013.

As human beings, by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in, and the people functioning within certain institutions behave as they do because of normative standards rather than because of their desire to maximize individual utilities. These standards of behavior are acquired through involvement with one or more institutions and the institutions are the major social repositories of values.¹³⁸

As mentioned above Turkey is actually a unique case in EU candidacy debate with its religion, history culture and external relations. It was member of NATO since 1952 and the only country who became part of the EU Customs Union before it became member of the Union. Again it's the only predominantly Muslim country among the previous candidates. Therefore it needs to be separated from other candidate countries and evaluated on its own merits.

Nevertheless, external agencies, in this case the EU, are critically important in the positive developments that took place in Turkish domestic and international affairs. Therefore it can be argued that the EU candidacy, in the broader context, worked in Turkey's favour in terms of rising as a regional power.

Research Methods

Most intellectual engagements with the Turkey-EU relationship are written from an outsider (non-Turkish) vs. insider (Turkish/regional) perspective and that this positioning inherently affects the nature of the narrative, particularly whether Turkey is characteristically perceived as 'weak/dependent' on outside actors vs. 'strong/rising actor' able to manipulate external actors. Therefore doing research on this, necessarily involves paying careful attention to how different authors position themselves (insiders/outside) and how that affects their narrative. This thesis is balanced in its views as it is not swayed towards one of the perspectives mentioned above. That only became possible by doing a multi-disciplined and through research by employing numerous research methods. Selection of texts, interviews, places to do research was largely motivated by providing as wide a spectrum as possible, while at the same time engaging key intellectual voices.

¹³⁸ J.G. March & J.P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions*, (New York: Free Press, 1989), cited by Guy Peters, in *Institutional Theory: Problems and Prospects*, Political Science Series, No. 69, (Vienna: Institute for Advanced Studies, 2000), p. 2.

This study, which focuses on empirical research due to the very fragile and changeable nature of the relations, combines qualitative and quantitative methods, focusing in particular on primary sources, library-based research, field work, case studies, media analysis, discourse analysis, interviews, surveys and statistical analysis. Historical and political research also makes up the backbone of this research. National archives and the archives of national assemblies of relevant countries were consulted widely during the writing of this thesis. The British Library, the Directorate-General Energy and Transport research facilities, official documents of the European Parliament and the EU Digital Library were also extensively used.

First, library-based research was conducted to understand the extent of literature available and also to understand the study in depth. Once the direction of study was identified, different groups of people were interviewed. After this, suitable locations were decided on and the field work stage begun. During field trips some interviews were also conducted and observations of people made.

The research first focused on library-based historical evaluations of relations between Turks and Europeans to understand the impact of history on current affairs. After the 1960s, European decision makers who wanted to keep Turkey out, empowered by public discourse, historical texts and many symbols spread across the Europe of once-threatening-Ottomans, deployed rhetoric that relied on several ideas from Turkey's level of democracy, influence of the military on the civilian politics, underdeveloped economy, large population, to religion and human rights issues. However, after a comprehensive evaluation, this study argues that current policy makers are also heavily influenced by the lengthy, and mostly negative, history of interaction between Turkey and Europe.

A close analysis of the media has clearly shown that the rhetoric of political elites, journalists and public figures has an immense impact on the people's views towards Turkey-EU relations in both sides. The mass media acts like a modern propaganda machine as it helps those in power to reach millions of people on a regular basis. Politicians then shape the way they want to construct people's conceptions about the material world we live in today, using the reach of the mass media and modern technologies. The thesis wanted to figure out the impact of media on Turkey-EU relations as well.

To explore further the rhetoric of the media, this study evaluated the material published in Turkish and in the English language across Europe on a regular basis. The

research looked especially at the speeches and texts of the French, German, British and Turkish leaders, policy makers, and journalists, as well as those of highly influential people in academia to understand the impact of the rhetoric they use.

The findings were very clear that in the minds of many Europeans, Turkey moved from an exotic, threatening 'other' to a populous, underdeveloped Muslim country that needed to be developed, but also be kept away from 'Europe'. But it is still considered as an 'other'. As a result, the EU supports the development of democracy, rule of law and economy in Turkey but not full integration. On the other hand Turkish people, while admiring the EU's outlook, look at the EU with great suspicion, believing that Europe has a historic agenda that will never accept Turkey being a better and stronger country.

In addition to historical research the study also heavily relied on the media analysis as mass media had a great impact, on a daily basis, on the opinion of the people. The majority of English and Turkish speaking media were analysed during the research process on a daily basis;¹³⁹ this covered newspapers, news channels, online magazines and periodicals.

To complement the findings of other methods used in the study field trips were organized to various parts of Europe and Turkey during the course of the research to observe public opinion trends regarding Turkey EU relations. The original field research was mainly focusing on grasping how Turkey is seen or perceived both internally and externally. Additionally Field research was trying to compliment what was the agenda behind Turkey's new energy politics. And through field research the thesis was trying to figure out how that perception has changed through time and the extent to which Turkey's 'foreignness/difference' is in many ways embedded in a firmly established European cultural tradition.

During the field trips as many people as possible from a variety of backgrounds were spoken to. These people included market stall holders, waiters, restaurant owners, petrol station managers, superstore managers, office workers, artists, lawyers, pharmacists, people in bars, teachers, farmers and many more to learn about the feelings towards Turkey's potential membership of the EU and the impact this relationship had on Turkey's domestic evolution.

¹³⁹ See the list of media organs used in the bibliography section

For example, one field trip was conducted by visiting a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) tanker to discover the differences between transporting natural gas via pipelines or ships to be able to understand how important to build pipelines via Turkey. As part of the trip *Al Oraiq* of K-Line, one of the largest tankers in the world was visited, in Zeebrugge Port in Belgium.¹⁴⁰ This trip helped the study to better consider the infrastructure and delivery methods of natural gas by sea and to attain critical information about cost and security issues. The field work also helped the thesis to conclude that pipelines were much more cost-effective than carrying gas in the form of LNG; therefore a possible pipeline via connecting energy resources with Europe via Turkey would be mutually beneficial. However, during the same field trip the study also concluded that LNG was a great alternative to the pipelines in case of a disruption of energy supply to many European countries caused by any political and environmental reasons.

Several other field trips were conducted to mainland Europe and to Turkey to observe the impact of this relation both on Turkey and on EU. During these trips about 15 European countries and hundreds of different cities, towns and villages were visited. These trips were vital in providing information about public opinion regarding Turkey-EU relations. I could also get the sense of the perceptual change that took place between 1990's and 2015.

Interviews were also a great source of information for this thesis. As Atkinson and Silverman state, our culture is almost an 'interview society'¹⁴¹ and this study conducted various interviews to corroborate evidence supporting the points made in this thesis. Interviews were conducted with politicians, experts, elites, members of the public, academics, business people and journalists in order to understand the relationship better.

The thesis mainly used semi-structured interviews to give more flexibility to the interviewees, as in a semi-structured interview the interviewee has great freedom in how to reply to questions.¹⁴² In some cases, the people interviewed consisted of lecturers, teachers and postgraduate degree holders'. They tended to be the people that the rest of society respect and listen to. Therefore, their opinions were crucial for the study, giving an insight into the views of informed members of society.

¹⁴⁰ Field trip of the author to the largest LNG tanker of the time, *Al-Oraiq*, in 2010 while discharging at the port of Zeebrugge in Belgium.

¹⁴¹ Paul Atkinson and David Silverman, "Kundera's Immortality: The interview society and the invention of the self," *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3, 1997, pp. 304-325.

¹⁴² Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 4th Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

In other cases, generally less-educated people in society such as builders, market-stall holders, farmers and unemployed men in cafes were also interviewed. As they make up the majority of the population and obviously contribute to the outcome in national elections, their opinions were quite important to this research. We should however bear in mind that their opinions shifted more easily than those of educated people. They sounded less informed, but also less firm in their views; some of them changed their views towards either Turkey or Europe during the course of the interview.¹⁴³

When an interview was arranged with the first group, a set of questions were on hand to ask. Some of the answers received both in Turkey and in EU states were surprising and shocking; some degree holders even thought that Turkey was already an EU member, while others thought Turkey was ruled according to Sharia Law, or that the EU was a Zionist organization run by atheists, and that Turkish women were forced to wear headscarf and had a similar regime to Iran.

Again, it was very clear from the Turkish respondents that there exists a very negative feeling towards the EU in that almost all of them thought the EU had a secret agenda and did not want Turkey in the union. However, majority of the people in this cluster were well aware of the volatility of the relations and suggested that historical legacies are crucial; people needed to interact with one another through visits, though it would take time for any major development to take place between the two sides.¹⁴⁴

With the second group, which is considered to be the less informed part of society compared to the degree holders, cafes or building sites were visited in order to have informal group talks rather, than pre-prepared interviews.¹⁴⁵ Here, the intention was to get the general feeling of the working-class.

The most significant difference in responses was that educated people were more rational in the way they talked about the issue, while the less-educated people generally spoke in the way that the political parties they supported – or the newspapers they read – discussed the issue. This cluster focused more on daily life, even sporting events, in their answers. Some people interviewed in Europe supported Turkey merely because of its national football teams' passionate performance in games. Others were against

¹⁴³ See Appendix 1 for the interview questions and the responses.

¹⁴⁴ Interviews with numerous people across Europe and Turkey as mentioned in Appendix 2.

¹⁴⁵ Interview in a cafe in Mathausen in Austria with group of Austrian workers (Aug.10, 2010), Group Interviews in several places Turkey (such as Istanbul, Artvin, Kastamonu) with construction workers, farmers, unemployed and people from the service industry.

Turkish entry into EU because they thought that the Turks would flock Europe and take their jobs and seek social security benefits.

The above interviews were a critical source of information about the public view towards Turkey-EU relations. Therefore, they brought immense clarity to the questions posed above.

As well as interviewing non-academic people this thesis strongly believes that consulting and interviewing experts¹⁴⁶ and policy makers is highly relevant to Turkish-EU relations as the process between the two sides frequently involves the analysis of political developments at the highest level of government, and elite actors will often be critical sources of information about the political processes under study.

Consulting experts and elites, who influence and shape the public opinion with their comprehensive and authoritative knowledge and skills in a particular field assisted the research greatly.¹⁴⁷ They are also important in terms of constructing collective understandings and attaching meaning to the material world for the people they represent. Their opinions were crucially important as they help shape the opinions of political elites. For example three scholars, King,¹⁴⁸ Taşağıl and Kızıltoprak¹⁴⁹ unanimously stated that ‘history plays a major part in EU-Turkey relations. They also asserted that although it will take more time, one day, if EU remains together, Turkey will be a full member of this Union. But if the process takes much longer Turkey might not want to be part of it any more’. Again when a prominent public figure and historian İlber Ortaylı¹⁵⁰ was interviewed, he stated in our informal meetings that there was no hope in the EU itself and therefore Turkey must seek its future in other directions or it should at least have a multi-dimensional foreign policy rather than wait at the gates of the collapsing EU.¹⁵¹ He also said:

The EU has shifted away from its original way and its future is unknown. It has expanded more than it should have expanded. We do not have to be in this institution. And it is not a good idea to solve our domestic problems with the EU.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁶ See Appendix 3 for the list of Experts consulted

¹⁴⁷ Lewis Anthony Dexter, *Elite and Specialized Interviewing*, (Colchester: ECPR Press, [1st Edition 1970 Evanston: Northwestern UP] 2006), p.19.

¹⁴⁸ Interview of author with Geoffrey King, March 19, 2010.

¹⁴⁹ Interview of author with Ahmet Taşağıl and Süleyman Kızıltoprak, Feb. 17, 2013.

¹⁵⁰ Mevlut Tezel, ‘İlber Hoca'nın kopya polemiginde haklı çıkması’, *Sabah*, Sept. 9, 2010, http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gunaydin/Yazarlar/sbmevlut_tezel/2010/09/07/İlber_hocanın_kopya_polemigin_de_hakli_cikmasi, retrieved Jan.12, 2013.

¹⁵¹ Author's informal interview with Professor İlber Ortaylı, Dec. 18-19, 2009, London.

¹⁵² İlber Ortaylı, "*Tarih Perspektifinden Türkiye-AB Serüveni*," Anadolu Aslanları İş Adamları Derneği (ASKON) conference, May 12, 2012, <http://www.askon.org.tr/prof-dr-ilber-ortayli-dan-iliginc-tespit-ab-yolundan-sapmis-ve-gelecegi-belirsizlesmistir> retrieved Feb. 18, 2013.

Interviewing politicians also helped make general inferences about the beliefs, activities or actions of the large group of people that the particular leaders represent. When the former leader of the Great Unity Party (GUP), Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, was interviewed,¹⁵³ he clearly stated that:

The EU will keep Turkey waiting at the door for a long time and it was unnecessary for Turkey to remain at the door any longer.

From this assertion, the common beliefs of his followers could be interpreted and partial generalisations could be made. However, the research also took note of the fact that perhaps some members of GUP were protest members who do not support the party in all policy matters. They follow the GUP because they do not support the ruling party or have no alternative place to lend their support.¹⁵⁴

Even though there are problems with the idea of generalisation in qualitative research, it was necessary for this study to make some judgments through partial generalisations of the findings of the interviews conducted, as it is impossible to speak to every person. In the case of this study, the people interviewed in Europe and Turkey were carefully selected to be representative of the wider population. For example, if a person was a member of a political party, it was taken that they were ideologically driven, and mostly thought, in similar ways to their political parties. Also, the study looked for wider trends at key moments in time to mark important norm and identity shifts with regards to the Turkey-EU relationship. However, there are always limits to the accuracy of mass generalisation. Therefore, this study also used other methods to support its findings.

During the interview stage, my identity as a Turkish man made my research easier in Turkey, though this was not always the case everywhere in Europe. For example, in France and Austria people refrained from talking negatively about Turkey. Due to this, it was very important for the thesis to critically assess every interview. Even though I interviewed very reliable people, the evaluations still had to be done robustly so that the personal bias of the interviewees was not reflected in my findings.

¹⁵³ Interview of Author, May 1, 2008 with Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu who died in a helicopter crash on 25 March 2009.

¹⁵⁴ It has been a common complaint in Turkey that there has not been a proper opposition to Erdoğan's JDP. Even Erdoğan himself complains about this fact.

As well as interviews, the thesis also used surveys and statistical analysis to track changes in popular opinion on current issues. As well as using surveys and statistical analysis made by myself – via the internet and social media sites such as Facebook, private companies, and mass media organizations – I also heavily relied on the Eurobarometer¹⁵⁵ as it offered me a great deal of information. Using these tools, I discovered a rising trend of anti-EU feelings in Turkey over the last five years. Combining different sources of information to confirm particular trends at particular moments in time helped the thesis to explore and explain these trends.

Larger samples used in quantitative research methods were supplementary to the qualitative outcomes of the thesis, especially when doing partial generalisations and interpretations of public opinion. For example, a joint project of three universities from Turkey and Spain surveyed people in France, Britain, Germany, Spain and Poland on how Turkey's EU bid was viewed, discovering that the most significant variable was age and generation when it came to the issue of supporting Turkey's EU accession. The results showed that support was higher among the younger population and was lower among those older.¹⁵⁶

However, this method also has some limitations when analysing and evaluating EU-Turkey relations, as public opinion shifts almost every year in Turkey and in Europe too. Therefore, some statistics became invalid over a very short period of time. As a result, I had to be very careful when deploying surveys and statistical analysis in my thesis.

As well as direct communication, indirect observation was also used in this research. For example, the way Turkish and German people crossed the road were compared, as well as the busyness of religious places when comparing Austria and Turkey and again to compare Italy and Turkey. Additionally, the driving styles of Europeans and Turkish people were also noted during the field trips. The observations of these specific norms were critically important for the thesis in order to understand and confirm stereotypes.

Due to the fragile and changeable nature of the relationship between EU and Turkey, the empirical study side makes up the backbone of this thesis. Therefore national and international media makes up the largest chunk of the research material employed during the research process.

¹⁵⁵ The public opinion analysis section of the European Commission since 1973.

¹⁵⁶ *Anatolian News Agency*, Jan. 24, 2010.

Various national media played a more important role than pan-European media portals in terms of what this thesis is focused on (EU-Turkey relations). With this in mind, the national media of influential countries such as Germany, the UK and France gave us a more accurate insight and more reliable information regarding public opinion in Europe towards Turkey. Since English is considered the lingua franca of our era, the British-language media occupies a greater place within this research when it comes to measuring public opinion. Therefore, this study extensively uses the main media organs in the UK to find logical answers to the research question posed above. English versions of European newspapers were also used during the research process. When checking the public and official government opinions in the US, the New York Times and the Washington Post, as well as others news networks such as CNN and Fox News were also used to consolidate the library-based research part of this thesis.

Regarding the Turkish part of this research, Turkish mass media organs were also relied on extensively. In addition to the media published in Turkish, some Turkish newspapers published in English were also used.

While working on the thesis, the rules governing research ethics and legal issues were strictly observed. Any issues that could be regarded as unethical and illegal were carefully avoided. For example, some interviewees did not want their names to be mentioned in the thesis, some public figures did not want certain information to be recorded and some interviewees did not want to have any recording devices taken to the interview site. Moreover, people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds were included in the research process. They were clearly informed about the intentions of the author and the research being conducted. Their traditions, cultures, religions and values were respected.

There were some obstacles to the research, such as security restrictions on many energy sites, and partial access to Russian and other European resources due to limitations regarding language skills. However, the connections made during the research process secured the study enough access to the information needed to find answers to the questions in mind. Hardship in arranging interviews with high-profile people, the cost of the field work and obtaining important publications regarding energy markets, were other obstacles encountered during the research.

Chapter 3

The EU and Civilian-Military Relations in Turkey

The role of the Turkish army in civilian politics

This chapter will evaluate the impact of Turkey-EU relations on Turkish domestic politics, with a focus on civilian-military relations. First, the historical place of the military in Turkey will be evaluated. After this, the underlying causes of the military interventions will be assessed. Then each military intervention will be explained briefly. This will be followed by an evaluation of EU's impact on the civilian-military relations in Turkey and how the civilian authority, thanks to EU reforms, gradually contained the army's presence in politics. In this section, the JDP government's push for EU reforms and results of this in terms of curbing the military's presence will be studied in particular.

Historically speaking, the Turkish military has been an important force behind most important developments in Turkey, shaping its domestic and, to a certain extent, foreign policy agenda. Many see the frequent military interventions and armed forces' tutelage over politics as the main reason why Turkey's democracy did not consolidate for so long.¹⁵⁷ However, during the last decade, mostly due to Turkey-EU relations, this privileged position of the army has waned significantly. This chapter will first take a closer look at the underlying causes of the heavy presence of the army in civilian politics, particularly since the 1950s and then give a brief outline of each major direct military intervention in Turkish politics. Lastly, it will evaluate the impact of Turkey-EU relations on civilian-military relations by focusing on the latest developments in Turkish domestic politics due to the reform process encouraged by the EU.

In Turkey, the military traditionally thought of itself as the “guardians of the secular republic” and directly interfered in civilian politics on three occasions, which will be

¹⁵⁷ Ahmet T. Kuru, ‘The Rise and Fall of Military Tutelage in Turkey: Fears of Islamism, Kurdism and Communism’, *Insight Turkey*, Vol 14, No:2, 2012, pp. 37.57 <http://www.insightturkey.com/the-rise-and-fall-of-military-tutelage-in-turkey-fears-of-islamism-kurdism-and-communism/articles/163> retrieved Sept 24, 2013

expanded on later in this chapter. This thesis strongly argues that the military's position in Turkish politics until the early 2000s was so significant that governments in Turkey, like the JDP, knew they could not clash with it on their own. Powerful external assistance and support was required. Therefore, they tried to use the process of Westernization/modernization and EU relations to subdue the military. In simple terms, the EU became a tool of domestic politics in Turkey in the struggle for civilian rule over the military's position. After the JDP's electoral victory in November 2002, Turkish politicians, under the convenient pretense that they wanted to reform Turkey to meet EU requirements, namely the Copenhagen Criteria, began pursuing a hidden agenda, which was to use the reform programs to fight the military. Equally, the EU was not too concerned about being used against an institution that was preventing a major ally from developing into a Western-style democracy. These politics suited both Turkey and the EU. This is why the thesis strongly believes that co-constitutionalism exists in Turkey-EU relations.

As implied, the presence of the military in civilian politics worried the EU more than anything else as it was definitely against the values and norms of Western democracy.¹⁵⁸

In its 2004 report on Turkey, the European Commission noted that,

Turkey has achieved significant legislative progress in many areas, through further reform packages and constitutional changes and ... further changes have been introduced over the last year in order to align civilian control of the military with practice in EU Member States ... Civilian control over the military needs to be asserted.¹⁵⁹

Therefore, the EU supported governments who tried to tackle this issue by stating its contentment in its annual progress reports. Its 2013 progress report pointed out that,

As in all of their previous reports on the accession progress, the Commission, Council, and Parliament found positive issues that they could point to and noted in one year or another that they welcomed Turkey's continued commitment to the negotiation process, as well as advancements Turkey had made in judicial reform and civil-military relations.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Eric Faucompret and Jozef Konings, *Turkish Accession to the EU: Satisfying the Copenhagen Criteria*, (New York: Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Economics, 2008), p. 156.

¹⁵⁹ Turkey Progress Report

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2005/package/sec_1426_final_progress_report_tr_en.pdf, retrieved April 29, 2013, pp. 9-12.

¹⁶⁰ Vincent Morelli, *European Union Enlargement: A Status Report on Turkey's Accession Negotiations*, Jan. 8, 2013, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS22517.pdf> p. 6, retrieved April 30, 2013 (updated Aug 5, 2013).

Perhaps the experiences of the Italian coup attempt (in 1970 by Junio Valerio Borghese) followed by the Spanish one (in 1981 by Antonio Tejero) taught the EU the lesson that a country where the military has such a strong presence in politics could easily turn into a dictatorship. However, the military's position in Turkish politics is more complicated and very different from the other two examples. While the Italian and Spanish coups were considered right-wing, the Turkish coups were considered secular and left-wing. The former were directed to destroy the republics while the Turkish ones took place in order to "protect" and "guard" the Turkish Republic. Also, in Turkey, the military's reasons for intervention changed over time. Sometimes, they legitimized this by claiming to save the republic from the communists, other times from the Islamists or Kurdish separatists. To be able to understand the underlying factors that facilitated the military involvement in politics, it is important to look at the fundamental reasons in detail. This thesis believes that analyzing this matter in depth will enlighten some Western scholars about the military's place in Turkey.

What were the main causes of the intervention of the Turkish military in politics?

The Turkish military took matters into its own hands on three different occasions in 1960-1961, 1971-1973, and 1980-1983, and also developed for itself a higher political profile during the intervening periods. As seen in 1997, it has indirectly caused governments to resign and has temporarily or indefinitely ended the political careers of prominent leaders, including current Prime Minister Erdoğan who was imprisoned in 1999. Again in 2007, chief of general staff Yasar Buyukanit gave a stinging warning to the JDP government in the now infamous attempted 'e-coup' by posting a statement on its official website about the military's 'concern' regarding the way events were unfolding in Turkey. This role of the military in politics is now being challenged, and to a great extent subdued, as the Turkish government seeks to comply with the Copenhagen Criteria for something which is necessary in order to obtain membership in the EU.

In this part of the thesis we will consider the causes underlying the emergence of an active role for the army in the Turkish political arena in the second half of the twentieth century. The historical role of the military in the Turkish politics prior to 1960 will be considered, as will the impact of the end of the single-party political system in 1950 and

the extent to which military intervention from 1960 onwards set a precedent for future intervention. The ideology of the officer class will then be examined, with a particular focus on the somewhat paradoxical roles of the army as both the “protector of the state” and a “modernizing force” in society, and the extent to which the civilian population of Turkey encouraged and supported an active political role for the military. Lastly, after outlining the external factors such as US support during the Cold War, the direct causes for each instance of military intervention will be explained. This section will end with a detailed consideration of the changes in the military’s position in Turkey due to Turkey-EU negotiations.

Although the Turkish Republic was established by soldiers, Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk, or ‘father of the Turks’) moved quickly to differentiate between soldiers and politicians in the belief that the military’s active involvement in politics would corrupt the military as an institution.¹⁶¹ Less than two months after the proclamation of the republic, he passed a law banning serving soldiers from holding political office and insisted that officers who wished to retain their parliamentary seats should resign their commands.¹⁶² Still, Turkey was to be ruled by retired military men until 1950 as İsmet İnönü, a prominent war hero, replaced Atatürk, when the latter died in 1938. İnönü also held the military rank of ‘pasha’ and, during his entire political career most people still continued address him as ‘pasha’, rather than any other title connected to civil politics, right up until his death in 1973.

Again, contrary to what Atatürk had wanted, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, military intervention in politics during periods of crisis became a recurring feature of Turkey’s political landscape. In each instance, civilian control was restored after a transitional period during which purported problems were addressed. During each intervention Turkey had problems with its relationships with the Western world, particularly the EU, as the strong presence of the army in civilian politics was unwelcome. To understand the root cause of the military intervention, we need to look at the underlying issues in Turkey’s politics in some detail.

There are several causes underlying the intervention of the military in Turkish politics. The historical role was a key factor. Due to the modernization programs implemented in the army after the failure of the second siege of Vienna in 1683, the

161 Gareth Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance: The Turkish Military and Politics*, (Oxford: Adelphi Papers 337, Oxford University Press, 2001), p.33.

162 Andrew Mango, *Atatürk*, (London: John Murray Publishers, 2004), p. 400.

military occupied center stage in the Ottoman Empire for about three hundred years. Military leaders also took over following WW1. Therefore, any study regarding the role of the Turkish army in politics should begin with its traditional role from the Ottoman period. Military and politics were mixed together. Therefore, a clear distinction between the military and civilian arms of the administration was not developed during the Ottoman period.¹⁶³

The military's special place in Turkish society can be traced back to the critical role the army played in the showdown with the Ottoman Empire and the foundation of the modern Turkish Republic too;¹⁶⁴ as Andrew Mango writes:

The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 can be seen as a model for military intervention in politics ... it was a military operation which seized power, and it was followed by other military operations in 1909 and 1913 until the plenitude of power was concentrated in one junta.¹⁶⁵

The Turkish military's role in the modernization of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent establishment of the Republic resulted in the military leadership viewing itself as a modernizing force and the vanguard of democratic rule in Turkey. In a sense, the military saw itself as the key to westernization in Turkey. However, it must be noted here that when the JDP government came to power in the 2000s, it was a party considered not ideologically compatible with the military. However, the JDP took Europeanisation and turned it into a tool against the military which reduced its power in the civilian domain.

Therefore, although the military was, in one sense, removed from politics during the early period of the republic, it was consistent with historical Turkish political traditions for the military to intervene when it perceived such intervention to be in the "interests of the nation".

When Atatürk founded the republic in 1923, it was based on a single-party system that, it was argued, would eventually lead to democracy. The idea of introducing liberal democracy to Turkey was not new. There had long been a general policy of Westernization, which started during the Tanzimat period, reaching its pinnacle during Kemalism,¹⁶⁶ and was the official ideology of the single party. Atatürk had the intention

163 William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 55.

164 Stephen Larrabee and Ian Lesser, 'Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty', (Santa Monica: RAND Publications, 2003), p. 27.

165 Andrew Mango, 'The Young Turks,' *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 8, No.1, Jan. 1972, p. 116.

166 Kemalism (in Turkish *Kemalizm* or *Atatürkçülük*) literally means 'following Kemal Atatürk's way'. Based on the six principles of Republicanism, that is, Nationalism, Secularism, Populism, Statism and

to introduce a multiparty system in his new republic.¹⁶⁷ Attempts were twice made to build a multiparty system, but both failed (1924 and 1930).¹⁶⁸ A real step towards creating that democratic system was made in 1946 when opposition parties made their first appearance in the Turkish political arena due to external and internal reasons. As the Cold War, seen as one of the principle factors of Turkish political life after 1945,¹⁶⁹ was heating up with the end of the World War II, the Soviet Union had abandoned its traditional policy of friendship with Turkey and had begun to demand concessions inconsistent with Turkish national interest, such as bases in the Bosphorus and territories in the East.¹⁷⁰ For İnönü, it had become impossible to stand up to this superpower by continuing to stay neutral: The only solution was to unconditionally join the West, which in turn necessitated the acceptance of the Western model in domestic rule as well.¹⁷¹ The first multi-party elections held in 1946 were the direct result of this decision.

Turkey's turn towards the West and Western liberal ideas was also prompted by the desire to take advantage of American financial aid. Hale believes that the launch of the Truman Doctrine on March 12, 1947, in which US President Harry Truman asked for the approval of a \$400 million aid program to Turkey and Greece (to last until the end of June 1948) marked a turning point in this regard.¹⁷² This was the start of the American commitment to the defense of anti-communist regimes around the world.¹⁷³ Therefore, this was the start of direct American influence on the Turkish military and its officers.

Reformism, the ideology of Kemalism was officially adopted by Turkey in the 1930s. Since then it evolved gradually and Kemalism not only determined the nature and dynamics of Turkish policies but, as Feroz Ahmad writes, also been "a source of permanent ideals and ideology for all nations which had yet to realize their national aspirations." (Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, London: Routledge, 1993, p. 66). Kemalism remained a flexible concept in Turkey, as these principles were never defined in any detail. After Erdoğan's JDP came to power, Kemalism began to be debated openly. As a result, the supporters of the RPP thought that the JDP and the policies it was following posed a threat to the official secularist nature of the state.

¹⁶⁷ Fethi Okyar, *Üç Devirde Bir Adam (A Man through Three Eras)*, (Istanbul: Tercüman Yayınları, 1980), pp. 392-393.

¹⁶⁸ Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri (the Speeches and Commentaries of Atatürk) Vol.2, (Ankara: Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1952), pp.46-47.

¹⁶⁹ Mehmet Gönlübol, *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the Course of Events) 1919-1973*, (Ankara: Ankara SBF Yayınları, 1974), p. 200 and Ahmad, *ibid*, p. 224.

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 224.

¹⁷¹ Baskın, Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savasından Bugüne Olgular Belgeler, Yorumlar*, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), p.502.

¹⁷² Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000*, p.115.

¹⁷³ Zürcher, p.209.

The İnönü government was in serious need of foreign support in terms of continued military expenditure which it needed to deter Stalin, meaning that any economic assistance was a major advantage. More importantly, Turkey's inclusion in the Marshall Aid program was a clear signal to the Soviet Union that the United States was prepared to make material, and not only purely symbolic, contributions to the defense of Turkey. Indeed, Sadak argues, that "The Truman Doctrine was a great comfort to the Turkish people, for it made them feel that they were no longer isolated."¹⁷⁴ Turkish leaders may have believed that a turn to Western liberal ideas would improve the possibility of them obtaining aid, and the provision of aid from the West may have improved the way in which the Turkish people viewed Western political ideals. Consequently, with the Truman Doctrine in 1947 Turkey officially became part of the long-lasting Western alliance system which involved the development of rule of law and democracy.

There were also a number of domestic social, political and economic factors that led to Turkey's turn to liberal democracy in the second half of the 1940s. One such factor was the general dissatisfaction of the population with the government of the time. Eroğul writes that the long period of rule without opposition had led to a situation in which all discontent was directed against the government.¹⁷⁵ One factor was therefore the desire to channel popular discontent, which had reached a critical level, toward democratic avenues in order to prevent a social explosion.¹⁷⁶

A large number of Turks, including the bourgeoisie, found the patronizing attitude of the establishment particularly difficult to swallow in the late 1940s. In Zürcher's words, "The regime had never been popular with the masses."¹⁷⁷ The Kemalist reforms had done little to improve their lot but had stripped them of their religion by imposing secularism, a move resented by ordinary people who could not understand why their age-old traditions – which could hardly be described as fundamentalist in a country where Islam has traditionally assumed a very pragmatic form – were summarily dismissed as obscurantist superstition.¹⁷⁸ This might be one reason that people during the 1990s and again in the 2000s did not really support the military in its politics against the religious sects. Contrary to this, after the 1990s, the more the military harassed

¹⁷⁴ Necmeddin Sadak, Turkey Faces the Soviets, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.27, 1949, p.461.

¹⁷⁵ Cem Eroğul, 'The Establishment of Multiparty Rule', in Irvin Cemil Schick and Ertugrul Ahmet Tonak (eds.), *Turkey in Transition-New Perspectives*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.102.

¹⁷⁶ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey, A Modern History*, (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), p. 211.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.206.

¹⁷⁸ Nicole and Hugh Pope, *ibid.*, p.88.

religion and religious symbols such as the headscarf, the more the religiously motivated parties gained public support.

The bourgeoisie did not place much trust in the single-party regime¹⁷⁹ as it was always possible for it to suddenly institute policies detrimental to their interests, such as the Wealth Tax (Varlık Vergisi) of 1942¹⁸⁰ and the land reform and nationalization of forested areas undertaken in July and August 1945.¹⁸¹ Despite the generally pro-business attitude of the state, the bourgeoisie felt insecure in its diminished ability to influence it. Sakip Sabanci, who was a major tycoon in Turkey, stated in his autobiography that, “the overwhelming impact of state-induced uncertainty in business life creates instability and leads to business failures.”¹⁸² As Mardin points out, while the business community fails to exercise control over the state, there is always uncertainty and unpredictability in business life, no matter how sympathetic the attitude of the state to business interests.¹⁸³ Consequently, there was a determination on the part of the bourgeoisie to end the domination of the state on the economy.¹⁸⁴ Therefore, when the opportunity to do so appeared in 1945, they supported the creation of a multiparty system separating the ruling party (the Republican Peoples Party, or RPP) and the state (since the RPP was in fact running the state)¹⁸⁵ and, in time, establishing the hegemony of the former over the latter.¹⁸⁶ The military, as well as the RPP, were seen by the masses as the main agents behind religious oppression. Therefore, the introduction of the multiparty system was welcomed by people of all classes, who showed their support by overwhelmingly voting for the Democrat Party (DP) and its liberal policies.

Nye has also noted that perhaps it was inevitable that the multiparty system instituted by İnönü would devolve into the factional polarization and bitter conflict that has come to characterize Turkish politics as battles between right and left-wing extremists during

¹⁷⁹ Ahmad, *ibid.*, 1993, p.213.

¹⁸⁰ The Wealth Tax affair of 1942-43 was designed to favor Turkish/Muslim businessmen, but it backfired as a state capable of plundering non-Muslim businessmen could as easily decide to plunder Muslims.

¹⁸¹ *Resmi Gazete*, no 5255, Law 4305 of 11 November 1942 on the Capital Levy, Cited in Eroğul, p. 139.

¹⁸² Ayşe Buğra, *State and Business in Modern Turkey: a comparative study*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), p.95.

¹⁸³ Şerif Mardin, ‘Center-periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics,’ *Daedalus- Jstors*, 1973, Vol. 102, No.1. <https://ondercetin.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/center-periphery-relations.pdf> retrieved Dec. 22, 2014.

¹⁸⁴ Tevrik Cavdar, *Türkiye’nin Demokrasi Tarihi – 1839-1950*, (Ankara: Imge Kitapevi, 1999), p. 401-416, F. Ahmad, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ The RPP was in charge of the army as both institutions shared the same secular vision for Turkey.

¹⁸⁶ Ahmad, *ibid.*

the past two decades show.¹⁸⁷ It was this conflict that created the conditions for the first military coup in 1960. However, the ways in which the principal political players reacted to the creation of the multiparty system were more important in leading to the intervention of the armed forces in 1960. Frey writes that, following its electoral victory in 1950, the DP

Began to tamper with the cherished programs supported and even, to a large extent, inaugurated by the army ... and, in the eyes of many officers, began to sabotage some of those programs.¹⁸⁸

Hence there was a latent but growing feeling of betrayal among these military officers, which, in the words of Landau, was “gradually grouped under a commonly agreed slogan of ‘a return to Atatürkism’ or ‘Neo-Kemalism.’”¹⁸⁹ They strongly believed that it was religious fundamentalism that had brought backwardness to the Ottoman Empire and that had eventually brought about its end. They thought that by allowing religious freedom, the DP was preparing the subsequent end of the Kemalist state too. This feeling of betrayal, coupled with Prime Minister Adnan Menderes’s indiscriminate use of the military to enforce martial law so as to prop up his unpopular regime (mostly among military personal), resulted in the politicization of the military in the late 1950s.

The initial military coup in 1960, which was conducted by the National Unity Committee (Milli Birlik Komitesi),¹⁹⁰ set a historical precedent which led to an increase in the military’s role in the administration of the state. After the coup, power and authority which were constitutionally vested in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) was assigned to the NUC until it would be eventually transferred to a new TGNA.¹⁹¹ The military intervention in politics can therefore be viewed to a certain degree as self-perpetuating.

Following this coup, the National Security Council (NSC [Tr.: Milli Güvenlik Kurulu-MGK]) was created through the 1961 constitution.¹⁹² This body was composed of the president, the prime minister, the chief of general staff, the ministers of national

187 Roger P. Nye, ‘Civil-Military Confrontation in Turkey: The 1973 Presidential Election,’ *Middle Eastern Studies*, April 1977, pp. 209-212.

188 Frederick W. Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite*, (Massachusetts: MITP, 1965), p. 261.

189 Jacob M. Landau, *Radical Parties in Modern Turkey*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), p. 7.

190 Hugh Poulton, *Top Hat, Grey Wolf and Crescent: Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic*, (London: Hurst Company, 1997), p. 173.

191 Cited in Hale, pp.122-123.

192 Hakkimizda (about us), <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/index.php/kurumsal/hakkimizda>, retrieved Jan.12, 2014, and Hale, *ibid.*, p. 138.

defense, the three commanders of the army and the commander of the gendarmerie forces and was an important forum for the military to express its political views.¹⁹³ According to law number 129, the duty of the NSC is to advise the council of ministers on security matters and to help them implement any decision taken by the council.¹⁹⁴

Videt writes that the creation of the NSC in 1962 assured a constitutionally guaranteed privileged role for the military in Turkish politics and injured civilian rule permanently.¹⁹⁵ The NSC provided a legal forum for the armed forces to convey their views to civilian politicians and to voice the concerns of the military regarding domestic politics and foreign relations.¹⁹⁶ The strength of the NSC was confirmed in 1971 by the “coup by memorandum.” This is still a powerful institution; for example, in 1997, the NSC thought that a government led by the Welfare Party was a threat to secularism in Turkey and forced the government to resign.¹⁹⁷

With each military coup, the role of the armed forces in the political sphere was strengthened and re-affirmed, and the legal basis for such a role was consolidated in a series of enactments. The Turkish Constitution of 1982, The Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law of 1961 and the National Security Council Law of 1983 all emphasized the military’s duty to, in one form or another, “protect the democratic principles of the republic”. Article 85 of the Internal Service Regulations of the Turkish Armed Forces stipulated that those forces “shall defend the country against the internal as well as the external threats, if necessary by force.”¹⁹⁸

One factor that facilitated the military taking an active role in the political life of the nation was the homogeneous lifestyle of the officers, which led to a unity of political views and of purpose. The officer class was a professional military group, which tended to avoid the rest of society, almost for life. This had the effect of creating a kind of social layer, complete with their own casinos, swimming pools, sports centers, restaurants and even private beaches. Places occupied by the military are always the

193 Idris Bal, *Turkey’s Relations With the West and the Turkic Republics, The Rise and the Fall of the Turkish Model*, (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), p.23.

194 Genel Bilgi (General Info), <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/index.php/milli-guvenlik-kurulu/genel-bilgi>, Retrieved Jan.12,2014

195 Bertil Videt, *The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics*, (Copenhagen: Copenhagen University, Department of Political Science, January 2005), p. 17.

196 Justin Brown, ‘The Military and Society: The Turkish Case,’ *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.25, No.3, 1989, pp.389-400 and www.mgk.gov.tr, retrieved Dec.20,2014.

197 Ersin Kalaycioğlu, *Turkish Dynamics: Bridge Across Troubled Lands*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.158.

198 Metin Heper, ‘The Military-Civilian Relations in Post-1997 Turkey,’ IPISA Conference, *Globalization of Civil-Military Relations: Democratization, Reform, and Security*, Bucharest, Jun. 29-30, 2002, p.3.

most beautiful parts of the country, such as the banks of the Bosphorus in Istanbul. There was therefore a distinct, fairly homogenous, group of people with a high degree of organization and similar aims.

Turkish military training begins at an early age, with army officers of the future isolated from the rest of society and educated in military high schools. Orhan Erkanlı, a former member of the NUC of 1960, wrote in 1973 that,

The military class lives an enclosed life, and its contacts with the civilian people are slight. ... They spend all twenty-four hours of the day in the same environment, and in the company of the same people. This way of life draws them into exactly the same ideas, opinions, complaints and results.¹⁹⁹

The military therefore needs to be viewed not merely as a professional group but as a distinct social group in Turkish society with its own political aims and ideals. Moreover, the officer class has an aristocratic confidence in the superiority of its own political ideals. Hale points out that army cadets are impressed with the view that they are superior to civilians²⁰⁰, indeed, Birand's quote of a speech made by a commander to military students is illustrative here:

Always bear in mind that you are superior to everyone and everything and that you are trained here to have superior knowledge and superior qualities.²⁰¹

It was in the 1950s that the Turkish army became adequately equipped to mobilize itself as a political force, largely due to US aid.²⁰² This aid also encouraged the army in its belief that civilian politicians were failing Turkish society. Many young officers went abroad for training through NATO exchange programs and so had a chance to see how backward Turkey was when compared to the West. According to Zürcher, it is now known that from 1955 onwards plots against the government were hatched in these circles.²⁰³

Since then, the position of the military class has changed dramatically as a result of the EU backed reform programs which were implemented – especially during JDP-dominated governments. Military figures are no longer considered untouchable, since hundreds of them have been prosecuted and have ended up in prison during the now

199 Orhan Erkanlı, 'Anılar, Sorunlar Sorumlular,' (Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1973), p.376, Hale, *ibid.*, p.320, Bal, *ibid.*, p.21.

200 Hale, *ibid.*, p.321.

201 Cited in Hale, p.321.

202 Zürcher, *ibid.*, p.241.

203 *ibid.*, p.239.

famous Ergenekon, Balyoz (sledgehammer) and Espionage trials. Public opinion towards their position in the country has also changed. This naturally led to a major attitude shift amongst the officer class too, in that many more now believe that they are there solely for security purposes and that they serve the state and the people. This was reflected in their actions, as mighty top brass generals now resign quietly, rather than giving the prime ministers orders and warnings.²⁰⁴ In sum, although they are still seen as a distinct class in society, it is nowhere near the levels seen in the past.

The military's own constitution defines its role as to protect both the state and the republic. Article 35 of the Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Code states: "The duty of the Armed Forces is to protect and safeguard Turkish territory and the Turkish Republic as it stipulated in the Constitution."²⁰⁵ General Kenan Evren in fact cited this article after the coup of 1980 as legal justification for the takeover of the government by the armed forces in circumstances where the republic might otherwise have collapsed.²⁰⁶

İhsan Dağı argues that there is a deep-rooted tradition of military intervention in politics which is largely brought about by the military's self-perception as "the guardian of the state" and its distrust of politicians.²⁰⁷ The military's conception of democracy in Turkey is based on its own perception of the expression of the national will rather than just ballot box results.²⁰⁸ The self-ascribed guardian role of the military, which is legitimized by the role of military elites in forming the republic and a national security ideology, gives rise to interventionist and authoritarian tendencies.²⁰⁹

According to the current mission statement of the Turkish military, it sees itself as having a moral and legal obligation to protect the Turkish republic against every kind of threat or danger that might threaten the existence of the state.²¹⁰ It does not differentiate between internal and external threats or between threats to the country's territorial integrity and to the Kemalist principles enshrined in the Turkish Constitution.²¹¹ As a result, anything that was seen as a threat by the army was something to act against.

²⁰⁴ 'Turkey: Military chiefs resigns en masse,' *BBC News*, Jul.29, 2011,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14346325>, retrieved, Jun.18, 2014

²⁰⁵ Mehmet Ali Birand, 'The Generals Coup in Turkey; An Inside Story of 12 September 1980,' Translated by M. A. Dikerdem, (London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1987), p.187.

²⁰⁶ Hale, *ibid.*, pp.246-247.

²⁰⁷ İhsan Dağı, 'Democratic Transition in Turkey, 1980-83: The Impact of European Diplomacy,' in Sylvia Kedourie (ed.), *Turkey, Identity, Democracy, Politics*, (London: Frank Cass, 1996), p.125.

²⁰⁸ Jenkins, p.34.

²⁰⁹ Frank T. Tachau and Metin Heper, 'The State, Politics, and the Military in Turkey,' *Comparative Politics*, Vol.16, No.1, Oct.1983, pp.19-20.

²¹⁰ Turkish armed Forces, Mission Statement http://www.tsk.tr/1_tsk_hakkinda/Gorevi.html, (Translation of the author), retrieved Jan. 14, 2015.

²¹¹ Jenkins, *ibid.*, pp.33-34.

Civilian opinion had no importance once the generals “who are superior in knowledge” had made a decision.

Nevertheless, thanks to relations with the EU, and the helping hands of the reform packages imposed by it, Turkey’s civilian authority has managed to amend the articles that had previously paved the way for the coups since 1960s. In this respect, Article 35 was rephrased and greater emphasis placed on the role of the army as a protector from “external threats” rather than “internal” ones. The new article reads:

The duty of the Armed Forces is to protect the Turkish homeland against threats and dangers to come from abroad, to ensure the preservation and strengthening of military power in a manner that will provide deterrence, to fulfil the duties abroad with the decision of the Parliament and help maintain international peace.²¹²

Bal writes that another factor that led the army to intervene in politics during the second half of the twentieth century was the Turkish military’s perception of itself as representing enlightenment, secularism and modernism.²¹³ Dağı also refers to the legacy of the military as a self-professed “modernizer.”²¹⁴ Indeed, this modernizing aspect of the military ever since the nineteenth century meant that, especially after the Kemalist reforms, the military was even more committed to bringing in a Western-style government which would be democratic (in the sense that the military understood democracy, which essentially meant secular government).²¹⁵

The reform movements that had emerged at the end of the nineteenth century had been led by the military, and it was the military intelligentsia that had designed the secular Turkish Republic. As former president and 1980 coup leader, Kenan Evren, one said, “the Turkish armed forces are devoted to democracy and they are its indestructible guards.”²¹⁶

The reality is that Evren was being selective in his interpretation of the term “democracy,” taking the secular elements of Western democracy and not the general principles of rule by elected representatives. In the West, military interventions are not

²¹² ‘Turkish Parliament OK’s change on coup pretext article,’ *Hurriyet Daily News*, Jul. 14, 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-parliament-oks-change-on-coup-pretext-article.aspx?pageID=238&nID=50706&NewsCatID=338>, retrieved May.12, 2014.

²¹³ Begum Burak, ‘Can Secularism Hinder Democracy: The Turkish Experiment,’ *Human & Society / Insan ve Toplum*, 2012, Vol.2, No.4, Dec.2012, http://www.academia.edu/2554567/Can_Secularism_Hinder_Democracy_The_Turkish_Experiment, retrieved, Jan.12, 2013 and , Bal, *ibid.*, p.21.

²¹⁴ Dağı, *ibid.*, p.125.

²¹⁵ Tachau & Heper, *ibid.*, pp.19-23.

²¹⁶ Brown, *ibid.*, pp.400-401.

part of the democratic structure. Therefore, what Evren really means when he is discussing democracy is the idea that Turkey is a “secular republic”. The Turkish army therefore reacted whenever it considered that these principles were coming under threat.

In all three coups, the reasons given by the military for intervention have been similar in nature: The military say that they are “the guardians of democracy and the civilians, who need to be cared for and guided.”²¹⁷ In a press conference on May 28, 1960, General Gürsel emphasized that:

The purpose and the aim of the revolution is to bring the country with all speed to a fair, clean and solid democracy. I want to transfer power and the administration of the nation to the free choice of the people.²¹⁸

The 1971 ultimatum stated that the current government had “made the public lose all hope of reaching a level of contemporary civilization, a goal set by Atatürk.”²¹⁹ Dağı further notes a conflict between the military’s role as a modernizer and its previously mentioned desire to avoid fragmentation and insecurity. While the latter leads to intervention in political life as a way to safeguard the principles of the republic and to clean up the mess politicians make, the former forces the military to reassert its commitment to democracy and a rapid return to civilian rule after a military takeover.²²⁰ Although the Turkish army’s long-term aim is the establishment of a democratic state, it is willing to sacrifice democratic principles in the short term where it perceives that they pose a threat to national unity.

The military’s principles therefore lead it to intervene in politics but also operate to define its role narrowly and limit such intervention to the short term. As Karpat argues, despite the difficulties in managing a Western-style civil-military relationship, the Turkish military did not envisage the creation of a permanent military regime and remained the “guardian” of the state, not the “ruler.”²²¹

Paradoxically, the later military coups can be seen in one sense as short-term measures to actually protect the state against long-term military rule. From 1960 to 1980 the military interventions in Turkey became less and less threatening to the

217 Bal, *ibid.*, pp.19-20.

218 Hale, *ibid.*, pp.119-120.

219 Nicole Pope and Huge Pope, *ibid.*, 2004, pp. 105-106, Jenkins, *ibid.*, p.37.

220 Dağı, *ibid.*, pp.125-126.

221 Kemal Karpat, ‘Military Interventions: Army-Civilian Relations in Turkey Before and After 1980’, in Metin Hepar & Ahmet Evin (eds.), *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter),1988, p. 28.

consolidation of democracy.²²² While in 1960, colonels led the military intervention, the following two interventions were carried out by higher-ranking generals. Also, while a faction of the junta that carried out the 1960-1961 intervention toyed with the idea of introducing not only constitutional but also social and economic reforms in Turkey, the latter two had more limited goals.²²³

There was also civilian encouragement of the interventions of the army in Turkish politics. As the leader of the 1980 coup, Evren, said in 1987:

The armed forces do not carry out a coup whenever they feel like it. They do it only at the invitation of the nation. And the nation wanted the coup of 12 September.²²⁴

The initial coup, in 1960, was legitimated by a contemporary report of the then leading students of law that claimed that the DP government, which was subsequently removed from power, had lost its legitimacy. It was argued that the government had acted with no regard to the enlightened public opinion of the country.²²⁵ Heper points out that it was in fact this report that led the military to reconsider their initial decision to return to civilian rule as soon as possible and to stay in power and supervise the adoption of a new constitution.²²⁶

When we look at public perception of the military's role in Turkey, the combination of social, cultural and historical factors which have exalted the Turkish military as virtually the embodiment of the nation have also endowed it with a security role, which extends far beyond that of the armed forces in Westernized parliamentary democracies. Although the Turkish military undoubtedly relishes its role as both guardian of the nation and of Kemalist doctrine, it is not merely self-appointed, it has a popular mandate. Many Turks expect the military not only to protect them against foreign threats but also to intervene to restore order from the chaos created by inept and corrupt civilian government.²²⁷

It is the lack of confidence in politicians and the political process which, added to the public prestige of the armed forces, has ensured that public perception of the security role of the military extends into the political arena. In 1980 when the military physically intervened, the public initially welcomed the coup. Commenting on this, Birand writes,

222 Heper, *ibid.*, pp.4-5.

223 Karpat, *ibid.*, pp.137-158.

224 Feroz Ahmad, *ibid.*, p.214.

225 Heper, *ibid.* p.4.

226 *ibid.*, pp.4-5.

227 Hale, *ibid.*, p.247, Birand, *ibid.*, pp.195-198.

Weary and shocked after years of terror in the streets, the Turkish public embraced Kenan Evren and the army as their liberators. Some got carried away and began comparing Evren with the legendary Atatürk... A broad spectrum of the Turkish people was convinced that the country had been saved from the brink of self-destruction.²²⁸

Birand adds “but this attitude changed as time passed.”²²⁹ Hale also notes that by September 14, life throughout Turkey had returned to an unaccustomed calm.²³⁰ However, it should be noted that the public support for the military was for intervention rather than rule.²³¹ In other words, people wanted the generals to go back to their barracks once calm was restored.

Some analysts, such as Hale and Jenkins, have suggested that among national institutions, only the armed forces retain consistent public trust and respect.²³² Other Western commentators also note the outlook of the military in Turkey; Nick Ludington, who for years was a Turkish correspondent for the Associated Press, talked of Turkish officers as “well-educated, in general non-corrupt, and Western-oriented secular democrats.”²³³ Bal comments that sometimes the lack of belief in democracy and the incapability of civil society to solve its own problems are related to the military interventions.²³⁴

The military has been an effective institution, perhaps the most effective institution, within the Turkish state. Despite it being a very important economic actor in its own right, the military establishment is seen as largely untainted by corruption. This is a function of the sheer size of the military establishment – the second largest in NATO after the United States – its large claim on state spending and its pension, foundation and commercial holdings. Retired senior officers are commonplace on the boards of Turkey’s large holding companies.²³⁵

However, while the support for the army always remained high against the PKK terrorism, with the JDP in power and the aforementioned court cases against military personal, the attitude of people towards the military has changed. According to the opinion polls, confidence in the army was 90 % before the Ergenekon trials, but went

228 Birand, p. 195.

229 *ibid.*, pp.195-196, Jenkins, p.20.

230 Hale, *ibid.*, p. 247

231 Jenkins, *ibid.*, p. 20

²³² Hale, *ibid.*

233 *Milliyet*, Jun.18, 1998.

234 Bal, *ibid.*,p. 23.

235 Larrabee and Lesser, *ibid.*, p.30.

down to 63 % by 2010. This was the lowest public support ever for the military, as it had never previously gone below 80 %.²³⁶

It is probable that the younger and more educated generation, which has been much more exposed to the EU and the Western standards, has a different set of expectations of the army and they are the root cause for the lowering of support. These people want to see the military as a security provider, rather than policy makers. For the majority in this group, conscription is not needed as it gets in the way of their career plans.²³⁷ They think Turkey must build a professional army and stop relying on conscription.

Although internal factors were the root cause of the interventions of the army in civilian politics, external factors should not be disregarded. Many observers in Turkish politics are convinced that there could have been no coup unless Washington had given the green light.²³⁸ All three direct interventions happened during the Cold War era (1945-1991). As an indispensable ally of the United States, Turkey was the forward base of Western capitalist interests near the southeastern borders of the Soviet Union. For example, the United States installed the Jupiter nuclear missiles in southern Turkey in the 1950s, which were one of the root causes of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.²³⁹ After the Truman Doctrine, Turkey was included in the American sphere of influence and joined NATO in 1952 (Turkey sent soldiers to Korea during the Korean War to show its support). On one hand, the United States was supporting liberal reformers inside the DP that had allowed religious freedoms, a sort of counterbalance to anti-religious Communist tendencies; while on the other hand, it spent millions of dollars to modernize the Turkish army with training programs by NATO officers. Some of the officers would go on to carry out the 1960 coup, officers such as Alparslan Türkeş who had been trained in the United States. We can say that American policy towards Turkey during the Cold War was paradoxical. This was clearly explained in the memories of a well-known revolutionary officer, Talat Turhan:

²³⁶ Neşe Düzel, 'Adil Gur: Orduya güven en düşük noktada' *Taraf*, Jan.25, 2010

²³⁷ Military conscription forces every Turkish man to serve in the army; this is not something everyone especially the educated generation looks forward to. Even the Turkish expatriates had to serve in the army until the change in the law in Dec. 2011.

²³⁸ Ahmad, *ibid.*, p.214.

²³⁹ The first American nuclear missiles were placed in Turkey in 1959 directly aiming at the Soviet Union. They were also seen as a direct commitment of the USA to protect Turkey in case of a Soviet aggression. Although the warheads were under American custody both Turkish and American authority required to launch these missiles. During the Cuban crisis in 1962 Khrushchev demanded that these missiles to be removed from Turkey. Kennedy agreed with his demand in exchanged for the withdrawal of all Soviet nuclear missiles from the island of Cuba.

The Anti-Communist Front, which was formed in every American ally during the Cold War, included the army, nationalist groups and even religious organisations. They were all financed by American dollars.²⁴⁰

With this in mind, the military was seen as the vanguard of Western, and mainly American, interests in Turkey. Thus whenever left-wing groups gained momentum, right wingers were supported, and if they could not stop the rise of the left, the military intervened.

The army's influence in politics was something the EC strongly disliked. However, we cannot say the same thing for the United States, as it has been claimed that the 1980 coup was the "preference of the USA."²⁴¹ According to Birand, as cited by Balta, the CIA Ankara Station Chief Paul Henze sent a telegram to Washington informing the US President James Carter²⁴² about the coup by saying "Our boys have done it."²⁴³ When Henze disowned the words and branded Birand as a liar, Birand provided the media with the video of a conversation, proving the words Henze used.

Another example of US support for the coup was its strong opposition to the many EC countries who chose to cease relations with Turkey following the coup. For example, after the coup, the EC rejected the release of the Fourth Protocol that involved financial help (European Currency unit (ECU) 600 million) to Turkey on the grounds that the current military regime in Turkey was not welcomed by the EC.²⁴⁴ However, the United States, which also supported and perhaps organized (via the CIA) similar coups in Greece, Chili, Argentina and Brazil,²⁴⁵ declared that it trusted the Turkish army. Thanks to this US support, although almost all formal relations were cut off until 1986, the EC did not prevent military aid to Turkey after the coup.²⁴⁶

This shows how EU-Turkish relations have been affected with the special relationship that existed between Turkey and the US. However, as mentioned later on, some Turkey skeptics in the EU see the Turkish-US relationship with a hint of caution,

²⁴⁰ Talat Turhan, 27 Mayıs 1960'tan 28 Şubat 1997'ye Devrimci Bir Kurmay Subayın Etkinlikleri, 1. Kitap, (Istanbul: Sorun Yayınları, 3rd edition, 2001), pp.16-17.

²⁴¹ Mehmet Ali Birand, 12 Eylül, Saat: 04:00, (Istanbul: Karacan Yayınları, 2nd edition, 1985), p. 286.

²⁴² Commonly known as Jimmy Carter.

²⁴³ İbrahim Balta, 'Birand'dan Henze'ye Sesli Görüntülü Yalanlama', *Zaman*, Jun. 14, 2003, also at <http://arsiv.zaman.com.tr/2003/06/14/haberler/h2.htm>, retrieved Jan. 12, 2013.

²⁴⁴ Harun Arıkan, ibid., p. 122 and Zuhâl Yeşilyurt Gunduz, Turkey's Approach Towards the EU: Views from Within, <http://sam.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/ZuhâlYeşilyurtGunduz1.pdf>, retrieved Jan. 12, 2013.

²⁴⁵ Turhan, ibid., p.17.

²⁴⁶ Fulya Kip-Barnard, 'Soğuk Savaş ve Sonrasında Türkiye-AB İlişkileri,' in Cem Karadeli (ed.), *Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında Avrupa ve Türkiye*, (Ankara: Ayraç Yayınevi, 2003), p.229.

believing that Turkey could become a Trojan horse for US interests within the Union. On the other hand, Turkey-US relations are not the same as they used to be before the new millennium as Turkey is trying to pursue at least some of its foreign and defense relations independently from US influence. This was the case when Turkey decided to award the tender for a missile defense system to China, instead of to a NATO state, since China offered co-production and technology transfer to Turkey which neither the USA nor other NATO members were too keen on doing.²⁴⁷ This choice was not welcomed by NATO members as they argued that these weapons were not compatible with the NATO military equipment. Under pressure from NATO, Turkey, who first, signalled a clear message to its allies that relations were not going to be the same as before did go back on its decision and re-opened the bidding to allow Western companies to revise and resubmit their bids. On 19 February 2015, the Turkish Defence Minister İsmet Yılmaz announced that “there was no interest from the Western companies to the rebidding so Turkey is closer to completing the agreement with the Chinese company.” Yılmaz also made it clear that “the new missiles would not be integrated in to the NATO defence system and operate completely independent of it.”²⁴⁸

Direct causes of military intervention in Turkish politics:

The 1960 coup

On May 27, 1960, modern Turkey witnessed its first full-fledged military coup d'état. The coup was of a non-hierarchical nature in the sense that it was not carried out by generals, but by other military officers of lower rank, such as colonels.²⁴⁹ These middle-rank officers, upon assuming power, organized themselves into a revolutionary council named the National Unity Committee (NUC), under the chairmanship of General Cemal Gürsel, the former commander of the army.²⁵⁰ Menderes' policies can be seen as the direct cause of the 1960 coup. However, during the early part of DP rule, the

²⁴⁷ David Lague, 'For China Turkey missile deal is a victory even if it does not happen,' *Reuters*, Oct. 2, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/02/us-china-turkey-idUSBRE9910GN20131002>, retrieved Jul. 18, 2014.

²⁴⁸ Bakan Yılmaz'dan Çin füzesi yanıtı: NATO sistemine entegre edilmeyecek, *Hurriyet*, Feb. 19, 2015 <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/28243862.asp>, retrieved, Feb 24, 2015.

²⁴⁹ Begum Burak, 'The 1960 Coup in Turkey: An Attempt to Analyze Politics from a Gramscian Perspective,' *GWP*, Sept. 12, 2012.

²⁵⁰ Ergun Özbudun, 'Development of Democratic Government in Turkey,' in Ergun Özbudun (ed.), *Perspectives on Democracy in Turkey*, (Ankara: Turkish Political Science Association Publication, 1988), p.19.

majority of the people in Turkey supported liberal reforms brought by his government. As Karpat notes,

The Democrat Party regarded religious freedom as one of the principles of basic freedom; the words of the party suggested that Turkish society was an Islamic society, so that people should practice their religion in the way they like and in the language they prefer without mixing religion in with daily politics.²⁵¹

For example, the DP passed a law with the support of the RPP²⁵² allowing the call to prayer to be made once again in Arabic – something which had been outlawed since 1932 – in accordance with its liberal view on religious affairs. A week after his election victory, on May 20, 1950, Menderes made a speech explaining the program of his new government and did not even mention Atatürk's name. In fact, he emphasized that the victory of the DP was the most important revolutionary moment in Turkish history.²⁵³ These activities were interpreted by the officer class as undermining secularism and Kemalism. The DP went further with their reforms; they shortened the period of military service, enforced a liberal amnesty law, made travel for Turkish citizens abroad easier, as well as that of foreigners to visit Turkey. Formerly banned Turkish citizens were allowed back to Turkey, enacted a new press law and formed a commission to determine which laws and decrees were anti-democratic.²⁵⁴ However, the Menderes government also repeatedly passed legislation designed to restrict freedom of the press to print material “designed to damage the political or financial prestige of the state” or “belittling persons holding official positions,” in order to combat growing Kemalist political opposition.²⁵⁵ Not only was strict censorship placed on newspapers and radio stations, thus inhibiting free discussion of political and social issues, but opposition parties were also barred from access to state radio, the only way the masses could be

²⁵¹ Kemal H. Karpat, *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi, Sosyal, Ekonomik, Kültürel Temeller*, (Afa Yayınları: İstanbul, 1996), p.229

²⁵² Murat Bardakci, Adnan Menderes Suçlamaktan Vazgecin, Arapca Ezani DP ile CHP beraber Serbest Bırakmışlardı (Stop Blaming Menderes. Arabic Call for Prayer was reintroduced by DP and RPP, translation of author) *Hurriyet*, Jun.10, 2006, <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=4560385>, retrieved Dec. 10, 2011 and Hikmet Özdemir, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti*, (İstanbul: İz Yayınları, 1995), p.206.

²⁵³ Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *İhtilalin Mantığı ve 27 Mayıs İhtilali*, (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 7th edition, 1999), pp.180-181.

²⁵⁴ Kemal H. Karpat, *ibid.*, pp.329-330.

²⁵⁵ Ben Lombardi, Turkey: Return of the Reluctant Generals, in *'Political Science Quarterly'*, Vol. 112, No. 2 (Summer, 1997), pp. 191-215.

reached during the election campaign of 1957.²⁵⁶ Menderes felt secure in his position, knowing that the people were behind him, and hence did not think about the military.²⁵⁷

By 1959, growing hostilities between government and opposition supporters fuelled by a polarization of public opinion led to a breakdown in law and order.²⁵⁸ Although Menderes survived a plane crash near London on his way to Cyprus negotiations, on February 17, 1959, which worked to soften relations between the two sides, it did not take too long for the RPP to start an aggressive campaign against the government. In April 1959, the leader of the RPP, İsmet İnönü, started a tour of Western Anatolian cities which his followers called “Büyük Taarruz” – or “the Great Offensive”.²⁵⁹ It was named after one of the campaigns of the Turkish Independence war, a period when İnönü was commander in chief of the Western Front in Turkey. The tour was deliberately begun from Uşak, the town where İnönü took the Greek commander in chief, Nikolaos Trikopolis, as a prisoner of war.²⁶⁰

Student demonstrations in April 1960 led to violent clashes with police, with the imposition the following month of martial law in Istanbul and Ankara failing to restore order. In fact, it was the imposition of martial law that provided the catalyst for the coup, as many army officers were opposed to their mandate to fire on “even the smallest public assembly.”²⁶¹ So, in a sense, in a strange twist of events, the military resisted the anti-democratic will of the civilian government.

The stated purpose of the 1960 coup was to return the Turkish republic to the democratic reforms of Atatürk. The immediate or proximate *casus belli* was an order from Menderes to the military to arrest İnönü. But, in fact, this coup was organized and planned by the students and faculty of the War College and the Faculty of Political Science – many of the same social forces that had achieved the Young Turk Revolution of a half-century earlier.²⁶² This intervention clearly showed that the Turkish army was

²⁵⁶ Lombardi, *ibid.*; Kemal H. Karpat, “The Turkish Elections of 1957,” *The Western Political Quarterly*, Jun. 1961, pp. 43-59 and Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Vol. II: Reform, Revolution and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), Vol. II, p.411.

²⁵⁷ Aydemir, *ibid.*, p.210.

²⁵⁸ George S. Harris, ‘The role of the military in Turkey in the 1980s’, in M. Heper and A. Evin (eds.) *State Democracy and the Military*, (Berlin: deGruyter, 1988), p. 182.

²⁵⁹ Protesto Kurbanı Siyasiler (politicians who were the victims of protest, translation of author), *Sabah*, Apr, 19, 2010, http://www.sabah.com.tr/fotohaber/gundem/protesto_kurbani_siyasiler/17076, retrieved Jun. 12, 2011.

²⁶⁰ Aydemir, *ibid.*, pp.281-282.

²⁶¹ Hale, *ibid.*, pp.185-189.

²⁶² Shaw and Shaw, *ibid.* p.414.

not separate from politics. The tradition they acquired from the Ottomans, of being deeply involved in politics, was in fact still the case.

The 1971 military ultimatum

In 1971 Turkey experienced what Özbudun called a “half coup”, in which the military chose to govern from behind the scenes instead of taking over directly.²⁶³ It is also known as the “coup by memorandum.” On March 12, 1971, Chief of General Staff Memduh Tagmac handed Prime Minister Demirel what amounted to an ultimatum from the armed forces, demanding that a strong government be formed, that would be able to end “anarchy” and carry out reforms “in a Kemalist spirit.”²⁶⁴ If the demands were not met speedily, the army would “exercise its constitutional duty” and take over the administration directly.²⁶⁵

A breakdown in law and order was also the trigger for the military ultimatum of 1971. After 1968, clashes between right- and left-wing students turned especially murderous, and bank robberies and kidnappings rocked Turkey.²⁶⁶ The generals blamed the government for the disorder. By early 1971, Demirel’s government, weakened by defections, seemed to have become paralyzed. This paralysis coincided with the deterioration of the economy. Despite the controlled devaluation of the national currency in August 1970, efforts to redress the economic decline were undermined by chronic inflation (78 % from 1963 to 1968).²⁶⁷ Again, as had happened in 1960, what was seen as the abuse of the armed forces led to political intervention by the military; martial law was imposed in Istanbul in 1970.²⁶⁸ The use of the army to support an unpopular government was opposed, and the generals issued a series of proclamations and warnings. General Memduh Tagmac used his New Year’s address to issue a strong warning to “all who may try to destroy the national integrity of the republican regime and Atatürk’s reforms.”²⁶⁹ He continued:

The armed forces, whose mission is to protect the country against any danger from without or within, will smash any action directed against the country.²⁷⁰

263 Özbudun, *ibid.*, p. 21.

264 Kalaycıoğlu, *ibid.*, p. 106 and Zürcher, *ibid.*, p. 258.

265 Hale, *ibid.*, p. 185.

266 Harris, *ibid.*, pp. 185-186.

267 Burak Sansal, ‘Military interventions in Turkey,’ <http://www.allaboutturkey.com/ita/darbe.htm>, retrieved Jan. 18, 2010.

268 Zürcher, *ibid.*, p. 259.

269 Burak Sansal, *ibid.*

270 Ben Lombardi, *ibid.*,

It should also be noted that on this occasion people in Turkey kept quiet and, to a certain extent, supported the military. Commanders who did not want to take power into their own hands organized an ‘above party’ cabinet under the leadership of Nihat Erim. Erim appointed a technocratic cabinet from outside the political establishment to carry out the commanders' socio-economic reform programme.²⁷¹ The regime rested on an unstable balance of power between civilian politicians and the military; it was neither a normal elected government, nor an outright military dictatorship which could entirely ignore parliamentary opposition.²⁷² It could therefore be considered as a meritocratic government since the members were chosen according to their intellectual capacity.

The 1980 coup

Between 1973 and 1980 there were no less than ten successive governments. , and most of the time they were formed without the majority support in parliament.²⁷³ According to Özbudun, this political instability would lead to the 1980 coup.²⁷⁴ There were similarities when compared to previous interventions. In particular, the role of the military in maintaining law and order had increased to a level that the generals did not like. By early September, 1980 it was estimated that approximately 25 % of the 475,000-man army was involved in maintaining civil order, a role not welcomed by the military High Command.²⁷⁵

There were also factors that existed in 1980 that had not been present in the 1960 and 1971 interventions.²⁷⁶ As journalist Mehmet Ali Birand notes, it would have been impossible to expect them “to remain immune to the divisions and stirrings which had rent asunder the fabric of civil society.”²⁷⁷ By early 1980, senior officers were becoming increasingly alarmed that the country’s political polarization had begun to “seep into” the armed forces, as Birand has noted.²⁷⁸

²⁷¹ Feruz Ahmad, *ibid.*, pp.149-150

²⁷² William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, *ibid.*, p.195

²⁷³ Mango, *The Turks Today*, pp. 59-61 and Hale, *ibid.*, p.215.

²⁷⁴ Özbudun, *ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁷⁵ Soner Kizilkaya, ‘Bir 12 Eylül Bilancosu’, *NTV Magazine*, (September 2000), p.77.

²⁷⁶ Sühayp Aydın, 1980 darbesi neden yapıldı? (why di 1980 coup took place?), <http://www.sosyaldusunce.com/1980-darbesi-neden-yapildi/> retrieved, Dec.15, 2010 and Kenan Evren <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMSFJ0J1dZQ> retrieved, Jan.15, 2011 and

²⁷⁷ Birand, *ibid.*, p.85.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.56.

The organizers of this intervention had greater objectives than the previous ones. In many ways, the changes they brought consisted of undoing the work of their predecessors (the 1960 and 1971 coups)²⁷⁹ and declaring the 1961 constitution null and void. The 1980 junta questioned the legitimacy of the 1960 coup and blamed it for the liberal 1961 Constitution and democratic laws, denounced as a luxury it could not afford at this stage of Turkey's development. Consequently, May 27 (the date of the 1960 coup) was eliminated as a day of national celebration.²⁸⁰ Taken as a whole, the 1982 constitution and other post-1980 legislation represent a significant attempt toward de-politicization coupled with greater state control over both the legal arena and the institutional framework of the nascent civil society in Turkey. The new constitution rejected two main things: a major premise of pluralist democracy and the clarification of the position of civil society institutions. The architects of the September 12 regime desired to construct a political sphere with the state at its center and society as the periphery.²⁸¹ By 1980 the army had turned itself into an autonomous organ in Turkey. After the coup, the 1982 constitution made this position legal.²⁸²

Evren, the coup commander, was very happy with the results of the intervention as it completely stopped the social unrest within hours. He commented without a trace of irony that "those young children [the soldiers who implemented the coup] saw themselves as the lions saving the country."²⁸³ In what can only be described as a "justification tour" of the country after the intervention, Evren plainly announced that "there was no state, let alone state authority, and our intervention reminded people about the state."²⁸⁴

However, the unrest did stop after the military takeover and thousands of people including politicians, students and trade unionists were arrested – 48 of whom were executed – and strict censorship was imposed on the media. There was torture, persecution, oppression and coercion in the country.²⁸⁵ Many left Turkey and became asylum-seekers in major European countries such as Germany, France and the UK.

279 Clement H. Dodd, *The Crisis of Turkish Democracy*, (Beverly: Eothen Press, 1983), p.47.

280 Ahmad, *ibid.*, pp .214-215.

281 Binnaz Toprak, 'The State, Politics, and Religion in Turkey,' in M. Heper and A. Evin (eds.) *State Democracy and the Military*, (Berlin: deGruyter, 1988), p.127 and Kalaycigolu, *ibid.*, pp.125-127.

282 Pinar Kaya Ozcelik, '12 Eylul'u Anlamak,' *Ankara Universitesi Sosyal Bilimler Fakultesi Dergisi*, No. 66/1, (pp. 73-92), p. 91. <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/42/1595/17227.pdf>, retrieved, Jan, 18. 2014

283 Nicole & Hugh Pope, *ibid.*, p. 142.

284 Kenan Evren's Nov.2, 1982, Izmit speech, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MUBCx6cMdY>, retrieved Mar. 18, 2013.

285 Turhan, *ibid.*, p.21.

They created an anti-regime environment in Europe by informing the public about the mistreatment of the people by the military. This was not something the military would initially wanted, as these countries were providing both financial and military aid to Turkey. European leaders began to publicly criticize Turkey. As Dağı notes:

Democracy and human rights issues were repeatedly expressed publicly and privately by the West European states in their bilateral relations with Turkey. At the beginning they showed a rather mild reaction, but as time passed without much progress, and as the generals took harsh policy decisions they became tougher.²⁸⁶

Alternatively, the United States had a different way of dealing with the new situation in Turkey. It saw Turkey as a strategic ally in its fight against Soviet Communism during the Cold War. Therefore, it did not criticize the military's intervention, merely expressing its trust in the Turkish military and their promise to restore democracy. Strategic imperatives were the basis of the US approach to Turkey in the post-coup period and they prevailed over concerns about democracy and human rights. US high officials even criticized their European allies for failing to understand Turkey's problems and lobbied effectively in the Council of Europe to prevent Turkey's expulsion.²⁸⁷ However, the EC repeatedly expressed its discomfort at the general state of democracy and human rights in the country. The leaders of European countries were very clear that the EC would not deal with an anti-democratic regime; indeed, they had stopped dealing with Greece in 1967 in the wake of the coup there. As a concrete step against the military regime in Turkey, the European Commission decided not to pass the Fourth Financial Protocol to the Council of the European Community. Consequently, any possible European aid to Turkey became conditional on the restoration of civil democracy. This was a clear sign that Turkey was being isolated in European affairs, something which disturbed the military as it saw itself as a secular modernizing force.

By imposing strict censorship and putting thousands of people on trial, the 1980 military regime tried to change the political attitude of the people and to de-politicize the whole of society in an attempt to prevent future political and ideological fragmentation like that which had characterized pre-coup Turkey. The aims of the coup were expressed in the first communiqué as including "to re-establish the authority of the state and to eliminate all the factors that prevent the normal functioning of the

²⁸⁶ Dağı, *ibid.*, p.127.

²⁸⁷ Dağı, *ibid.*

democratic order.”²⁸⁸ This third intervention can therefore be seen as an attempt to ensure long-term reforms that would prevent the need for a fourth intervention. However, it should be noted that the last direct coup of 1980 did not prevent Turkish democracy from experiencing the so-called “post-modern coup” in 1997. Nor did it prevent the military from issuing a threat to the JDP government in April 2007 in the now infamous “E-coup.”

Before this however, the 1990s was another interesting period of civil military relations in Turkey. Shortly after the creation of the Task Force West (Bati Çalışma Grubu) in the naval staff division of the military, a move designed to collect evidence about “fundamentalist threats” to the state, on February 28, 1997 the military issued a memorandum to Erbakan – then head of the coalition government – that called on him to “balance democracy” and “restore the Kemalist regime”²⁸⁹ in the face of “radical Islamic threats”. In addition to institutional mechanisms such as the NSC, the military used a variety of informal mechanisms to influence policy against the government. These ranged from public pronouncements and briefings to journalists, to informal contacts with bureaucrats and politicians.²⁹⁰ As a result of the pressure applied by the military, on June 18, Prime Minister Erbakan resigned.²⁹¹ The “Modern coup” of 28th February, as it came to be known, caused the almost total disestablishment of Islamic organisations in the country.²⁹² Religious foundations, schools and other establishments were all taken under a tight scrutiny and under pressure from the military’s threat, many people tried to cut off links with these organisations.

After these events, the military restored its historically privileged position and started exercising dominance over civilian rule until almost late 2007. However, after 1999 – thanks to Turkey’s closer ties with the EU – governments began pushing forward with reforms necessary to meet European standards in democracy, as outlined by the Copenhagen Criteria. These reforms meant that there was no space for generals to set up policy agendas for the civilian authorities. The only way for governments to tackle the military was to take the modernization and westernization tools away from it and spearhead these two processes themselves. This is exactly what happened, especially after the pro-Islamic JDP’s landslide victory in the 2002 general election. Knowing well

²⁸⁸ Dağı, *ibid.*, p. 125.

²⁸⁹ Zürcher., *ibid.*, p.301.

²⁹⁰ Jenkins, *ibid.*, p.53.

²⁹¹ Kalaycıoğlu, *ibid.*, p.158.

²⁹² Cihan Tugal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), p.147

the military's stance towards them, the JDP was cautious not to make any religiously motivated moves. They left their traditional Islamist rhetoric in favor of conservative democratic discourse, allowing them to gain the backing of the well-known liberals and public figures.²⁹³

At the same time, they bore in mind the most important charge that the military could use against them, that of “religious fundamentalism” (or *İrtica* in Turkish) and “turning away from Europe.” The JDP therefore became the champions of modernization and westernization in Turkey – the two most important aspects the military was proud of being the protector of ever since the creation of the republic.

During the rule of the pro-Islamic JDP government led by Erdoğan, the military's authority on civilian rule almost completely vanished. During this quick, but very important progress Turkey made in terms of democracy, one cannot underestimate the significant role that the EU played. Below we will be evaluating in detail the chronology of this development.

The EU's impact on the civil military relations in Turkey

Although the EU had clearly showed its disapproval of the military's involvement in civilian politics, until the beginning of the 2000's EU's impact in Turkish domestic affairs was factually minimal. This was due to the fact that there was not a strong government drive since Özal, who until his death, tried to increase the authority of the civilian government over the military. Özal did try to overcome the military's presence by doing unprecedented things.

Firstly, in the hierarchical protocol order, the Prime Minister used to stand at number seven. Özal changed this to make it so that he became third, after the president, and the head of the parliament.²⁹⁴ Then, in June 1987 he vetoed Necdet Öztorun,²⁹⁵ as the chief

²⁹³ People like Ahmet Altan, Cengiz Candar and İlber Ortaylı supported the JDP in principle as they thought there must be a platform for conservative democrats to exercise their politics free of military threat.

²⁹⁴ Begum Burak, ‘Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Ordu Siyaset İlişkileri, History Studies,’ *International Journal of History*, Vol.3, No.1, (2011), http://www.historystudies.net/Makaleler/1128650304_Beg%C3%BCm%20Burak%20-%203.pdf, retrieved Sept.12, 2013

²⁹⁵ İdris Gürsoy, ‘Necdetler Operasyonunun Perde Arkası,’ *Aksiyon*, Aug. 15, 2011 <http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/aksiyon/haber-30188-195-necdetler-operasyonunun-perde-arkasi.html>, retrieved Sept.12, 2013.

of General Staff.²⁹⁶ Moreover, he ignored the foreign office and the chief of General Staff, Necip Torumtay, who was selected by Özal when he decided to ally with the USA during the first Gulf War. Torumtay resigned over this issue, thus giving Özal a third consecutive victory over the generals. However, it should be noted that at the time Özal had a very good relationship with US president, George Bush Sr., and many in Turkey knew that the army could not get its way without de-facto authorization coming from the USA, as had happened during the 1980 coup. To reiterate again, these events could have resulted from the fact that the Cold War was nearly over, and that the army was no longer perceived by both Western and Turkish politicians as the most important entity in protecting Turkey against possible Soviet aggression.

In the 1990's and early 2000's, Turkish politics lacked three important elements to subdue the military. First was the absence of a strong domestic political actor. The second element was the insecurity felt within the country as internal security threats reached an all-time high, and finally, insufficient international assistance.

During this time, no civilian authority could undertake the task of fighting the army single handedly, due to the fact that the government was invariably led by coalitions with rarely any unanimity with regarding internal and external matters. Again, traditional Kemalist elites and the dominant media always supported and promoted the army, viewing this as the only stable and powerful institution that could support them and their privileges. These elites strongly believed that Turkey's geographical conditions required a special type of democracy²⁹⁷ where the army occupied a central place. To them, Turkey was encircled by a ring of fire: Armenia, Syria, and Greece all laid claims to Turkish land, and with Iran and other Middle Eastern countries considered too religious and a threat to Turkey's secularism, while the Kurds posed an internal threat to Turkey's unity. For Kemalists, the lack of a strong civilian government which could keep the people together against all of these perceived threats meant that the army became critically important.

Moreover, the increasing terrorist activities of the Kurdish separatist group, the PKK, made both the military and general population in the country believe that soldiers were the most important people in maintaining peace in the country against an international

²⁹⁶ Necdet Ozturun has started using his future title even before he was officially declared as the Chief of the General Staff. In his invitation to the Prime Minister General Ozturun signed the document as the Chief of General Staff which Özal found unacceptable.

²⁹⁷ Özlem Terzi, *The Influence of the European Union on Turkish Foreign Policy*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), p.61

conspiracy that wanted to divide Turkey. This conspiracy, in their eyes, had been ongoing ever since the First World War. The years 1992 to 1995 were seen as especially critical times in terms of general terrorist activities and unrest as well as violent crackdowns on many civilian and other groups in southeastern Turkey. During this time media coverage was dominated by military activities in the southeast with regular scenes of funeral ceremonies for fallen soldiers, as well as coverage of other internal and external threats to the country.

Lastly, although Turkey was trying to get ever closer to the EU, as seen in the successful bid to secure a Customs Union deal in 1995, there were few other steps that had been taken towards membership since the first application was made in 1987. As a result, external assistance and guidance from the EU caused the civilian authority to feel weak when compared to the military. This worked to give the military the sense that it occupied first place in the eyes of the public. This was only intensified when the Islamically-rooted Welfare Party (WP) of Erbakan won the general election on 24 December 1995 with 21.8 % of the vote which gave it 158 MPs in Parliament.

This result created tension between segments of the military and civilian leaders.²⁹⁸ Army chiefs, who never did anything tangible to get close to the West besides rhetorical commitments, were worried that a religious party could move Turkey away from its 'western orientation'. A large part of the media was behind the military's stance against the WP. This also included many left-wing politicians. It is worth mentioning here that some influential conservative politicians, like former Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, openly showed their disapproval of the involvement of the military in politics. In one of her rallies, Ciller, the first female Prime Minister of Turkey, who was also a professor of economics and a well-known western-leaning democrat, stated that "[the] Public wants the military to get out of the politics and stick to soldiering"²⁹⁹

As well as many of the internal dynamics, external support for the military was also incremental during the aforementioned years. As already mentioned, American support for the military during the Cold War was one of the main reasons it felt its involvement in politics was justified and was vital to keeping Turkey a western oriented and secularist state. However, this is not to say that Turkey lost its importance entirely for the West after the Cold War. When the superpower rivalry was over, Turkey continued

²⁹⁸ Burak, *ibid.*

²⁹⁹ Marvine Howe, *Turkey: A Nation Divided Over Islam's Revival*, (Colorado: Westview Press, Boulder, 2000), p.144

to perceive its geographic location as a military asset which offered the opportunity to act as a bridge, or a barrier, between the West and the energy resources in the Middle East.³⁰⁰ Especially the American involvement in the Middle East and Iraq at the beginning of the 1990's and Turkey's active support of American policies in the region once again made the military the country's most important foreign policy tool. Due to the fact that the Turkish military had allied itself with Western powers, much literature and media coverage also clearly promoted the notion that the military was a secularist organization. For example, Weede argued that "Turkey is still the best example of a Muslim democracy, but Turkish democracy is strongly guided by the secularist armed forces, which makes the democratic character of the regime dubious."³⁰¹ Again Chomsky argued that the American media will not pay attention to many negative aspects in Turkey.³⁰²

It is important to note that the military's traditional place in Turkish politics was always seen as a headache in terms of Turkey-EU relations. Thanks to its military, Turkey officially became part of the western alliance system in the 1950s due to its membership of NATO. Over the last five decades, however, and especially during EU negotiations, the same army that had forced Turkey to orientate itself westwards now became an obstacle for Turkey's western-oriented policies. In one sense, the military was confused about whether it should support the EU or not, and the military frequently caused tension in negotiations with the EU over accession, acting as a barrier which prevented the country from meeting the Copenhagen Criteria which has steered EU enlargement since the early 1990's.³⁰³ Still, it would be the democratization process, strengthened by the EU's accession conditionality (the *acquis communautaire*)³⁰⁴, that

³⁰⁰ Terzi, *ibid.*, p.p.56-57

³⁰¹ Erich Weede, 'The Diffusion of Prosperity and Peace by Globalisation', in Robert Higgs and Carl P. Close (ed.), *Opposing the Crusader State: Alternatives to Global Interventionism*, (Oakland: The Independent Institute, 2007), p. 254

³⁰² Noam Chomsky, *World Orders, Old and New*, (London: Pluto Press, 1994), p.15

³⁰³ Burak Akçapar, *Turkey's New European Era: Foreign Policy on the Road to EU Membership*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2007), p. 168

³⁰⁴ Both "acquis" and "communautaire" are French expressions. Acquis, meaning "something that has been acquired/ achieved", and communautaire meaning "of the community" The Acquis Communautaire is the accumulated body of European Union (EU) law and obligations from 1958 to the present day. It comprises all the EU's treaties and laws (directives, regulations, and decisions), declarations and resolutions, international agreements and the judgments of the Court of Justice. It also includes action that EU governments take together in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice and under the Common Foreign and Security Policy. New EU Member States must accept all the existing acquis - some elements of it during a transitional period - and put in place mechanisms to adopt future elements of the acquis. The Court of Justice has ruled that the EU acquis takes precedence over national law if there is a conflict, and that the acquis may have direct effect in the Member States. Vaughne Miller, *The EU's Acquis*

would change the role and position of the military in policy making.³⁰⁵ Due to the EU's harmonization reform packages, which had to be implemented, by 2007 the military's authority over the civilian government had weakened and by the end of 2014 it was reduced almost to zero. This progress will be explained in detail below.

Reform and Progress in civilian-military relations

The military's strict control over civilian rule did not last too long after a clear confrontation had begun between the self-styled secularist forces and the Islamic political activists during the second half of 1990's. This fight became most overt in 1997 after the military dominated NSC forced the coalition government, headed by Erbakan – the predecessor of the now ruling JDP – to resign.³⁰⁶

However, by the end of 2007, just a decade after their massive victory against political Islam³⁰⁷, the military had almost totally lost control over civilian authorities. There is no doubt that the political balance shifted in favor of civilians thanks to the EU's conditionality rules – considered in this research as the main force behind the reform programs put in place by the JDP governments in Turkey since 2002.

Up until 2007, the military was the main 'secular force' in the conflict between sections of Turkish society who were secularist and the more politically Islamist ones (or those with an ideology similar to Turkey's current President, Erdoğan),³⁰⁸ which also included religiously motivated movements like the Nurcus. In this long running conflict, the military had maintained its position of strength by forging close relations with the most important elements of the Turkish state, such as the judiciary, including the Constitutional Court (which decided on the closure of the political parties), as well as various ministries. It also found close allies within the secularist media circles and business environment which controlled the majority of the mass media and the industrial output in Turkey.³⁰⁹

Communautaire, SN/IA/5944 House of Commons Library, International Affairs and Defence Section, Apr. 26, 2011, p.p.1-2

³⁰⁵ Terzi, *ibid.*, p.60

³⁰⁶ Tugal, *ibid.*

³⁰⁷ Ideology that pursues the belief that Islam should guide political, social and economic life

³⁰⁸ It has to be noted here that the JDP had many types of people within its ranks from nationalists to liberals and secularist including former RPP politicians such as Ertugrul Gunay.

³⁰⁹ Ümit Cizre, 'A New Politics of Engagement: The Turkish Military, Society and the AKP', in Ahmet T. Kuru and Alfred C. Stephan 9ed.), *Democracy, Islam and Secularism in Turkey*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p.p. 122-148 (p.122)

As civilian authorities in Turkey could not single handedly change the nature of civilian-military relations in favor of the former, external assistance and guidance was crucially necessary. Therefore, both the 1999 Helsinki and 2004 Brussels summits can be seen as watershed moments in Turkish political history. After both of these summits, Turkey passed reform packages necessary to meet European democratic standards. These reforms focused on the EU's most significant reservations about Turkish politics and policies, including civil military relations.³¹⁰

1999 Helsinki Council and aftermath

After the Helsinki Summit where Turkey was officially accepted as a 'Candidate Country', many official documents, such as annual progress reports, criticized both the level of democracy and the military's position in Turkey. The main criticisms in these documents generally centred on the institutional aspects of democratic control. In this respect, the status of the Chief of the General Staff (nominally under the prime minister), the role of the National Security Council in Turkish political life, the lack of an effective civilian control over the military / defence budget³¹¹ the removal of military representatives from the civilian boards and amendments to military courts constituted the main focus of reform. As Yıldırım notes:

Looking at EU's official reports concerning Turkey, reform process in civil-military relations can be divided into four parts, the transformation of the role and composition of the National Security Council, the transparency of the defense budget, the removal of the military representatives from the civilian boards and amendment of military courts.³¹²

Due to the Helsinki summit, political life in Turkey began to change dramatically. This is because the decisions made there meant that Turkey needed to meet the Copenhagen political criteria in order to become a full member of the Union. The Turkish government had a strong incentive for its democratization and political reforms, that is, the distinct possibility of full membership of the EU, but only if it fulfilled the latter's political conditions. This was also the first time that Turkey was given a clear

³¹⁰ Müftüler-Baç, 'Turkey's Political Reforms and the Impact of the European Union', *South European Society and Politics*, Vol: 10, No:1, pp.16-30, (Mar.2005), p.21

³¹¹ Ali Güney and Petek Karatekelioğlu, Turkey's EU candidacy and Civil-Military Relations: Challenges and Prospects, *Armed Forces & Society*, No: 31/3, (Spring 2005), p.p. 439-462 (this quota from pp.443-444)

³¹² Çağrı Yıldırım, *ibid.*

perspective for membership; this, in turn, increased the impact of the EU on Turkey's political Europeanization process.³¹³ According to the EU Commission:

The basic features of a democratic system exist in Turkey, but a number of fundamental issues, such as civilian control over the military, remain to be effectively addressed.³¹⁴

In every official communication between Turkey and the EU, one of the most important obstacles for Turkey was cited as the army's regular involvement in civilian politics. In simple terms Turkey needed to fulfill the EU conditionality which is the core strategy of the Union to induce non-Member States to comply with its principles of legitimate statehood,³¹⁵ or, in Birsen's words:

The European Union has set a number of common and legitimate values upon which stands the membership of each candidate country. These values are accepted not only by the European members, but are also part of the overall international community and the United Nations.³¹⁶

Turkish leaders were excited about the decision of the EU in 1999, however, they were also very cautious not to make the military restless. In his speech in the aftermath of the Helsinki summit decision, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit, a well-known left-wing secularist politician, said that the, "Turkish state would not grant freedom to those who oppose secularism" before adding that "the NSC was not an impediment to Turkish democracy."³¹⁷ Basically, he was worried that with the EU rapprochement, political Islam would gain momentum and only the military could stop it. By trying to clarify the NCS's position he was also making it obvious that the EU was not happy with this institution within Turkish democracy. After the so-called 'Post-Modern coup' of 1997, the military exercised special powers over civilians in such matters connected to internal and external affairs. For example, when local governors had to be informed about security matters, the military did not consult the civilian authority first, but went straight to the governors. Again, as regards external affairs connected to countries such as Israel, USA and EU member states, the military had a near monopoly, thus influencing the

³¹³ Müftüleri-Baç, *ibid.*, p.20

³¹⁴ European Commission Report on Turkey, 2001, p.32

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2001/tu_en.pdf, retrieved Oct. 22, 2013.

³¹⁵ Akçapar, *ibid.*, pp.167-168 and Schimmelfenning et al., 'Costs, Commitment and Compliance: The Impact of EU Democratic Conditionality on Latvia, Slovakia and Turkey,' *Journal of Common Market Studies*, (2003), Vol. 41, No.3, p. 495, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jcms.2003.41.issue-3/issuetoc>, retrieved Nov. 10, 2014.

³¹⁶ Erdoğan Birsen, 'Compliance with EU Democratic conditionality: Turkey and the political criteria of the EU,' *Netherlands Institute of Human Rights*, (Sep.2006), Paper submitted for ECPR, Utrecht, The Netherlands, p. 7, <http://www.jhubc.it/ecpr-istanbul/virtualpaperroom/042.pdf>, retrieved Mar. 18, 2014.

³¹⁷ Mehmet Ali Birand, *Türkiye'nin Avrupa Macerasi: 1959-1999*, (Istanbul: Dogan Kitap, 2000), p.544

foreign ministry to a large degree³¹⁸. But the decision in Helsinki was going to have a great impact on the way the military operated in Turkey.

As Eralp states, the Helsinki framework required a major mental shift of orientation in the attitudes of both the EU and Turkish officials towards creating a more cooperative relationship. This summit also called for major political and economic reforms in Turkey. The EU actively stimulated these reforms through the publication of its Accession Partnership document which was announced in November 2000. As a result, the EC listed the short and medium term economic and political priorities aimed at the transformation of the Turkish state in line with the Copenhagen Criteria. The political measures in the document were designed to create a more liberal and pluralistic order and the economic measures focused on the achievement of macroeconomic stability and an effective regulatory structure.³¹⁹ The Accession Partnership Documents also openly criticized the State Security Courts which included both civilian and military judges. These courts tried cases involving crimes against the security of the state and organized crime, and were one of the main reasons of criticism from the EU as they had been accused of human rights violations.

Although in the immediate aftermath of the Helsinki Summit some changes were made with the introduction of EU Harmonisation Reform Packages, Turkey could only start to implement the major changes by the end of 2001 due to the dire financial crisis it was fighting in 2000 and early 2001. As well as this financial crisis, the weakness of the coalition government was also a factor. With the introduction of the first (February 19, 2002) and the second harmonization packages (April 9, 2002) the status of the State Security Courts which were created by the military regime in 1980 were changed. With the third package the structure of the NSC was an important area the government begun to address.

³¹⁸ Due to USA's agenda in the Middle East during and after the Cold War, Turkey had very special relations with Israel. Especially the militaries of both countries, since 1950's were cooperating in technology, intelligence, joint military exercises and so on. Again due to Turkish officers continuously being part of NATO operations they had influence over the foreign affairs especially at the NSC meetings.

³¹⁹ Atilla Eralp, 'Turkey and the European Union', in Lenore G. Martin and Dimitris Kerides (ed.), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002), pp.79-80

Harmonisation Package And Law number	Date accepted	Date officialised	Connection to the military
1- 4744	6 February 2002	19 February 2002	
2- 4748	26 March 2002	9 April 2002	Changes in the State Security Courts
3- 4771	3 August 2002	9 August 2002	Job description and specification of the gendarmerie force Changes in the Radio and Television Broadcasting
4- 4778	2 January 2003	11 January 2003	Changes in the State Security Courts
5- 4793	23 January 2003	4 February 2003	
6- 4928	15 July 2003	19 July 2003	Changes in the State Security Courts, internal security threats
7- 4963	30 July 2003	7 August 2003	Military courts law number 11 NSC and NSC Secretariat laws 4, 5, 9, 13, 15, 19
8- 5218	14 July 2004	21 July 2004	
9-		12 April 2006	Military courts

Table 1- EU Harmonization Packages after 2000

As Eralp writes in response to the Accession Partnership Document, the Turkish government prepared the Turkish National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis which was submitted to the EC in March 2001. This was a major attempt to meet the political and economic requirements of the EU. Turkish authorities focused on the political aspects of the National Program in the later part of 2001 and in 2002. For this purpose, 34 amendments to the constitution were made, primarily in the areas of human rights, freedom of expression and freedom of organization.³²⁰ At first, significant changes related to the position of the military in Turkey were not included in these amendments. However, they were followed by harmonization laws designed to translate the constitutional amendments into concrete action by bringing Turkish laws in line with the acquis.³²¹ On August 3, 2002 with the introduction of the third Harmonization package the death penalty was abolished. Then gender equality in marriage and amendment of the laws regarding freedom of the press was passed, as well as minorities being granted the right to learn and broadcast in their mother-tongues.

³²⁰ Atilla Eralp, *ibid*, p. 80

³²¹ *Ibid.*, p.80

One of the most significant steps towards empowering civilian rule was the restructuring of the NSC. The reform packages which were undertaken to comply with the Copenhagen political criteria have changed the composition and function of the NSC, despite the remaining influence of the military in Turkish politics. Originally, the number of civilian and military members was equal, but the amendment of October 2001 in the constitution granted a civilian majority in its composition by adding deputy prime ministers and the justice minister to the NSC. Article 118 was changed from “The cabinet will give priority to the decisions of the NSC” to “The cabinet will take NSC’s advice into consideration”³²² Although these changes were simple words they meant a lot in terms of the legitimacy of the military interventions into civilian matters. It needed to pass through the TGNA. A proposal to make the constitutional changes into law was sent to the parliament on December 28, 2001. Due to the ill state of the coalition the proposal did not pass in parliament until January 15, 2003.

Also within the Second EU Harmonization Reform Package which came into force on April 9, 2002, the job description and specification of the gendarmerie force was changed to not allow any of its military personnel to fulfill civilian positions in local districts as acting officers.³²³ Consequently, the reforms introduced to meet the EU’s demands after the 1999 decision begun to impact on the military’s position when compared to before the coming to power of the JDP. However, it was clear that any direct confrontation with the military was still to be avoided and many issues related to foreign affairs were directed by the generals who had a strong presence within this ‘advisory body’. During Ecevit’s time in office (1999-2002), the NCS continued to advise the civilian authority in terms of internal and external matters and in the Copenhagen European Council in December 2002 recalled its decision in 1999 in Helsinki which stated that:

Turkey is a candidate State destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate States. It strongly welcomes the important steps taken by Turkey towards meeting the Copenhagen criteria, in particular through the recent legislative packages and the subsequent implementation measures which cover a large number of key priorities specified in the Accession Partnership. The Union acknowledges the determination of the new Turkish government to take further steps on the path of reform and urges in particular the government to address swiftly all remaining shortcomings in the field of the political criteria, not only with

³²² Hilal Köylü, ‘MGK’da Sivil Dömen Basliyor’, *Radikal*, Aug. 2, 2004 and Terzi, *ibid*, p.62

³²³ Türkiye’de Siyasi Reform, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Official Document of the EU Reform Packages), Secretariat General for EU Affairs, (Ankara: M&B Tanitim Hizmetleri, 2007), p. 10 <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/files/pub/tsr.pdf>, Retrieved Sept. 16, 2014

regard to legislation but also in particular with regard to implementation. The Union recalls that, according to the political criteria decided in Copenhagen in 1993, membership requires that a candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.³²⁴

This was a clear indication that Turkey was heading in the right direction in terms of reform programs but there was still a lot to do. However, the power of the coalition government was diminishing day by day and the military still occupied center stage in Turkish politics. Ecevit's poor health made the situation worse, as there were rumors that the military and secularist media wanted him out so that they could put his deputy, Husamettin Özkan, in charge of the government. Özkan, however, refused to do so.³²⁵

Nevertheless, until November 3, 2002, this coalition government successfully passed three EU harmonization packages and put them into force by the time the JDP, a party where liberalizing ex-radicals were in the steering wheel, came to power on November 3, 2002. It was now the religiously-motivated JDP's turn to continue with the reform movement that would successfully subdue the army by 2011.

JDP and the civilian-military relations

Following JDP's landslide election victory in November 2002, a conflict between civilians and the military was seen to be inevitable. These two institutions were completely against each other concerning fundamental issues such as the place of religion and the extent of secularism in Turkey. The military deeply held conviction that, if unchecked, political Islam would emerge as a fundamental threat to the established secular regime. For example, while the military was the avatar of the Kemalist secularist regime, the JDP wanted religion to occupy more space in public sphere. To be able to overcome the threat of the military, the JDP reformed its image as the champions of the Europeanization program. As Cizre writes:

The new government adopted a Europeanist posture in foreign policy, coupled with a reformist domestic agenda. If effectively implemented this posture would, by

³²⁴ Copenhagen European Council Dec,12-13, 2002, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/73842.pdf, Retrieved Oct.31 2013

³²⁵ Idris Gürsoy, 'Askerler Ecevit'ten DSP'yi istedi,' *Aksiyon*, Mar.14, 2011 and Sevilay Yukselir, 'Ecevit'in hastaligi "proje" miydi?', "100% siyaset," *A Haber*, <http://www.ahaber.com.tr/webtv/videoizle/-100-siyaset>, retrieved Nov.10, 2013

prioritising democracy over security, inevitably diminish the influence of the traditional centres of power, most notably that of the Turkish army's.³²⁶

As well as the changes in the pro-Islamic image there were many other reasons why things were shifted in favour of civilian rule. These included the changing attitudes and rhetoric of pro-Islamist politicians, the support of liberal elites for politicians who supported Turkey's membership into the EU, and the impact of continued EU initiated reform programs in Turkish domestic politics. It should be clearly noted that if the EU had not supported the democratization process the JDP would never have found the strength from any of the aforementioned factors to take on the military in Turkey. Therefore, this thesis argues that, in a sense, by trying to negotiate its membership with the EU, Turkey was also using the EU journey as a tool to challenge the military's invincible power in its domestic politics.

Nevertheless this transition was not as easy as some considered. As Tugal mentions:

Following the JDP's election victory in 2002, Kemalist journalists and politicians intermittently voiced their suspicion that the JDP was still an Islamist party. As proof they claimed despite a cosmetic change in the national showcase of the party, that the party apparatus remained unchanged in popular neighborhoods and provincial towns- deeply Islamist.³²⁷

In addition to the reasons mentioned above, the JDP was also very lucky that a moderate secularist Hilmi Özkök was Chief of the Turkish General Staff (TGS) at the time when they came to power in 2002. He was known to respect the will of the majority in Turkey. General Özkök sought to develop a *modus vivendi* with the AKP government. Özkök questioned the wisdom of the military interventions in the past, expressed his trust in the judgment of the electorate, and did his best to insulate the military from day to day politics. The military departed from this accommodating position when confronted with what it perceived as attempts to undermine secularism. During the İmam Hatip³²⁸ Schools controversy in 1997 the military declared that the

³²⁶ Ümit Cizre, *ibid.*, pp.134-135

³²⁷ Cihan Tugal, *ibid.* p.147

³²⁸ İmam Hatip literary means 'Preacher'. These schools were established in the hope that they would produce İmam Hatips. However, graduates of these schools went to universities and left to find jobs in other professions. This was the main reason why the army became worried. They saw that these schools were the places stimulating religiously motivated political views. The significant growth of the number of İmam Hatip Schools and their graduates also worried the military. For example, in 1963 there were about 9300 graduates while in 1978 this number reached 150.000 and by 1995 it was more than 500.000. Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States*, (Washington DC.: The Brooking Institution, 2000), p. 61

proposal to allow the graduates from this school to compete on an equal footing with graduates of other educational institutions in admission to non-theology faculties at university violated the secular premise of the republic.³²⁹

The military, however, did not resist changes in civil military relations that were introduced via the harmonisation packages that sought to bring Turkey's institutional framework more in line with EU standards. The most important of these changes was the reform of the NSC, which was divested of its executive power and turned into a purely advisory body; it went from a largely military membership to a civilian majority, with a civilian appointed as secretary general in 2004.³³⁰

Although the fourth (January 2003)³³¹ and the fifth harmonisation packages (February 4, 2003) did not have much to do with the military's position, the JDP government legislated for some of the changes which were proposed to the parliament during Ecevit's government in the years 1999 to 2002.³³² According to these changes the number of civilian participants in the NSC was legally increased while the number of military members was reduced. Moreover, with the new amendment, the meetings were to take place less frequently and serve as purely recommendations to the government. The amendment changed the Statue of the NSC Secretariat General, which was previously classified, into an unclassified one. At the same time it also changed the Secretariat Generals internal composition by closing down the Community Relations Department which was responsible for the conduct of the psychological operations on the public.³³³

Although these changes were improving the credibility of Turkish democracy, the presence of the NSC in politics was still remarkable and the weakness of civil society was obvious. Retired generals such as Sener Eruygur still chaired some of the most important civil society organisations, like the Atatürkist Thought Society (ATS [Tr.:Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği, ADD]). Civil society organisations were being used to influence the political life of the country. As mentioned by Rumelili and Cakmakli;

The need for Turkey to consolidate its democracy is frequently emphasized and the role of civil society is seen as crucial for democratization. The EU has increasingly made efforts to

³²⁹ Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, (Santa Monica: RAND National Defence Research Institute, 2008), pp.68-69 and Metin Heper, 'The Justice and Development Party Government and the Military in Turkey,' *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 6, No.2, Jun. 2005.

³³⁰ Rabasa and Larrabee, *ibid*, p.69

³³¹ This package indirectly related to the military as it included amendment to the State Security Courts (article 16/4)

³³² Sometimes it is referred as the 57th Government.

³³³ Terzi, *ibid*, p.63

strengthen civil society actors in candidate countries as a means to enhance the level of political participation in these countries as a fundamental to democracy.³³⁴

For instance, the National Security Strategy Document was still prepared by the NSC and then adopted by the government without a parliamentary debate. To Terzi, this is one of the most controversial issues concerning the influence of the military over politics, since it severely diminished the power of the government to determine what is to be perceived as a threat and what is not from a political point of view. In this way, many political issues ended up being securitized without leaving space for discussion.³³⁵ Due to fear of the generals, even a powerful government like the JDP stayed away from initiating its own agenda to move the military away from politics too quickly. One of the reasons behind this could be the fact that JDP, which is known to find much of its support among conservative and religious-orientated groups, did not want to take on the military by themselves. They wanted to take their time and gain momentum with the help of the EU and other bodies such as the Nurcu movement³³⁶.

The sixth harmonization package, which entered into force on July 19, 2003, introduced significant legal changes that further expanded freedom of expression, religious freedom, and the Law on the Establishment and Broadcasts of Radio and Television Stations³³⁷ which was connected to the military's power to monitor what was broadcast. One other important element of this package was that the government did not submit the bills to the NSC before it was brought to the TGNA. With this move, the JDP broke an unwritten grand rule which assumed the government would go to the NSC first.³³⁸

³³⁴ Bahar Rumelili and Didem Cakmakli, Culture in EU Turkey Relations, in Jozef Batora and Monika Mokre (ed.), Culture and External Relations: Europe and Beyond, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), p.113

³³⁵ Terzi, *ibid.*, p.63

³³⁶ Nurcu Movement (Nur meaning divine light) was originally founded by Said Nursi (Known to his followers as Bediuzzaman – literally means the unique person of his time). It has several branches but the largest of them is currently led by Fethullah Gülen (known to his followers as Hocaefendi-Esteemed teacher) who lives a self-exiled life in the USA since 1999. The Nurcu Movement attempts to reconcile religious faith with scientific knowledge. The branch of the Nurcus (or Nurcular in Turkish) that is loyal to Gülen is also known as the Gülenists (or Gülençiler in Turkish). They have got enormous network of schools, companies and institutions across the globe. Iren Özgür, Islamic Schools in Modern Turkey: Faith, Politics, and Education, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp.119-120. The Gülenist movement who had great relationship with the JDP until late 2012 is now considered as a “parallel state” or dark forces that are trying to take over the government. As of February 2015 members of this organisation suffers heavy state scrutiny.

³³⁷ Political Reforms In Turkey, *ibid.*, p.13

³³⁸ Isil Abisgil and Samil Tayyar, ‘Uyumda Ortayol Arayisi’, *Sabah*, May 31, 2003

This package was considered to be one of the most controversial and bold moves by the JDP. Not only had it included delicate changes, it also created debates within the JDP regarding which parliamentary commission should deal with these changes.³³⁹ With this package a number of amendments were enacted to the Law on the Establishment and Broadcasts of Radio and Television Stations. Article 3 was amended to reduce the restrictions in relation to monitoring. An amendment to Article 6 removed the representative of the Secretariat General for the NSC from the Board of Supervision.³⁴⁰ With the abolishment of the National Security Political Secretariat, Public Relations Secretariat and Information Secretariat of the NSC, the scope of this institution was reduced to just an advisory body. Therefore, this was another important step forward, thanks to the EU, towards the goal of making politics in the country be governed by civilians.

Although the EC was happy with the changes it still demanded more because the NSC was still an important institution where the military influenced many decisions affecting the state. Moreover, whenever military chiefs made speeches, the media paid as much attention to them as to the civilian leaders of the country. In simple terms, although laws were changing to limit the military's reach, in public life they were still seen as important actors. Therefore, the EC wanted further reforms so the military could internalize the changes. As a result, by the time the Seventh Reform Package was introduced in 2003, the progress of EU reforms had already prepared the way for a diminished military influence on the policies of educational, arts and broadcasting institutions.³⁴¹

The landmark seventh harmonization package, which entered into force on August 7, 2003, introduced significant changes in the context of the civilian-military relations and the functionality of the executive, by a series of amendments enacted to the Penal Code, Law on the Establishment and Trial Procedures of Military Courts, and the Law on the NSC and the Secretariat General of the NSC. With this reform package, 'the NSC or the parallel government',³⁴² which was previously the main institution of army influence,

³³⁹ Esat Pala, 'MGK'da Yeni Duzen', *Hurriyet*, Nov.30,2003.

³⁴⁰ Pala *ibid.*, Köylü, *ibid.*, and Political Reforms In Turkey, *ibid.*, p.14

³⁴¹ Yıldırım, *ibid.*,

³⁴² Heath W. Lowry, 'Betwixt and Between: Turkey's Political Structure on the Cusp of the 21st Century' in M. Abromowitz (ed.), *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy*, (New York: Century Foundation Press, 2000), p.48

was transformed from being an executive decision-making board into an advisory board.³⁴³

The seventh package also included a number of amendments pertaining to the jurisdiction of military courts over civilians, the auditing of public transactions, as well as reference to the military expenditures and provisions regarding the Secretarial General of the NSC. The amendment to Article 11 of the Law on the Establishment and Trial Procedures of Military Courts removed cases related to criminal offenses, such as inciting soldiers to mutiny and disobedience, discouraging the public from military duty and undermining national resistance, from the jurisdiction of military courts if these offenses were committed by civilians.³⁴⁴

The package also added an article to the Law on the Court of Accounts that introduced provisions that allow the Court to audit accounts and transactions, upon the request of the Parliament, in all areas where public means are used, including those of all kinds of institutions except the Presidency of the Republic and organisations, funds, establishments, companies, cooperatives, unions, foundations, associations and similar bodies which benefit from public resources. The package provided for the drafting of a bylaw to establish the principles and procedures to be observed when auditing state property in the possession of the Armed Forces.³⁴⁵

As mentioned previously, via the NSC, the military exercised special controls over civilians. The government in Turkey tried to change this after 1999 with the help and guidance of EU conditionality. An Internal Service Act was adopted by Turkish Armed Forces following the 1960 intervention. Article 35 of this Act stated that the armed forces would defend the country against internal and external threats. This article was seen as the main justification behind the military interventions. Although the NCS was reduced to just an advisory body this article was not changed until 2013. Finally, with the constitutional change by the TGNA on July 13, 2013, this article was changed to prevent possible future interventions once and for all.³⁴⁶

Article 4 of the Law on the NSC and the Secretariat General of the NSC were amended to revise the duties and authority of the Council in order to prevent the

³⁴³ İsmet Akca and Evren Balta Paker, 'Beyond Military Tutelage: Turkish Military Politics and the AKP Government', in Canan Sokullu (ed.), *Debating Security in Turkey: Challenges and Changes in the Twenty-First Century*, (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2013), p.80

³⁴⁴ Political Reforms In Turkey, *ibid.*, p.17

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.17

³⁴⁶ Fahir Arıkan, 'TSK 35. Madde Degistirildi,' (Turkish Armed Forces Article 35 has been Changed) *Hurriyet*, Jul. 14, 2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/23718265.asp>, retrieved Oct.12, 2013

misinterpretation of its advisory role. The package repealed Articles 9 and 14 of this Law that gave the Secretariat General certain executive powers. The amendment to Article 13 aligned the duties and authority of the Secretariat General with those of the Council, limiting them to the functions of a secretariat for the Council. The amendment to Article 5 increased the time period between regular National Security Council meetings from one month to two and repealed the prerogative of the Chief of General Staff to convene a meeting. Article 15 was amended to revise the appointment procedure of the Secretary-General of the NSC. The Secretary-General will now be appointed upon the proposal of the Prime Minister and the approval of the President, allowing a civilian to serve in this office.

The package repealed Article 19 of the Law, which provided that “the Ministries, public institutions and organisations and private legal persons shall submit regularly, or when requested, non-classified and classified information and documents needed by the Secretariat General of the NSC.” The preparation of a new bylaw in conformity with these amendments to replace the current bylaw on the rules and procedures regarding the Secretariat General was provided for by the package. The new bylaw was published in the Official Gazette on January 8, 2004. The Parliament adopted a law on December 10, 2003 that abrogated the confidentiality of the bylaw and the staff of the Secretariat General of the National Security Council.³⁴⁷

With seven successive harmonization programs Turkey was even closer to the EU. After the changes made their way to the statute books, the NSC secretariat no longer had the authority to monitor the implementation of its recommendations on behalf of the president and the prime minister. EU pressure has been crucial in changing the balance within the NSC in favour of its civilian members and thus paving the way for a more civilian influenced foreign policy.³⁴⁸ Previously the army used to exercise special powers over foreign affairs agenda setting via the NSC. It was also the most important institution in internal affairs and the general security issues. Because the agenda in the NCS meetings was set and monitored by the security staff, namely the military, many concerns including the Kurdish issue were considered to be security matters rather than political problems. Therefore the Turkish politics was also primarily driven by security concerns. However, changes induced by the EU in relation to civil-military relations contributed to a process of ‘de-securisation’ of Turkish politics and society, whereby

³⁴⁷ Political Reforms in Turkey, *ibid*, pp.17-18

³⁴⁸ Terzi, *ibid.*, p. 63

issues were moved from the security agenda back onto the political one.³⁴⁹ With this having been completed, the JDP government successfully put in place its ‘Democratization package’ to solve the Kurdish issue without using military methods. Therefore, it can be argued here that the EU is the main driving force behind the current process of ‘peaceful solution to the Kurdish question’ in Turkey.

Thus the institutional changes in the making of internal and foreign policy have been achieved through EU conditionality and prove a strong example of the Europeanization process.³⁵⁰ Generally speaking, the period between 1999 and 2004 has witnessed radical changes in Turkish politics and society due to the EU requirements for reforms in legislation on various issues accompanied by increasing economic stability, unprecedented levels of foreign investment, and growing competitiveness of the private sector.³⁵¹

After the Seventh Reform Package other reforms to the Constitution were passed. Another huge shift occurred in June 2004 as the State Security Courts were formally abolished. The move was heralded by the government as a turning point due to the fact that these courts were seen as the main source of human rights violations by international organisations such as Amnesty International.³⁵²

As Terzi argues, another crucial aspect of the civilian-military balance in Turkish domestic politics is civilian empowerment, whereby the civilian government took control over not only military matters, but also life in the country in general – from economics to social issues. As a result this brought a new norm in Turkish democracy: civilian oversight of the security sector.³⁵³ This meant that some of the most important internal and external concerns such as PKK terrorism that had drawn many in Turkey to supporting the military for nearly three decades was going to be dealt with via political rather than military means. This was something the EU wanted to happen.

The Law abolishing the death penalty and amendments to various other laws, also known as the 8th Harmonization Package, was adopted by Parliament on July 14,

³⁴⁹ Atilla Eralp and Zerrin Torun, *Europeanization of Turkish Politics and Policies: Past, Present and Future*, in Belgin Akcay and Bahri Yılmaz (ed.), *ibid.* p.29

³⁵⁰ Terzi, *ibid.*, p. 63

³⁵¹ Eralp and Torun, *ibid.*, p.29

³⁵² Koksal Bayraktar, *Turkey, Justice Delayed and Denied: The persistence of protracted and unfair trials for those charged under anti-terrorism legislation*, *Amnesty International*, Sep. 2006

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR44/013/2006/en/e83c909f-d3fe-11dd-8743-d305bea2b2c7/eur440132006en.pdf>, retrieved Dec.12, 2013

³⁵³ Terzi, *ibid.*, p.64

2004.³⁵⁴ With the amendment of various laws in line with the constitutional amendments of 7 May 2004, the death penalty was abolished and replaced with an aggravated life sentence. Many people, especially right-wing supporters argued that this was changed due to the fact that the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, had already been sentenced to death and was awaiting execution. They believed that the EU did not want him dead in order to make him the “Mandela of Kurds”³⁵⁵ so that one day he could be freed and used to split the southeastern regions from mainland Turkey.

In this context, with the amendment of the Law on Higher Education, the provision allowing for the selection of one member of the Higher Education Council by the General Staff was also repealed.³⁵⁶ This was also a good sign in that the military no longer had a hand in higher education.

With the amendment of the Law on the Establishment of and Broadcasting by Radio and Television Corporations, the provision allowing for the nomination of a member of the Supreme Board for Radio and Television by the Secretariat General of the National Security Council was repealed. Again, with the amendment of the law on wireless communication, the provision regarding the membership of the Secretary General of the NSC at the High Communication Council was canceled. In addition, there was the amendment of the law on the protection of minors from harmful publications and the provision allowing for the selection of one member of the competent board by the National Security Council which was also repealed.³⁵⁷

All these changes were welcomed by the EU and the Turkish authorities were encouraged to take further steps to strengthen the rule of law and democracy in Turkey. However, while these brave steps were taken, the government also moved cautiously. An interesting part of the document published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ EU secretariat can be used to highlight this fact; for example, when the document summarized the changes that took place in Turkey with the EU harmonization packages under the title ‘What has changed with the EU Harmonization Packages?’, all changes and amendments are meticulously mentioned – except the changes that affected the military’s position. This alone allows this thesis to make the judgment that the civilian

³⁵⁴ Political Reforms In Turkey, *ibid.*, p.18

³⁵⁵ Hevallo Azad, ‘Yesterday Mandela! Today Ocalan!’, *Amed News Agency*, <http://www.khrag.org/?p=1006&lang=it>, retrieved Oct.12, 2013.

³⁵⁶ Political Reforms In Turkey, *ibid.*, p.18

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.18

government was still very worried about the military's presence in politics at the time of the publication of the aforementioned report in 2007.

Apart from these harmonization packages, the government passed other regulations that affected the position of the military in Turkey. For example, the law amending the Military Criminal Code and the Law on the Establishment and Trial Procedures of Military Courts was adopted by the Parliament on 22 January 2004, and entered into force on 29 January 2004. Thus, provisions on the death penalty were aligned with the constitutional amendments of 2001.³⁵⁸

The law amending the Military Criminal Code and the Law on the Establishment and Trial Procedures of Military Courts was adopted by the Parliament on 22 January 2004, and entered into force on 29 January 2004 with the purpose of aligning with the constitutional amendments of 2001. Under this new law, a person who was arrested or detained would be brought before a judge within four days in case of offences committed collectively and the arrest or detention of a person shall be notified to the next of kin immediately, while findings obtained through illegal methods shall not be considered as evidence.³⁵⁹

Date	Type	Major Changes
3 October 2001	1st Constitutional Package	34 Amendments to the 1982 Constitution
November 2001	New Civil Code	Gender equality in marriage
February/March 2002	2nd Constitutional Package	Constitutional amendments
2 August 2002	3rd Constitutional Package	Abolish death penalty/revised anti-terror law, allowed broadcasting in languages other than Turkish
3 December 2002	4th Constitutional Package	Operationalize previous reforms/revise Penal Code for torture
4 December 2002	5th Constitutional Package	Retrial of all cases decided in State Security courts
May 2003	6th Constitutional Package	Adopt Protocol 6 of the ECHR, convert all death sentences to life imprisonment/repeal Article 8 of Anti-Terror Law
July 2003	7th Constitutional Package	Revise the National Security Council
7 May 2004	8th Constitutional Package	Ten amendments of the Constitution, freedom of press, and gave priority to supranational treaties over domestic law, abolish State Security courts.
24 June 2004	9th Constitutional Package	Change Article 46 of the Penal code, revise the Higher Education Board and the Censure Board.
25–26 September 2004	New Turkish Penal Code	Revise laws on violence against women and children/change the penalties for various offences and redefine offences.

Table 2: Turkish Political Reforms, 2001-2004³⁶⁰

The ninth harmonization package was announced on April 6, 2006, by the then foreign minister, Abdullah Gül, included the law amending the Law on Establishment and Legal Procedures of Military Courts (this law came in to force on July 5, 2006).³⁶¹

³⁵⁸ Ibid, pp.19-20

³⁵⁹ Ibid, p.20

³⁶⁰ Müftüleri-Baç, *ibid.*, p.22.

³⁶¹ Political Reforms In Turkey, p.23.

The law was approved by Parliament on 29 June 2006 and published in the Official Gazette of 5 July 2006. It was one of the elements of the 9th Harmonization Package which abolished the competence of military courts to try civilians during peacetime, with the exception of collective military crimes. Moreover, thanks to this law, it was now possible to request, from military courts, the reopening of cases in accordance with decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. Individuals who did not comply with compulsory military service or persons who did not comply on time would now be tried in civilian courts.³⁶²

The JDP Government set up a high-profile Reform Monitoring Group in September 2003 with a view to ensuring effective implementation of the reforms. The Group was composed of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Interior ministers and high-level bureaucrats, and chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, since June 2005. Secretariat General for EU Affairs provided secretarial services to Reform Monitoring Group.³⁶³

The Reform Monitoring Group Information Gathering Sub-Committee that convenes in the chairmanship of the Secretary General of EU Affairs monitors the implementation of the decisions taken by the Reform Monitoring Group and work on the issues to be submitted in the Reform Monitoring Group.³⁶⁴ The high level of involvement shows the determination of the Turkish government in terms of the implementation of these rules in day to day life in Turkey. As it is mentioned in the official document, “the implementation of the reforms and the accession process to EU is a permanent item on the agenda of the Council of Ministers.”³⁶⁵

Evaluation of the EU’s role in civil military relations in Turkey:

Although EU conditionality proved a strong example of progress in civil-military relations in Turkey, it has not been fully successful in preventing senior military officials from publically expressing their opinions on foreign policy issues,³⁶⁶ as well as internal affairs. For example, on April 27, 2007, during presidential election campaigning, the military published a document online airing its disapproval of one of

³⁶² Ibid., p.24.

³⁶³ Ibid., p.28.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Terzi, *ibid*, p.63.

the candidates, Abdullah Gül, as the 11th president of the republic. This document later on was called the attempted “e-coup”.³⁶⁷ In the document the army clearly stated that:

The problem that emerged in the presidential election process is focused on arguments over secularism. Turkish Armed Forces are concerned about the recent situation. It should not be forgotten that the Turkish Armed Forces are a party in those arguments, and absolute defender of secularism. Also, the Turkish Armed Forces is definitely opposed to those arguments and negative comments. It will display its attitude and action openly and clearly whenever it is necessary.³⁶⁸

People were shocked with what they read as it was almost a direct threat to the JDP government. The media also hastened to spread the news that the military had issued a very serious warning to the government. Prominent journalists such as Mehmet Altan, Hasan Cemal and Fehmi Koru called it a modern coup. The next day everyone expected the government to keep silent and not to respond to the military in any form. However, the spokesperson of the government, Cemil Cicek, did an unusual thing and organized a press conference the day after the army’s warning. He denounced the military’s statement in a clear and assertive manner. He reminded the press of the job of the military and told them that, according to the law, they were accountable to the Prime Minister.³⁶⁹ This was perhaps the first civilian showdown against the military aggressors which ended in the humiliating defeat of the generals for no response from them was forthcoming. Instead, soon after, military trials had begun to put many high-ranking generals behind bars.

The Prime Minister, Erdoğan also came out with a statement that called the Chief of General Staff one his officials,³⁷⁰ and stated that he would take the latter to task about this matter. Then, on May 7, 2007, Erdoğan had a meeting with the Chief of General Staff, Yasar Buyukanit, at the Dolmabahce Palace. This meeting is considered to be a turning point in the history of civilian-military relations in Turkey, as it was followed up

³⁶⁷ Philip H. Gordon, Ömer Taşpınar, *Winning Turkey: How America, Europe, and Turkey Can Revive a Fading Partnership*, (Washington DC.: The Brooking Institutions, 2008), p.6 and Rabasa and Larrabee, *ibid*, p.71

³⁶⁸ Excerpts of Turkish Army Statements, *BBC News*, Apr.28, 2007 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/6602775.stm> and Official Web Site of Turkish Armed Forces, http://www.tsk.tr/3_basin_yayin_faaliyetleri/3_1_basin_aciklamalari/basin_aciklamalari.html, Basın Aciklamalari, NO:BA 08/07, Ap.27, 2007.

³⁶⁹ Press Conference of Cemil Cicek, *CNN Turk*, Apr.28, 2007 and *Hukumetten Muhtiraya Karsi Dik Durus*, *Samanyolu Haber*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVM8W_PkOmY, retrieved Nov.30 2013

³⁷⁰ This is also considered as an issue by the EU as in other member states the Chief of General Staf is directly responsible to the Prime Minister.

by the greatest trial of military personnel in Turkey's history. This became known as the "Ergenekon Trials" as Judge Zekeriya Öz began proceedings on July 25, 2008.³⁷¹

Without backing from the west, no politician in Turkey could single handily tackle the military. For example, straight after the 27 April statement by the military, the EU Enlargement Commissioner, Olli Rehn, said that the controversy was a chance for the military to show that it respected democracy. Rehn went further, adding that, "The timing is rather surprising and strange. It's important that the military respects also the rules of the democratic game and its own role in that democratic game."³⁷² This warning from an important EU official came not less than twenty four hours after the statement was made. Therefore, the EU's substantial support for the JDP government, during this critical showdown between April and May 2007, should not be underestimated.

The military trials or revenge trials³⁷³

During the first years of JDP rule, the Europeanization process was hastened. Regulations were changed to comply with EU standards. For the first time since the creation of the republic, civilians were truly trying to take charge of the country. This control brought about long-lasting trials of generals such as Ergenekon, Kafes and Balyoz.³⁷⁴ Hundreds of retired and serving officers were imprisoned, including former chief of general staff of the Turkish army İlker Başbug who served more than two years imprisonment sentence.³⁷⁵

So many generals were imprisoned that it became a running joke that there was no high command to run a possible military campaign if there was a war involving Turkey.³⁷⁶ Some people, including politicians like Muharrem İnce and artists like Levent Kırca, criticized the trials as the revenge of pro-Islamists on the secular segments of society. Some people even described the trials as 'Erdoğan versus the

³⁷¹ Serpil Kırkeser, Ergenekon Davasında Bes Yilin Özeti, *DHA*, Jul. 25, 2013

http://www.radikal.com.tr/Türkiye/ergenekon_davasinda_5_yilin_ozeti-1143366. retrieved Oct.22, 2013

³⁷² EU Warns Turkish Army over votes, *BBC News*,

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6602661.stm>, retrieved Oct.18, 2013.

³⁷³ As mentioned in conclusion all military personnel who were tried and imprisoned with the mentioned trials released as the JDP and then the Prime Minister Erdoğan declared these trials as bogus trials of the Gülenist "Paralel State".

³⁷⁴ In this study these trials sometimes referred as Cage (Kafes) and Sledgehammer (Balyoz) trials.

³⁷⁵ Jennifer Lang, 'EU Counter-Terrorism Plans: Implications for Turkey', in Kenan Aksu (ed.), *Turkey-EU Relations: Power, Politics and the Future*, (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), pp. 19-45.

³⁷⁶ Ömür Çiçek, 'İnce: Disarida general kalmadı. Ben artık Türkiye'yi anlamıyorum,' *Milliyet*, Apr.11, 2010

military.³⁷⁷ At first, the EU and its officials supported the trials. However, the length of the trials and the continued imprisonment of prisoners during these long tribunals, which go beyond what the EU had wished for, have recently begun to be criticized by human rights activists and some politicians in Brussels. For example, in its 2012 progress report, the EU showed its dissatisfaction with these trials by stating that: Concerns persisted over the rights of the defense, lengthy pre-trial detention and excessively long and catch-all indictments, leading to significantly enhanced public scrutiny of the legitimacy of these trials. Offering a chance to strengthen confidence in the proper functioning of Turkey's democratic institutions and the rule of law, these cases have been overshadowed by real concerns about their wide scope and shortcomings in judicial proceedings. Moreover, they tend to contribute to the polarization of Turkish politics. Judicial proceedings need to be sped up to ensure the rights of the defense and to promote transparency in these cases. Investigations tend to expand rapidly; the judiciary accepts mainly evidence collected by the police only, or supplied by secret witnesses.³⁷⁸

As evidently stated by the Commission's report, although the military's influence in civilian politics was reduced to a minimum, Turkey's society has been polarized due to these trials. The government's response to the EC's criticisms was that the military's previous position needed to be curbed in order for Turkey to develop into a properly functioning democracy. Looking at the government's response, this thesis infers that the EU reforms were used by the JDP government to restrict the military's reach in order to pursue an agenda of stripping Turkey of its strict secular face. But it needs to be noted that Turkish secularism needs to be understood in its own merits as it is different from French and American secularism.³⁷⁹ Before these trials, without the EU's support, the military had pushed for a secular Western-style democracy - but placing itself at the core of the decision making process. However, without the military's presence in Turkish politics, the EU is increasingly losing the power it once had to drive relations in the direction it wants. Perhaps also due to economic developments since 2002, for the first time, Turkey is equally in charge of its relationship with the EU. As Türköne

³⁷⁷ <http://rt.com/news/Erdoğan-turkish-army-beheaded-799>, retrieved Feb. 25, 2013.

³⁷⁸ Turkey Progress Report 2012, p. 7

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf, retrieved Feb. 26, 2013.

³⁷⁹ Ahmet T. Kuru, 2009, *Secularism and State Policies toward Religion The United States, France, and Turkey*, Cambridge Studies in Social Theory, Religion and Politics, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

argues, “although Turkey does not receive the benefits it deserves as a result of its hard work, the EU adventure made us win a lot of things. For example if it was not for the EU standards civilian authority would not be able to remove the military’s presence in politics.”³⁸⁰

Conclusion

To conclude, the causes of the intervention by the Turkish military in politics are complex and particularly difficult to understand for many non-experts. One reason for the military taking an active role in politics is historical, as it is consistent with Turkish political history for the military to intervene in politics. Furthermore, interventions in the twentieth century set and reinforced a precedent, and the role of the military as a protector of the principle of secular rule grew with its membership in such bodies as the NSC.

The unity and homogeneity of the officer class meant that the army largely subscribed to the same ideology – the protection of Kemalist style secular rule – which made intervention more likely. The polarization of political parties under the multiparty system led repeatedly to the failure of the democratic system to prevail in Turkey. This failure, combined with the abuse of the military by the elected governments in order to preserve their own positions and defeat their political opposition, made it more likely that the officers would intervene to restore order and prevent abuse.

The impact of United States and the context of the Cold War influenced Turkey massively, especially in relation to the role of the military. Many people see the US and the Cold War as indirectly responsible for causing the numerous coups. By choosing to be an ally of the West, Turkey accepted the influence of American policies directed towards European countries designed to keep Soviet influence at minimal levels. Whenever left-wing sentiments gained popularity in Turkey, the United States did not shy away from supporting military interventions, like it did after the one in 1980.

It is fair to say that the role of the military in Turkish society and politics is changing and it is likely to change further under the pressures of modernization and the emergence of competing political elites.³⁸¹ Although there has not been any direct political intervention by the armed forces since 1980, on two different occasions – 1997 and again in 2004 – the military tried to exercise its power on the civilian rule. Until

³⁸⁰ Mümtaz’er Türköne, ‘Türkiye ilerliyor mu?’ *Zaman*, Oct.18, 2013.

³⁸¹ Larrabee and Lesser, *ibid.*, p.29.

2007, governments tried to run the country by pleasing the officers in order to avoid a possible coup. Indeed, Momayezi rightfully argues that “coups avoidance is not the same as civilian control.”³⁸²

As mentioned several times before, Turkey’s EU membership may largely depend on the ability of the republic to bring an end to the military’s active role in politics so that Turkey can comply fully with the Copenhagen Criteria. Until recently, across Europe, the image of the civil-military relationship in Turkey remained much influenced by the military’s interventions in politics during the second half of the twentieth century and by the status and authority that the NSC had acquired by the end of the century. Although things have shifted in favour of civilian rule since the beginning of the new millennium with the push from the EU and the strong JDP governments, it will take some time for both the West and Turkish society to internalize a political life without the fear of military intervention.

Yet much has changed of late, particularly in the last ten years, thanks to the EU Harmonization Programs implemented by the three consecutive JDP governments. For example, with an amendment to Constitutional Article 118, the role of the NSC was reduced to an advisory/consultative body. In addition, its composition was amended in order to make civilian members a majority.³⁸³ Moreover, since August 2004 the office of secretary general of the NSC was given to a civilian. The landmark Seventh Harmonization Package was particularly important as it changed the balance in the NSC in favour of civilians in Turkey. Perceptions, though, have not fully caught up with reality. Although in modern Turkish history the military is arguably a protector of democracy, it cannot be said to be a democratic or accountable institution.

During the first decade of the 2000s there have been some very impressive institutional changes that have included changes to the military’s position in the country. For example, the aforementioned Seventh Reform Package of July 23, 2003, aimed to set considerable limits on the powers of the NSC. Despite all these efforts the army’s presence was still strong and the European Commission expressed its worries in its 2004 and 2005 annual reports by stating

382 Nasser Momayezi, ‘Civil-Military relations in Turkey,’ *International Journal of World Peace*, Vol.15, No. 3, (New York: Sept.1998),

383 Suke Toktas and Ümit Kurt, ‘The Impact of EU Reform Process on Civil Military Relations in Turkey,’ *Today’s Zaman*, Dec.17, 2008, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=161501, retrieved Jan. 20, 2010.

Although the process of aligning civil-military relations with EU practice is underway, the Armed Forces in Turkey continue to exercise influence through a series of informal channels.³⁸⁴ They still exert significant influence by issuing public statements on political developments and government policies.³⁸⁵

This influence includes provisions on the basis of which the military continued to enjoy a degree of autonomy in legal and administrative structures that were not accountable to civilian structures. However, recent reforms, such as annulling the military's authority to nominate members to the Higher Education Council and broadcasting board and making its budget accountable to a civilian authority, have significantly weakened the power of the military in its areas of influence. It has minimum authority in the institutions it once used as a tool to interfere in civilian politics. These changes were necessary to meet the EU's criteria for full membership. As a result, the military's presence in Turkish politics is now at its lowest level since the creation of the republic.

Nonetheless, the military in Turkey believe that becoming a member of the EU will keep Turkey a modern and secular republic – their initial stated goal when they first began interfering in politics. Their aim was to ostensibly stop Turkey from becoming a religious state which leaned towards the East. Another worry was the Kurdish issue, which they believed would only be solved by military methods. Becoming an EU member would solve these two major concerns of the military without any need for their intervention.

Among the Turkish people there is significant support for the democratization process and Turkish EU-membership, as a survey conducted in July 2011 showed, 69 % of people in Turkey support EU membership.³⁸⁶ In no other candidate countries have these two topics been so closely interconnected. The European norm here is that armed forces are unambiguously subordinate to the lawfully elected government-in-office and the armed forces' leadership has no voice in public affairs beyond its professional

³⁸⁴ Commission of the European Communities, Regular Report on Turkey's progress towards accession, 2004, Brussels, 6.10.2004 (SEC(2004) 1201).
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2004/rr_tr_2004_en.pdf, retrieved June 12, 2012.

³⁸⁵http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2005/package/sec_1426_final_progress_report_tr_en.pdf, retrieved Jun.12, 2012.

³⁸⁶ Guenther Seufert, 'Türkiyede Dis Politika Algisi,' Jul. 2011, *TESEV*,
<http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/07.2011.pdf>, retrieved Dec.12, 2012.

domain.³⁸⁷ At this point in time, it is no longer possible for the segments of the secular elite and the military to jeopardize the democratization process and the possibility of EU membership. Civilian courts have conducted trials to subdue the military's presence in civilian politics. As a result of these trials, more than 300 retired and serving military personnel were sent to jail for planning coups. Consequently, the balance of power in Turkish politics has undoubtedly shifted in favour of the civilian government over the course of the last decade. Even if they try, the military may not be able to maintain its, however little, remaining popular legitimacy any more. Some people in Turkey are now worried more about the JDP's future plans considering that the military has no power to obstruct them. This thesis believes that even within the EU, although much of the reforms were welcomed, there is a segment that is worried about the direction Turkey has moved towards during last few years. For example, in an article related to Turkey-EU relations published in the popular online EU newspaper 'EUObserver', in December 2011, 11 EU foreign ministers wrote:

Turkey has transformed its governance, society and democracy. Civilian control of the military has been firmly embedded and judicial reform is underway. And Turkey is now embarking on a new transformation discussing replacement of the current constitution drafted by the military in 1980. The EU has been at the heart of this transformation since the new millennium, the accession negotiations helping to guide the Turkish reform process. In support of Turkey's reforms, the EU has committed technical assistance and funding worth over €750 million in 2011 including work to strengthen democratic institutions, protect fundamental rights and strengthen civil society. Recent progress in the accession negotiations has been disappointingly slow, but Turkey continues to pursue reforms to align its legislation with the EU acquis.³⁸⁸

There is no question that candidacy to the EU membership has contributed to the democratization of civil-military relations in Turkey as the power of the NSC has been first restricted and then further diminished by 2011. The progress is obvious and the EU has clearly stated this in its reports in a supportive manner. The military court also lost most of its capability through the harmonisation packages while the Court of Auditors received the authority to audit accounts and transactions of every organisation including the state properties the army owned. Additionally, thanks to the Seventh Harmonisation Package, trials of the civilians in State Security Courts were also totally abolished, and

387 David Greenwood, 'Turkish Civil-Military Relations and the EU: Preparation for Continuing Convergence,' *Centre for European Security Studies*, (The Netherlands: Nov. 2005), pp.3-4.

388 Ažubalis, A., Bildt, et al. The EU and Turkey: steering a safer path through the storms, *EUObserver*, (Dec.1, 2011), <http://euobserver.com/7/114473>, retrieved Feb.27, 2012.

the transparency of defence costs was improved with the armed forces now more accountable for what they were spending. Finally, with the Eight Harmonisation Package, the State Security Courts were totally abolished. Moreover, the decisions of the Supreme Military Council are now open to judicial review. However, there are certain limits to its impact because of the legacy of the Ottoman Empire and the Kemalist Republic, and this will probably remain the case in the near future. The only way to maintain full civilian control over the military is the full implementation of recent reforms, which, as the Regular Reports by the EU on Turkey consistently indicate, are crucial to the democratization process.³⁸⁹

Since 2002, under the strong leadership of Erdoğan, the JDP, which won three consecutive elections with landslide victories, has implemented great reforms in Turkey which sent the military back to their barracks, the way Atatürk wanted in the 1920's. However, no one can guarantee whether the soldiers would stay in their barracks if the civilian authority was not as strong as Erdoğan's JDP. In order for civilians to control the military properly, both civilians and the armed forces need to be better educated about the role of the military in a state. As this is unlikely to happen over a short period of time, we still cannot say that army is fully controlled by the civilians.

In general terms, whether or not Turkey is becoming more modern and whether the Turkish military's role in politics has been reduced to zero, there remains a particular conception of Turkey within the EU: a large Muslim country, historically an enemy of Europe and one that is underdeveloped. That identity has remained stable, even in the face of significant changes occurring on the Turkish side.

³⁸⁹ Yıldırım, *ibid.*

Chapter 4

The EU and Turkey's Religious Political Parties: Ideological and Identity Change?

Religion and Politics in Turkey: a brief history

Turkey's relations with the EU have played a great role in changing the identity of Islamic political groups in Turkey, most notably during the last decade. This was something the religiously motivated Turkish political elements did not expect or want. Nonetheless, it was a European ideal to see the transformation of Islamic parties in Turkey in order to set the country up as a role model for the rest of the Islamic World. Therefore, rather than just economic and political affects, enlargement has also been seen to provide other changes which includes the ideological transformation of religious parties.

Since their foundation after the start of proper multiparty elections in 1950, Turkish Political Islamist thought gained support by being anti-Western in ideology. 'The West' was portrayed as evil while 'the East' represented all that was good. However, the Islamist parties were repeatedly closed down by the secular institutions for being anti-Western and anti-secular. As a result, their outlook radically changed over the course of the last fifty years. Incidentally, these years also coincided with renewed Turkey-Europe relations. Therefore, the impact of these relations on the ideological or tactical changes in religious political ideologies in Turkey cannot be underestimated. These changes were hastened especially after the Welfare Party (WP) was forced out of the government in 1997. Following this incident, the majority of political Islamists started to believe that they could only come to power if there was a functioning Western style democracy in Turkey. This is because, as it stood, the Turkish political system meant the secular military had a huge presence and would never allow a religious party to take hold of power. To be able to come to power properly, these parties needed the system to change and become more democratic. This was only possible through closer ties with the EU. Consequently, rather than opposing it, they became the champions of the Europeanization process in Turkey. The masses they mobilized in their anti-Western rallies were now mobilized in favour of the Westernisation processes. For example, no

political leader in Turkey was ever celebrated at the airports by thousands of supporters after their return from foreign trips like Erdoğan was after he had signed the document enabling the beginning of Turkey's official EU negotiations in 2005. Most of the people who cheered at airports for EU membership were the same ones rallying on the streets with Erbakan against Europeanization a decade earlier. This is because they had come to view the EU as a “masonic, Jewish and a Catholic club” at the time. However with Erdoğan religion in Turkey ‘has been able to adapt to capitalism, neo-liberalism and state or international organisations such as the IMF and WB.’³⁹⁰ An explanation of this sharp change will make up the backbone of this chapter.

After outlining the history of Islamist political thought and their anti-Western stance in Turkey, this chapter will focus on the changes in the outlook of Islamist political identity during the last fifteen years. Religion in Turkey and in the EU will also be touched upon to give the reader a greater sense of the context. Overall, this chapter argues that religious parties underwent a very radical turn, from resistance to Western policies and the EU in general, to their desire to use the process of EU accession for their own benefit. This shift was mainly the result of the rise to power of people like Erdoğan who were better at ‘playing’ the political game in a way that would reconcile their religious affiliations with a seemingly liberal approach to politics.

Also, in its relations with Turkey, the EU has ignored anti-European rhetoric produced by the religious parties in Turkey who saw the EU as a threat to Turkey in every aspect. This lenient attitude from the EU can be considered a key element fermenting the major identity change of these religiously-motivated political parties.

Religion and EU

The EU, which considers itself secular, does not have an official religion and keeps itself away from any religious affiliation. The EU promises to guarantee religious freedom and promotes non-discrimination of religious groups; it promotes respect of religious diversity and the maintenance of dialogue with all religious communities and non-confessional organisations. At the same time, the Union endeavours to uphold the status of churches and organisations under member state laws. The EU has, over the

³⁹⁰ Farhang Morady and Ismail Siriner, *Globalisation, Religion and Development*, (London: IJOPE, 2011), p.2
http://www.academia.edu/1509825/Morady_F_and_Siriner_I.2011_Globalisation_Religion_and_Development_London_IJOPE retrieved Jul. 28 2015.

years, also become aware of the importance of religion as they started pushing for national values that includes Christian elements for political reasons as seen in the UK with the government initiative of teaching ‘the British Values at schools.’ The Union draws inspiration from the continent’s rich religious inheritance.³⁹¹

However, there are debates about whether there is a strong relationship between a ‘European identity’ and Christianity in the Union, despite the fact that is officially considered secular. Both in Turkey and in Europe there is an unwritten requirement in the subconscious of the people that only Christian countries can be members of this Union since ‘Europe is Christian’. As Casanova writes:

The debate about how Christian Europe haunts the secular elites by unspoken, cultural requirements as Christian Democrats when they address the question of Turkey EU membership.³⁹²

European Christian Democrats think ‘European identity’ and Christianity have a very strong bond; to them, the EU is in the process of building a civilisation which Turkey, as a predominantly Muslim country that has not gone through a Christianity-inspired period of enlightenment, has no place.³⁹³ According to this tendency, Turkish secularism is not recognized as equal to European secularism.

Although diversity has flourished in today’s Europe and can be considered a common feature of the continent, it is also as common to see the dominance of Christianity across Europe in daily life. Undeniable reflections of historical legacies that once thrived with Christianity at its core can be observed in most streets of Europe. Thus, no matter how much it claims to be secular, the EU has a pan-European culture which was historically born out of Christianity. Therefore, one can also argue that religious difference is the most important cultural distinction between Turkey and EU, as all current members share Christian legacies. As mentioned in the literature review above, European politicians like Bolkestein see Europe as a ‘Christian continent’ and do not want Turkey, which was ‘kicked out’ of central Europe centuries ago, to be a member due to similar religious reasons. In a similar vein, the Christian Democratic

³⁹¹ State and Church in the European Union, <http://www.churchstate.eu/Publications/State-and-Church-in-the-EU>, retrieved Aug.22, 2014.

³⁹² Jose Casanova, ‘Religion, European Secular Identities, and European Integration,’ in Timothy Byrnes and Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *Religion in and Expanding Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp.65-92.

³⁹³ Ingrid Kylvstad, ‘Turkey and the EU: A New European Identity in the Making’, LSE ‘Europe in Discussion’ Paper Series, Paper No: 27/2010, Oct. 2010. p.8.

Union of Germany (CDU)³⁹⁴ also argues that Europe is based on Judeo-Christian traditions and Kantian enlightenment,³⁹⁵ and that predominantly Muslim Turkey has no place in it – no matter how secular it claims to be. It is clear from their statement that Kantian cosmopolitanism with its inclusive morality is not very well internalized in European minds yet. However, as of today, European secularism lives alongside a major decline in religious practices and less space for religion in social life. European social life is no longer defined by religion and people almost think that they are supposed to be irreligious.³⁹⁶ However, it may still be considered ‘Christian’, for the EU actively promotes particular rights, including the right to freedom of religion – something which is crucially important. In official EU documents on these freedoms, it clearly notes that:

The EU does not consider the merits of the different religions or beliefs, or the lack thereof, but ensures that the right to believe or not to believe is upheld. The EU is impartial and is not aligned with any specific religion or belief.³⁹⁷

However, in the same manifesto the EU also clearly states that:

In any case, the EU will recall, when appropriate, that the right to freedom of religion or belief, as enshrined in relevant international standards, does not include the right to have a religion or a belief that is free from criticism or ridicule.³⁹⁸

Therefore, in light of the above statements on religion, Turkey’s Islamic faith is not an obstruction for it to become a member of the EU. As Zürcher and Linden have argued:

Officially, Islam does not play a role in the decision whether to accept Turkey as a member state of the EU. Yet many people wonder if a Muslim country such as Turkey would really fit into the EU. Religion did not play part in 1999 when Turkey was granted the status of candidate member. However since September 11 2001, the concern in member states about Islam and Muslims increased. This has contributed to growing doubts over the question whether Turkey’s Islamic character is compatible with the political achievements of the EU and its member states. Objections to membership, on cultural and religious ground have been increasingly raised, even in political circles.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁴ In German Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands.

³⁹⁵ Kylstad, *ibid.*, p.9.

³⁹⁶ Casanova, *ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁹⁷ Terry Sanderson, ‘New EU guidelines on religion and belief make plain that no religion is entitled to special rights’, Jun.27, 2013, <http://www.secularism.org.uk/blog/2013/06/new-eu-guidelines-on-religion-and-belief-make-plain-that-no-religion-is-entitled-to-special-rights>, retrieved Nov.15, 2013.

³⁹⁸ Sanderson, *ibid.*

³⁹⁹ Zürcher and Linden, *The European Union, Turkey and Islam*, *ibid.*, p.5.

As noted already, officially speaking, religion does not form part of the common EU values. The Union defines itself as a system of values and actions based on the basic principles of freedom and democracy, as well as recognition of human rights, fundamental liberties and the rule of law. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion forms an integral part of these basic rights, as does the respect afforded by the Union to cultural and religious diversity. Viewed from the perspective of the principles and fundamental rights of the Union, there is no prior reason to exclude a country on the grounds of its dominant religion. Freedom of religion and conscience mean that religious believers, including members of minority beliefs, should face no restrictions in the exercise of their rights. It is precisely in this area that people harbour doubts about Islam. Even though all member states are formally secular and recognise freedom of religion, they do not always remain neutral towards different religions. For example, some member states have a state church, while others do not.⁴⁰⁰ Therefore, there is no single European model against which to test the ‘Turkish experience’. The most that can be done is to see whether Turkey meets certain minimum conditions.⁴⁰¹

This is not to say that the church and the religious conservative parties do not have an influence in the EU. Although some consider this to be merely symbolic, some European states, such as the UK, have a very close relationship with, in this example, the Church of England. Indeed, the Queen is the head of the state and the Church at the same time.⁴⁰² There are also many Lord Spirituals in the House of Lords.⁴⁰³ Although the church does not have the traditional and historical powers to influence policy matters in the EU directly, it still has an important indirect impact through different channels that includes public sermons and charity works.

In fact, the European People’s Party (EPP) which was originally founded by the European Christian Democrat parties in 1976⁴⁰⁴ is the largest party in the European Parliament, the European Council and in the European Commission. Moreover, both

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., p.6.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., p.7.

⁴⁰² Edmund Cusick, ‘Religion and Heritage’, in Mike Storry and Peter Childs (ed.), *British Cultural Identities*, third edition, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p.242

⁴⁰³ As mentioned by the official website of the Church of England there are 26 bishops of the Church of England sit in the House of Lords. Known as the Lords Spiritual, they read prayers at the start of each daily meeting and play a full and active role in the life and work of the Upper House.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/our-views/the-church-in-parliament/bishops-in-the-house-of-lords.aspx> retrieved Jan.22, 2015

⁴⁰⁴ Tapio Raunio, ‘Second Rate Parties: Towards a Better Understanding of European Parliament’s Party Groups’, in Knut Heidar, Ruud Koole (ed.), *Parliamentary Party Groups in European Democracies: Political Parties Behind Closed Doors*, (New York: Routledge, ECPR Studies in European Political Science, 2000), p.244.

presidents of the European Council and the President of the European Commission are from the EPP.⁴⁰⁵

As mentioned above, the EU keeps an equal distance from all religions and it does not officially endorse any religion. But through a connection to the electorate and the latter's relations with churches and its ideology, there is thus an indirect recognition and influence of religion in the Union.

Religion and Turkey between 1920 and 1950

During the Ottoman period religion occupied center stage in state affairs. The reforms enacted by the Ottomans were generally meant to make for a stronger and modern Islamic state. However, after the creation of the Turkish Republic, almost all ties of the Turkish people with the Islamic world were slowly forced to cut off. The reforms introduced by the new Republic were intended to change the identity of the country and its people. The aim was not only to turn Turkey towards the West, but also to reform Turkey's religious culture. To reach this goal the 1920's witnessed Turkey accepting the French model of Laicism as the modern republic was founded. However, unlike the French state, the Turkish state still exercised strong control and influence over religion.⁴⁰⁶ There was a strong ideological dimension to reforms, coming as they did from the Republic's founder, Mustafa Kemal, into a series of dogmas which came to be known as Kemalism. This offered a blueprint for reform and was supposed to be a modern and scientific alternative to a religiously-based worldview.⁴⁰⁷ To Atatürk, reforms introduced to Turkey during this period were meant to "destroy the institutions that left Turkey behind civilised nations and then to introduce new and modern institutions in place of the destroyed ones"⁴⁰⁸ Although there were some resistance from the religious foundations of the time they were harshly suppressed.

The first article of the 1921 constitution clearly stated that 'sovereignty belonged to the nation unconditionally, thus replacing Islam as a principle of political legitimacy'.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁵ Nikoleta Yordanova *Organising the European Parliament: The Role of the Committees and their Legislative Influence*, (Colchester: ECPR Press, University of Essex, 2013).

⁴⁰⁶ Zürcher and Linden, *ibid.*, p.7.

⁴⁰⁷ Recep Şentürk, 'Islamic Reformist Discourses and Intellectuals,' in Shireen T. Hunter(ed.), *Turkey: Permanent Religion with Dynamic Law, in Reformist Voices in Islam: Mediating Islam and Modernity*, (New York: M.A Sharpe, 2009), p.228.

⁴⁰⁸ Afet İnan, *Tarih Boyunca Türk Kadınının Hak ve Görevleri*, (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1975), p.174

⁴⁰⁹ Yeşim Arat, *Rethinking Islam and Liberal Democracy: Islamist Women in Turkish Democracy*,(Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), p.3.

Then, in 1924, the Caliphate was officially abolished and the new, tightly controlled, Directorate of Religious Affairs (Tr.: ‘Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı’) and the Directorate of Pious Foundations were introduced. Parliament also passed a bill on 3 March 1924 which brought all educational institutions under state control. Again, in April 1924, Sharia courts were disbanded and the entire justice system was unified under the justice ministry, now following secular codes. In late 1925 another change swept across the state, as a new Western-style hat replaced the Ottoman fez. Moreover, religious tariqhah lodges were also banned, though these went underground rather than vanishing completely. Mustafa Kemal explained clearly why he wanted to close these religious lodges in his Nutuk (or ‘Great speech’) so as to “prove that our nation as a whole was no primitive nation filled with superstitions and prejudices”⁴¹⁰.

The Swiss Civil code was adopted to replace the Islamic Sharia code in 1926. This was further strengthened in the same year as Turkey was officially declared to be a secular state. Although the 1924 constitution had declared that Islam was the official religion of Turkey, this reference was removed in 1928. Moreover an amendment in 1937 declared the republic to be secular.⁴¹¹ Thus state and religious affairs were separated. In simple terms, the emphasis of the new Turkish nationalist ideology shifted increasingly towards language and race rather than religion.⁴¹² With the introduction of the Latin alphabet in 1928, replacing the Arabic one, another significant tie with the Islamic world was also removed. In the 1930s further steps were taken to remove Islam’s influence in Turkish life, as the call to prayer was legally only to be recited in Turkish, rather than Arabic, and people were increasingly penalised for possessing books written in Arabic scripts in their homes. As orientalist Bernard Lewis wrote, “the State aimed to end the power of organized Islam and break its hold on the minds and hearts of the Turkish people”.⁴¹³

On 27 May 1935, the Turkish Parliament passed a new law that changed the weekly holidays from Friday to Sunday and established the first of January as a public holiday, meaning that people were expected to celebrate the New Year along with Western countries. The suppression of Islam continued tightly after the death of Mustafa Kemal in 1938. Overall, republican reforms were imposed by the state in a top-down fashion,

⁴¹⁰ Gareth Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey: Running West, Heading East*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p.96.

⁴¹¹ Stephen Vertigan, *Islamic Roots and Resurgence in Turkey: Understanding and Explaining the Muslim Resurgence*, (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2003), p.43.

⁴¹² Jenkins, *ibid.*, p.18.

⁴¹³ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p.416

without much concern for either public debate or public approval. Even today, despite considerable progress in the development of Turkish democracy, the basic tenets of Kemalism are viewed as sacrosanct and not subject to debate or revision.⁴¹⁴

There are two differences between Turkish secularism and the European secularism which we discussed above. Firstly, the Turkish case does not have the same historical context as European secularism has – and, obviously, Turkey had a majority Muslim, rather than Christian, population. Secondly, Turkey’s secularism was forced upon the people and did not have the same time as in parts of Europe to be truly internalized. The laicism imposed on Turkey by Mustafa Kemal was more of a cultural revolution than a social revolution, and it has failed in many ways to produce a secular moral code similar to the European ethical codes; this is because it all happened in a very short period of time without the consensus of the masses.

The development of laicism in Turkey was a clear departure from the past, but also different from the West in another way – there was more resistance to this laicism from different religious factions. This clashing historical legacy has also had a great impact on the development of political parties in Turkey and later for the EU accession process. Resistance to secularism from conservative parties drew large amounts of votes. With this, the military was able to legitimize its intervention into politics by arguing that it was ‘protecting secularism’. In most cases, military intervention was supported by secularist parties such as the RPP.

The İnönü regime, which came to power following the death of Atatürk, in 1938, was even stricter than its predecessors in battling religion up until the end of World War Two (WWII). Turkey, who sided with the West at the last hour, requested huge financial and political assistance, especially from the USA. This was one of the important topics of discussion during the well-known Truman Speech in 1947. To be able to get the aid it needed, Turkey had to commit to a democratic future. As a result, İnönü, as the President of the Republic and the leader of the Republican People’s Party (RPP), a strictly secular movement founded to promote Atatürk’s legacy in 1923, initiated a process of allowing multiparty politics in 1946. Although there were two attempts in 1924-25 and 1930 to move to a multiparty system,⁴¹⁵ until 1946 Turkey was

⁴¹⁴ Şentürk, *ibid.*, p.228.

⁴¹⁵ Jacob, M. Landau, *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1984), p.28 and Douglas Reynolds *Turkey, Greece, and the Borders of Europe. Images of Nations in the West German Press 1950-1975*, (Berlin: Frank and Timme, 2013), p.150.

ruled by a single party regime, the RPP. This was due to the fact that the RPP would not tolerate the idea of any religious tendency that could grow out of the opposition.

However, the Truman Doctrine meant that Turkey had to allow the formation of opposition parties. This meant that power for political parties rested on receiving the support and votes of the people. Everybody was allowed to vote. Therefore, to make the rural conservative electorate happy became a crucial matter for political parties. Since most people in Turkey were still living as they had done during the Ottoman period, religious oppression and anti-Islamic rhetoric would no longer serve the good of any political party. Acknowledging this, the RPP started introducing more religious freedom in Turkey. When multiparty elections were allowed for the first time in Turkish history in 1946, religion once again began to occupy a prominent place in politics, necessitated by the fact that if the RPP was to ever receive public support, it had to loosen its anti-religious drive. Although the RPP won the elections – under highly contested and controversial conditions – they realized the coming trouble and challenge to their power from the growing opposition parties. Consequently, RPP, against their traditional posture, started exploiting religion, as the opposition sounded friendlier towards Islam to the mostly conservative rural public. For example, by 1949, small numbers of religious education lessons were given in state schools and the RPP even allowed Imam Hatips (Muslim preachers) to be trained. Moreover the RPP's educational reforms were accompanied by a relaxation of the restriction on religious instructions outside of the state system. Members of the tariqahs who had been providing clandestine Qur'an classes were now able to emerge into the open and expand their activities. Furthermore, in March 1950 the RPP restructured and expanded the Diyanet, appointing 941 new personnel. These religious reforms of the RPP did not help them in the 1950 elections however. But because of these characteristics, the republican era reforms are of the type that can best be described as 'outer reforms': this type of reform comes from the state rather than society, including the religious establishment, and is in sharp contrast to Ottoman reforms,⁴¹⁶ however, in a sense they are broadly in-line with the English reformation of the 16th century.

⁴¹⁶ Şentürk, *ibid.*p.229.

Multiparty politics and religion 1950- 1987

The new Turkish republic almost completely banned religious influences on the state. However, with the introduction of multiparty democracy to Turkey after WWII, religion started playing an important role once again. The Democrat Party (DP), which had a conservative outlook and appealed mostly to rural and poorer sectors of society, won the first proper multiparty elections.⁴¹⁷ The reign of the secular RPP ended and DP formed the government in May 1950. One of the first things the new government did, specifically, on their third day in office, was to change the rules and allow the call to prayer to be recited in Arabic – something which had been banned in 1932. Imam Hatip Schools, those schools which educated religious leaders, or imams, were also re-opened and became popular across the country, replacing the typical and simple Imam Hatip Courses. There was of course major popular support for these changes and the DP took advantage of it.

The role of education, and especially the education given in these Imam Hatip Schools, was critical in that they raised the back bone of future supporters of these religious political parties. The ones who were educated in these schools mostly supported conservative parties. They hugely admired the Ottoman legacy, learned Islamic studies and mostly criticized the modern republic and its institutions. They had an anti-Western and pro-Eastern outlook. These groups of people would end up feeding the youth organisations of the nationalist and religious movements in the 1960's.

At the time, due to its official position as the opposition, the RPP also started relaxing its stance against religion and became more moderate with regards to laicism. It was almost impossible for the RPP to come to power with its original stance towards Islam. The DP government, which was supported by the majority of the masses at the time, through Diyanet and some civil society groups, also initiated a mass building program which saw around 15,000 new mosques opened between 1950 and 1960. Tariqahs, especially the followers of a man called Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan – their group called the 'Süleymancılar' – were also allowed to operate Qur'an courses. Said Nursi, a hugely influential Islamic scholar who had faced constant harassment forcing him underground during the previous decades (his followers were called 'Nurcular') was now also given more freedom with the coming to the power of the DP governments in the 1950s. But it should be noted that these religious groups refrained from direct

⁴¹⁷ First multiparty elections were considered not democratic.

confrontation with the state apparatus, which extended beyond the formally elected government. Their attitude was one of ‘work with the state rather than fight against the state’. For example, Mehmet Zahid Kotku – a well-known leader of the Naqshibendi order in Turkey – has refrained from being seen as someone who was against the state; at a time when left-wing and the right-wing political organisations engaged in bitter fighting to bring their ideologies to the fore, his followers (along with the followers of other religious orders) stayed away from any sort of violent conflict. Again, the Fethullah Gülen, who is considered as the most important religious scholar in Turkey today, told people who were protesting against the USA’s invasion of Iraq in 1991 that, “by going to street and saying no to this, no to that you will achieve nothing.”⁴¹⁸ This attitude has not changed up to the end of 2013 where a major animosity started between the ruling JDP government and the Gülençiler (in English Gulenists, sometimes they are also referred as Nurcular), the followers of Fethullah Gülen.⁴¹⁹

Consequently, due to the moderate stance of the government towards religion and religious organisations in the second half of the 1940’s and 1950’s, Turkey witnessed a surge in Islamic political parties. Religiously motivated parties such as the National Development Party, the Protection of Islam Party, the Nation Party and the Social Justice Party were all established after WWII. The DP however, received most of the conservative electoral votes while in office between 1950 and 1960.

During the early years of the DP government, religious tendencies were given the freedom they desired – more so than at any time since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. After lifting the ban on the Arabic call to prayer, the ban on religious broadcasting was also lifted by the DP. Some MP’s even began to promote the idea of Islam coming to occupy more of a public presence in everyday life. On one occasion, Menderes even told his MP’s that if they wanted “they could bring the Caliphate back”. While all of this was occurring, rumours began to rage about Prime Minister Menderes’s now infamous kissing of the hands of a previously persecuted religious scholar, Said Nursi (a sign of respect in Turkey) and raised many eyebrows in the Kemalist establishment. The RPP used these debates, which raged in the press, as an argument for the idea that religious sects were increasingly impacting Menderes’s policies. This rumour was clearly condemned by the students of Nursi as they argued

⁴¹⁸ Alev Erkilet Baser, *Ortadoğu’da Modernleşme ve İslami Hareketler: Türkiye, Mısır, İran, Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi, Doktora Tezi (PhD Thesis), Haziran 1996, p.p.141-142.*

⁴¹⁹ The fight became obvious after an alleged corruption scandal broke out in Dec. 2013 where the ruling JDP accused the Gulenists for acting on behalf of “dark forces”.

that the two had never met in person.⁴²⁰ However, while the DP increasingly controlled every aspect of life, there were widespread incidents which were seen to be targeting the secularist system in Turkey and they sparked counter protests by the opposition. Some such attacks included attacking busts of Atatürk in various places, asking for fez and burka to be freed in DP's Konya meeting and again mayor of Izmir from DP, Raif Onursal's proposal of expelling İnönü like the last Caliph Abdülmecit Efendi.⁴²¹ These incidents forced the DP to introduced new laws in 1951 related to the protection of Atatürk and secular system. Following on from that the government also closed down the Islamic Democratic Party in 1952.

In later years, the DP used religion as a tool to attack the opposition, and mainly the RPP who, in terms of outlook and worldview, came to represent the strict Kemalist-secularist mood of the 1930's. As a result, religious factions were controlled by the right-wing parties most notably the DP and Menderes governments. However, although it received the support of the conservative sections of society, the reign of the DP ended with the military coup of 27 May 1960. The Junta and the courts it established claimed Menderes was trying to undermine the secular Turkish Republic. It later sentenced Prime Minister Adnan Menderes to death and executed him and some of his ministers in September 1961. The generals who orchestrated the coup believed the secular state was at stake and the execution of the prime minister would send a strongest message to others who challenged the system created by Atatürk. To them, Menderes was allowing religion, which they believed had laid the foundations for the decline and eventual collapse of the Ottoman Empire, to infiltrate the veins of the state once again. They saw this as a threat that would eventually break up the country.

Contrary to expectations, the military regime and the constitution created in its wake were not oppressive towards religion. It focused more on civil liberties than limitations of rights. Therefore, governments set up in the 1960s did not take Turkey back to the 1930s where religion was clearly not welcomed in the public sphere. In addition, from the 1960's onwards, political parties that explicitly identified themselves as religious began emerging. Imam Hatip schools spread across the country, while more and more mosques were built every year by governments set up either by the RPP or Justice Party (JP [Tr.:Adalet Partisi, AP]) which replaced the Democrat Party. The Nurcular,

⁴²⁰ Oral Çalışlar, 'Adnan Menderes Said Nursi'nin elini öptü mü?', *Radikal*, Jan.20, 2010.

⁴²¹ Feroz Ahmed, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy 1950-1975*, (London: Royal Institute of international Affairs, 1977), p.4.

flourished in the 1960's while Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği (Association for the Struggle Against Communism, ASC) was also established.

These religious schools and religious establishments did not emerge out of thin air. There was popular demand as they appealed to the needs of the poorer rural groups due to the fact that the state was struggling to realize basic development goals at the time, such as electricity and running water supplies to these areas. These groups were generally less educated and historically speaking had trust for religious establishments, more so than the state. In villages, as well as usual prayer spaces, imams had also been conducting other important rituals for centuries such as burials and mevlids.⁴²² Therefore, in a sense, these areas had been receiving more support from religious groups than the state, and this was reflected in their support for the spread of religious education across the country. However, it should be noted that religion was not free of the state domain. It was strictly controlled and, to an extent, exploited by the government and the state to reach political goals.

During the heated political environment of the 1950s and early 1960's, with the Berlin and Cuban Crisis shaking the stability of world politics deeply, Turkey was seen as a strategic asset for the West,⁴²³ though it came also to be rocked by violent insurgencies drawing on student movements, particularly during the 1960s. These mainly left-wing groups were considered less religious and more secularist and they established their own student organisations, while right-wing groups also began to organize. These right-wing groups, generally seen as more religious, such as Milli Türk Talebe Birliği (National Turkish Student Union-NTSU) also began organizing anti-Communist and pro-Jihad rallies. The most important of these groups however would be founded by nationalist leader and a former army officer Alparslan Türkeş. His nationalist teachings came to be referred to as 'Ülkücüler' or 'the idealists', and is also the name of a group formed in 1969 which became the most fearsome representative of the right-wing, which did not shy away from violently clashing with left-wing organisations. This group followed a Turkish-Islamic agenda, declaring that Turks were 'as Muslim as Mount Hira in Arabia' (the site of an important landmark in Islamic history) and 'as Turkish as the Tengri Mountains in Central Asia'.

⁴²² Special ceremonial rituals to celebrate the birthday of Prophet Muhammed where religious verses are recited and songs sung. But in Turkey mevlids are also very common in celebrating child birth, circumcision days, after the death of people, in weddings and so on.

⁴²³ William H. Park, 'The Security Dimensions of Turkey-EU Relations', in Michael Lake (ed.), *The EU and Turkey: A Glittering Prize or a Millstone?*, (London: Federal Trust for Education and Research, 2005), p.128.

In 1965, Türkeş became the leader of a right-wing political party called ‘Republican Villagers Nation Party’ (RNVP [Tr.: Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi, CKMP]) later renaming it ‘The Nationalist Action Party’ (NAP [Tr.: Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, MHP]) in 1969. He published a book titled “Dokuz Işık” (or Nine Lights) where he advocated a strictly nationalist agenda. Later, the youth movement of Türkeş, the ‘Idealist Hearths’ or (Ülkü Ocakları in Turkish) spread across the country, their members calling themselves Bozkurtlar (or Grey Wolves) after a well-known figure in pre-Islamic Turkish mythology.⁴²⁴ Although the youth movement was the most effective representative among right-wing groups, by following more of a nationalist agenda rather than a religious one, Türkeş failed to make a serious impact on the political arena in elections between 1969 and 1977 and received about three % of the national votes., He was the only member of his party that could take a seat in the parliament in 1969 elections.⁴²⁵

However, a mechanical engineer and a successful academic named Erbakan was by the 1960s becoming a prominent representative of the religious section of society. It can be argued here that if it were not for the Cold War, the Turkish military would not have allowed Erbakan or the above mentioned groups to flourish since, as hardened Kemalists, they saw religion as a threat to the secular state. NATO membership since 1952 meant that the Turkish military also had close ties with the USA. Therefore, it is arguable that the US supported a ‘religious revival’ in Turkey as a way of fighting the Communist threat in the country. Moreover, during these same years, the role of the youth movements was essential in shaping the political atmosphere in Turkey. Right-wing groups focused on national issues and had minimal or no international contact at all. Their supporters generally came from poorer and more rural backgrounds. They did not only see communism as a threat to Turkey, but also to their traditions, culture and religion. This was not the case in the West. They were less interested in religion than the Turkish youth. On the other hand, left-wing groups had extensive contact with international networks. There was some rural support for these groups as well, but members were generally middle-class and urban settlers.

⁴²⁴ Zürcher, Turkey: A Modern History, p.257.

⁴²⁵ Jenkins, *ibid.*, p. 131. NAP has increased its vote from 3.4 per cent to 6.4 on Jul.22, 1977 elections.

Necmettin Erbakan: an Islamist scholar and political leader

After failing to persuade the JP to name him as a party candidate in the 1969 elections, Erbakan went on to win a seat as an independent candidate for the central Anatolian town of Konya – also a stronghold of religious conservatism in Turkey.⁴²⁶ Erbakan was a follower of the Naqshibendi order and the teachings of Sheikh Mehmet Zahit Kotku. Consequently, under his religious teacher's agreement and support, Erbakan set up a new political party called the National Order Party (NOP [Tr.: Milli Nizam Partisi-MNP]) on 26 January 1970. Undoubtedly, most of his main personnel came from the ranks of the religious Naqshibandi order. At the time, although most supported the JP, some of the Nurcular also supported Erbakan. The party program of the NOP heavily stressed moral issues and in public statements, Erbakan made no secret of his nostalgia for the Ottoman Empire. But he purposefully stayed away from openly expressing the party's support for a religious state. He was probably worried about getting banned by the military chiefs. One is left in no confusion as to his goals after analysing his speeches: he was an anti-Western, anti-Zionist politician who wanted to establish a state with Islamic moral codes. On 20 May 1971, soon after the military intervention on 21 March of the same year, the NOP was closed down by the Constitutional Court due to what they argued was Erbakan's anti-laicist agenda considering that he wanted religious education lessons to be introduced into secondary schools, and the fact that he was enthusiastic about re-introducing the Caliphate. But to many scholars, Erbakan was not asking for an Islamic state that was run by Islamic Sharia law. According to Çakır, he was in fact telling the dominant elites of Turkey "to add a little bit of Islamic motifs in to the democracy games they were playing. And he was clearly stating that his party knew how to add it better than others."⁴²⁷

Erbakan did not give up his political fight even after the court's decision. After spending some time in Switzerland, he established his second political party, the National Salvation Party (NSP [Tr.: Milli Selamet Partisi, MSP]). He was supported by Naqshabandi orders and the Milli Görüş (National Vision) which was founded by Erbakan in 1969. This time, he was more cautious and he focused more on moral issues, as well as opposing the integration of Turkey with the European Common Market. He saw rapprochement with the West as an immoral thing to do. His aim was to integrate

⁴²⁶ Zürcher, *ibid.*, p.257.

⁴²⁷ Ruşen Çakır, *Ne Seriat Ne Demokrasi: Refah Partisi'ni Anlamak*, (Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1994), p.129.

Turkey with the Islamic world, where he thought Turkey naturally belonged. For example, in his speech in Kocaeli on 13 November 1970, he declared that “the immorality in the country will disappear when the NSP come to power and establishes an honourable, moral Muslim Turkish state just like it used to be in the past.”⁴²⁸

In the 1970s support for the NSP increased and after the 14 October 1973 elections Erbakan successfully brought political Islam partly to power in Turkey for the first time since the creation of the Republic. He did this by taking part in two different coalition governments. The first was formed with the secularist party, the RPP, in 1973 after which Erbakan joined a coalition with Demirel’s AP and Türkeş’s NAP in 1977. Erbakan also published a booklet titled “Milli Görüş” (National Vision) in 1975 which was later taken as the name to signify his followers and their vision for a new society. The booklet included a mixture of general principles and specific proposals. For example, it defended the rights of women to work and have the same access to education as men, while simultaneously insisting that their primary role was toward the family, particularly in their role as mothers.⁴²⁹ By the 1990s this was no longer a core tenant, since Erbakan had increasingly argued women should become more involved with politics in order to bank their votes. To many scholars, this change in attitude towards women was one of the main reasons why he was very successful at this time. The booklet also highlighted the importance of making opportunities available for the poorer and more rural parts of society.

During the same years, Erbakan also preached loudly against NATO and any connection to the EEC. He advocated close ties with the Islamic world, a withdrawal from NATO, and the severing of Turkey’s growing ties with the EEC.⁴³⁰ In one of his speeches Erbakan declared that his party was against the “freemasons, communists and Zionists” as he condemned the EEC for being a Jewish and Zionist organisation. At later stages, he also condemned the EEC for being a ‘Christian Club’.⁴³¹ At the time, his remarks were not taken into serious consideration by EEC officials as his power in the Turkish political arena was not significant.

⁴²⁸ Jenkins, *ibid.*, p.131.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.135.

⁴³⁰ Jenkins, *ibid.*, p.135.

⁴³¹ Elizabeth Özdalga, ‘Necmettin Erbakan: Democracy for the Sake of Power,’ in Metin Heper and Sabri Sayari (ed.), *Political Leaders and Democracy in Turkey*, (Oxford and New York: Lexington Books, 2002), p.136 and Jacob M. Landau, *Exploring Ottoman and Turkish History*, (London: C. Hurst & Co, 2004), pp.154-155.

During the 1970s, in which youth groups from left and right-wing organisations in Turkey had violent clashes, Erbakan and his followers were also openly talking about bringing the caliphate back and forming an Islamic state in Turkey. They wanted Turkey to stay away from forming close political and economic ties with the West as they blamed the West for Turkey's major political and economic problems as well as the unrest among the youth. In one of his speeches in the TGNA he said:

Who are the West? Who is the IMF? We are making them big by giving them the match in their hand to set a fire in our country. And it's us who goes around with water hoes like a fire fighter to stop to fire from one corner to another one! We must stop it and turn our face to Islamic World, the real world for Turkey.⁴³²

He was becoming very open about his desire for Turkey to get closer to the Islamic world and worries about the military were nearly forgotten. The noteworthy increase in his level of confidence was due to the fact that support for his ideology was widespread and much more powerful by the late 1970s than in previous years. While also aiming to make Friday rather than Sunday the public holiday, Erbakan also initiated close relations with the Islamic world and put pressure on the government to provide Turkish passports for the expelled members of the Ottoman Dynasty.⁴³³ However, the generals who closely observed all the demands of left and right-wing groups showed what they thought of this before the end of 1980: On 12 September 1980, the third military coup ended the dreams of all political organisations. The coup stopped all forms of civilian politics in Turkey.

Religious political thinking between 1980 and 1994

Political leaders including Türkeş, Ecevit, Demirel and Erbakan were all sent to prison and banned from active politics after the 1980 military coup.⁴³⁴ Their political parties were also banned. While they were in prison, their affiliates set up new political parties under different names but largely maintaining the same goals. In this respect, the closed NSP was replaced by WP, and the NAP of Türkeş was replaced by Nationalist Working Party (NWP, [Tr.: Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi, MÇP]), while Demirel's JP was replaced by True Path Party (TPP [Tr.: Doğru Yol Partisi, DYP]). Until the referendum

⁴³² Erbakan's speech in the TGNA <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOLhnAZPnHY>, retrieved Jan.19,2013.

⁴³³ Doğan Duman, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye'de İslamcılık*, (İzmir: Dokuz Eylül Yayınları, 1999), p.91

⁴³⁴ Zürcher., *ibid*, p.279.

of 1987, which asked whether people in Turkey wanted previously banned politicians to contribute to politics once again, they all remained out of politics. But the referendum initiated by then Prime Minister Özal – an economic liberal and a statesman who made freedom of religion part of his political discourse – resulted in the lifting of the ban placed on the politicians and all once again regained their seats as heads of the new parties.

Özal was a highly educated pro-Western politician who came from a religious family that followed the Naqshibendi Sufi order.⁴³⁵ His brother was also a politician, who became a member of parliament for Erbakan's party. In a sense, Özal represented a new breed of political, social and economic thinkers in Turkey. This distinctive generation of highly educated engineers, writers, scientists and businesspeople were modern-minded, liberal, and pro-Western while also openly loyal to Islam and supporting of the secular Turkish state. They believed that as long as religious beliefs did not interfere or become involved in state matters they could be practiced freely in a secular society; in such a society, states have no official religion and have an equal distance to all religions.⁴³⁶

In Özal's time Turkey enjoyed more religious freedom. Moderate religious factions were authorised to set up boarding schools and private revision centres. Özal knew that if there was suppression of their beliefs people were likely to become more radical. He was also a passionate Westernizer who wanted Turkey to be part of the EU or at least come closer to this political entity. Therefore, although he knew that the EEC would reject Turkish application, he nonetheless initiated a process for Turkey to apply for membership of the EEC in 1987.⁴³⁷ With this unsuccessful application out of the way he had still achieved two important things: Firstly, he reassured many that, under him, Turkey was always looking Westward, whilst secondly, also demonstrating to the new generation of religious intellectuals in Turkey that a democratic and moderate religious politician could also be a reformer and westerniser.

While Tırkeş was seen to follow a Turkish-Islamic agenda, Erbakan pursued a more overtly Islamic-Turkish agenda. The difference can be explained thus: for Tırkeş, being Turkish was the most important thing, while for Erbakan being Muslim was of primary concern. Therefore, Tırkeş was never identified as a religious leader but rather a

⁴³⁵ Kemal H. Karpat, *Studies on Turkish Politics and Society: Selected Essays and Articles*, (Leiden: Brill NV, 2004), p.719.

⁴³⁶ Özdemir Ince, *Kisi hem laik hem Musluman olamaz mi?*, *Hurriyet*, Aug.8, 2004.

⁴³⁷ Paul T. Levin, *Turkey and the European Union: Christian and Secular Images of Islam*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.166.

nationalist figure. Erbakan once again came to stand as the main representative of political Islam in Turkey. Although Erbakan and Türkeş represented the two most important right-wing religious political parties, namely the NAP and the WP, Karpat argues that:

They were not responsible for the national-Ottoman-Islamic resurgence but were to some extent its beneficiaries. They sought rather unsuccessfully to channel and use these popular currents of feeling to attain their own political ends.⁴³⁸

Focusing once more on moral issues, Erbakan gained the momentum when cleared to participate in politics again when he began to mobilize women to support his party.⁴³⁹ He also continued with his anti-Western and anti-EEC rhetoric. When Prime Minister Özal, who had ran a majority government under his Motherland Party (MP) since 1983 applied for full membership to the EEC in 1987, Erbakan strongly criticised him. According to Erbakan, Turkey could not benefit from joining the EU either economically or politically as it was a ‘Christian Union.’ As if echoing Samuel Huntington’s Clash of Civilisations thesis of the 1990s, Erbakan declared:

Our history is a history of 1500 years of conflict between the European and Islamic cultures.⁴⁴⁰

However, the 1987 application to join the EEC was not a failure on all fronts as Erbakan tried to depict. As mentioned before Turkey’s application was referred for a detailed study and this decision re-established Turkey’s eligibility. Though even today some people still try to debate the geographical boundaries of Europe, the above decision asserted that Turkey is geographically a European country and all other arguments were officially null. To Erbakan, this was not a significant event but rather a statement of fact.⁴⁴¹ Therefore, it can be argued that the EEC’s reluctant position empowered religious elements in Turkey

Finally, in 1994, Erbakan’s changing rhetoric towards women and focusing on the poorer parts of society bore its first fruits during local elections when his party assumed control of the municipalities of Istanbul, Ankara, and twenty eight other cities. This success sent shockwaves throughout the Kemalist secular establishment.⁴⁴² During these

⁴³⁸ Karpat, *ibid.*, p.364.

⁴³⁹ Arat, *ibid.*

⁴⁴⁰ Özdalga, *ibid.*, p.136.

⁴⁴¹ Erbakan only agreed for this statement in terms of Turkey being geographically part of Europe rather than cultural unity.

⁴⁴² Ioannis N.Grigoriadis, *Trial of Europeanization, Turkish Political Culture and the European Union*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.103.

elections, a young politician who was an active member of the NTSU since his youth and the former chairmen of the WP in Istanbul, Erdoğan, became the mayor of Istanbul.⁴⁴³

Political Islam in Turkey between 1994 and 2001

Following on from their successful run in the municipal elections, the WP became a key protagonist in the 1995 national elections, when it became the biggest single party in the parliament, winning 21.38 % of votes. However, just before Erbakan became Prime Minister, the long awaited Customs Union agreement, one of the most important milestones in Turkey-EU relations, came into force. To prepare Turkey for the conditions of this agreement, under the leadership of Turkey's first female Prime Minister, Tansu Ciller, who ran with the slogan 'ya girecegiz, ya girecegiz' (we will be member of the EU either this way or that way), the TGNA passed a package of reforms to comply with the EU demands on 23 July 1995. These new reforms directly impacted on Turkish political, social and economic life as they reshaped some of the articles of the Constitution introduced by the military regime in 1982.

The changes to the articles gave associations and trade unions the right to engage in politics, allowed civil servants to join trade unions and parties to establish youth and women's branches. The voting age was brought down from 21 to 18. Ciller seemed to continue the Westernisation journey from where the late president Özal had left (he had died in suspicious circumstances in 1993). Again, for the first time since the military take-over of 1980, the legacy of the coup d'état was being discarded, but the package was a compromise and the people who had held power during the period of military rule retained their immunity. Article 8 of the anti-terrorism law was also kept after the army had let it be known that it considered the idea of removing it 'inappropriate.'⁴⁴⁴

As a result, the Customs Union, which was one of the main goals of the 1963 Association Agreement, was finally established with Turkey under the EU Association Council Decision 1/95 of 6 March 1995.⁴⁴⁵ Agricultural products being exempt from the Customs Union did not satisfy some Turkish politicians including Erbakan, as they argued that the only proper goods Turkey could sell to Europe was agricultural foodstuffs. Indeed, Turkey's main industrial sector was agriculture in the 1990s.

⁴⁴³ M. Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.126.

⁴⁴⁴ Zürcher, *Turkey: a Modern History*, p.297.

⁴⁴⁵ Palabıyık and Yıldız, *ibid*, p.76.

Moreover, even though this was an economic agreement, in Turkey's case, the Customs Union also had major political implications. For example, political liberalisation⁴⁴⁶ acquired more urgency when the EU made the conclusion of a Customs Union with Turkey explicitly dependent on it.⁴⁴⁷ This was something that Turkey would greatly benefit from during later dates.

With the Customs Union, Turkey officially declared that it would follow neoliberal economic policies. In this regard the Customs Union meant the culmination of Turkey's liberalisation efforts to catch up with the world economy, a process that had started in the early 1980s, since EU rules have great parallelisms with those of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and some other international regimes.⁴⁴⁸

However the rise of the political Islam in Turkey with WP became a reality on 8 July, 1996, when it formed a coalition government with TPP and its leader Erdogan became Prime Minister.⁴⁴⁹ But then, contrary to the expectations both in Turkey and in the Western world, in its first months in office, the new cabinet went out of its way to avoid confrontation and accure respectability. The strong Islamist rhetoric employed by the WP in opposition, which had called for the abolition of interest, a halt to integration with the EU and the breaking of ties with Israel was seemingly forgotten.⁴⁵⁰ While in opposition, Erdogan also campaigned against the Customs Union in various forms and branded the agreement as a disgraceful and colonial treaty.⁴⁵¹ The agreement was, for Erdogan, against what he had originally intended to do, which was to create an Islamic common market liking the "Developing Eight" which included Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Egypt and Nigeria.⁴⁵²

Conservative politicians thought that by signing the Customs Union before full membership "Turkey put itself in a disadvantaged position as it did not receive the aids other countries received during the transition period. Also any small aid was furthermore stopped by the Greeks"⁴⁵³ (this was a common perception in Turkey that

⁴⁴⁶ Political liberalisation reforms included the removal of a several restrictive measures on the constitution that the junta had imposed in 1982.

⁴⁴⁷ Zürcher, *ibid.*, p.296-297.

⁴⁴⁸ Ercan Atak, Harmonisation of Turkish Legislation and Practice with that of The European Union, Mar. 22, 2001, p.2 www.tbmm.gov.tr/ul_kom/kpk/pre1.doc, retrieved Jun. 11, 2013.

⁴⁴⁹ Zürcher, *ibid.*, p.299 and Gregoriadis, *ibid.*, p.103.

⁴⁵⁰ Zürcher, *ibid.*, p.299.

⁴⁵¹ Hakan Yavuz, 'Islam and Europeanisation in Turkish Muslim Political socio-Political Movements,' in Timothy A. Byrnes, Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.244.

⁴⁵² Tariq Ramadan, *Islam and the Arab Awakening*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.100.

⁴⁵³ Davutoğlu, *ibid.*, pp.511-512.

the Greeks were taken in to EU to stop the Turks whenever possible). However, at later stages, especially when the WP came to power, Erbakan stressed that he was no longer against the Customs Union Agreement with the EU which he had earlier opposed.⁴⁵⁴ His said that his desire was to make Turkey the leader of an Islamic economic block rather than just becoming a secondary power in the Western alliance systems.

While Turkey-EU relations were taking a new form during the 1990's, internal affairs in Turkish politics were changing dramatically as support for religious parties was rising, something which is noted above. In the municipal elections of 27 March 1994, the WP party came third with 19.1 % of the vote, meaning that they nearly doubled their support compared to previous elections. The victory in large metropolitan cities such as Istanbul and Ankara was a sign that this party had now become the voice of not only the neglected and poor sections of the population, but also the small businesspeople.⁴⁵⁵ Istanbul, in particular, was very important in terms of the prestige it afforded to the party. Erdoğan, as the mayor of Istanbul, had huge responsibility on his shoulders as he himself noted in 2007, "Erbakan had to choose me as chairman of the party in Istanbul when I was 31 because there was not any suitable person in the party yet,"⁴⁵⁶ implying that his party had a lack of qualified politicians and intellectuals at the time to fill key posts. This was probably one of the major handicaps that such religious parties had. Urbanisation began to bear fruits from the beginning of the 1990s as more and more educated people joined the WP.

Erdoğan, a great orator and a charismatic leader, was originally from the small Black Sea town of Rize, whose parents had immigrated to the Kasimpasa district of Istanbul in search of a better life. Supporters of the WP portrayed him as a well-spoken, religious and trustworthy politician figure. The opposition also agreed with most of these interpretations. When he made TV appearances he drew big audiences with his excellent oratory skills. He could debate with anyone, be they intellectuals or politicians and also win most of these. He would speak in the language that the majority of people understood, giving simple responses using football terminology like "you cannot change

⁴⁵⁴ Fawaz A. Gerges, *America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.p.209-210.

⁴⁵⁵ Zürcher, *ibid*, p.295.

⁴⁵⁶ Hidayet Karaca and Ahmet Boken, *Ozel Gundem*, Samanyolu TV, Jul, 14, 2007 (A TV interview with Prime Minister) also can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbzqsvbLZzY>, retrieved Feb.12, 2015.

the rules of the game during the match” when discussing the EU.⁴⁵⁷ Erdoğan was also a graduate of the Imam Hatip School and an openly anti-EU and pro-Islamic unity politician. In the 1990s Erdoğan became a household name in Turkey.

So, although Erbakan was truly loved and respected by his followers, there was no doubt Erdoğan was becoming the second most important person within the party. Erbakan was a professor of engineering, a good public speaker with a great educational background. Erdoğan on the other side came from a working class background with less academic achievements on his CV. However he also had much, albeit a different sort of, charm. He was seen as a young role model for millions and soon after becoming the mayor of Istanbul, declared the deputy to Erbakan. Until their political break in the late 1990s, the two spoke with the same tone and Erdoğan considered Erbakan his teacher.⁴⁵⁸ Erbakan, Erdoğan and other major actors within the WP raised the profile and support for the party significantly.

Political Islam becomes a major political player

During the 1990s the WP began using certain key discourses in their campaigns that they encouraged their supporters to identify themselves with. For example, Adil Duzen (‘just system’)⁴⁵⁹ and being against interest (‘faiz’)⁴⁵⁹ were two such key discourses used by the party. WP supporters portrayed themselves as good citizens standing against evil. They said this was the fight of ‘Hak’ (good/truth) against ‘Batıl’ (evil/wrong).⁴⁶⁰ Here, Hak represented the authentic, godly, sacred, and just system of Islam, while Batıl represented the materialist, imitative, and colonial system of the West. In fact, in his speeches Erbakan used the word Batıl⁴⁶¹ to describe the opposition parties who supported Turkey’s entrance into the EU, as he saw the EU as the ‘horse of the USA’ that created many problems in the world, including the one in Iraq. He repeatedly mentioned that the West was hypocritical in their dealings on human rights and other

⁴⁵⁷ ‘Erdoğan: Oyun Basladı, kural degisiyor (game started rules are changing),’ *Gazete Vatan*, Nov. 9, 2007

⁴⁵⁸ Erdoğan always called Erbakan ‘Hoca’ (teacher).

⁴⁵⁹ Erbakan’s speech about the Adil Duzen at the Middle Eastern Technical University (or ODTU) in 1991 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I46g0TlnTY>, retrieved Nov.19, 2013.

⁴⁶⁰ Erbakan’s speech while in opposition in 1995 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQC6NtSBtAl>, retrieved Nov.19, 2013.

⁴⁶¹ A speech by Erbakan related to Hak and Batıl, ODTU,1991 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgIdQb4mZUk>, retrieved Dec. 19, 2013.

issues.⁴⁶² This ideological stance separated the WP from the rest of the political parties in Turkey, helping the party and its supporters to clearly identify themselves as defenders of the Islamic good while condemning the rest as being the followers of Western evil. This religiously motivated, conservative and anti-western identity of the WP stacked in the minds of the people in Turkey including the secularist such as the army. However, the WP was not worried about upsetting these forces, as they were only gaining more support when they clearly identified themselves as the only political party that used references to Turkey's Islamic heritage and past to campaign. This division in Turkish politics showed itself to be useful in the general election of 1995. Indeed, the WP won the general election of 24 December 1995 with 21.4 % of the vote. Many scholars such as Erick Zürcher considered this victory "a true watershed in modern Turkish history."⁴⁶³

However, the WP did not have enough seats to set up a government. Also, the political parties in opposition did not want to set up a coalition with Erbakan. As a result, with the encouragement of President Demirel and the army, Tansu Çiller's TPP and Mesut Yılmaz's MP formed a coalition government. However, this government collapsed within six months due to the fact that they had been forced to work together right from the start rather than agreeing on key principles or policies.

Still, during the unstable Çiller-Yılmaz coalition, the Customs Union came into force. While in opposition, Erbakan had declared a political war against EU membership. Two members of his party at the time, future President Abdullah Gül who was a Member of Parliament and future Prime Minister Erdoğan, were also champions of anti-EU and anti-Western rhetoric. They both strongly believed that the EU would never accept Turkey. Gül in particular made many speeches in the Turkish Parliament against the EU application process and the Customs Union by referring to it as a 'Christian Club.' In the TGNA Gül argued that:

It is certain that Turkey will not be able to get in to EU...Leading European politicians and philosophers all say this; because the EU is a Christian Union. It is not us saying this. The former leader of the EU Delors and the former Prime Minister of England also say this. In the EU's future predictions list for 2010, all the former Communist states are there but Turkey is not seen. Everything is working for Europe's advantage, but not for Turkey's. We are constantly

⁴⁶² M.Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 223

giving into their demands but they do not do that for us. As professor Manisalı⁴⁶⁴ says, they will put you in a shed in front of the rich people's mansions. We are not saying this. Everyone else is saying this. Even the Customs Union is a disadvantageous institution."⁴⁶⁵

Moreover, Erdoğan also repeated similar tropes in one of his speeches in Sakarya in 1990; in fact, he repeated exactly what Erbakan and Gul had said:

The EEC? We are not getting in it! It seems like we are, but do not worry they will not take us. But it is important to know the reality: The EEC is a Christian Catholic states union. I am not a fortune teller but this is the reality. They will not accept us. We will not get in to this wok! Why? Because if you do not convert to their religion they will just keep you waiting at the door. Why? Because they might take away Cyprus and also make us accept the Armenian genocide. But we (the WP supporters) are going to come to power and will not ask to get in to the EEC."⁴⁶⁶

In addition to the above, in another speech where Erdoğan was speaking to university students about secularism in Turkey, he argued that Turkey should not be secular as this did not match with the 'Turkish way of life' and the beliefs of 99% of Turks, who were Muslim. There he stated that:

You cannot become [a] secularist and [a] Muslim at the same time. You are either a Muslim or a secularist. When these two get together they act as opposite magnets. It is impossible for them to be together; this is because Allah is the creator of a Muslim and therefore Allah is the ultimate ruler. Then they say authority belongs to the nation without any reservation or condition ⁴⁶⁷ which is a big lie as it does not belong to [the] people.⁴⁶⁸

Moreover, in the 1990s other members of Erdoğan's movement, like Bülent Arınç, Hasan Mezarıcı and Şevket Kazan, also won support with these types of speeches. The secularist section of society, including the military, had good grounds to think that the JDP might shift Turkey away from Europe and towards the Islamic world. However, as can be seen in later parts of this paper, when they came to power in late 2002, Erdoğan

⁴⁶⁴ Professor Erol Manisalı is a left leaning intellectual, known with his anti- EU and now anti-JDP stands. It is interesting to see that in 1995 Gül was referencing Manisalı's views in his speech as they both thought the same. In 2015 Manisalı still thinks the same but Gül changed his mind and supported the EU prospects as president. Manisalı, who is sentenced to nine years imprisonment during the Ergenekon trials, also thinks that the EU and JDP are both using each other's as he wrote in his article in Cumhuriyet daily on Sept. 5, 2011 where he compared RPP and JDP's EU politics.

⁴⁶⁵ Gül made this speech on Mar. 8, 1995 in TGNA <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GVnQDtb9NoQ> retrieved Sep.13 2011.

⁴⁶⁶ This speech was made in Sakarya, on Mar. 16, 1990 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCxeEpAMMY0> retrieved Dec. 28 2013.

⁴⁶⁷ Here Erdoğan references Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's well known quote.

⁴⁶⁸ Video of the speech is found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFs-pGv2dKQ&feature=related>, retrieved Dec.13 2014.

cleverly used EU backing to defeat his opponents one after the other; he did this by becoming more European and secular than the secularists themselves.

After the collapse of the TPP and MP government,⁴⁶⁹ (also known in Turkey as the ANAYOL government), president Demirel asked Erbakan to form another government. Erbakan and Çiller agreed to form a coalition together and Erbakan became the Prime Minister of Turkey on 28 June 1996. He was to be prime minister for the first two years and then Ciller would take over for the last two years. The new government surprised the Western World, as for the first time a religiously oriented party with an anti-Western vision had taken power in the modern Turkish Republic. The army's imminent intervention as the 'guardians of the secular republic' was expected by many. Surprisingly, apart from firing some religious officers from the army, the military did not get as involved as expected.

The WP was also cautious during the first months in government. Although Erbakan opposed the Customs Union originally, he straight away adopted a pro-EU position while in office. Later, he made EU accession Turkey's primary foreign policy goal.⁴⁷⁰ Leading figures of the party, such as Abdullah Gül and Lutfu Dogan, sought to distinguish between Westernisation and modernity. They thought that Westernisation in the Turkish context was a process of alienation from one's own cultural values and history and its replacement by an empty shell that only could be a pale shadow of the 'other' that it aspires to be. This was seen as the root cause of underdevelopment.⁴⁷¹ To them, the fake developments and imitations were portrayed to represent modernity under the guise of protecting the Republic.⁴⁷² As a result Turkey was being kept underdeveloped due to this false illusion which was presented to the masses as Westernisation. For the WP's leadership, modernity was seen as a necessity for survival and its technological, scientific democratic and industrial elements were not seen as being incompatible with Islam.⁴⁷³

Nevertheless, as time went by, perhaps due to the fact that Erbakan was running the country quite well, his government was beginning to seriously worry officers and

⁴⁶⁹ The 53rd Government, also known as the ANAYOL government, was a coalition government formed on 12 March 1996 between the TTP of Çiller and the AP of Yılmaz. It did not last too long as Yılmaz resigned on 6 June 1996.

⁴⁷⁰ Yavuz, *ibid.*, p.244.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.224.

⁴⁷² Eyup Ozveren, 'In Defiance of History: Liberal and National Attributes of the Ottoman-Turkish Road to Modernity,' in Zoltan Denes (ed.), *Liberty and the Search for Identity: Liberal Nationalism and the Legacy of Empires*, (Budapest: CEU press, 2006), p.491.

⁴⁷³ Yavuz, *ibid.*, p.224.

secularist elements in society, including the media. The military might have thought that continuation of the success in government would clearly attract more support for the WP in future elections. To them this created the possibility of jeopardizing the future of secularism in Turkey when they considered Erbakan's previous rhetoric. So the secularists were waiting, on guard, to catch Erbakan conducting 'anti-secular activities'.

28 February postmodern coup; the beginning of the new game in Turkish politics:

As previously mentioned, soon after forming the government, the strong Islamist rhetoric employed by the WP while in opposition – which had called for the abolition of interest and a halt to integration with the EU – was forgotten.⁴⁷⁴ The WP was becoming more moderate in its position towards the West and Israel. Although the government was getting along quite well with the military, the press – which was controlled by two powerful media patrons, Aydın Dogan and Dinç Bilgin (they held 66% of the media in 1997)⁴⁷⁵ – continued to attack the WP. Journalists were fed things to write in their columns by the General Staff. According to Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan, a close colleague of Erbakan, a well-known journalist at the time, who was also stripped of his member of the parliament status and banned from politics for five years after the 28th February incident⁴⁷⁶ Fatih Çekirge, used military sources (information was provided by soldiers) on almost two hundred different occasions to set the headlines against Erbakan for the national daily Sabah. On many occasions he made up lies regarding similarities between the religious revival in Turkey and Iran.⁴⁷⁷ Ceylan further argued that:

One of the funniest and dramatic headlines we have ever seen was published in the daily Hurriyet on 10 October 1996; it read "Wind of lies". This headline outlined 20 lies Erbakan had made in his speech to the nation a day before. However there was one issue with it. Indeed, Erbakan had not made a speech the day before after Nabi Avcı and I requested he attend an

⁴⁷⁴ Zürcher, *ibid*, p.299.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p.299.

⁴⁷⁶ The Constitutional Court decided to strip Necmettin Erbakan, Şevket Kazan, Ahmet Tekdal, Şevki Yılmaz, Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan and İbrahim Halil Çelik of their MP status, in accordance with Article 84 of the Constitution. It found that these persons, by their words and deeds, had caused Refah's dissolution. The Constitutional Court also banned them for five years from becoming founding members, ordinary members, leaders or auditors of any other political party, pursuant to Article 69 § 8 of the Constitution. European Court of Human Rights, Grand Chamber, Case of Refah Partisi (WP) and Others v. Turkey, Feb. 13, 2003, [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-60936#{"itemid":\["001-60936"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-60936#{), retrieved, Jun. 7, 2013.

⁴⁷⁷ Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan in Mehmet Ali Önel's 'Deşifre Programı', *A Haber TV*, Sept. 8, 2013 (Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan was one of the debaters in this programme. He has explained what exactly happened during the 28 February. He was in charge of the WP's propaganda and promotions).

important national football match instead. It was very obvious that the army had prepared the headline long before the speech was made and gave it to *Hurriyet*, one of the big three daily newspapers of the time. They never expected the speech to be cancelled, so they went ahead and printed it anyway. This is how the army covertly interfered and played with people's minds in Turkey.⁴⁷⁸

Still, support for the WP kept rising as witnessed during the by-elections of 1996. In simple terms, the more the media attacked the WP, the more public support they received. It showed that people had lost trust in the Turkish media in the 1990s and the 'protest vote' went to the 'victimized and unwanted'.

While the WP was trying to bring tensions down and allay the fears of secularists, internal and external forces continued to undermine it. Some of the younger politicians, such as Abdullah Gül, were trying to change the identity of the party in the minds of the people from one which associated it with the idea of a 'Fundamentalist Islamic party' to a 'Democratic Muslim party' similar to the Christian Democratic parties of the West. The military, on the other hand, aimed to use its increasingly close cooperation with Israel in order to make sure that the WP and Erbakan appeared weaker to their voters and not really in charge of the country. Indeed, the army was aware that Erbakan had gained much support by vehemently arguing that he would cut off all his relations with Israel. Any time the military signed a deal with Israel, or had joint military manoeuvres with it, this was always given much positive publicity thanks to the control of the media that many secularist and military elements held. Some of the activities of party members like those of Sevki Yılmaz, coupled with the formal visits Erbakan made to countries such as Iran, Egypt and Libya, provoked the ire of the military, something it made known in an NSC meeting in February 1997.

As mentioned in detail in the previous chapter, the military intervened on 28 February 1997 on the grounds that the activities of the WP were threatening the secular status of the Republic. The immediate cause of this was a mass rally organized on 31 January 1997 by the mayor of a small town in Ankara called Sincan, under the title "Jerusalem Night", a pointed reference to, and demonstration against, Israel. During the rally, the Iranian ambassador was honoured as a guest speaker, going on to tell those present to get rid of secularism and bring in Sharia Islamic law. Three days later tanks

⁴⁷⁸ Ceylan, *ibid.*

rolled over in the streets of Sincan in a show of power by the army.⁴⁷⁹ After the meeting of 28th February, Erbakan had to sign documents⁴⁸⁰ the military had designed, and was forced to resign formally in June 1997. This intervention came to be known as the 28th February ‘postmodern coup’ or as the ‘Secular Restoration.’

The above coup and the events that followed it transformed the identity of the religious political parties as a whole. Before this, apart from some moderate Islamists, most supporters of political Islam debated Turkey’s place within the EU, an organization they considered to be a ‘Christian Club’. They also depicted the EU as an evil entity that had the aim of destroying Turkey and anything related to ‘Turkishness’ and Islam from Europe, rather than merely welcoming it as a member. To them, there were historical, religious and ideological differences between Turkey and Europe that could not possibly be overcome simply by joining the EU. These people were, put simply, completely anti-EU. In addition to the Islamists, there were also some left-wing groups, such as the Workers Party (Tr.:Isci Partisi, IP), that saw the EU as an evil agent of Western imperialism. For the Common Market, their well-known statement was “they will be partners, we will be market.”⁴⁸¹

However, during the 28th February process, some moderate political Islamists started questioning their established anti-Western identity and began to change their attitudes and rhetoric towards the EU. Therefore, the military’s intervention caused the Islamists to revise and revolutionise their position within the political spectrum and it is for this reason that it is considered to be a watershed moment in the history of political Islam in Turkey. Nonetheless, it should be noted that many of the radical elements have not changed their position either during or after the military’s intervention in February. They unceasingly insisted that the EU was an evil project and that Turkey could be prosperous by getting closer to the Islamic World.

After this intervention, which many within the largest political Islamist groups and institutions – namely the WP – considered a wakeup call, some reformist politicians began raising their voices, arguing that the WP should ‘moderate’ their views in order

⁴⁷⁹ Mark L. Haas, *The Class of Ideologies: Middle Eastern Politics and American Security*, (New York: Oxford University press, 2012), pp.186-187.

⁴⁸⁰ “Erbakan 28 Şubat kararlarını imzaladı mı? Ne yazık ki Evet” (NCS recommendations No: 406) <http://millicumhuriyet.com/2013/10/07/erbakan-28-Şubat-kararlarini-imzaladi-mi-evet-iste-kararlar> retrieved Dec. 18, 2014.

⁴⁸¹ Nuri Yurdusev, ‘Osmanli Mirasi ve Turk Dis Politikasi Uzerine,’ in Osman B.Dincer et al. (ed.), *Yeni Donemde Turk Dis Politikasi: Uluslararası IV Turk Dis Politikasi Sempozyumu Tebliğleri*, (Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2010), p.51.

to take part in the political future of Turkey. They did not want their party to face yet another closure.⁴⁸² It was obvious that under such political circumstances it was impossible to continue with their style and method of politics. Many of these movements had been against the EU since the 1960s, and it had not helped them achieve anything substantial, apart from being continually being bullied by the military and the secular institutions. But now they understood that in order for them to be successful in Turkish politics, they needed Turkey to become a properly functioning democracy that respected human rights and freedom of speech. This was only possible by following the EU model and getting closer to this entity.⁴⁸³ West European secular countries had much better human rights records and more religious freedom than any religious states. They rationalized that being part of the Western world would allow Turkey and its people, including religious groups, to have more freedom. Consequently this was what they were aiming for.

Thanks to the improvements in telecommunications and transportation systems, while discovering more about the Western world and its values, the Turks also started realising the completely different, and in a sense, backward, condition of most Muslim countries. Common perceptions that had penetrated the minds of people in the Islamic world since Ottoman times, had also pushed the Turkish people, especially the moderate Islamists, towards an identity shift making them move closer to Western values and especially those of the EU in the 1990s. Moreover, some stereotypes about the Muslim, and particularly the Arab world also persisted, such as the idea that the Arabs “stabbed the Ottoman Empire in the back during WWI by allying with the British, thanks to the efforts of Lawrence of Arabia”. Whilst some Arabs believed that the “Turks were imperialist colonisers who later on betrayed Islam by becoming secular”.⁴⁸⁴

Beyond all those perceptions, politics moved on in Turkey as the Constitutional Court wanted to ban the WP even after Erbakan resigned from his post in June 1997. Vural Savaş, the main prosecutor at the Supreme Court, demanded the closure of the WP as he declared that “it had become the focal point of the criminal activities against

⁴⁸² Prior to WP, Erbakan’s two other parties were also closed by the Constitutional Court. These parties were the National Outlook Party (NOP) and the National Salvation Party (NSP).

⁴⁸³ Ali Bulac, ‘AB’yi Ne Kadar Tanıyoruz?’, *Zaman*, Nov. 26, 2000.

⁴⁸⁴ Mustafa Acar, ‘Avrupa Birliği Uyeliğine Tepkiler: Türkiye’nin Daha İyi bir Alternatifi Var mı?’, *C.Ü. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol.2, No. 2 p.p.75-91.

<http://www.arastirmax.com/system/files/dergiler/10693/makaleler/2/2/arastirmax-avrupa-birligi-uyeligine-tepkiler-Turkiyenin-daha-iyi-bir-alternatifi-var-mi.pdf>, retrieved Jan. 5, 2014

the secular state.”⁴⁸⁵ Finally, on 16 January 1998, the WP was banned by the Constitutional Court.⁴⁸⁶ Its leader, Erbakan, was given a five year-ban from active politics which later extended to a life-time ban. Most interestingly, after reading a poem from pan-Turkist sociologist Ziya Gökalp that included the lines “The mosques are our barracks, the domes our helmets, the minarets our bayonets and the faithful our soldiers”⁴⁸⁷ during a December 1997 election campaign, the popular mayor of Istanbul, Erdoğan, was also charged with ‘inciting religious hatred’ and ‘calling for the overthrow of the government’.⁴⁸⁸ In the end, on 21 April 1998, Erdoğan was sentenced to ten months in prison.⁴⁸⁹ Some other mayors and party members were also prosecuted. The state acted so decisively against Erbakan and the WP that even the opposition were not too happy about the closure of political parties and the prosecution of political leaders.

Erdoğan’s imprisonment would also go on to become a national matter, as he toured the country before serving his sentence, explaining to people why it was wrong to send him to prison. While touring it became obvious that the majority of people in Turkey thought it the wrong decision to imprison him. During his tours, and the period leading up to his time in prison, it was obvious that people were already treating him like the leader of a party rather than just a mayor. This is probably why he was encouraged to move on and split from Erbakan’s party. During a particularly moving speech, to tens of thousands of supporters in front of the Pınarhisar Prison, just before he went inside on 26 March 1999 he said:

I am not saying goodbye. This is just a pause. We will continue to work on the projects we have worked on together in the past. The notes that will follow will bring Turkey peace, love, and brotherhood and will continue to unite your love.⁴⁹⁰

Erdoğan served four months in prison and came out on 24 July 1999 to a hero’s welcome.

The EU on the other hand kept itself away from the internal politics of the country during the tense times after the military’s 28th February Memorandum. However, when

⁴⁸⁵ *Milliyet*, May 22, 1997.

⁴⁸⁶ *Zaman*, Mar.14, 2008.

⁴⁸⁷ Rainer Hermann, *Where is Turkey Headed?: Culture Battles in Turkey*, (New York: Blue Dom Press, 2014), p. 75

⁴⁸⁸ Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim democracy in Turkey*, p.67 and *Hurriyet*, Feb.13, 1998.

⁴⁸⁹ *Türkiye*, Apr.22, 1998.

⁴⁹⁰ Hakan Aslaneli, “*Erdoğan Goes to Prison*”, *Hurriyet Daily News*, Mar. 27, 1999, Erdoğan’s farewell speech to people before entering to prison, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNB5j7isKJQ>, retrieved Dec.19, 2013

the WP took the Constitutional Court's decision to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in 2001 the European Court ruled against Erbakan, a fact which disappointed him and his supporters. In a majority verdict of 4:3, the judges in Strasbourg decided that the closure had been justified on the grounds that it answered a "pressing social need" and, hence, did not violate the provisions of Article 11 of the convention.⁴⁹¹ The Court's conclusion regarding Article 11 of the Convention was that:

Consequently, following a rigorous review to verify that there were convincing and compelling reasons justifying Refah's (Welfare's) dissolution and the temporary forfeiture of certain political rights imposed on the other applicants, the Court considers that those interferences met a "pressing social need" and were "proportionate to the aims pursued". It follows that Refah's dissolution may be regarded as "necessary in a democratic society" within the meaning of Article 11/2. Accordingly, there has been no violation of Article 11 of the Convention.⁴⁹²

Moreover, along with the plaintiffs, some international human rights organisations, such as Human Rights Watch (HRW), were also disappointed with the decision of the ECHR. HRW regarded the decision to be 'inconsistent' and, in another of its statements, argued that:

The ECHR has heard nine cases against Turkey concerning political party bans by Turkey's Constitutional Court. In all but one case (the WP case), the European Court has ruled against the decision to ban, finding Turkey in violation of articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention (freedom of expression and freedom of association), largely on the basis that none of the reasons given by the Turkish courts justified the banning of a political party. The judgment of the European Court in this case has been widely criticized for being inconsistent with its previous rulings on the closure of political parties, and failing to examine the lack of evidence that the Welfare Party was planning to overthrow democracy.⁴⁹³

Although the judgment was practically insignificant for WP, since its leaders had already founded another political party called the Virtue Party (VP [TR: Fazilet Partisi, FP]) even before the WP was officially closed, the decision to apply to a Western institution (which they had hated for so long) showed two things: one is that the WP must have regarded this organisation as an objective institution where it could seek

⁴⁹¹ William Hale, 'Human Rights: The EU and Turkish Accession Process', in Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Ruben (ed), *Turkey and the European Union: Domestic Politics, Economic Integration and International Dynamics*, (New York: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 2003), p.125

⁴⁹² Türkiye, Apr. 22, 1998.

⁴⁹³ Hakan Aslanlı, "Erdoğan Goes to Prison", Hurriyet Daily News, Mar. 27, 1999, Erdoğan's farewell speech to people before entering to prison, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNB5j7isKJQ>, retrieved Dec.19, 2013

justice, and, second, is that it confirmed to members of the party that even the ECHR was not sure if Turkey needed such a radical political party. Another crucial fact that came out of this decision was that, even though not a body of the EU, the ECHR was significant because it showed Europe's stance on the matter.

Prepared for its imminent demise, the leadership of the party founded the Virtue Party (VP [Tr.:Fazilet Partisi or FP]) before the WP was even officially banned. However, some younger and reformist politicians wanted to break away from traditional positions of the party in order to stay free from harassment by secularist forces and manoeuvre more easily in Turkey's political arena. They wanted to take over the leadership of the party in the absence of Erbakan, who had a five-year ban from active politics. However, during the party congress and discussions on leadership on 14 May 2001, Abdullah Gül lost the vote by 521 votes to Recai Kutan's 633 votes. The VP was also closed down by the Constitutional Court on 22 June 2001. This was another watershed moment for political Islam in Turkey as Erbakan's disciples became split once and for all after this closure. On July 2001, the older generation of Erbakan loyalists established the Saadet Partisi (SP [Felicity Party, FP]) under Kutan's chairmanship. On 14 August 2001, the younger generation, led by Erdoğan and Gul founded the JDP. Two days later Erdoğan was elected as the JDP's first chairman with Gul as his deputy.⁴⁹⁴ These young politicians defied the elders of Turkey's Islamist movement when they broke from the group's traditional leadership, promising a new political organization that could lead Turkey to a new and more democratic future.⁴⁹⁵ The JDP was the fifth pro-Islamist party since the 1960s. Acknowledging the problems he might face due to his party's background, Erdoğan used the term 'conservative democracy' to describe his political beliefs.⁴⁹⁶ As Taspinar writes,

Erdoğan understood that political liberalization would consolidate the JDP's power base. To achieve two crucial objectives, Erdoğan put democratic reforms at the top of his agenda, seeking to comply with EU membership guidelines. The move earned him the support of Turkey's business community, liberal intellectuals, and pragmatic middle class. It also won him political legitimacy in the eyes of the military. After all, European recognition had long been the ultimate

<http://www.arastirmax.com/system/files/dergiler/10693/makaleler/2/2/arastirmax-avrupa-birligi-uyeligine-tepkiler-Türkiyenin-daha-iyi-bir-alternatifi-var-mi.pdf>, retrieved Jan. 5, 2014.

⁴⁹⁵ Milliyet, May 22, 1997.

⁴⁹⁵ Zaman, Mar. 14, 2008.

⁴⁹⁶ He avoided referencing Islam when defining his political party's outlook

⁴⁹⁶ Yavuz, *ibid*, p.67 and *Hurriyet*, Feb.13, 1998.

prize in Atatürk's vision of a Westernized Turkey. And by giving priority to social services, the AKP also appealed to the impoverished underclass. Erdoğan's strategy paid off in 2002.⁴⁹⁷

Erdoğan's trajectory from a leader with religious tendencies to one who understood how to 'play the game' of liberalization and EU accession to his benefit, was one of the most important outcomes of the 28 February proceedings. Moreover, the EU's decision not to involve itself in events in Turkey was another reason why the religious political elite started seriously questioning the mistakes they were making in the Turkish, and perhaps global, political arena. The 1990s therefore taught two major lessons to political elites in Turkey. First, was that religion is undeniably one of the most important denominators in elections, and Islamist rhetoric brought in more votes than others – especially from poorer and rural areas, however, it was a not an easy field to play with under the current system where this was seen as a religious exploitation by the secularist forces. The second lesson was that if any of these religiously motivated political parties wanted to come to power, and to remain there, it depended heavily on the standard of democracy in Turkey. It was clear that Turkish democracy was going to be improved if negotiations with the EU succeeded. There was no hope in improving conditions in Turkey by using politics which looked East. An outlook which focused on the West was the only way to avoid secularist institutional intimidation. In this sense, the 1999 Helsinki decisions also had critical implications on the religiously motivated parties as it paved the way for possible membership to the Union.

Justice and Development Party era:

When early elections were announced in 2002, Ecevit's government was on the verge of collapse. However, at the time the JDP was in a strange position in terms of leadership, with the leader of the party, Erdoğan, not allowed to participate in active politics due to his ban. When the JDP won a landslide victory on 3 November 2002, Abdullah Gül became prime Minister as Erdoğan could not be elected to parliament. But, thanks to the cooperation of the opposition (RPP) under the leadership of prominent social democrat and secularist Deniz Baykal, Erdoğan's ban was lifted and during March 2003 by-elections he won a seat in the same town where he had once read

⁴⁹⁷ Türkiye, Apr.22, 1998.

⁴⁹⁷ Hakan Aslaneli, 'Erdoğan Goes to Prison,' *Hurriyet Daily News*, Mar. 27, 1999, Erdoğan's farewell speech to people before entering to prison, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNB5j7isKJQ>, retrieved Dec.19, 2013.

that now infamous poem. Gul gave his place to Erdoğan and himself became the new foreign minister.

Though the heavy presence of the military continued, a cautious spirit continued to guide the JDP at the outset of Erdoğan's government. As Baran argues,

The party sought to consolidate its support domestically and abroad by cultivating an image of a conservative and democratic party, akin to Europe's various Christian democratic parties. Gul and Erdoğan focused their public statements on economic reform and growth, and Turkey's quest for EU membership. They also sustained the economic policies outlined by Kemal Dervis's reform plan and sanctioned by the IMF.⁴⁹⁸

Although the leadership of the party avoided any confrontation with secularism and its well established institutions during their first years in power, a continuous tension between the secular state establishments and the party has nonetheless persisted. As Eligur puts forward:

The JDP defined itself as the conservative-democratic party, unlike the centre-left political parties; however, it regards the secular character of the state as problematic. Thus it tries to redefine the state structure according to a new interpretation of secularism and democracy; an idea that has been supported only by the Islamic segment of the population, including the traditional FP.⁴⁹⁹

With its liberal and democratic outlook the JDP was welcomed by the West as a model Islamic political party and Erdoğan, with his charismatic leadership, acted as more of a Westernizer than any other prime minister before him. The almost total shift in the rhetoric of both Erdoğan and Gul was in a sense worrying (as some Europeans did not believe them), but at the same time promising, for the European leadership.⁵⁰⁰ Some people did not believe that the JDP was any different from its predecessors and that they were merely roleplaying until they had achieved what they wanted, which was to establish a religious government in Turkey. But some others believed that the shift in identity in Erdoğan's political Islam was genuine, as the new liberal Muslim elites that followed him sincerely wanted human rights and democracy in Turkey as set by the standards of the EU. Fuller argued that the JDP was by far the most moderate

⁴⁹⁸ Zeyno Baran, *Torn Country: Turkey Between Secularism and Islamism*, (Stanford: Hoover institution Press, 2010), p.53.

⁴⁹⁹ Banu Eligur, *Mobilisation of Political Islam in Turkey*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p.281.

⁵⁰⁰ Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, (Washington DC.: Unite States Institute of Peace, 2008), p.51.

professional and successful of a long string of Islamic parties in Turkey. While managing Turkey better than most other mainstream parties, the JDP also wisely learned from the mistakes of earlier Islamist parties which, admittedly, had to operate under more difficult political circumstances imposed on them by the military.⁵⁰¹ Therefore, the JDP strongly believed that Turkey needed the guidance of the EU to be able to get increased human rights and democracy in order to free itself from the military's pressure.

On a different scale, Erdoğan was also playing to the internal political elites by portraying his party as a conservative rather than religious one. When Erdoğan held a press conference to launch the party, the hall was draped with a huge portrait of Atatürk and all those present were asked to observe a minute's silence in Atatürk's memory. After the press conference was over, Erdoğan and the other founding members of the party departed to pay their respects to the Anıtkabir (Atatürk's mausoleum in Ankara).⁵⁰² This was a clear sign that the JDP, unlike its predecessors, was officially distancing itself from its WP roots. They were now the defenders of the laicism, something which offered them the opportunity to come to power. They preferred to call themselves 'democratic conservatives' rather than 'democratic Muslims.' In fact, MPs in the JDP came from a variety of backgrounds, including the Nurcus and former RPP and NAP members. In many ways, the JDP was a party of many coalitions united within one and staffed by people who did not want to see a return to coalition governments fighting for power in Turkish political life.

Similar to its shift in the idea of secularism, the JDP also focused on developing closer ties with the EU and the West. As argued in other chapters, the JDP needed external help to overcome the strongest secular institution that could threaten the party's future: the military. No other power could be more useful than the EU and its reform programs for the JDP. Some people like Eligur argue that the JDP successfully exploited Turkey's long quest for EU membership as a political opportunity to advance Islamist demands.⁵⁰³ However, the current climate in Turkey does not prove this statement right.⁵⁰⁴

The opposition also condemned Erdoğan for 'religious dissembling' though he fiercely rejected such accusation by stating that his views had changed over time. In one

⁵⁰¹ E. Fuller, *ibid.*, p.50.

⁵⁰² Jenkins, *ibid.*, p.167.

⁵⁰³ Eligur, *ibid.*, p. 281

⁵⁰⁴ Author's regular observation of Turkey by personally visiting different institutions and places.

interview he said “the world has changed and I have changed as well.”⁵⁰⁵ But these words did not convince the opposition. Despite its liberal conceptualisation of secularism and its call for consensual politics in sensitive issues, the JDP was accused of undermining the secular nature of the regime by being Islamist without the Islamist discourse.⁵⁰⁶

This thesis believes that Erdoğan realized that it was impossible to come to power in Turkey with the old rhetoric of parties such as the WP, and it that it was not a negative development to have a properly functioning European style democracy in Turkey. Perhaps he thought that one way to move closer to the Muslim World was via closer ties to the EU, as this was unlikely to provoke the secularists in Turkey as much. This was not a one way profit for Turkey, the EU was also going to benefit from this, as for many Muslims, the experience in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan left no room for hope in terms of relations between the West and the Islamic World, and the radicals continuously abused this fact. Navroz Udwad stated that:

Turkey’s impending accession to the EU has the power to bridge the chasm between Islam and Christianity and bring hope to millions in the Islamic world ... Within this tortured context, surrounded by a seemingly endless wave of dark news, the outcome of Turkey’s efforts to enter the EU are vitally important – not just to Turkey and the EU, but to us all, citizens of the world as we may be ... The symbolism of a large Muslim population knocking patiently on the doors to the hitherto exclusive Christian club that is the EU should not be overlooked. In an age aching for understanding, for a rise above suspicion, enmity and loathing, the possibilities offered by the ascension of Turkey to the EU would be ground-breaking...⁵⁰⁷

Turkey occupied a different place in the Islamic world, as it was one of the few which had not been colonized by European powers. After WWI, almost all Muslim countries had been colonized by Western powers; colonized nations found it hard to raise their own intellectuals and therefore lagged behind in terms of technology and in fact, civilisation, as a whole. The history of colonization is another reason why some in

⁵⁰⁵ Douglas Frantz, ‘Turkey’s Ruling Coalition Uneasily Awaits Arrival of New Party,’ *The New York Times*, Aug.3, 2001, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/03/world/turkey-s-ruling-coalition-uneasily-awaits-arrival-of-new-party.html>, retrieved Dec.12, 2013.

⁵⁰⁶ Burhanettin Duran, ‘The Justice and Development party’s ‘New Politics’: Steering toward conservative democracy, a revised Islamic agenda or management of new crises?’, in Ümit Cizre (ed.), *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey: the Making of the Justice and Development Party*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), p. 92.

⁵⁰⁷ Navroz Udwadia, ‘Bridging the Chasm: A Reconciliation of Civilizations,’ *Harbus News*, Oct.18, 2004.

the Islamic world wanted to keep themselves away from the Western world, as this separated Turkey, a self-confident country, from the rest.

When Muslim countries received their independence, they built nations around their Islamic past. In a sense, hatred of the West was a very important element of the nation building process in the Islamic World. In Turkey however, it was completely the opposite: the new Turkish state was built in almost a completely opposite way, with admiration for the West and being less close to the Islamic World.

These two important differences between Turkey and the rest of the Islamic world offered Turkey-EU relations a unique opportunity to bridge the broken ties between the Western and Islamic powers. Erdoğan saw this exclusive position that Turkey occupied as an opportunity to establish his party on liberal, conservative, and democratic values, rather than just Islamic norms. As a result, after the JDP came to power, he became more European than any of his predecessors – including those left-wing politicians that had ruled before, such as Bülent Ecevit and Deniz Baykal. Although promising to solve major issues in the country, such as allowing the headscarf in public places and universities, Erdoğan's party considered itself to be the champion of the Westernisation process and thus reassured many that their aim was not to shift the direction of the country towards the Islamic world. One of the leading members of the JDP government, Bülent Arinc, asserted that his party was not a threat to secularism and that there were no problems with the secular regime as it was established in Turkey very well. He argued that, “the principle of secularism, the focal point of the disagreements, is not disputed by anyone. The dispute originates from different interpretation of this principle.”⁵⁰⁸

On many occasions, party leaders would reassure those present about their intentions. However, the JDP's persistent attempts to redefine secularism in Turkey in order to accommodate religion raised suspicion among the secular segments of society, who feared that the party had a hidden Islamic agenda.⁵⁰⁹ The JDP presented religious oppression in Turkey as an issue about the lack of democratic freedom in the country, rather than couching it in terms of religious freedom. They saw the democratization process as a way of giving people the right to hold beliefs. However, although they gained power in 2002, they did not manage to resolve the major issues surrounding religion until 2013 – including lifting the headscarf ban. Indeed, this was a sensitive

⁵⁰⁸ Duran, *ibid.*, p.92.

⁵⁰⁹ Eligur, *ibid.*, p.281.

issue for people in Turkey who found it difficult to understand why there was a headscarf ban in public places and universities. This issue was so politicized that during the first half of the 1990s, the WP used it as a tool to gather more support. Therefore, before focusing on the JDP and EU relations, it is wise to look at the headscarf issue in more detail.

In Turkey, the headscarf was banned in public places, schools and universities from early 1960s until the end of 2013. While the Turkish Armed Forces and secularist political parties such as the RPP supported this ban, the majority of political parties defined as conservative or right-wing, such as the MP, WP and NAP, were all against it. Although it not a major issue when the Republic was founded, the headscarf began to be hotly debated after 1951 when a student wanted to study at the theology college and wear her headscarf. More attention was paid to this in public debates as political Islam gained more popular support, especially after the 1970s. Although Özal tried to have restrictions lifted several times, both the president and the Constitutional Court refused to amend the law, and the headscarf remained banned in public institutions.

1993 was also a crucial year for this issue, as it represented the first time this issue was brought to the attention of the EHRC by two students, Senay Karaduman and Lamia Bulut. Bulut and Karaduman, filed a lawsuit against the Turkish State as they wanted to have their headscarves on for photographs that would be placed on their diplomas. However, the Court argued that, “if a student decides to study in a secular school she had to obey the rules imposed by the secular institution.”⁵¹⁰ Therefore, the students lost their case. However, among religious spheres in Turkey concerns were raised about the validity of the court ruling, since there were no other universities in Turkey where one could study, apart from secular ones. The court had judged Turkey using European standards (where there are choices available for either religious or secular places to study) to rule on the headscarf issue in Turkey, where, in fact, no such choice was available.

During the first half of the 1990s, most universities turned a blind eye to students who came to college wearing the headscarf. However, the ban was strictly imposed in other public places. When the WP started gaining the majority of votes, this issue became politicized by secularists as they began arguing that the headscarf was a symbol

⁵¹⁰ Ali Ulusoy, Avrupa İnsan Hakları Mahkemesinin Üniversitelerde Turban Yasasına İlişkin Kararları Üzerine Notlar, p.p.125-126 <http://auhf.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/auhfd-arsiv/AUHF-2004-53-04/AUHF-2004-53-04-Ulusoy.pdf>, retrieved Dec.26, 2013.

of political Islam. They also accused the WP of using this religious dress as a tool to gain support since they often mentioned lifting the ban on headscarves in public life.

As the headscarf issue started occupying an increasingly prominent place in Turkish political debates, the secularist factions became more restless. After the February 28th postmodern coup, life became more difficult for people who wore the headscarf at universities. The army made its demands clearer after this, arguing that universities should ban the headscarf once and for all. After the closure of the WP, the Virtue party (VP) was established and Merve Kavakçı, one of its MP's, wanted to take her oath in parliament on 2nd May 1999 with her headscarf on. The opposition, then led by Prime Minister Ecevit, did not allow her to take her oath and ejected her from parliament.⁵¹¹ The debate became fuel for Islamist parties, as they promised to solve this issue once they were in power. First Erbakan and his parties and then, after 2002, Erdoğan and the JDP both made similar promises.

Many students took off their headscarves, but many of them had already decided to give up studying or tried to migrate to other countries. Some students started wearing wigs to show sarcastic opposition to the decision. The ban became material for major debates among writers, journalists, politicians and academics. Some argued that it should be banned while others said it was against human rights and freedom of thought to ban it. Eventually, the ban ended up at the ECHR, as discussed above.

As well as rejecting the WP's claim that it was closed down illegally and that this was against freedom of speech, the ECHR also did not provide any solution to the restrictions on wearing the headscarf. In fact, in 2005, the ECHR upheld Turkey's ruling against a young woman who had taken the Turkish State to the court because she had been expelled from the University of Istanbul for refusing to take off the scarf in class. The court rejected the appeal by Leyla Sahin, who argued that the state ban violated her right to an education and discriminated against her. The verdict was a bitter shock for the public, especially the Islamist elite.⁵¹² This is because, in this instance, the Court decided that:

⁵¹¹ News Real, TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) May 2, 1999, Headscarf Deputy Stripped of Turkish Citizenship, May.5, 1999, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/344787.stm>, retrieved Dec 17, 2013, Video of the incident in the parliament can also be seen <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIMoSPD2Idg>, retrieved Jan. 25, 2014.

⁵¹² İmdat Özen, 'Impact of EU'S Decisions on Euro-Skepticism of a Turkish Religious Peripheral Party, Felicity Party' <http://www.lindenwood.edu/jigs/docs/volume2Issue1/essays/83-117.pdf>.

We agree with the majority that there has been no violation of Article 9 of the Convention in the present case. We have also voted for the finding that there was no violation of the first sentence of Article 2 of Protocol No.1.⁵¹³

Indeed, the decision of the Court was not welcomed by the Islamic spheres in Turkey as they clearly expected an opposite outcome. This again exposed a paradox that the Islamist elite was living in; being anti-West and anti-EU but relying on the mercy of European institutions for freedom of religion in their own country. Whereas, according to Wallach Scott “the EU has been consistent in its support for secularisation of the East,”⁵¹⁴ some EU leaders openly suggested ways to solve this issue by pointing Turkey towards the French model. Indeed, Turkey-EU Joint Parliamentary Committee Co-Chair Joost Lagendijk proposed that the ruling AKP government use the French model to resolve the headscarf issue. According to the French model, university students would be allowed to wear Islamic headscarves, but elementary and high school students, and government employees would not.⁵¹⁵ When Kavakçı took her case to the ECHR, the Court decided, in 2007, that her expulsion from the parliament was against her human rights. Here, the ECHR finally helped religious people feel that the Court was not biased against them. Perhaps the JDP being in power and introducing EU harmonisation reforms one after the other had impacted the Court’s decision.

The issue also became a major problem between the devoted secularist and Kemalist President Ahmet Necdet Sezer and Prime Minister Erdoğan during state ceremonies, due to the fact that Erdoğan’s wife, Emine Erdoğan, wore a headscarf. Sezer deliberately tried to keep Emine Erdoğan off the guest list when entertaining foreign dignitaries and celebrating any formal occasion under his patronage. This treatment was not considered inclusive, but rather, was seen as discriminatory and unfair by EU officials. However, Emine Erdoğan continued her life as normal which was considered an act of bravery and dignity by many. Quoting a European ambassador, Amberin

⁵¹³ Case of Leyla Sahin v Turkey, The European Court of Human Rights Judgement, Strasbourg, Nov.10, 2005, [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-70956#{"itemid":\["001-70956"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-70956#{), Retrieved April 20, 2012.

⁵¹⁴ Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), p.p. ix,x.

⁵¹⁵ ‘EU’s Lagendijk: The AKP can solve the headscarf issue through the French model,’ *Hurriyet*, Jan.22, 2008.

Zaman wrote, “It's a fine line to tread, and despite the humiliation she has to endure, Emine is performing brilliantly.”⁵¹⁶

Although this issue was not solved during the first decade of JDP rule, the issue of Turkey becoming ‘more religious’ remained a common debate in the country. While the secularist elite saw the JDP as a threat to the founding principles of the Republic and argued that people were becoming more religious, the data suggests otherwise. For example, one striking point to note is that during the JDP government, contrary to what most people believe, the number of people wearing the headscarf decreased. Indeed, the Financial Times cited a survey conducted by Ali Çarkoğlu that argued:

60 % of women wear the headscarf (in 2006), compared with 75 % seven years ago, while 36.5 % of women do not wear any head covering, compared with 27.3 % before.⁵¹⁷

Eventually, in late 2013, the headscarf issue was solved in the Turkish parliament as a majority of MPs voted to lift the ban on wearing a headscarf in public places⁵¹⁸ a decision welcomed by European institutions.

JDP, EU Harmonisation Packages and Religious Freedom for all in Turkey:

After 2002, the JDP government symbolized the great transformation of political Islamic parties which had operated in Turkey since the 1950s. Apart from their own supporters, other political elites were not happy with the JDP’s moderate outlook. It was especially criticised by two different groups: the religious segments (mostly WP followers) and non-religious (secular) segments. Religious people condemned the JDP as being full of pretentious Muslims, while secularists condemned it for having a secret agenda.

For the first group, Erdoğan and his friends had betrayed Erbakan’s legacy ever since they had begun championing the Europeanization programme which had been fiercely opposed by Erbakan and his followers in the past. As mentioned before, even Erdoğan and Gul had aggressively opposed the EU, considering it a Masonic Christian Club. However, after coming to power as President and Prime Minister of the Republic, they

⁵¹⁶ Amberin Zaman, ‘Striking a Balance in Secular Turkey’, *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 22, 2004, <http://articles.latimes.com/2004/aug/22/world/fg-firstlady22> retrieved Aug. 29, 2014 (Zaman wrote that the European ambassador in Ankara was speaking on condition of anonymity).

⁵¹⁷ Vincent Boland, ‘Fewer Turkish Women Wearing Headscarf’, *Financial Times*, Nov. 22, 2006, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/742d3d96-7a01-11db-8d70-0000779e2340.html#axzz2rAGMwavy>, retrieved, Apr. 12, 2012.

⁵¹⁸ ‘Kamuda Basortusu Sorunu bu Sabahtan Itibaren Serbest,’ *Radikal*, Oct. 8, 2013.

worked to secure Turkey's closest ever position to EU candidacy. It was Erdoğan and Gül who signed the European Constitution on 29 October 2004 in Rome.⁵¹⁹ Moreover, it was the JDP who successfully helped Turkey to start negotiations with the EU for full membership in October 2005. All of these were seen as betrayals by former colleagues of the JDP politicians, namely the followers of Erbakan.

On the other hand, the secularists were also worried about the JDP's role in politics, believing that the JDP was using EU membership as a tool to fulfil its secret agenda. To them, the ultimate goal of the JDP was not to become a westernized country, but to create a religious state in Turkey that did not look towards the West, but rather, sought a place in the Muslim World. Secularists also saw the reforms instigated by the JDP as a cowardly way of subduing strong secularist elements in Turkey, such as the military, in order to pave the way for the religious fundamentalists to move more freely. Eligur explained this groups' worries as follows:

The JDP framed its Islamic agenda in terms of EU reforms packages intended to democratise the country. These EU demands helped the Islamist movement diminish the power of certain secular state institutions, utilizing a liberal tool kit calling for democratisation. Erdoğan, pointing out the democratisation reforms in Turkey resulting from the EU reform packages declared that the JDP initiated "a silent revolution" in the country.⁵²⁰

When looking at Turkey's relations with Islamic states, especially after academic turned politician Davutoğlu became foreign minister and initiated his 'zero problems with Neighbours policy',⁵²¹ Turkey began to initiate very close ties with Muslim majority states, including Syria and Iran. The secularists saw this as a threat to Turkey's founding principles of being a Westernized country. When EU negotiations slowed down after 2006, especially due to the opposition of France with then-President Sarkozy at the helm, Turkey began to engage even more closely with the non-EU states. While the JDP explained these policies as Turkey practising a more 'multidimensional foreign policy', secularists saw it as a dangerous shift in Turkey's foreign relations. The military, which represented the staunchest and most potent secular opposition to political Islam until 2007, was also worried about the leadership of the ruling party and

⁵¹⁹ Erdoğan and Gül (then foreign minister) signed the documents in front of a huge statue of Pope Innocent X which angered many in Turkey.

⁵²⁰ Eligur, *ibid.*, p.281.

⁵²¹ Davutoğlu, *ibid.*

their anti-secular past. They were concerned that the EU-inspired reforms would transfer political power to elected civilians.⁵²²

Whatever the opposition may argue, it is certain that the JDP and its founders have shifted the course of political Islamist thought in Turkey. The EU is now seen as a modernising power that has helped people to gain more freedom in the public and private spheres of life, including in terms of religious freedom. If it was not for EU reforms, the military would have been running the government agenda and the headscarf would still be banned today. Again, if it were not for the EU's support, the JDP would have been banned in 2008, since the Constitutional Court was pushed to reject the shutting down of the party due to very strong pressure from EU institutions and its leaders. Indeed, between May and June 2008, EU leaders issued statements criticising the judiciary in Turkey for even starting a closure case against the JDP.

But it should be noted that the JDP adopted a more moderate line until it secured additional electoral support and reduced the military's influence to almost nil in 2007. After the general elections on 22 July 2007 the JDP, having received 46.6 % of the votes it now seems to be in the process of abandoning its moderate line. As a response to the JDP mobilisation against the secular-democratic state, the Constitutional Court declared in 2008 that the party was a centre of anti-secular activities.⁵²³ But the result of the case was not all bad for the JDP as it was not banned, but instead given a financial penalty and warning. According to Eligur, the secular state establishment, such as the Judiciary, counter mobilized against the JDP, though this did not cease the party's Islamic mobilisation against the secular democratic state. It seems that the JDP, during its second term in government, had successfully mobilized against the secular-democratic state. And the international environment favours the JDP also, as the US advocated the promotion of 'moderate Islam' as part of its wider geopolitical strategy.⁵²⁴ Again, the EU's support for the JDP during the closure case was significant. For example, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe declared that the JDP's closure would amount to a judicial coup. Prime Minister Erdoğan supported the EU's involvement in the lawsuit. In fact, the US and the EU, by criticizing the Turkish judiciary, acted as international elite allies of the JDP, providing it with the legitimacy

⁵²² Ümit Cizre, *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey: the Making of the Justice and Development Party*, (Abington: Routledge, 2008), p.2.

⁵²³ Eligur, *ibid.*, p.282

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*

that the party successfully seized upon for mobilisation against those opposing it in Turkey.⁵²⁵

Erdoğan's statements in support of Western involvement represented a clear identity shift for religious groups and their leadership in Turkey. To him, the EU and the wider West, including the US, were now the defenders of the JDP and thus the new moderate political Islam. Prior to the JDP, for religious political parties in Turkey such as the WP, the US and the EU represented the major evils of the world, and these parties used anti-Western rhetoric as a tool to gain support. Now, contrary to their previous ideological leanings, the new political Islamic groups were using pro-Western rhetoric to gain support.

Between 2002 and 2004 nine EU harmonisation packages were introduced. The first three came during the coalition government of Ecevit, and the last six under the JDP government led by Erdoğan. These harmonisation packages not only gave more freedom to Muslims in Turkey, they also included minority religious rights. For example, the Third Harmonisation Package enabled the community trusts (meaning non-Muslim charitable trusts) to acquire and dispose of real property with the permission of the Council of Ministers. With this reform (Article 4) they could now also acquire real property by way of gift or bequest. Following the Third Package, the Fourth confirmed this right (Article 3), substituting the permission of the General Directorate of Foundations for the permission of the Council of Ministers. Additionally, the Sixth Package recognized the rights of non-Muslim communities (Article 9) to build places of worship subject to the permission of competent administrative authorities.⁵²⁶ Therefore, the Europeanization process in Turkey helped raise religious freedom for all communities.

However, as of 2013, the democratic face of Erdoğan's JDP is once again being questioned by many, including the religious groups mentioned above, as well as the secularists. When Turkey-EU relations were almost frozen after 2006 due to France's opposition to opening new chapters, Erdoğan began pursuing relations with the Muslim world, as well as China and Russia. Positive bilateral relations with other countries and regions other than the EU intensified to unprecedented levels. As the military's involvement in politics had been reduced to zero, the JDP could manoeuvre more freely

⁵²⁵ Banu Eligur, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p.268.

⁵²⁶ Ergun Özbudun and Ömer Faruk Gençkaya, *Democratization and the Politics of Constitution-Making in Turkey*, (Budapest: Central European university Press, 2009), p.76.

in the religious sphere too. This is where the support and guidance of the Gülen movement became important, as Erdoğan was portrayed as a great world leader.⁵²⁷

During Erdoğan's time in office since 2003, foreign investment, especially from the Arab world, has flown into Turkey reaching an unprecedented level. While the majority of the world was facing the financial crisis in 2008, the Turkish economy was not affected greatly. This increased Erdoğan's popularity and he won yet another victory in local (2009) and general (2011) elections. As a result, he started shifting his rhetoric back to that of the 1990s, which proved to some secularists their suspicions about him harboring a secret agenda.

While the JDP is the most successful party in Turkish political history, the JDP was also accused by the secularists as merely a new face for political Islam. To them, without any powerful rivals, Erdoğan was turning Turkey into a religious state, a charge never accepted by Erdoğan. The widespread protests in the summer of 2013 were compared to the 'Arab Spring' by many as the police began using what was described by some as excessive force to suppress the protests.⁵²⁸ However, the protests failed to bring down Erdoğan and the JDP. Again, in December 2013, a massive corruption scandal that involved three ministers' children shook the JDP's credibility. However, the March 2014 local elections and the August 2014 Presidential elections both showed once again that nearly half of the electorate in Turkey still backed Erdoğan and his party, as they voted to make him the 12th President of the Republic. However, the JDP-initiated peace process with the PKK, developments in neighbouring Syria, and threats from ISIS terrorism will likely have a major impact on Erdoğan and the JDP's future successes. If the Kurdish issue is peacefully resolved, he could be considered the 'second Atatürk.' However, if things go wrong, he will probably be the first person that the Turkish people blame.

Conclusion

Islamic political thinking in Turkey started utilizing the opportunities presented to them by the West in general, and EU policies in particular. They clearly benefited from engaging with the Western world, which, for about half a century, they had seen as the source of evil. This global openness helped them to develop a new identity which is

⁵²⁷ Erdoğan and Gülen's recent clashes are briefly explained in conclusion. This rivalry is increasingly heating up at the time of the completion of this thesis.

⁵²⁸ Barbara Wolf and Margaret Anderson, 2013 and Beyond: Part II, (Bloomington: Author House, 2014), p.100.

modern minded and they are often referred to as ‘Muslim Democrats.’ With this new identity, Turkey has become the centre of global attention in many ways. Investment to Turkey boomed between 2000 and 2003, as the Turkish economy grew at a speed never seen before. Again, having closer ties with the West attracted millions of tourists to the country which then helped to create among many in Europe a pro-Turkey stance. After a positive image towards Turkey and Turkish people, many major sporting events were also awarded to Turkey.⁵²⁹

Originally, Islamic political thought in Turkey had seen the EU as both the ‘enemy of Islam’ and Turkey. However, by the late 1990s, they have increasingly seen the EU as the only hope to making Turkey a functioning democracy where people can have religious freedom. Indeed, younger politicians from the WP party realized that the only way to keep their parties from being banned was to follow the secularist mainstream politics and, subsequently, support the Westernisation process. As a result, the JDP was formed with the hope of bringing moderate Islam or ‘Islamic democracy’ to power.

In November 2002, the JDP came to power with a landslide victory. Within a year former anti-Western leaders like Erdoğan and Gul were in charge of Turkey. But this time they were more pro-EU than any of their predecessors. It was the JDP that introduced reform packages one after the other so as to comply with the Copenhagen Criteria and to prepare Turkey for EU entry. Again, it was the JDP and other former anti-EU politicians who successfully signed the 2005 agreement that started the negotiations for full membership of the EU.

The EU’s support during the process of reforms and in subduing the military’s role in politics was crucial. The European Parliament considered these reforms “courageous and revolutionary.” It stated that these reforms signified a “strong motivation and political will” to converge with the EU’s standards and practices. The sheer volume and the speed of the reforms, as well as the consensus of support behind them, helped change the popular perception of the civilian government as underachieving, unstable and corrupt.⁵³⁰

The EU again stood against the judiciary when the JDP faced closure in a high-profile case in 2008. In a sense, we can argue that with the JDP, the EU utilized its powers to make Turkey more democratic and freer and open towards all religions. Then

⁵²⁹ For example 2005 Champions League Final between Liverpool FC and AC Milan was held in Istanbul.

⁵³⁰ Cizre, *ibid.*, p.2.

the JDP used the EU to be able to bring moderate Islam to power in Turkey for three consecutive elections. As mentioned above, 2013 had not been very successful for Erdoğan in terms of peace and stability in Turkey due to two major events: the Gezi Protests and the corruption scandal that touched ministers in his government. These two incidents were expected to become major determinants of the March 2014 local elections and the August 2014 presidential election, considered by many as one of the most critical elections of all time in Turkey. The JDP's and then Erdoğan's victory in these two elections was the least desired option for the secularists, who argued that Erdoğan had authoritarian tendencies and that he would try to change the secular and western outlook of the country in order to Islamise it. In these cases, although it kept its distance and did not directly interfere in the elections, the EU clearly wanted Turkey to remain a democratic and secular state; it does not want an authoritarian Islamist state bordering its southeastern members, namely Cyprus, Greece and Bulgaria.

In both elections, the JDP and Erdoğan won landslide majorities. Erdoğan used his public speaking skills, as well as massive media support, to gain the votes of half of the electorate. First, he defeated the opposition in local elections⁵³¹ and then beat the opposition's candidate for President, the prominent conservative diplomat, Professor Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, during presidential elections in August 2014.⁵³² During these two elections Erdoğan used familiar rhetoric which presented the West and Israel as a threat to Turkey's unity and wellbeing. He convinced his supporters that the movement headed by a cleric who lives in the US, Gülen, was supported by outside agencies and that they were trying to take over the government by fabricating evidence against him and the government. He propagated a "Red Scare"-like hysteria that a "parallel state"⁵³³ was operating in the country. In this he meant that Gülen and his supporters were trying to take over the police forces, the state bureaucracy, the judiciary and the military – eventually the entire state – by putting people in prison using fabricated evidence. Erdoğan portrayed himself as the only one who could fight against this group. He indirectly forced the courts to release many imprisoned army personnel, journalists and

⁵³¹ 'Turkey PM Erdoğan claims election victory,' *BBC News*, Mar.31, 2014, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-26807067>, retrieved Dec.25,2014.

⁵³² Joe Parkinson and Emre Peker, Turkey Election: Erdoğan Wins Landmark Victory, Aug, 11, 2014 <http://www.wsj.com/articles/turks-cast-votes-in-presidential-election-with-Erdoğan-primed-for-win-1407658125>, retrieved Dec.25, 2014.

⁵³³ Erdoğan labelled the Gülenist organisation as the "Parallel State." Here he meant that his organisation was acting as if they were the state within the state. Their management and structure was operating as if they had their own hierarchical order starting from Fethullah Gülen. Erdoğan accused the followers of Gülen in Turkey being more loyal to their own organisation rather than the Turkish state.

scholars who had been sentenced in previous court cases mentioned above, such as the Ergenekon and Balyoz cases, under the suspicion of organizing plots against the government. Those police officers and judges who once sentenced people for undermining state authority and organizing plots to overthrow the government were now put under close scrutiny. Many of them were sacked from their positions and thousands of police officers were forced to change locations. They were branded agents of a parallel state. After 14 December 2014 the media leg of this organisation was targeted and many more prominent figures were put in prison under suspicion of working for a parallel state and spying for other countries.

The EU and the US followed the events in Turkey closely, though without directly interfering. However, in many occasions politicians from both the US and the EU indirectly warned the Turkish government to restrain their actions against sentencing people without proper evidence, as this was an undemocratic practice. Some European officials went so far as to ask the EU to stop membership negotiations with Turkey. According to *Today's Zaman*, Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, the vice president of the EP and a Dutch member of the EP Marietje Schaake argued that:

Turkey's official statements that it wants to join the EU do not match the government's actions. The systematic attacks on the rule of law in Turkey must stop. The repeated actions of the Turkish government against journalists, editors and publishers mean that the Copenhagen criteria for EU accession negotiations are no longer being fulfilled. Turkey should stop its path away from Europe, and meanwhile, Europe must make it clear that too many boundaries have been unacceptably crossed.⁵³⁴

As for Erdoğan, during his Presidential election campaign in 2014, he blamed the EU for being prejudiced towards Turkey and argued along the same line as EU studies expert Neil Nugent, that:

An enlarged EU clearly carries more weight in its external relations and dealings. And in the particular case of Turkey, its accession could provide valuable bridges between Europe and the Islamic World.⁵³⁵

Whether Erdoğan was merely acting and using the EU as a tool for his wider political agenda or not, today, thanks to the EU – and although not everyone accepts this –

⁵³⁴ 'EU Criticism of Mass Media Arrests in Turkey Mounts,' *Today's Zaman*, http://www.todayszaman.com/diplomacy_eu-criticism-of-mass-media-arrests-in-turkey-mounts_367271.html, retrieved Jan.25, 2014.

⁵³⁵ Nugent, *ibid.*, p.68.

Turkey is richer and more democratic than when compared to the pre-2002 era before the JDP came to power.

Along with the military and religious parties, the EU also had a huge impact on another issue to be discussed in the next chapter: Turkey's energy policies. Due to its good relations with the EU, Turkey gained confidence in pushing itself forward to become an energy transit hub for western markets. The next chapter will evaluate the impact of the EU on Turkey's role as an energy corridor.

Chapter 5

The EU and Turkey's energy sector

The EU, and in general the global economic dynamics, has a significant impact on the decisions Turkey takes regarding its energy policies. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, Turkey's good relations with the EU and the West have greatly helped Turkey to become an investment hub especially in the energy sector. Turkey has skilfully used the EU membership prospects as a tool in its economic development especially during the continuous JDP governments of Erdogan after 2002.

International economic climate after 1991 also directly affected Turkish domestic economic and political policy making as new import and export opportunities arisen, especially concerning the world energy markets. With the end of the Cold War and later on greater enlargement of the EU the world trade expanded significantly and this has busted the importance of Turkey's geostrategic position including its large number of young work force. As stated by Frieden and Martins:

Expansion of world trade strengthens owners of nationally abundant factors, such as labour in poor countries and capital in rich countries. Again, change in international economic environment affects the policy preferences and behaviour of domestic groups, and thus has an impact on national policy making and foreign economic policies.⁵³⁶

Being geographically located between nearly 70% of the world's hydrocarbon resources and the largest energy consumer markets, Turkey wanted to utilize its geostrategic position by becoming an energy hub.⁵³⁷ With the discovery of large deposits of energy resources in the Caspian region and in northern Iraq, Turkey's new strategy is to make itself an indispensable partner for the EU concerning energy security by linking the energy producers with energy consumers through its territories. As mentioned in the introduction there was a great worry in post-Cold War Turkey that the West would no longer need Turkey and that this would mean it would not get the assistance required to

⁵³⁶ Frieden and Martins, *ibid.* p.121

⁵³⁷ Katinka Barysch, 'Turkey's Role in European Energy Security,' *Centre for European Reform Essays*, Dec. 2007, http://www.cer.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/pdf/2011/essay_turkey_energy_12dec07-1381.pdf, retrieved Aug, 11, 2010 and Nadir Devlet, 'Turkey's Energy Policy in the Next Decade,' *Perceptions* Winter 2004-2005, p.p.71-90, <http://sam.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Nadir-Devlet.pdf>, retrieved Jan.25, 2014.

develop itself further. The ever increasing energy needs of the West came as a saviour in the 1990s and then again in the 2000s as Turkey began to promote itself as an energy bridge so as to regain its geopolitical role which was thought lost after the Cold War.



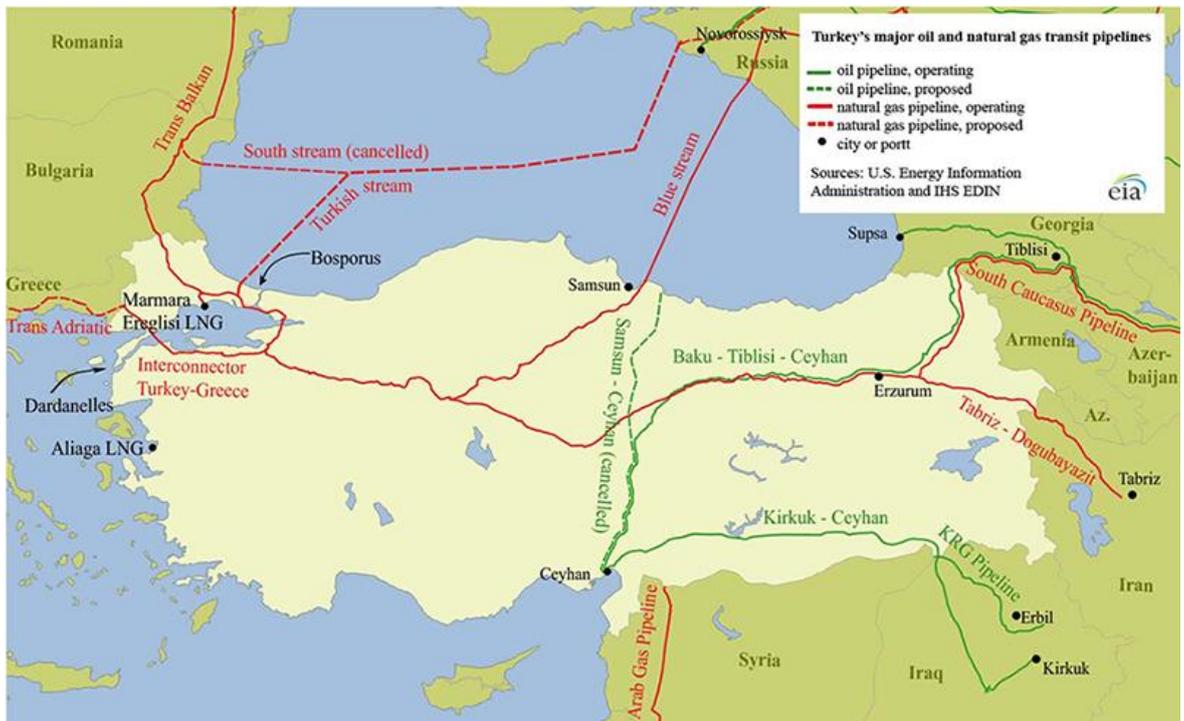
Map of Turkey between Asia and Europe.⁵³⁸

Developments in Turkish domestic politics are also closely linked with the ever increasing confidence Turkey had in international trade including international energy politics. The religious parties, opponents of the West, underwent a major transformation by getting rid of strong anti-Western rhetoric in 2000's. This allowed them to benefit hugely from the democratic environment which finally allowed them to come to power. They then utilised the influence of EU, via mandatory reform programmes, to subdue the military which was the main driving force behind civilian politics for decades. A stable and more democratic environment that was mainly created in 2000's, together with international economic and political demand, allowed Turkey to play more proactive role in international economic fields.

In order to implement the goal mentioned above, Turkey successfully campaigned to build major international pipelines on its land to transport energy from producing

⁵³⁸ Turkey Location Map, <http://turkeymap.facts.co/turkeymapof/turkeymap.php> retrieved Spt. 2015

regions. From the Caspian, first the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil (BTC), and then the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas (BTE- also known as South Caucasus Pipeline), pipelines were built with the support of the EU and the USA. From the Kurdish region in northern Iraq a pipeline was built to connect it with the already running Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipelines. Additionally, the even bigger, but partly failed, project called the Nabucco Gas Pipeline initiative which sought to connect Caspian gas to European markets was put forward with the support of the west, most notably the EU. Although the initial Nabucco failed, Turkey is keen to build TANAP⁵³⁹ that will carry Caspian, and possibly Iraqi, gas to the ever-growing Turkish markets and on to the European markets via the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) as these two pipelines will be linked at the Turkey-Greece border. It should be noted that these multi-billion dollar grandiose projects are not only taking place because of their economic importance, that the role of politics is the real key for their successful completion. Therefore, when Turkey proposes projects which encompass the interest of big players such as the USA, the EU, Russia and Iran, strong international political and financial backing becomes crucial.



Map of Turkey's major oil and natural gas transit pipelines⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁹ Intergovernmental Agreements were signed to build TANAP on June 26, 2012. The pipeline will leave Turkey via Bulgaria and Greece.

⁵⁴⁰ Turkeyenergy data analysis, Jul. 2015, <https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis.cfm?iso=TUR> retrieved Sep. 12, 2015

While becoming an energy bridge is seen as a significant tool for Turkey's international relations, it is also the key to domestic developments for Turkey as it is heavily reliant on hydrocarbon resources. Turkey imports around 90% and 98% respectively of the oil and natural gas it consumes. In 2012, in terms of oil, Turkey imported 35% from Iran, 17% from Iraq, 13% from Saudi Arabia and 10% from Russia. In the same year, Turkey imported 56% of its natural gas from Russia, 18% from Iran, 8% from Azerbaijan and 16% as LNG from different sources.⁵⁴¹ Looking at the data, especially in the natural gas sector, Turkey's heavy reliance on Russian gas is striking. Consequently, the primary objective of Turkey's energy strategy is to ensure its own energy security while contributing to that of Europe.⁵⁴² Therefore being an energy corridor is a win-win situation for Turkey for both its external and internal affairs.

However, it should not be forgotten that energy is also a key element for the EU's security concerns since more than half (54.1%) of the EU-27's⁵⁴³ gross inland energy consumption in 2010 came from imported sources, who are non EU members⁵⁴⁴ such as Norway, Russia and Algeria. For example in 2010 about 80% of EU gas imports derived from these three suppliers. On present trends, if no measures are taken, energy import will rise to about 70% in the next 20 to 30 years. While 45% of oil imports to the EU come from the Middle East, 40% of gas imports come from Russia (with another 30% from Algeria and 25% from Norway). By 2030, the overall share of gas (in total energy used) is expected to rise and it was considered that this would mainly be at the expense of nuclear energy. Overall, EU dependency on Russian gas was expected to increase as many Eastern European countries joined the Union.⁵⁴⁵

Reliance on a small number of suppliers encouraged the EC to make the idea of a diversification of its energy supply routes a priority in energy policy. Undeniably, Turkey stands in a strategic position within this important scheme. Moreover, the roots of the EU are itself connected to energy, given that the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) treaties were two, of the three, first texts on which the European alliance was initially

⁵⁴¹ 'Country Analysis,' Turkey, EIA, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=tu>, retrieved Aug.22, 2014.

⁵⁴² Tuncay Babali, 'The Role of Energy in Turkey's Relations with Russia and Iran', *CSIS papers*, Ankara, Mar. 29, 2012, http://csis.org/files/attachments/120529_Babali_Turkey_Energy.pdf, retrieved, Feb. 20, 2014

⁵⁴³ Before Croatia became member of the Union.

⁵⁴⁴ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Energy_production_and_imports, retrieved Feb.20, 2014.

⁵⁴⁵ Rafael Kandiyoti, *Pipelines: Flowing Oil and Crude Politics*, (London: I.B.Tauris, 2008), p.22.

founded.⁵⁴⁶ Therefore, as well the producers, the EU also needs good relations with the countries that act as a corridor for its energy needs.

As mentioned in the introduction, this thesis argues that Turkey's good relationship with EU is one of the main reasons behind the confidence it has in relation to the grand idea of it becoming an energy transit hub. For example, if it was not for EU support, neither Turkey, nor the energy producing countries, would have backed the BTC and the BTE pipelines. It is very clear that these are projects that make Turkey feel more confident about its accession negotiations with the EU and also its relations with the neighbouring energy producing countries.

As can be understood from the above, there is no doubt that energy becomes a very important political tool in EU-Turkey relations. Positive relations between the EU and Turkey play a great part in Turkey's aims of becoming an energy bridge for the West and a full member of the Union in the future. In addition to both Turkey's and the energy producing countries' gains from these projects, the EU also benefits economically and politically. This directly impacts Turkey's energy policies, its relations with the EU and the energy producer countries.

As briefly touched upon above, one of the main assumptions of this thesis is that political factors play more important role than economic factors when choosing transportation routes, determining resource development strategies and dealing with energy security issues in the Caspian and the Middle Eastern regions. For example, while the BTC and BTE were successfully built for political reasons, Nabucco failed due to political considerations. If the new initiative, TANAP, is ever to be successful it needs strong political backing from the EU, rather than purely financial cost-benefit calculations.

The main aim of this chapter, therefore, is to outline the political and economic role that the EU plays on Turkey's use of Caspian and Middle Eastern energy resources. In order to explain this clearly, the chapter will first look at the extent and limitations of the Caspian and Middle Eastern energy reserves, and then move on to analysing the importance of these regions for Turkey and the EU. After evaluating the impact of the EU on Turkey's policies, it will also give an account of the role of other actors –

⁵⁴⁶ Slawomir Raszewski, 'The EU's External Policy of Energy Diversification in the Wider Black (and Caspian) Sea Region: Regional Security Complex or Security Community?,' in K. Henderson and C. Weaver (ed.), *The Black Sea Region and EU Policy: The Challenge of Divergent Agendas*, (London: Ashgate, 2010), p.136.
(The third treaty is the EEC Treaty).

notably Russia, Iran and the USA – who also have a hand in deciding the future of energy resources and their utility.

This thesis believes that the so called “century’s project”, the BTC, was built just as EU-Turkey relations were continuously and significantly improving between 1999 and 2006, and that the Nabucco project failed partly because the political atmosphere between Turkey and EU was not as good as in the pre-2006 period. Consequently, the EU’s impact on the success of Turkey’s idea of being an energy corridor between East and the West is undeniably high. To be able to test the validity of this hypothesis, the thesis will assess in detail the reasons why and how the currently running BTC was built, and what the significance of it was for Turkey and the wider world. The chapter will then assess the failed Nabucco project and the future of the smaller alternative to it, TANAP.

Caspian Region:

The Caspian Sea, with very lightly salted waters, is the biggest enclosed body of water on Earth.⁵⁴⁷ Politically, the region first came to the attention of the international community following the break-up of the Soviet Union, which opened a new era in the history of oil production in the Caspian and the Caucasus regions.⁵⁴⁸ The Caspian Sea region is a major economic asset. It has large oil and gas reserves that are only now beginning to be fully developed. Oil reserves for the entire Caspian region are estimated at 18-35 billion barrels, comparable to 22 billion in the United States and 17 billion in the North Sea. Natural Gas reserves are even larger, accounting for almost two-thirds of the hydrocarbons found in the Sea. The region also possesses possible oil reserves which will yield billions more barrels, something which is part of allure of the Caspian region.⁵⁴⁹ It has been estimated that Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan together contained between 16.5 and 32 billion barrels of proven oil reserves and around 166 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁷ Franklin Borroughs, *The Pepper Three Kingdom*, (North Caroline: Azelea Art Press, 2013), p.157.

⁵⁴⁸ Ottar Skagen, *Caspian Gas (Central Asian Caucasus Prospects)*, (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Russia and Eurasia Programme, 1997), p.1.

⁵⁴⁹ Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: the epic quest for oil, money & power*, (New York: Free Press, 3rd Edition, 2008),

⁵⁵⁰ Akiner, *ibid*, p. 365.

If properly exploited, the oil resources in the Caspian region could become the driving force behind a broad economic development for those involved.⁵⁵¹ Although they would satisfy only a relatively small proportion of global needs, the Caspian resources would be of strategic importance to the overall energy balance worldwide and, in particular, to consumers in Europe and the Black Sea region.⁵⁵² Therefore, the emergence of the Caspian Basin in international politics must be considered in the context of an approaching energy crisis, especially connected to Europe.

In its difficulties in trying to secure its energy supply, the EU pays great attention to this region for the purpose of diversifying its energy supply routes. During the 17th Caspian International Oil and Gas Conference, in Baku, which was held on June 1-4, 2010, many diplomats and analysts highlighted the importance of the regions' energy resources for Europe. For instance, Angus Miller, adviser on Caspian energy issues at the U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office said, "Azerbaijan is an inseparable component in ensuring Europe's energy security", while Richard Morningstar, the US Special Envoy for Eurasian Energy Issues stressed that "we support projects to supply Caspian energy resources to Europe since they play an important role in Europe's energy security".⁵⁵³ However, the main problem in the utilisation of energy resources in the landlocked Caspian Region is transportation, since this requires third parties to allow energy to be transported through their countries. The Caspian region has four major options when trying to sell its energy on the world market. The first is via Russia to Europe; the second is towards China and the rest of the Far East; the third option is towards the Indian Ocean; and, finally, the fourth is via Turkey and Iran to the Mediterranean. The Russian and Turkish options mean that transportation can be done relatively safely when compared to other options. However, due to economic and political reasons, these options are the ones which are in fact creating competition between Russia and Turkey in the fight to carry Caspian energy to energy hungry markets.

In terms of its significance, the Caspian region is very important to Turkey's grand strategy. Although Turkey is not currently a major oil producer, its emerging role as an

⁵⁵¹ Bülent Gokay, 'The background: history and Political Change,' in Bülent Gokay (ed.), *The Politics of the Caspian Oil*, (Houndmills: Palgrave Publishers Ltd, 2001), pp.13-15.

⁵⁵² Akiner, *ibid.*

⁵⁵³ Inessa Baban, 'Struggle for energy resources at Caspian oil and gas conference in Baku,' *Central Asian and Caucasus Institute Issue*, Apr. 24, 2010.

important oil transit country makes it increasingly important to world oil markets.⁵⁵⁴ Again, Turkey is not a major gas producing country, though it is becoming an important country for natural gas markets due to its location as it lies between the largest gas reserves – Russia, the Caspian, Iran and the wider Middle East – and the world’s second largest natural gas market – continental Europe.

Turkey itself is a rapidly growing energy market as it does not produce enough domestic oil and gas resources for its own needs. Therefore, it is trying to secure its own energy needs from a variety of diversified routes. Though diversification of its energy resource partners could be seen as part of solving the above problem, the key aim of promoting itself as major energy hub is down to other political and economic reasons and the most important driving force behind the Turkish interests in the Caspian region.

Apart from historic, cultural and ethnic links between Turkey and the states surrounding the Caspian region, strong support from the USA and European countries in favour of Turkish involvement in the region encouraged it to take bold moves there. This threatened Russia’s dominance. In this respect a New Great Game⁵⁵⁵ which developed played a significant and positive role for Turkey’s engagement in the affairs of the region.

Although many other reasons help to explain why Turkey chased an active policy towards the region, energy security issues should be seen as the most important motive. Both Turkey and EU heavily depend on exported energy resources. Therefore, the Caspian region is a crucially important source for diversifying their energy supply routes. While Turkey borders the region, the EU’s reach is limited to third party countries including its long term candidate for membership, Turkey. This geostrategic advantage puts Turkey in a stronger position as it tries to become an alternative energy corridor between the Caspian and the energy hungry EU, who is focused on lessening the risk of its overdependence on a single source, namely Russia. Hence while trying to meet its own fast growing energy demands safely by reaching out to several different regions; Turkey also tries to gain politically and economically by acting as an alternative energy corridor for EU.

⁵⁵⁴ US Energy Information Administration, Turkey; Overview Apr.17, 2014
<http://www.eia.gov/countries/analysisbriefs/Turkey/turkey.pdf>, retrieved Oct.11, 2014.

⁵⁵⁵ Lutz Klevevan, *The New Great Game: blood and oil in Central Asia*, (London: Atlantic Books, 2004) and Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*, (New York: I.B. Tauris, Fourth Edition, 2002).

In pursuing this goal, Turkey has successfully secured the BTC and BTE pipelines from the Caspian to Turkey with significant political and economic help of both the USA and the EU. The BTC became the first energy route that broke the monopoly Russia had over the transportation of energy resources out of the Caspian region. This project, which is examined in detail below, would never have been realised had the EU and USA not supported Turkey. For example, British Petroleum (BP), a multinational oil and gas company headquartered in London, is the main stake holder in this very highly politicised project which shows the European commitment to the project.⁵⁵⁶

The recently cancelled Nabucco project⁵⁵⁷ was also a mainly EU-funded project that wanted to link Europe to the Caspian resources. Turkey, which considers the Caspian a key political and economic tool, continued with its own plans and decided to build a smaller scale pipeline from Azerbaijan called TANAP. This was to supply gas to southern Europe via Greece which then went on to Italy. This project was also backed by EU as enough gas has been discovered in Azerbaijan to fill the pipeline. Both Turkey and the EU also back a Trans Caspian pipeline from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan to add to its Southern Gas Corridor.⁵⁵⁸ As Socor writes:

Full-scale investment approved at Shah Deniz, and supply contracts secured in Europe, make it possible for pipeline construction to proceed along the 3,500-kilometer Southern Gas Corridor, from Azerbaijan to EU territory. The cumulative investments are estimated at \$25 billion in the offshore gas project and \$20 billion in the construction of transit pipelines. This is one of the largest energy projects in the global energy business in terms of investment costs, technical complexity, territory covered and multinational participation.”⁵⁵⁹

In light of the above explanation, the Caspian region is crucially important for Turkey towards fulfilling its aim of becoming an energy corridor, in both the oil and gas sector, between the East and West. Azerbaijan’s cooperation, the key supplier of oil and gas to the projects so far is also significantly important to both Turkey’s and Europe’s

⁵⁵⁶ Giorgia Yiangou, ‘European Energy Security, the Mediterranean Dimension,’ in Franco Praussello (ed.), *Sustainable Development and Adjustment in the Mediterranean Countries Following the EU Enlargement*, (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2004), pp.139-140.

⁵⁵⁷ Nabucco gas pipeline project was cancelled in June 2013. For more detailed work on Nabucco see Brenda Shaffer, *Energy Politics*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009). And Gal Luft and Anne Korin (ed.), *Energy Security Challenges for the 21st Century, A Reference Handbook*, (Santa Barbara, Denver and Oxford: Praeger Security International, 2009).

⁵⁵⁸ Astrid Boening et al., *Global Power Europe, Vol.2: Policies, Actions and Influence of the EU’s External Relations*, (Berlin: Springer, 2013), p.155.

⁵⁵⁹ Vladimir Socor, ‘SCP, TANAP, TAP: Segments of the Southern Gas Corridor to Europe,’ *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Vol.11, No.8, Jan.15, 2014.

http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=41821&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=390&cHash=63216f7e7f95a7101c46eae5291e2d9, retrieved Feb.18, 2014.

plans. Environmental risks centred on issues of shipments of oil via the Turkish Straits and the potential dangers this poses to the city of Istanbul are another reason behind the Turkish efforts to build overland pipelines on its soil. However, no matter how the energy is delivered via Turkey to the world market, the EU's political and financial backing is the most important reason why these projects are even imagined in the first place. Without the EU, there is not a feasible market for Caspian gas (or even oil to an extent), and, again, without the EU there is no strong financial support for these resources. Therefore, being closer to the EU also makes Turkey closer to the Caspian and a more influential country in the region. It should be noted that having Turkey on their side allows the EU to clearly exert its influence over Caspian states much more easily. Therefore, it is very clear that EU-Turkey cooperation makes both sides more influential in the region.

The Caspian is as important to the EU as to Turkey. World daily consumption of oil over the last few years has been running in the vicinity of 85 million barrels, with natural gas consumption put at around 300 plus billion cubic. The US accounts for 25% of the consumption in both categories⁵⁶⁰ while the EU accounts for about 23%.⁵⁶¹ As these two power blocks account for about 50% of global energy consumption, for them, the security of energy supply and diversification of energy routes becomes crucial. The Caspian region therefore is highly important for the EU's energy policy.

In terms of oil consumption, after the USA and China, the EU is the third largest consumer, while for natural gas consumption it sits second, after the USA.⁵⁶² Thus overdependence on a single region comes with many security risks. As a result, these two biggest energy consumers supported the Caspian states to start exporting their resources so they could be made available to Western markets. However, as a landlocked region, Caspian energy could only be delivered via old Soviet routes. In trying to help the Caspian states gain more financial independence from Russia, the West pushed routes through Turkey as alternatives to the Iranian and the Russian routes. After cooperation regarding extracting and exporting Caspian energy resources to the world markets, the EU and the Caspian's newly independent states became indispensable trade partners in other aspects of economic life also. Consequently, as of

⁵⁶⁰ Rex, J. Zedalis, *Oil and gas in the disputed Kurdish territory: Jurisprudence, Regional Minorities and Natural Resources in a Federal System*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), p. IX.

⁵⁶¹ Sue Retka Schill, 'IEA Task40: Biomass provides 10% of global energy use', *Biomass Magazine*, Sep, 19, 2013 <http://biomassmagazine.com/articles/9444/iea-task40-biomass-provides-10-%-of-global-energy-use>, retrieved Mar.18, 2014.

⁵⁶² Raszewski, *ibid*, p. 137.

2012, the EU became the main trading partner of the Central Asian Republics.⁵⁶³ Turkey, a bridge between the two parties, also remains among the top five trading partners of the newly independent Caspian states of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The other aspect that made the Caspian region critically important for the EU was because most of the energy used in Europe was coming from Russia. In their debates, European leaders paid special attention to the Caspian energy resources development in order to protect themselves from overdependence on Russia. The Council of Europe's parliamentary Assembly debate in 2003 identified the Caspian as a key region for cooperation, especially concerning energy resources. The text adopted by the Assembly after its 13th sitting on April 2, 2003 stated that:

The Caspian Sea region is increasingly central to European energy security and prosperity owing to its rich human potential and its significant oil and gas resources. Against the prospect of increasingly tight supplies of these raw materials worldwide, it is vital for the countries in the region in particular, and for Europe and the world community in general, to pursue efforts to ensure maximum exploitation of these resources through the most fruitful and co-operative exploitation possible.⁵⁶⁴

During the same debate, as well as mentioning the financial support Europe offers for the development of the infrastructure, transparency in energy deals, peaceful agreements regarding the legal status of the Caspian Sea (and the borderline of the sea bed), the European Council also shared Turkey's concerns regarding the environmental risks that the shipment of oil posed to the Turkish Straits, especially to the Bosphorus on the shores of Istanbul. In its concluding remarks the Council said that:

The Assembly shares the concerns of Turkey over the major environmental risks arising from the disregard of the existing environmental safety norms for oil and gas tanker shipments, especially in the Turkish straits, and supports the tightening of the environmental safety norms for economic activities in the Caspian Sea and for the shipment of Caspian hydrocarbons to international markets, as well as the development of alternative transport routes.⁵⁶⁵

In the same meeting the EU's diversification needs were also discussed and mentioned clearly as it said:

⁵⁶³ <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/central-asia/>, retrieved, Jan.24, 2014.

⁵⁶⁴ Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly debate, Resolution 1324/2003, 'Europe and the Development of Energy Resources in the Caspian Sea Region,' Apr. 2, 2003, <http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/XRef/X2H-DW-XSL.asp?fileid=17102&lang=EN>, retrieved, Jan.24, 2014.

⁵⁶⁵ Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly debate, Resolution 1324/2003, *ibid*

The Assembly also welcomes the planned East-West energy supply routes, which will enable the transportation of oil and gas resources from the Caspian region to the West, and the strong co-operation between all the countries concerned. In this respect, the EU has stressed the importance of the transportation of Caspian oil and gas for the diversification and security of its energy resources in Europe.”⁵⁶⁶

The US, too, has also paid close attention to the Caspian energy resources for three important reasons. The first, to ensure that its own energy imports are not disrupted and the second, to make sure that Russia does not dominate the Caspian region as the Soviets did. The third reason is to prevent Iran from having a greater influence over the region. In 2001 the Cheney Report⁵⁶⁷ recommended diversity in both the types of energy used and the sources of energy in general, in order to maintain continuity of supply in the event of disruption; it expanded on the support to be offered to the Caspian basin countries, begun under the previous American administration (right after the Cold war).⁵⁶⁸ To be able to continue its policy the US strongly supported Turkey, as a key ally, so that the latter could use its ethno-cultural links with the regions to reach their energy resources. In this respect, US support was one of the key reasons why Turkey became such an important actor for the development of the new pipeline routes of the region and the EU. With this initiative the US was trying to make Turkey an important energy bridge, but it was also a means of overcoming Greek-Turkish hostilities by using energy as a tool. This was further bolstered with its strong support for Turkish membership into the EU. The Cheney Report’s recommendations for the Caspian included:

- Supporting the BTC oil pipeline as it demonstrates commercial viability
- Working to establish the commercial conditions that will allow oil companies operating in Kazakhstan the option of exporting their oil via the BTC pipeline
- Encouraging Greece and Turkey to link their gas pipeline systems to allow European consumers to diversify their gas supplies by purchasing Caspian gas.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁷ Dick Cheney, ‘National Energy Policy: Report of the National Energy Policy Group’, May, 16, 2001 <http://www.wtrg.com/EnergyReport/National-Energy-Policy.pdf>, retrieved Dec.24, 2014.

⁵⁶⁸ ‘The Caspian Basin Energy Reserves and Potential Conflicts,’ *Research Paper 5/24*, Mar.16, 2005 www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/RP05-24.pdf, retrieved Dec.25, 2014.

⁵⁶⁹ Cheney, *ibid.*, p.139.

As can be seen above, the Caspian region is considered a vitally important area of focus in terms of European and US energy security. Within this, Turkey occupies a specific and significant place as witnessed in debates over and over again in the European Council. Indeed, the Council shares Turkey's concerns and supports an East-West energy corridor that crosses Turkish soil. Although the Turkish route was neither the shortest nor the cheapest available, the political considerations made it a priority as Iran was under US sanctions while both the US (and the EU) wanted to ensure that Russia lost its tight grip over the Caspian region which it had regained since the end of the Cold War.

In the past few years the EU has paid even closer attention to the energy resources of the Caspian region by declaring them the priority in its policy making agenda. However, as mentioned before, rather than purely economic reasons forcing such policies, political considerations are very important too. The Market Observatory⁵⁷⁰ argued in its 2010 report that:

Cooperation between the EU, the Caspian region and Central Asia on energy issues is at the top of the EU's political priorities as reflected in the conclusions of the European Council in March 2007, September 2008 and March 2009. This cooperation is broad in scope and ranges from promoting sustainable development of energy resources, the diversification of energy supply routes and technical know-how to the deployment and advancement of new energy sources...⁵⁷¹

The diversification of energy supply routes became a matter of urgency for the EU as a result of its overdependence on Russian supplies. One of the key reasons why the EU wanted to diversify its energy resources, as explained later on this chapter, was the reoccurring commercial disputes over natural gas transit between Russia and Ukraine, particularly in 2006 and 2009. These disputes not only severely affected the EU, but they also undermined the image of Russia as a credible energy producer.⁵⁷² For the EU, these crises once again made the energy issue a matter of politics rather than economics. Although it was, economically speaking, not the best option, the Caspian resources and the Turkish corridor became a logical and strategic alternative to Russian energy.

⁵⁷⁰ The Market Observatory is a body created by the EC to get a better insight into European and international energy markets. It provides supports EU policymaking on energy. The observatory uses the Energy Market Observation System (EMOS) which hosts and analyses data relevant to the energy markets.

⁵⁷¹ Catherine Ashton, Answers to the Parliamentary Questions, Jul. 1, 2010, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2010-2843&language=HR>. retrieved Feb. 21, 2014.

⁵⁷² Raszewsky, *ibid.*, p. 138.

Therefore, the EU strongly supported the exploration and transportation of Caspian energy via routes that bypassed Russian soil as a matter of urgency.⁵⁷³ Since Iran was not considered, due to sanctions, the Turkish route became the only way to transport these energy resources to Western markets. However, this needed strong political will from the EU which did not appear to have either that, or an efficient energy policy at the time.⁵⁷⁴ This situation came to directly impact EU-Turkey relations as Turkey found the EU's needs perfectly matched with its own energy ambitions centred on energy routes.

The Middle East:

Vast Middle Eastern energy resources are critical for both Turkey and the EU. In terms of proven oil reserves, the Middle East has the largest share of the world's total. By 2003, six countries (Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and UAE) controlled 62.5% of the world's total oil reserves.⁵⁷⁵ In its 2002 report, BP Amoca stated that at the end of 2002 the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) was estimated to have 70% (728.3 billion barrels) of the 1.047.7 billion barrels of world reserves.⁵⁷⁶ The majority of these resources are located in the countries named above. In fact, the resources in these countries make up more than half the world's known oil reserves⁵⁷⁷ and the Middle East exported 41.4% of total world oil in 2002.⁵⁷⁸

Gas is more difficult to transport than crude oil, and thus the economics of natural gas in the Middle East is driven by location advantage, project economics and proven reserves. In contrast to its reserves, the Middle East's gas production is limited and underutilized, accounting for only 8% of world production.⁵⁷⁹ Discovered simultaneously with oil in the Middle East, natural gas was not initially perceived to be as valuable as oil. Even though technology designed to exploit its fuel making properties was well established in the USA and Europe, the Middle East, with such vast quantities, barely supplied these growing energy markets at the industries outset. Middle

⁵⁷³ Nicu Popescu, *EU Foreign Policy and Post-Soviet Conflicts: Stealth Intervention*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), p.101.

⁵⁷⁴ Filippou Proedrou, *EU Energy Security in the Gas Sector: Evolving Dynamics, Policy Dilemmas and Prospects*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), p.114.

⁵⁷⁵ Hossein Askari, *Middle East Oil Exporters: What Happened to Economic Development?*, (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd. 2006), p.55.

⁵⁷⁶ Anthony H. Cordesman, *Energy developments in the Middle East*, (Washington DC.: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2004), p.3.

⁵⁷⁷ Christiane Dorion, *Are We Running Out of Energy*, (Minnesota: Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2008), p.9

⁵⁷⁸ Cordesman, *ibid.*, p.28.

⁵⁷⁹ Askari, *ibid.*, p.55.

East gas production increased between 1970 and 1995 from 85 billion cubic metres (bcm), to 315bcm. In the 1980s, researchers started developing technologies to transport vast quantities of natural gas to distant populations.⁵⁸⁰ Proven natural gas reserves in the Middle East were somewhat lower than the percentage of its oil reserves, sitting at 39.8% of the world's total reserves. However, this is still the largest concentration in the world.⁵⁸¹

The resources that are really significant for Turkey-EU relations are the ones located in northern Iraq and, to an extent, in Iran. Currently, there are two parallel pipelines that transport Iraqi oil via Turkey to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan called the Kirkuk-Ceyhan (or Yumurtalik) pipelines. Oil from the Kurdish region also joins with the existing Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline via the newly built Taq Taq-Kurmala Pipeline.

Iraq's proven oil reserves stand in the 115 billion barrel (bbl) range, which ranks it as between the second and the third largest proven reserves in the world.⁵⁸² As far as the natural gas reserves are concerned, information suggest Iraq has proven reserves of around 112 trillion cubic feet (TcF) placing it tenth in the world with additional potential gas reserves of 275 to 300 TcF.⁵⁸³ However, Iraq currently only produces gas for domestic use and flares off a large amount of associated petroleum gas (APG)⁵⁸⁴ from its oil fields, but the country is looking to ramp up exports of natural gas to fund reconstruction of its conflict-battered economy and infrastructure.⁵⁸⁵

The Kurdish Region in northern Iraq is the most significant for Turkey as it has sizable oil and gas reserves. Nearly 23% of Iraqi oil reserves and perhaps as much as 89% of its natural gas reserves are thought to be situated in territory claimed by the Kurds; much of that located in areas disputed between the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and the central government.⁵⁸⁶ However, if the resources are utilized this could bring great financial benefit to all parties involved. According to

⁵⁸⁰ Shaul M. Gabbay and Amy J. Stein, 'Embedding Social Structure in technological infrastructure: constructing regional social capital for a sustainable peace,' in Jerry W. Wright (ed.), *The Political Economy of Middle East Peace: The Impact of Competing Trade Agendas*, (London: Routledge, 1999), p.165.

⁵⁸¹ Askari, *ibid.*, p.55.

⁵⁸² Rex J. Zedalis, *The Legal Dimensions of Oil and Gas in Iraq: Current Reality and Future Prospects*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.18.

⁵⁸³ Zedalis, *ibid.*, p.18.

⁵⁸⁴ There are two types of natural gas: associated petroleum gas (APG) and non-associated gas. Non-associated gas reserves are developed primarily to produce natural gas and APG is gas produced as a byproduct of the production of crude oil. Most countries in the Middle East prefer to flare off the APG that comes with the crude oil as it is harder to export since they are far away from the demand markets such as EU.

⁵⁸⁵ *Hurriyet Daily News*, Feb.10, 2014.

⁵⁸⁶ Zedalis, *Oil and gas in the disputed Kurdish territory*, 2012, p. IX.

Durukan, with the pipelines that connect Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean; “Turkey will be making 3 billion dollars per year while the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and Central Iraqi government will be making 9 billion dollars. The KRG is expected to get 3 billion of the 9 billion dollars revenue.”⁵⁸⁷

Currently, the oil running through pipelines between Kirkuk in Iraq and Ceyhan in Turkey stands at maximum capacity, daily 1.6 bpd. However, the pipelines are interrupted regularly due to bombs planted by insurgents on the Iraqi side and are therefore not able to work at full capacity most of the time.⁵⁸⁸ Still, Turkey and the KRG agreed to build even larger pipeline to carry the oil from Kurdish region to Ceyhan. In March 2014 Turkish energy minister Taner Yıldız announced that oil was running between Iraqi Kurdistan and Turkish Mediterranean port city of Ceyhan.⁵⁸⁹

Presently this pipeline is running at a capacity of 300,000-400,000 bpd (about one-sixth of Iraq’s total exports of 2.4 million bpd) though the KRG’s Minister of Natural Resources, Ashti Hawrami, has stated that exports will increase to 1 million bpd by 2015, and 2 million bpd by 2019.⁵⁹⁰ Still, there have been notable tensions between Turkey and the central Iraqi government regarding oil exports from the KRG, as Iraq is worried that this might lead to the independence of KRG from Iraq. But any significant oil transported via Turkey to the Mediterranean is welcomed by EU countries as it would allow them to reach oil without the hassle of having to go further than the Eastern Mediterranean.

Additionally, the KRG’s contribution to the TANAP project has become more evident. According to Azeri Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov, Azerbaijan has offered Iraq access to the Southern Gas Corridor that runs through Turkey, connecting the Caspian Sea to the EU so as to help Baghdad sell its natural gas to Europe. This is a significant development, as a possible Iraqi gas connection to TANAP would guarantee the pipeline would be filled with enough gas in the long term. Mammadyarov argued, “It’s a huge project and it’s open if Iraq is also interested to deliver their own natural

⁵⁸⁷ Namik Durukan, Türkiye Kurt Petrolünden Yilda 3 Milyar Dolar Kazanacak, *Milliyet*, Mar.13, 2014, <http://ekonomi.milliyet.com.tr/usb-k-irak-petrolu-Türkiye-ye-3/ekonomi/detay/1851012/default.htm>, retrieved Mar 13 2014 and <http://theiraqidinar.com/news/swiss-foundation-the-agreement-of-arbil-and-baghdad-and-ankara-on-the-export-of-oil-will-bring-big-profits-for-all-243251>, retrieved Mar.13, 2014.

⁵⁸⁸ Merve Erdil, ‘İste Yeni Boru hattı,’ *Hurriyet*, May, 25, 2013.

⁵⁸⁹ *CNN Turk News*, Mar.5, 2014.

⁵⁹⁰ Nick Cunningham, ‘Kurdistan Set to Begin Oil Exports to Turkey with New Pipeline Next Month,’ Nov. 28, 2013, <http://oilprice.com/Energy/Crude-Oil/Kurdistan-Set-to-Begin-Oil-Exports-to-Turkey-with-New-Pipeline-Next-Month.html>, retrieved Mar.30, 2014.

gas.”⁵⁹¹ This would undeniably serve both Turkey and the EU with the US clearly supporting the initiative in the wake of the events in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea to Russia.⁵⁹²

On top of the resources found in Iraq, the vast energy resources in Iran⁵⁹³ can also be utilized for Europe through the Turkey corridor. By the end of 2009, Iran accounted for 10.3% of proven global oil reserves (making it the fourth largest producer in the world). At the same time, it accounted for 15.8% of proven global natural gas reserves, the second largest in the world after Russia.⁵⁹⁴ Although there are US and UN sanctions on Iran, due to the scarcity of resources most countries continue buying Iranian oil and gas, including as China, Japan and Turkey.⁵⁹⁵ If international sanctions on Iran are lifted, the EU will also use Turkish routes to get Iranian gas. Iranian energy resources will undoubtedly be beneficial to Turkey-EU relations and Turkey’s relations with Iran.

With the discovery of vast oil reserves in the Middle East, the West, including Turkey, gradually became heavily dependent on these energy resources. As of 2014, the majority of the countries in the developed world are heavily dependent on the energy resources, mostly oil, of the Persian Gulf region. In 2006, the Middle East supplied 22% of US imports and 36% of the European members of the OECD’s oil imports.⁵⁹⁶ This overdependence is the key reason why the route through Turkey has become vital for European energy security. Issues surrounding the safety of oil and gas deliveries to Western markets, such as piracy in the Red Sea and instability in the Middle East, make the pipelines from Iraq to the Mediterranean via Turkey the most favourable option. This situation pushes Turkey to become friendlier with its eastern neighbours. Thus, realizing the potential political and economic gains it will bring, Turkey has re-

⁵⁹¹ Azerbaijan offers Iraq access to Europe gas pipelines, Feb, 14, 2014, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/azerbaijan-offers-iraq-access-to-europe-gas-pipelines.aspx?pageID=238&nID=62268&NewsCatID=348>, retrieved Apr. 3, 2014.

⁵⁹² ‘John Kerry pins hopes to Southern Gas Corridor’ Apr.3, 2014, <http://news.az/articles/politics/87437> retrieved, Apr. 3, 2014.

⁵⁹³ Especially after the nuclear deal has been signed with Iran in July 2015 Iranian energy resources become much more important for the world and of course for Turkey-EU relations. When the sanctions on Iran lifted Iran can sell its hydrocarbon resources freely without the fear of Western intimidation. This will not only help Iran to prosper but help Turkey to bridge itself between Iran and the West.

⁵⁹⁴ Hong Zhao, *China and India: The Quest for Energy Resources in the 21st Century*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012, kindle addition).

⁵⁹⁵ Nam D.Pham, *China’s Quest for Energy*, institute for 21st Century Energy, (Washington DC.: US Chamber of Commerce Publication, 2011), p.2 http://www.energyxxi.org/sites/default/files/EnergyChina_Final%2011-22-11.pdf, retrieved, Feb. 17, 2014.

⁵⁹⁶ Gal Luft, ‘Dependence on Middle East energy and its impact on global security’ http://www.iags.org/luft_dependence_on_middle_east_energy.pdf, retrieved Sept. 12, 2012.

considered its uneasy relations with the KRG since “Both sides come to see mutual benefits in improved relations, especially in closer economic ties. Approximately 80% of the goods sold in KRG are made in Turkey. Some 1,200 Turkish companies are currently operating in Northern Iraq.”⁵⁹⁷

Consequently the EU’s energy needs have a positive impact on Turkey’s relations with its neighbours and in a sense it brings at least some stability to the region. Improved Turkey-KRG relations also have positive implications for both the EU and Turkey due to the fact that it serves both their interests (in relation to energy security) simultaneously.

Collectively, the EU, as a whole, is the world’s largest energy importer, importing about 55% of their energy supply – approximately 84% of their oil and 64% of their natural gas.⁵⁹⁸ Europe mainly consumes fossil fuels and about half of the energy consumed in the EU is imported. Only 0.6% of the world’s oil reserves and 2.0% of proven natural gas reserves are located in the EU. When we look at some essential facts about EU energy imports one can easily understand the importance of diversification strategy and, therefore, the contribution Turkey might be able to make towards the security of European energy supplies. Due to limited indigenous hydrocarbon resources and rapidly rising demand, the total energy imports of the EU are constantly increasing. In 1995 this was only 44%, but this reached 61% in 2008⁵⁹⁹ and is expected to reach 70% by 2030⁶⁰⁰ (84% in gas imports). Russia’s share in the European energy market is remarkable, with Europe currently importing 42% of its gas – as well as a third of its oil and a quarter of its coal – from Russia. Although oil remains the single largest fuel in the primary energy mix, demand for natural gas will grow most rapidly, mainly due to strong demand from power generation plantations. This will increase European reliance on Russian energy even further. When considering the dramatic rise and the great dependence on a single energy source for EU energy imports, the policy makers are right to think about diversifying the supply routes to prevent possible future problems this might create.

⁵⁹⁷ F. Stephen Larrabee and Alireza Nader, *Turkish-Iranian Relations in a Changing Middle East*, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), p.13.

⁵⁹⁸ EC, Key Figures, *Market Observatory for Energy*, Jun. 2011.

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/countries/doc/key_figures.pdf, retrieved Jan. 18, 2014.

⁵⁹⁹ Green Paper (European Commission), ‘Towards a European strategy for the Security of energy Supply,’ Nov.29, 2000, http://www.aei.pitt.edu/1184/01/energy_supply_security_gp_com, retrieved Sept. 12, 2012.

⁶⁰⁰ Winrow, *ibid.*, p.234.

As already mentioned, the EU relies on imports for almost 80% of its oil supplies and indigenous oil supply is expected to fall to below 10% of consumption in less than ten years. Without a doubt, the EU oil supply is fundamentally a question of the security of supply to be expected from the global oil market too.⁶⁰¹ Therefore, it is vitally important for the EU to secure its oil supply through diverse sources. In 2002, 38% of oil imports came from OPEC, with Norway (24%), Russia (22%) and others, including Kazakhstan, Mexico and Azerbaijan, making up the rest. The EU's dependence on external oil supplies will continue to rise to a predicted 90% by 2020, with imports derived mainly from politically unstable areas, notably in the Middle East and Russia, whose share of Europe's import market has also been growing in recent years. For this reason political stability and peace in these areas is fundamentally important for the EU's energy security. It is also important for these regions to carry on producing enough energy, at reasonable prices, in order to meet the demands of the European market so that it can continue to make financial gains (as the money Europe spends on oil is very high). At present oil price levels the⁶⁰² EU's oil bill for imported and domestically produced oil stands at around €250 billion Euros per year, or roughly 2.3% of GDP.⁶⁰³

In terms of natural gas, considered the 'cleanest' fossil fuel, European dependency is increasing more so than for oil. Therefore, for Europe, Turkey is expected to play an even more important role in securing European gas needs than its oil needs. Natural gas consumption has been growing steadily for decades within the EU, offering environmental as well as economic benefits. In 2006, consumption stood at around

⁶⁰¹ EC Staff, Working Document: Annex to the Green Paper, A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy: What is at stake – Background Document, 2006, p. 19 http://www.energy.eu/directives/2006_03_08_gp_working_document_en.pdf, retrieved Sept. 10, 2013.

⁶⁰² It is important to note that the oil prices dropped significantly at the time of the completion of this thesis.

⁶⁰³ EC Staff, Working Document, *ibid.*, p.20.

515bcm per year – roughly one quarter of total EU energy consumption – and is foreseen to grow further, both in absolute and relative terms, towards 635bcm by 2030 under the conditions laid down in the 2005 Baseline scenario.⁶⁰⁴ Contrary to this increase in consumption, EU gas reserves are limited to 14 years at current production rates and indigenous production continues to fall while domestic demand continues to rise. Against the 2005 baseline scenario consumption increase, a doubling of natural gas imports from the current level of 275bcm annually to 535bcm by 2030 is also foreseen. As of 2013, 81% of the EU's natural gas needs will come through pipelines, while 19% will arrive as LNG. Again, while the EU imports 35% of its natural gas needs from Russia, 34% comes from Norway.⁶⁰⁵

As mentioned before, with this speedy increase in demand overall European gas import dependency could rise to 80% by 2020 and over 60% of EU's gas imports are expected to come from Russia.⁶⁰⁶ Due to the figures given below, one unavoidable fact will continue to shape Europe's energy policy: the EU's lack of sufficient indigenous energy deposits to meet its growing demand and maintain their high standards of living. Consequently, Europe will continue to be heavily dependent on foreign supplies to meet its energy needs, especially on Russia. However the crisis between Ukraine -the transit state, and Russia the supplier - has caused alarm bells to ring for Europe on a number of different occasions. Perhaps these crises are the main reasons why the EU is desperately supporting the Southern Corridor.

When looking at Turkey's position in terms of energy, its location comes up as a crucially important factor. Turkey forms a natural energy bridge between source countries and consumer markets. It stands as a key country in ensuring energy security through diversification of supply sources and routes, considerations that have gained increased significance in Europe especially after the Ukrainian gas crisis in 2006. In this respect the ambitions of Turkey and the EU align – something which pushes these two to cooperate in the region, particularly in discussions about energy routes. This is why

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

⁶⁰⁵ Ratner et al., *ibid.*, p.6.

⁶⁰⁶ The EU in its Green Paper on Energy Security published in 2002 anticipated a 45% increase in gas demand between 1998 and 2030, most dramatically in power generation.

the EC officially launched the Southern Corridor initiative in 2008 so as to ensure the supply to Europe of Caspian and the Middle Eastern gas via Turkey. This idea became one of the most important elements of the EU's future energy security plans. It also pushed Turkey to change its foreign policy agendas. For example, Turkey stopped being hostile to the KRG as it wanted to use the vast amounts of energy resources in this region as a political tool in its accession negotiations with the EU. Again, the internal energy market dynamics in Turkey started to be regulated to meet the European standards due to the Southern Corridor idea.

Turkey, the EU and the US support the creation of a Southern Corridor with the main aim of bypassing Russia, which currently stands like Damocles' Sword on the edge of Eastern Europe. According to Heinz Hilbrecht, the Director for Security of Supply and Energy Markets of the EU Directorate-General for Energy, European consumers are interested in purchasing gas from Azerbaijan and other countries of the region, something which guarantees that the EU is willing to pay the highest price for it.⁶⁰⁷ On other occasions the former EU Enlargement Commissioner, Olli Rehn, has also urged Turkey to negotiate conditions for making the Nabucco gas pipeline a reality. In a meeting Rehn said:

Too much time has already been wasted rather than making things happen. I encourage my Turkish friends to engage now seriously in the discussions in view of making Nabucco operational as of 2013.⁶⁰⁸

Looking at the above statements, it is very clear that the EU strongly favours the Southern Corridor to diversify its energy supply routes. This corridor will include major projects such as TANAP, the Turkey-Greece-Italy Connector and TAP. These fit well with both the Turkish and EU aims outlined above. But to understand EU's frustration in terms of diversification of its energy supply routes one must understand how serious the Ukraine crises were for Europe, as major gas disputes between Russia and Ukraine between 2006 and 2009 affected nearly two thirds of EU members, and prompted the EU to intensify talks on the construction of an alternative gas supply route to Europe. Although 40% of natural gas imports come from Russia, the EU did not previously worry much about its reliance on Russian gas, until January 2006 that is. This is when

⁶⁰⁷ Cited in Baban, *ibid.*

⁶⁰⁸ <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/eu-piebalgs-nabucco-tour-gas-supplies/article-176913>, retrieved Dec. 27, 2010.

Gazprom, Russia's state controlled energy giant, temporarily cut off supplies going through Ukraine due to disagreements on the price of the gas sold to this country.

Gazprom accused Ukraine of stealing Russian gas from the transit pipelines that delivered supplies to Europe through its territory. When the pressure dropped in gas pipelines in many European countries including Austria and Hungary, doubts were raised about Russia's reliability as an energy supplier. Soon after, an alarmist debate about the security of Europe's future energy supply began in earnest. Russian policies towards Ukraine were seen in Europe as unacceptable. Many European officials viewed it as an attempt to use energy resources as a political weapon to blackmail a neighbouring consumer state that depended heavily on Russian supplies. Even those who did not worry that the Kremlin may one day use gas as a political weapon against EU were increasingly concerned about persistent underinvestment within Russia. Any growth in Russia's gas output is gobbled up by the fast-growing domestic market. Although this is already limiting Russia's export capacity, it has nonetheless made ambitious plans to sell more energy to China, Japan and the US.⁶⁰⁹

After these incidents, officials arguing that Turkey was the necessary energy corridor to help reduce European overdependence on a single source began to raise their voices in the EU. Turkey saw this situation as an opportunity to push forward with its own agenda. Having the largest part of the multinational BTC pipeline safely running through its soil, Turkey felt confident that it could provide the same secure environment for another major pipeline.

The result of major gas disputes has been that energy-poor Europeans have finally become aware of possible negative consequences of their dependence on imported hydrocarbons. Moreover, they have become increasingly uncomfortable with an energy game in which the producers set the rules.⁶¹⁰ Energy security thus became a core issue in the EU's foreign policy agenda. A report issued by the European Commission in March 2006 carried a strong warning about European overdependence on limited energy supplies. It suggested a clear policy on securing and diversifying its suppliers of energy, especially for gas, by building new pipelines – thus opening up a fourth corridor – from different sources into the heart of the EU.

⁶⁰⁹ Katinka Barysch, 'Turkey's role in European energy security', *Centre for European Reform Essays*, Dec. 2007, p.3.

⁶¹⁰ Andreas Golthau, Russia's Energy Weapon is a Fiction, *Europe's World*, Spring 2008, No: 8, p.36. http://www.eurocollege.ru/fileserver/infcenter/EuropesWorld_No8_Full.pdf, retrieved Aug. 21, 2014.

In particular, the new Ukrainian crisis⁶¹¹ (as well as old issues between Ukraine and Russia) made the idea of diversifying energy supply routes even more vital for the future energy security of the EU. While EU officials wanted more alternatives, Turkey increased lobbying for a major pipeline to cross its territory as it believed that this would be mutually beneficial for both the EU and Turkey.

As mentioned above, Russia already provides substantial amounts of energy for the EU and in the near future it is expected 60% of the European gas imports will come from Russia (it is important to note that Turkey also depends on Russian energy as much as Europe does). Russia, the world's largest exporter of natural gas and the second largest exporter of oil, after Saudi Arabia, has used these resources, thanks to its the advantage of being Europe's neighbour, to become the EU's major partner, thus making Europe dependent on its natural gas supplies. It is very obvious that Russia will remain the EU's single biggest gas supplier for a long time. But the Europeans want their additional future demands to be met by a broader range of producers. When the European Commission published its energy policy package in January 2007, it put the diversification of sources of supply at the top of the priority list and the Caspian and Central Asian regions are essential to these plans.

Europe has already been importing oil from the Caspian region (bypassing Russia) through the BTC though in terms of gas, until now, Europe has only been able to import from Central Asia and the Caspian via Russian territory (the Turkey-Greece interconnector breaks this monopoly, but the quantities are so far low).⁶¹² Gazprom has a monopoly over all gas pipelines, which turns gas imports from other countries into Russian gas at the border. This setup provides the Kremlin with political clout and Gazprom with windfall profits: it buys Turkmen gas for \$100 per 1,000 cubic meters and sells it to Europe at 2.6 times that rate.⁶¹³ Consequently, Caspian states are desperately on the lookout for alternative transportation routes.

In April 2008, the Turkmen president told a high-level EU delegation that he was committed to developing a mechanism for sending Turkmen gas directly to Europe, and he offered to supply 10bcm as early as 2009. Privately, many officials are sceptical that either the volumes or the political commitment will materialize in such a short time and

⁶¹¹ At the time of completion the Ukrainian Civil War that started in late February 2014 was still an ongoing problem.

⁶¹² Jim Nichol, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for US interests, *Congressional Research Service*, RL33453, Apr.9, 2009, p.34.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, p.4.

they were right as it did not happen at the time of completion of this research.⁶¹⁴ But his efforts are not going to get rid of the agreements already in place. As a result, Russia has no problem in continuing to supply from Turkmenistan. While this monopoly is a problem for Turkmenistan, for Russia, the transport monopoly will only become more important if and when its own gas production falls short of domestic and European demand. It could then use Turkmen and other Central Asian gas to make up for shortfalls – but not if these countries have good alternative outlets.⁶¹⁵

There have been many proposals to build a variety of pipelines to pump the rich energy resources out of this landlocked region.⁶¹⁶ However, none of them, except the BTC, have been successful due to the involvement of the great powers and their political agendas. In the global energy game, Russia is against any pipeline that could damage its monopoly over the exportation of energy resources from the Caspian Region. The EU and US on the other hand are in favour of projects that break the Russian monopoly, but against any that crosses Iranian territory. Turkey is also against pipelines that cross Armenian territory as ‘*the football diplomacy*’⁶¹⁷ seems to have failed.⁶¹⁸

It is also wise to assess the importance of the European gas markets to the Russian economy as the majority of its gas is sold to Europe. Energy security analysts such as Belyi state that energy dependency is not one sided, but in fact mutual, between the EU and Russia. While the EU desperately needs Russian gas, Russia equally needs an EU which is willing to buy its gas. If the political problems continue to affect the flow of gas between Russia and Europe, the West will need to find alternatives. Hence, Russia’s former Cold War enemy, the US, has now become involved in securing European energy supplies by offering its own resources. Because of ongoing problems involving Russia and Ukraine⁶¹⁹, Belyi argues that,

⁶¹⁴ Mankoff, *ibid.*, pp.23-24.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.4.

⁶¹⁶ Sonia Shah, *Crude: the story of oil*, (London: Seven Stories Press, 2004), p.151.

⁶¹⁷ The “football diplomacy” is the name given to the rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia in 2008 where the Turkish President Abdallah Gül and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan decided to attend World Cup 2010 qualifying matches in Yerevan and Bursa. Gül attended the Match in Yerevan on Sept. 6, 2008 and in return Sargsyan was present in Bursa on October 14, 2009. Following this relaxation in the relations “Protocols on the establishment of diplomatic relations and development of relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey” signed in Switzerland. (For further information: General information, <http://www.mfa.am/en/country-by-country/tr/>, retrieved Jan. 22, 2015).

⁶¹⁸ Tony Halpin, ‘Football Diplomacy Seals the Deal between Armenia and Turkey,’ *The Times*, Oct.10,2009.

⁶¹⁹ In 2014 a major crisis erupted between Russia and Ukraine mainly due to the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by the Russian Federation. The Crises in Ukraine later on escalated in to a Civil War

In the longer term, Gazprom, as well as any other gas supply company, will find it difficult to argue that Russia is a reliable energy supplier. Although the current crisis has not yet affected any supply-transit flows, a general perception of risk has accelerated. The US has already promised to supply LNG to some European terminals, in particular to the planned terminal in Klaipeda (Lithuania), to ensure Baltic energy independence.”⁶²⁰

It is widely known that Russian president Vladimir Putin uses Gazprom as a foreign policy tool against Ukraine and, in a wider sense, against the EU too. However, he must also know the importance of the European markets for Russia’s economic stability as 60% of Gazprom’s revenues come from Europe. In this context renowned German energy specialist Claudia Kemfert argues that,

Russia is not likely to cut gas supplies to Europe as it heavily depends on energy deliveries to Europe. Some 60% of Russia's state income is due to oil, gas and coal sales - and a large part of that goes to Europe.⁶²¹

The US plan to transport energy to Europe, though it is more expensive to carry natural gas in the form of LNG, can still be considered as an alternative to Russian pipelines. But, it is evidently clear, that in the long run LNG can never replace the significance of an alternative pipeline route which both the EU and Turkey envisage bringing non-Russian gas to Europe. Compared to Russia, as an ally, Turkey has shown its reliability to the West ever since WWII and thus decision makers have fewer question marks, apart from ones relating to financial issues, when considering the Turkish option.

In this context it is clear that EU needs to diversify its energy resources, and so does Turkey. In light of the above explanations it is evident that Turkey-EU relations are geared towards promoting Turkey as a regional power and European dependency on exported energy gives Turkey the confidence to act like a major player in the energy market. Turkey’s own heavy dependency on exported energy resources is also directly

effecting almost whole of Eastern Ukraine where pro-Russian supporters fight with the pro-Ukrainian troops. Moreover, the Crimean dispute became an international crisis as most of the UN states do not recognize Crimea as Russian soil. Western countries including US started to impose sanctions on Russia due to its “arguably” support for the separatists in Eastern Ukraine and also due to the “illegal” annexation of the Crimean dispute.

⁶²⁰ Andrei Belyi, Implications of Crimea Crisis for Energy Markets: Vulnerabilities of Markets and Weakness of States, Apr.13, 2014, <https://balticscholars.stanford.edu/?articles=andrei-belyi-implications-of-crimea-crisis-for-energy-markets-vulnerabilities-of-markets-and-weakness-of-states>, retrieved Apr.14, 2014.

⁶²¹ Insa Wrede, ‘Europe Has Little Reason to Fear Russian Gas Cut-off,’ Mar.7, 2014, <http://www.dw.de/europe-has-little-reason-to-fear-russian-gas-cut-off/a-17480530>, retrieved Apr.14,2014.

solved via EU backed projects. Therefore, the EU has a great impact on Turkey's energy concerns. Good relations between Turkey and the EU also indirectly affect the regional developments as the energy producers have confidence in the Western markets. Consequently, it is mutually beneficial for both Turkey and EU to cooperate in energy sector as they need to broaden their energy supply routes to establish themselves as influential powers. It is particularly important for Turkey due to the fact that close cooperation in the energy sector might lead to other collaborative works directed towards full EU membership.

However, in order for Turkey to become an energy transit hub, major pipelines connecting energy resources with the European markets have to be built. These pipelines are grandiose projects that have problems both before and after they are built, relating to political, financial, security and infrastructural issues. As mentioned above, politics play a greater part than any other issue when choosing the direction of pipeline routes. Without a strong political will from the EU, it is nearly impossible to build such pipelines.

Whether Turkey could handle such big projects like TANAP is answered by the fact that it is already running the BTC. For policy makers, any future pipeline will surely have similar issues to the BTC considering the highly politicized nature of the region. Therefore, the BTC has become the standard for any future international energy project involving Turkey. That is why this thesis decided to explain the BTC in detail so as to bring to the fore the types of challenges a pipeline might encounter from beginning to end. Having analysed this aspect, the other projects Turkey is attempting to undertake will be more easily understood.

Below, I first look at the BTC pipeline in order to shed light on the transnational pipeline network which has been built linking Turkey and Western markets. Secondly, debates surrounding the now-cancelled Nabucco will be assessed in order to understand why it failed. After this, the TAP/TANAP will be looked at briefly before making concluding remarks regarding the EU's impact over Turkey's energy policies.

BTC Pipeline as a model for other Turkish routes:

On 4 June 2006, a British tanker, Hawthorn, left the Turkish port of Ceyhan, carrying the first Caspian oil to be exported via the Mediterranean. This oil had been transported from the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli oil field in the Caspian Sea to Ceyhan Port in the

Mediterranean through a pipeline running from Baku in Azerbaijan via Tbilisi in Georgia to the marine terminal in Ceyhan in Turkey. With an estimated investment of \$3 billion, the BTC project involved the development, financing, construction, and operation of a dedicated crude oil pipeline system. The 1,768 kilometre pipeline,⁶²² is buried throughout its length as it passes through Azerbaijan (442 kilometres), Georgia (248 kilometres), and Turkey (1,070 kilometres).⁶²³ The problems faced in securing this level of investment were numerous.

Lord Browne, the chief executive of BP, described the pipeline's construction as a major historical event which "reintegrates significant oil supplies from the Caspian into the global market for the first time in a century."⁶²⁴ In the words of Daniel Yergin:

Eventually, after years of wrangling, the BTC pipeline would link historic Baku, on the Caspian Sea, to a Turkish port on the Mediterranean- in part, a twenty first century parallel to the route pioneered by the Nobels, Rothschilds, and Samuels in the late nineteenth century. This pipeline, by providing an alternative to shipping oil through the Russian pipeline system, would help to underwrite the position of those newly independent states of the former Soviet Union.⁶²⁵

The BTC crude oil pipeline, which required a total of 10 million barrels of crude oil to be filled in from Baku to Ceyhan end,⁶²⁶ was completed in 2005, as part of a project to utilise the hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian region. It is the second longest oil pipeline in the former Soviet Union after the Druzhba pipeline. This pipeline has many similarities to the failed Nabucco and the now proposed TANAP; it saw very strong political involvement from various regions, it is very long, it crosses through three different countries including some unstable regions, construction took a long time and it was built against Russia's will by a consortium of eleven members. Even though it only supplies 1% of global demand it was strategically very important and as such was strongly backed by the USA and the EU.⁶²⁷

In the early 1990s, the countries in the Central Asia and Caucasus regions gained independence and the Caspian Sea emerged as a potentially significant energy

⁶²² S.Frederick Starr, 'The Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan Pipeline: School of Modernity,' in S.Frederick Star and Svante E. Cornell (ed.), *The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline: Oil Window to the West*, (Upsala: Central Asia Caucasus Institute, Silk Road Studies Program, Uppsala University Press, 2005), p.p. 7-15.

⁶²³ Reha Muhtaroglu, *BTC Pipeline-Impacts for the Region: Environment, Economic, Security and Political*, (Washington DC.: CSIS, Nov.21,2002).

⁶²⁴ Horizon, *BP Publication*, No.5, Aug.2006, p.16.

⁶²⁵ Yergin. Ibid, p.764.

⁶²⁶ Mark Tran, 'Q&A: The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline,' *Guardian*, May, 26, 2005.

⁶²⁷ H.Park, *ibid.*, p.128.

reservoir.⁶²⁸ As mentioned above, the full utilization of the basin's energy resources has been slowed down by the disagreement on choosing the politically and economically appropriate pipeline routes. The BTC route was strongly supported by Turkey from the outset, for both economic and political reasons. Economically, Turkey stood to benefit from massive foreign investment and increased employment as a result of its transit state status, and from the rentals for the section of the pipeline which passed Turkey, as well as from the increased oil supply necessary to meet its own growing domestic needs. Politically, control of the pipeline would bring Turkey increased international influence and prestige, particularly with Western powers such as the EU and the United States. However, it would never have been realised without huge sums of direct foreign investments.

The newly independent, energy rich, Caspian states lack the resources to fund construction projects. While they are strong from the point of view of oil potential, they are afflicted by infrastructural weakness leading to slow economic growth, and a degree of international vulnerability.⁶²⁹ Due to the region's relative geographical isolation, building new infrastructure to deliver its oil to consumers would be very expensive.⁶³⁰ The Turkish government therefore faced the challenge not only of securing political support from other states for the BTC pipeline, but also of convincing energy companies to make a substantial investment in the project.

As has been noted, the break-up of the Soviet Union led to discussions about the building of new pipelines to transport the Caspian energy resources.⁶³¹ The big question was which routes those pipelines would take. There were two main geographic focuses: one was the North Caspian basin; and the other, the South Caspian.⁶³² The oil companies started to look for the most suitable way of transporting the energy resources. Numerous routes were proposed, leading in all directions.

It was not merely economic, or even environmental considerations, that were at stake, but political influence too. The fact is pipelines offer more than economic benefits and trade possibilities. They form strategic cores of power along which

⁶²⁸ Idris Bal, Turkey's Relations with the West and the Turkic Republics, the Rise and fall of the Turkish Model, *ibid.*, pp.84-85.

⁶²⁹ John Roberts, 'Caspian Oil and Gas, How far have we come and where are we going?', in S.N.Cummings (ed.), *Oil, Transition and Security in Central Asia*, (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp.157-159.

⁶³⁰ Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, *ibid.*, pp.107-108.

⁶³¹ Gawdat Bahgat, 'The Caspian Sea: Oil and Gas Export Options', *Oil, Gas & Energy Law Intelligence*, Vol.1, No.02, Mar.2003.

⁶³² Akiner, *ibid.*, p.366.

communications, transportation and other infrastructure corridors develop. The state or alliance that controls such corridors may potentially also hold sway over the region. Thus, as will be seen, Turkey's strategic position as a transit country, friendly to the West, has increased Turkey's importance for Western countries. For example, the proposal of the BTC pipeline as an alternative to a pipeline through Iran has been heavily supported by the US and EU who are both keen to contain Iranian influence in the region.

The region's bountiful oil production potential has meant that a number of oil export pipelines have been proposed and the construction of some of these has already finished.⁶³³ Rough terrain, ethnic violence, bureaucratic infighting, and individual ambitions need to be accounted for along the way.⁶³⁴ These resources are distinguished in terms of their strategic significance, economic feasibility and technical complexity. More importantly, these routes involve uneven political and environmental risks and are often viewed within a framework of win-lose situations and alliance making strategies.

One reason for Turkey's support of the BTC pipeline project was due to the other possible routes which could be used to transport hydrocarbon resources from the Caspian region and Central Asia. These were seen as politically unattractive for Turkey, and also to the Western powers, in particular the US. The main routes for transporting oil and gas from the Caspian region and Central Asia run in five directions – the Western route through Turkey, and others through the Southeast, the North, South and East. All other routes, except the one through Turkey, were seen as unsuited to the political aims of the EU and the US. This, therefore, had a direct positive impact on the success of the Turkey route.

Western states had strong reservations on the potential China, Iran, Russia or Afghanistan routes due to political considerations. The USA, for example, did not want any further Russian monopoly over energy resources in the region.⁶³⁵ Additionally, the war in Afghanistan discouraged companies from investing in this route. The shortest route for Caspian resources however remains via Persian Gulf routes, where it could transport oil to Asia, a region where the demand for oil is projected to grow faster and command a higher price than the Mediterranean markets that most of the competing

⁶³³ Bahgat, *ibid.*

⁶³⁴ Hooshang Amirahmadi, *Pipeline Politics of the Caspian Region in The Caspian Region at a Crossroad, Challenges of a New Frontier of Energy and Development*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), p.164.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.136.

pipelines would serve.⁶³⁶ However, to a degree, US sanctions (and since June 2010, a new round of UN sanctions) have deterred potential investors and, as Bahgat points out, Baku never seriously contemplated exporting its main strategic resource through Iran with whom it is involved in a territorial dispute over South Azerbaijan.⁶³⁷ In addition to US sanctions, as Larrabee and Lesser write, Iran lacks the resources to be a major regional player which perhaps prevents any major investment flowing into this country.⁶³⁸ Lastly, although pipelines are now being built between Central Asia and China, which was seen as a huge market for Kazakh oil,⁶³⁹ at the time of the decision about the export routes of the Caspian energy, the West also had some concerns about the possibility of the eastern route through China being utilised. This was another reason why BTC was seen as the better option.

Exploring the feasibility of the above routes, it is clear that the BTC project had wider political contentions behind it when compared to economic ones. Most importantly, US and EU policy aimed for an East-West axis, or a new ‘Silk Road’, which would exclude Iran and Russia. By pursuing this policy, the US, backed by European states, wanted to cut down the dependence of the Caspian states on Russia as well as removing the dominance of Russia and Iran in the region. Countries such as Turkey and Georgia have used US-Iran and US-Russia tensions to push for what may seem less than optimal routes through their territories with a view to gain business and strategic advantage.⁶⁴⁰ Especially in Turkey’s case using the pipeline as a political leverage in its EU accession negotiations.

What is the importance of the BTC pipeline for Turkey?

The BTC pipeline is more than a pipeline for Turkey as it provides political, financial and environmental benefits. Unlike neighbouring Russia and Iran, Turkey is a consumer of Caspian energy, and the economic benefits to Turkey should not be downplayed. However, it also has broader strategic ambitions and hopes that it can use the West’s

⁶³⁶ Roberts, *ibid.*, p.154.

⁶³⁷ Bahgat, *ibid.*

⁶³⁸ Larrabee and Lesser, *ibid.*, p.117.

⁶³⁹ Interview of the author with then Ambassador of Kazakhstan to UK, Erlan Idrisov, Apr.10, 2006. On Sept. 28, 2012, Idrisov became the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Biographies and Dates, ‘Erlan Idrisov,’ <http://bnews.kz/en/persons/show/14193/>, retrieved. Jan.16.2015.

⁶⁴⁰ Amirahmadi, *ibid.*, p.164.

strategic interest in the Caspian region to bolster its own hand with the West⁶⁴¹ – especially with the EU during accession negotiations. Realising that control of energy transport routes can be almost as important as control of energy supplies, Turkey had great hopes invested in the BTC route. As mentioned before, since the end of the Cold War, Turkey's main aim has been to provide the principal export route for the Caspian and Middle Eastern energy resources to the Western markets. The BTC, therefore, offered this opportunity to Turkey.

For the Turkish Government, the BTC pipeline has been seen as a project primarily of political importance. In fact, the issue of direct economic benefits to Turkey was barely mentioned in the initial discussions. Despite the absence of strong economic arguments in favour of the project, the strategic and security advantages of the BTC pipeline were widely recognised by the public too. It was supported by a majority of the public, and has encountered no perceptible political opposition.⁶⁴²

Turkish officials believed that a pipeline across its territory would bolster Turkey's political standing in the international arena, particularly with the US which more than any other Western state has been the biggest promoter of the Baku-Ceyhan route.⁶⁴³ Naturally, possessing the 'energy card' during EU negotiations was also considered an important element of the pipeline. This was especially relevant as Turkey's geo-strategic significance appeared to have declined somewhat in the immediate post-Cold War era.⁶⁴⁴ Turkey did well, in a sense, to promote for itself a major role for American policy-makers as a dependable ally in a highly unstable region extending from the Middle East to the former Soviet Central Asia. Still, its importance was clearly not comparable to the Cold War era. This changed with the September 11 terrorist attacks, which marked a turning point in many ways. According to Bahgat, since 2001, a top priority of White House administration has been energy security.⁶⁴⁵ Kalicki also notes that:

⁶⁴¹ Necdet Pamir, 'Energy and Pipeline Security in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Regions; Challenges and Solutions,' in Oleksandr Pavluk and Ivanna K.Tsintsadze (ed.), *The Black Sea region: Cooperation and Security Building*, (London –New York: East West Institute), p.142.

⁶⁴² Baran, *ibid.*, pp.103-118.

⁶⁴³ Bolukbasi *ibid.*, p.223, Celik *ibid.*, p.121, Nachmani, *ibid.*, p.136.

⁶⁴⁴ Müftüleri-Baç, 'Through the Looking Glass: Turkey in Europe,' *Turkish Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, Spring 2000, pp.21-35.

⁶⁴⁵ Gawdat Bahgat, *American Oil Diplomacy in the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), p.1.

One needs to bear in mind the fact that the US Government has raised the nation's energy security to the level of top priority which means that the US international policy in the energy sector, including in the Caspian region, has become one of extraordinary importance.⁶⁴⁶

US strategy in the region could be defined as the availability of “multiple pipelines”, which means that the already existent pipelines should be supplemented with new ones.⁶⁴⁷ Turkey's proximity to the former Soviet states therefore took on new significance for US policy-makers. Turkish foreign policy in the post-War era had been conservative and isolationist, but US support for Turkey's involvement in its bordering regions played an important part in changing Turkish policy to a more activist role in the region.⁶⁴⁸ Bahgat also argues that in Transcaucasia, the main US goals were to increase stability, speed-up democratization, introduce a free market economy (and make sure that it operates smoothly), increase commercial activity, control nuclear weapons and encourage human rights standards.⁶⁴⁹ The principal priority can be defined as blocking the spread of influence of existing radical regimes and preventing the creation of new ones. According to Aras, the US policy also aimed at seeing the Central Asian Republics succeed so they would not be replaced by anti-Western radical regimes which may threaten international peace and security.⁶⁵⁰

As explained above, US policy has been in favour of constructing the BTC pipeline based on the desire to limit Russian and Iranian regional influence and leverage over energy supplies.⁶⁵¹ Therefore, when energy security became a top priority, the importance of Turkey for the US increased significantly. An intergovernmental agreement in support of the BTC pipeline signed in November 18, 1999 by Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, was described by then US President, Bill Clinton, as one of his most important foreign policy achievements that year.⁶⁵² Consequently, we can argue that by successfully operating the BTC on its soil, Turkey has regained its significance in international politics following the end of the Cold War. It has also been noted that

⁶⁴⁶ Jan Kalicki ‘Caspian Energy at the Crossroad,’ *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.80, No.5, 2001, pp.120-134.

⁶⁴⁷ Necdet Pamir, ‘Is There a Future of the Eurasian Corridor?’, *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 2, No 3, 2000, p.40.

⁶⁴⁸ Kemal Kirisci, US-Turkish Relations: From Uncertainty to Closer Ties, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.2, No.4, Oct.-Dec.2000, 37-64.

⁶⁴⁹ Bahgat, *ibid.*, pp.24-25.

⁶⁵⁰ Bülent Aras, ‘US –Central Asian Relations: A View from Turkey,’ *MERIA Journal*, Vol.1, No.1, Jan. 1997.

⁶⁵¹ Ziya Onis, ‘Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence,’ *MERIA Journal*, Vol.5, No.2, Jun.2001, <http://www.rubincenter.org/2001/06/onis-2001-06-07/>, retrieved Jan. 4, 2010.

⁶⁵² Baran, *ibid.*, p.107.

Turkey recuperated its political strength in the region by actively participating in the ‘war on terror’. Again, relations between Turkey and the EU have been strengthened much further during the last decade when Turkey was given the go ahead to become a candidate for full membership of the Union on 3 October 2005. Lately, in the European Parliament, the debate on energy security has also been heavily tainted by the issue of Europe's energy dependency (especially gas) on Russia.⁶⁵³ During these debates Turkey continuously emerges as a strategically important partner for the EU. Indeed, in one EU policy paper relating to energy policy, issued in 2000, Turkey was designated an “energy corridor”, meaning the fourth artery for Europe that should be developed.⁶⁵⁴ Gareth Winrow argues that it was originally a US strategy in order to circumvent Iran and Russia. Now the EU seeks to diversify its resources and build new pipelines.⁶⁵⁵ BTC clearly showed Turkey to be a reliable and secure transit country, and the obvious option is to build another secure route through the country for future projects. The EU knows that once it is built, there will be no concerns regarding the safety and security of TANAP. Therefore, BTC has had wider implications for Turkey in terms of its relations with the EU. The construction of another major pipeline such as TANAP, or Nabucco, which crosses its territory will add further leverage to Turkey. Most importantly, if Turkey realizes this importance, it will also have a better bargaining positioning in EU accession talks.

Turkey considers itself as one of the most important actors supporting the independence of the smaller Caspian states; it thus considers itself to have a stake in their socio-economic viability. For its part, Ankara perceives its rivalry with Iran and Russia over the location of the routes of the Caspian oil and gas pipelines as a struggle between the forces of the good (i.e. Turkey) and the less good (i.e. Russia) which try to destroy the nascent new states. Turkey is convinced that neither Russia’s nor Iran’s policy toward these states is conducive to furthering Turkey’s national interests or the interests of the smaller Caspian states.⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵³ ‘The Green Paper on a European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy’ <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/green-paper-energy>, retrieved Jun. 18, 2013.

⁶⁵⁴ Murat Yetkin, ‘Energy... Turkey’s Triumph Card in EU Membership Talk,’ *Turkish Weekly*, Apr. 8, 2005, <http://www.turks.us/article.php?story=20050408132611524>, retrieved Jan.17.2013, retrieved Jan. 11, 2013.

⁶⁵⁵ Gareth M. Winrow, Turkey’s Changing Regional Role and its Implications, Koc University, Istanbul, Dec. 2, 2005 (Presented at the Conference titled: Europeanization and Transformation).

⁶⁵⁶ Suha Bolukbasi, ‘Jockeying for Power in the Caspian Basin: Turkey versus Iran and Russia,’ in Shirin Akiner (ed.), *The Caspian Politics: energy and security*, (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p.219.

Past history and present interests combined to transform Turkey's relationship with Russia at the end of the twentieth century into a complex affair fraught with contradiction. Russia and Turkey have a historical rivalry over the Caspian and the Caucasus regions since the time of the Ottoman and Russian Empires. Russia does not want Turkey to penetrate into the Caspian nor Central Asia where Russia has traditionally played the dominant role for centuries. As Leeuw argues, the main fear for Russia is losing control over the oil tap of its former subordinate states and therefore control over political developments in the region.⁶⁵⁷

In the 1990s the ambiguities in the relationship surfaced as joint Russian-Turkish commercial and military interests' were noticed to be better than regional and economic rivalry. As a result, the relationship between the two was defined by close, if varied, cooperation, commingled with competitive unilateral steps specifically designed to undermine the other's interests; though without ever quite pushing matters to crisis levels.⁶⁵⁸ However, Moscow still harboured hegemonic ambitions in the region. The Russians were determined to maintain and, if possible, extend their influence in both Central Asia and the Caucasus.⁶⁵⁹ Russia also continued to oppose US interests in the region. Russia was therefore one of the biggest opponents of the BTC pipeline due to its geo-strategic importance. Indeed, Harris writes that geography has predisposed Russia and Turkey to a history of conflict and the BTC was the result of it.⁶⁶⁰ The BTC is therefore important to Turkey as a key element in its power struggle with Russia in the region.

Iran's influence in Caspian politics on the other hand looks limited at the moment. The US has successfully pursued a policy of isolating Iran, and the secularist Muslim elite in Central Asia and the Caucasus have little sympathy for Iran's brand of radical Islam. Iran's tense relations with Azerbaijan are also an obstacle to Tehran's ability to play a larger regional role in the Caucasus. The idea of reuniting Azerbaijan with the South Azerbaijan (in Iran) is still considered a danger to Iran's unity. Any conflict between Iran and Azerbaijan would directly affect Turkey too, since strong public opinion would likely force Turkey to support Azerbaijan.

⁶⁵⁷ Charles Van Der Leeuw, *Oil and Gas in the Caucasus and Caspian: A History*, (London: Curzon Press, 2000), p.155.

⁶⁵⁸ Nachmani, *ibid.*, p.122.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.123.

⁶⁶⁰ George Harris, 'The Russian Federation and Turkey, in Regional Power Rivalries,' in Alvin Z. Rubinstein and Oles M. Smolansky (ed.), *The New Eurasia, Russia, Turkey, and Iran*, (London and New York: M.E. Sharp, 1995), p.3.

Nonetheless, Russia's efforts to intensify ties with Iran in recent years have been viewed with concern in Ankara. According to Larreebe and Lesser, Iran and Russia share the same interests in preventing the expansion of US and Turkish influence in the region. This has been an important growing collaboration between the two countries. Both have sought to block the construction of the BTC pipeline and prevent Ankara and Washington from expanding their influence in the Caspian basin.⁶⁶¹ Even though they are potentially competitors in the oil and gas market, Russia and Iran cooperate in the nuclear field that has also attracted very close scrutiny from the US.⁶⁶²

Moscow had hoped to become Turkey's main natural gas supplier through the "Blue Stream" gas pipeline, while Iran had hoped to supply Turkey with Turkmen gas through its own pipelines. Iran not only wanted Caspian oil and natural gas to pass through its territory to foreign markets – rather than through Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey – but it also feared that the two projects would strengthen Azerbaijan. Soon after the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) agreements were signed in November 1999 for the construction of the BTC pipeline, Russia and Iran sought to undermine the economic rationale for the project. The Russian gas company, Gazprom, suddenly (likely at the urging of the Russian government) reached an agreement with Turkmenistan in December 1999, after two years of haggling, to buy Turkmen natural gas at \$36 per 1,000 cubic meters, and to purchase a large share of Turkmenistan's gas in the year 2000. The aim was to deter Turkmenistan from moving ahead rapidly with the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline.⁶⁶³ In an effort to persuade major oil companies not to proceed with BTC, Iran cut the cost of its oil swaps with Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan by 30%, beginning in the year 2000. As Iran's deputy oil minister for international affairs, Hosseini, stated, "the reduction would give Iran the upper hand in competing with political alternatives for the export of Caspian crude."⁶⁶⁴ In addition to the above a further political rationale for the BTC pipeline, for both Azerbaijan and Turkey, was the desire to avoid transporting energy through Armenia.

Azerbaijan has been engaged in a bitter territorial dispute with neighbouring Armenia since 1988 over the Azerbaijani area of Nagorno-Karabakh. The dispute

⁶⁶¹ Ibid., p.118

⁶⁶² Steven R. Weisman, 'US is Debating Talks with Iran on Nuclear Issue,' *The New York Times*, May 27, 2006 http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/27/world/middleeast/27iran.html?_r=0, retrieved Dec.11, 2010.

⁶⁶³ M. A. Guseinova, *The Policy of the US in Transcaucasia and Russian interests*, (Moscow: Moscow Institute of the US and Canada, 1999), pp. 14-15.

⁶⁶⁴ Mehdi Hosseini, 'Iran to slash Caspian oil swap fees,' *Ettela'at*, Nov.23, 1999 cited in Robert Freedman, *MERIA Journal*, Vol.4, No.2, Jun. 2000.

developed into a full-scale war and resulted in the occupation of over 17% of Azerbaijan's territory, the ethnic cleansing of over a million people (the overwhelming majority of which were ethnic Azerbaijanis) and the deaths of over 30,000 people on both sides.⁶⁶⁵ In support of Azerbaijan, Turkey also closed its borders to Armenia, a move it vowed to enforce until the Nagorno-Karabakh issue is solved.⁶⁶⁶

Turkey's relations with Armenia also remain strained by the legacy of the on-going dispute concerning the issue of whether the word 'genocide' is an apt way of describing the death of Armenians during World War I. Turkey strongly disputes the genocide claims made by Armenians and has provided greater access to Ottoman archives to prove the claims wrong and be more transparent though the issue remains contentious.⁶⁶⁷ Nonetheless, a protocol was signed on 10 October 2009, in Switzerland, to begin working on ending their disagreements, none of the issues relating to the Armenian claims about the WWI are touched upon due to the opposition from internal dynamics within both Armenia and Turkey. As a result of these conflicts, during the negotiations for the routes, it was vital for Azerbaijan and Turkey that the BTC would not go through Armenia.⁶⁶⁸

Other Political Benefits of BTC for Turkey in the Region:

Turkey also expects political benefits from the pipeline project on a more local level. Celik writes that the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a number of independent states in Central Asia and the Caucasus meant that, for the first time in over a century, Turkey was free to forge relationships with the fifty million people of Turkic origin in the region with whom the Turks of Turkey shared strong ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic ties.⁶⁶⁹ Indeed, there is a degree of sentimentality in the Turkish attitude to the newly emergent Turkic states. Carley notes that in the late 1980s, Turks from highest level officials to businessmen and scholars began to visit the region, where they were enthusiastically received both officially and popularly, amid cries of "Kardeş!" ('brother'/'sister'). There was also a revival of the Pan-Turkic ideology which traced its routes to a movement in the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth

⁶⁶⁵ Svante Cornell and Fariz Ismailzade, 'The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline: Implications for Azerbaijan,' in Svante E. Cornell, Fariz Ismailzade (ed.), *The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Silk Road Studies Program*, (Upsala: Upsala University Press, 2005), pp.73-74.

⁶⁶⁶ Larrabee and Lesser, *ibid.*, pp.106-107.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.106 and Pope and Pope, *ibid.*, pp.49-54.

⁶⁶⁸ Interview with Israfil Mammadov of Azerbaijan embassy, Apr.13 2006.

⁶⁶⁹ Yasemin Celik, *ibid.*, p.120.

century⁶⁷⁰ when Ismail Gasprinski a Jadidist (reformist) in the Russian Empire fought for ‘unity in language, in religion and in action’ of the Turkic people from Macedonia to the Great Wall of China.⁶⁷¹

Political opportunism also played a role in Turkey’s choice to take an active interest in the future of the newly independent Caucasus and Central Asian states. The US did not have a well-defined policy towards the region when the small republics gained their independence from the Soviet Union, and Turkey quickly stepped in to offer itself as an official bridge between the US and the new states.⁶⁷² Turkey suggested that its linguistic and ethnic links to the region, combined with its own secularist and Western-oriented political and economic policies, made it the ideal intermediary between the US Government and the governments of the new republics. Although this policy had limited success, Carley writes that the US soon began to take the lead to conduct its own policies in the region. The US supported Turkish intervention in the region as it favoured Turkey to its neighbouring rivals of Russia and Iran.⁶⁷³

As Baran notes, the BTC pipeline project has had an enormous impact on Turkish relations with all the key actors in the region, including the south Caucasus states of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, and the Central Asian republics.⁶⁷⁴ As Mammadov says “it is a kind of Silk Road project, linking the East with the West.”⁶⁷⁵ Moreover, Solak argues that:

Through the BTC Turkey is helping to keep the regional peace. By being part of the BTC project Turkey improved its image in the region as well as its political power. By supporting this project Turkey is helping the Transcaspian countries to improve their relationships’.⁶⁷⁶

To verify his point, the relations between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan can be given as a good example. Until Kazakhstan’s President Nursultan Nazarbayev made a landmark trip to Baku, marking Kazakhstan’s decisive move towards joining the BTC pipeline project, bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan had shown few signs of

⁶⁷⁰Patricia M. Carley, ‘Turkey and Central Asia, Reality Comes Calling in Regional Power Rivalries,’ in Alvin Z. Rubinstein and Oles M. Smolansky (ed.), *The New Eurasia, Russia, Turkey, and Iran*, (London, New York, Armonk: M.E. Sharp, 1995), p.169.

⁶⁷¹ Safer Nagayev, Dilde, Fikirde, İşte Birlik: Gaspıralı ve Türkistan, *Kardaş Edebiyatlar*, January-March, 1994, No: 26, pp. 8-14, and Thomas Kuttner, ‘Russian Jadidism and the Islamic World: Ismail Gasprinskii in Cairo,1908,’ *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, Vol.16, No.3-4. Jul.-Dec.1975. pp. 383-424.

⁶⁷² Patricia M. Carley, *ibid.*, p.194.

⁶⁷³ Carley, *ibid.*, pp.194-195.

⁶⁷⁴ Baran, p.111.

⁶⁷⁵ Interview of the author with Israfil Mammadov Apr. 13, 2006.

⁶⁷⁶ Ramazan Solak, ‘BTC Comes to Life’, *Zaman Daily News*, May 26 2006.

progress. Therefore one can argue that through BTC the Caspian countries can improve their relationships too.⁶⁷⁷

One reason for Turkey's interest in the Caspian region, and its support for the BTC pipeline, was that it expected to receive economic benefits from the pipeline beginning in 2006. Firstly, Turkey benefits from the rent as it has gained between \$140 and \$200 million annually from transit and operating fees. This amount will increase, after 16 years, up to \$300 million per year. The higher amount is based on the pipeline's maximum capacity of 50 million metric tonnes per annum (MTA), which is approximately 1 million barrels per day.⁶⁷⁸

The Turkish economy suffered hugely in the 1990s from the loss of revenues caused by the closure of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline that had been transporting Iraqi oil to Ceyhan. Following the First Gulf War, the pipeline was closed in August 1990 under UN Security Council resolution 661.⁶⁷⁹ The vast investment made for the port became useless. Local business suffered as much as the state itself. The BTC pipeline came as a saviour that enabled Turkey to re-establish Ceyhan as an oil port. It is particularly suited for the purpose, as large tankers can easily and efficiently load cargo for transportation to world markets. Turkey will also benefit from the increased supply of hydrocarbon resources. Despite being in the perfect geostrategic location, Turkey is faced with the serious long term strategic threat which is energy dependence. Lacking major oil and gas reserves of its own, as of 2003 Turkey is dependent on imported supplies for nearly 71% of its energy, a figure which is expected to increase to over 75% over the course of the next decade.⁶⁸⁰ As stated above, Turkey expects to face an energy shortage in the near future caused by increased domestic oil consumption. So, there is no doubt that the pipeline would be important in dealing with the expected upsurge in demand.⁶⁸¹

Turkey's European neighbours will also benefit from the energy resources, in terms of increasing the total amount of oil and gas available for import, improving Turkey's prestige in the region. Winrow writes that although Russia will continue to dominate the European market, Europe's long-term energy security needs could be met if Turkey

⁶⁷⁷ Marat Yermukanov, 'Baku and Astana Play it safe in Caspian oil battle,' *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol.2, No. 105, May 31, 2005 <http://www.jamestown.org/>, retrieved Aug.29 2011.

⁶⁷⁸ Zeyno Baran, 'The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline: implications for Turkey,' in S. Frederick Starr and Svante E. Cornell (ed.), *The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline: Oil Window to the West*, (Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 2005), pp.108-109.

⁶⁷⁹ Baran, *ibid.*, p.103.

⁶⁸⁰ Havva Caha, Energy Security of Turkey, (Paper submitted to the International Conference on Human and Economic Resources, Izmir, 2006) <http://globalcitizen.net>, retrieved Jan. 9, 2011.

⁶⁸¹ Baran, *ibid.*, pp.104-105.

becomes a key energy transit state.⁶⁸² In addition, the existence of an alternate energy resource to Russia will be important; this has particularly been the case in Europe since January 2006, when Russia threatened to close the gas taps for Ukraine over price disputes.⁶⁸³

The building of the pipeline and the infrastructure also brought significant economic benefits to Turkey through increased employment. During the construction of the pipeline about 15,000 people were employed, following a commitment from BP to use local labour for around 70% of the construction force.⁶⁸⁴ This was a great opportunity for unemployed people in the relatively poor area of eastern Turkey.⁶⁸⁵

In addition, the development of the Ceyhan terminal also brought increased employment and other opportunities for Turkish business. The total rebuilding of Ceyhan began in 2002. A 2.6 km long reinforced concrete loading jetty supported by 496 steel piles was erected, capable of handling two 300,000 deadweight tonne tankers simultaneously. Seven new storage tanks, each with a capacity of 150,800 cubic metres were constructed on the site, together with state-of-the-art facilities such as a control room for loading ships and a back-up control room capable of operating the whole BTC route in an emergency. The main contractor was a Turkish company, Tekfen, and 12 million man hours were worked by its employees to complete the refurbishment of the port.⁶⁸⁶ This investment in Ceyhan will have long-lasting consequences for the Turkish economy. As Robin Knight has reported, “[the] Ceyhan marine terminal has been transformed into a Mediterranean energy hub that supplies crude oil to world markets.”⁶⁸⁷

Environmental concerns should not be overlooked when considering the reasons for the Turkish Government’s support of the BTC pipeline project. Oil transported through shorter pipelines to Black Sea ports must by necessity be shipped through the Bosphorus in order to reach world markets. However, Turkey strongly opposes any further increase of tanker traffic in the Straits. If there was an explosion of an oil tanker, or a large oil spill, around Bosphorus, this would be a great catastrophe for Istanbul as the home for

⁶⁸² Gareth M. Winrow, ‘Turkey and the East-West Gas Transportation Corridor,’ *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Spring 2004.

⁶⁸³ Recently the Ukrainian Civil war and annexation of Crimea by Russia has created greater crisis in the region.

⁶⁸⁴ ‘Horizon’, *ibid.*, p.18.

⁶⁸⁵ Sedat Laçiner, ‘Caspian oil Reaches Ceyhan,’ *Turkish Weekly*, May 29, 2006.

⁶⁸⁶ ‘Horizon’, *ibid.*, p.18.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

more than 12 million people and the major economic and cultural centre of Turkey.⁶⁸⁸ As Ünlü writes, it has been difficult for the Turkish Government to prevent tanker traffic through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles due to Article 2 of the Montreux Convention 1936, which says that “In time of peace, merchant vessels shall enjoy complete freedom of transit and navigation in the straits, under any flag and with any kind of cargo.”⁶⁸⁹ In 1994 however the Turkish Government implemented new regulations for passage through the Bosphorus,⁶⁹⁰ but both Greece and Russia declared the regulations as unacceptable and to be violating international law.⁶⁹¹

Since 1950, 200 major accidents have been recorded.⁶⁹² For example, in 1979, the Romanian tanker, *Independenta*, collided explosively with a Greek freighter, shattering windows onshore and spilling more than 93,000 tons of oil and diesel fuel.⁶⁹³ Again in 1991, the Lebanese vessel, *Rubinion 18*, struck one of the bridges crossing the Turkish Straits, sinking with its cargo of 20,000 live sheep to the sea floor. The noxious decomposition that resulted was so strong that no marine wildlife had returned to the area as of 1996.⁶⁹⁴

According to statistical information published by the Turkish Government, approximately 50,000 vessels travel through the straits annually.⁶⁹⁵ The statistics say that the volume of maritime traffic is expected to increase even more in the near future for a number of reasons. Firstly, the opening of the Danube Canal in September 1992 linked the Rhine and Danube Rivers and thereby created a route between Rotterdam and the Romanian city of Constanta on the Black Sea coast.⁶⁹⁶ Other factors include the increase in traffic from the Volga Don and Volga Baltic Canals, the economic recovery of the Russian Federation (leading to an increase in the number of trade vessels in the

⁶⁸⁸ Bülent Aras, *The New Geopolitics of Eurasia and Turkey's Position*, (London: Frank Cass, 2002), p.13

⁶⁸⁹ Nihan Ünlü, *The Legal Regime of the Turkish Straits*, (The Hague, London and New York: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Vol.13, 2002), P.148.

⁶⁹⁰ Leeuw, *ibid* p.129.

⁶⁹¹ *ibid*, p.129.

⁶⁹² Bayram Ozturk, *The Istanbul Straits, A Closing Biological Corridor*, (Istanbul: Turkish Straits Voluntary Watch Group, 1995), p.150, Aras, *ibid.*, pp.12-13.

⁶⁹³ E. Köse and E. Basar Risk Assessment of the Turkish Straits, *Assessment and Management of Environmental Risks*, NATO Science Series, Vol.4, 2001, pp 373-378.

⁶⁹⁴ Emily J.Hicks, Environmental constraints on development of Caspian oil and gas resources: The Bosphorus and the Caspian Sea, Jan. 4, 1999, <http://www.wws.princeton.edu>, retrieved Dec. 18, 2014.

⁶⁹⁵ Ünlü, p.57.

⁶⁹⁶ The Turkish Straits, ‘The New Maritime Regulations’, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, Turkey, File 9947.B04.

Black Sea), and the increase in the population of Istanbul leading to a higher volume of traffic transporting local people from one side of the city to the other.⁶⁹⁷

Most importantly, the utilisation of oil resources (and perhaps gas in the shape of LNG) from the Caspian region will increase the volume of traffic in the Turkish straits, as the oil is shipped from the Black Sea to the world markets. Tanker traffic in the Bosphorus increased dramatically when shorter pipelines started to carry oil from the Caspian Basin to the Black Sea ports of Supsa and Novorossiysk in 1997, as there is no other route for tankers out of the Black Sea. Already half of Russia's total oil exports of between 30 and 35 million tonnes per year travel through the Bosphorus, and it is estimated to increase gradually in the future. This could potentially double the current shipments of oil through the straits if it was all to be transported via the northern routes. The increased traffic through the narrow and overcrowded Turkish straits linking the Black Sea and the Mediterranean would become unsustainable.

It is therefore vitally important for Turkey to find an alternative to transporting Caspian energy via the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. The availability of Ceyhan as a Mediterranean port could help solve this problem. Akiner writes that "the incalculable advantage of avoiding the Bosphorus" was one of the crucial factors tipping the balance for the BTC pipeline.⁶⁹⁸ If the Caspian gas is carried to the Black Sea ports to be exported as LNG it has to travel through the Bosphorus as well. Therefore, any other transit pipelines will prevent further increase in the volume of tanker traffic that crosses through the needles eye by removing the option of building LNG terminals in Black Sea.

Challenges for Turkey

Significant obstacles, both non-political and political, had to be overcome before the pipeline was built. As Akiner notes, the governments of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, with strong support from the US administration and the EU countries, favoured a line from Baku via Tbilisi to Ceyhan. However, it was less easy to obtain the support of investors. Akiner writes that "The energy companies – and it was they, not the governments, who would be investing in the project – were more hesitant."⁶⁹⁹

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁸ Shirin Akiner 'Ten Years On: Achievements, New Concerns, Future Prospects,' in Shirin Akiner (ed.), *The Caspian: Politics, energy and security*, (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), pp. 365-366.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., p.366.

Geographical problems were the main non-political obstacles for the BTC pipeline. The Caspian is one of the stormiest seas in the world, due to the specific characteristics of the atmospheric process on the sea; thus the oil fields within the sea must be very well structured.⁷⁰⁰ It was also very difficult to agree on a route due to difficulty of the landscape. Akiner notes that many analysts doubted the economic sense of this route, which measured some 1,760 km, much of it running across difficult and dangerous terrain.⁷⁰¹ There was also a risk of theft from the pipeline. Although BTC is buried under ground, other pipelines and fuel storage risk being attacked by petty thieves, who try to drill holes in the pipeline and steal fuel. This has taken place on many occasions in the past and although it does not pose a major threat to the pipelines, it presents a problem for the political leadership of the country and to the environment.⁷⁰² One example of this kind of activity is Chechnya where much illegal tapping of the pipeline has taken place on many occasions.⁷⁰³

There were also environmental concerns. The Caspian Sea is highly polluted by hydrocarbon pollutants. In addition, sea level rose and desertification of the surrounding Caspian region greatly affect the environment.⁷⁰⁴ The chief environmental concern was that in Georgia, the pipeline would skirt one of the country's most famous national parks.⁷⁰⁵ As Akiner writes, not only is this area ecologically sensitive on account of its rich biodiversity, but also because it is part of the catchments area of the Borjomi Springs, in Central Georgia, the source of a highly popular mineral water. This water is greatly prized throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)⁷⁰⁶ and accounts for 10% of Georgian exports. If there were to be a spillage from the pipeline, not only would it harm the environment, but it would destroy the reputation of Borjomi mineral water. This would deal a shattering blow to the local economy and put many people out of work.⁷⁰⁷

There is also a danger of ruining the Caspian's unique ecosystem, which could soon lead to an irreversible environmental catastrophe. As a result of the development of

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid., p.386.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid.

⁷⁰² Cornell and Ismailzade, *ibid*, p.75.

⁷⁰³ Roberts, *Pipeline Politics*, *ibid*, p.83.

⁷⁰⁴ Dahl, C., and Kuraybayeva, K. 'Energy and the environment in Caspian,' *Energy policy*, 2001. pp. 429-440

⁷⁰⁵ Akiner, *ibid.*, p.386.

⁷⁰⁶ CIS was formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It is a regional organisation participated by 11 former Soviet Republics. As of today the CIS states are Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

offshore oilfields there is an aspect of ecological danger that is the threat of the complete destruction of sturgeon and other aquatic forms of life, fish and plants. The development work for the Azeri Chirag and Guneshli oilfields in particular has produced a concentration of hydrocarbon waste in an area where large shoals of sturgeon spend the winter months. The recent development of the oil industry affects 10 million people living around the Caspian Basin, whose life is bound up in the fishing industry.⁷⁰⁸

As Sultanov points out, protection of biological diversity through the BTC has created a challenging issue in Azerbaijan.⁷⁰⁹ Moreover, around the various pipeline pumping stations it is very likely that environmental pollution will result.⁷¹⁰ The waste waters are formed as a result of washing up pump filters and this will create huge environmental pollution over the fauna, wildlife species and flora on the routes of the pipeline.⁷¹¹

However, the environmental challenges were tackled by the interested parties. Akiner says that “even though there are still major concerns over pollution, over fishing and the fluctuating level of the sea, some progress was made in matters of environmental security.”⁷¹² The Almaty Declaration on Environmental Cooperation in the Caspian (May 1994) was an important step towards the formulation of a joint approach towards these problems. The launching of the Caspian Environment Programme in May 1998, funded by the Global Environmental Facility and the EU, with additional support from the private sector, institutionalised a multi-sectoral plan of action to address environmental and bio resource issues. In 1998-2002, trans-boundary analytical studies were produced, as well as strategic action programmes. This created a framework within which to undertake projects that were regionally and thematically interlinked.⁷¹³

The problems of land acquisition have also been tackled as part of the project. From the outset, the BTC Company sought to develop a basis of mutual respect and understanding with the affected communities in the hope of establishing good, long

⁷⁰⁸ Gokay, *ibid.*, pp.14-15.

⁷⁰⁹ Elchin Sultanov, Precedence on the Protection of Biological Diversity Along the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline in Azerbaijan, in *Environmental Aspects of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Petroleum Pipeline*, (Baku: The Nippon foundation, 8-9 Jul. 2000), p.35-38.

⁷¹⁰ Mahir Aliev, ‘Hydro-meteorological Conditions in the Caspian Sea and Oil Production’, in *Environmental Aspects of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Petroleum Pipeline*, p.47

⁷¹¹ Islam Mustafaev, *Ibid.*, p.61.

⁷¹² Akiner, *ibid.*, p.369.

⁷¹³ *ibid.*, pp.366-369.

term relationships.⁷¹⁴ A programme of social and environmental investment will ensure that the peoples of the three host nations also share in the benefits.⁷¹⁵

There is also a regular and ongoing dialogue with other key stakeholders in relevant countries including regulators, the scientific community and domestic non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as with organisations such as the World Bank and international NGOs.⁷¹⁶ Again, while working on the BTC project, BP and its partners opened an Enterprise Centre in Baku to help small and medium sized local companies to develop their business in the oil and gas industry.⁷¹⁷

The most serious social and ethnically motivated threat to the BTC came from the restive Kurdish community concentrated in Turkey's eastern borders as the pipeline crossed through the problematic areas.⁷¹⁸ The organisation called the Kurdish Human Rights Project that was founded and based in Britain in 1992, had also actively been working against the project.⁷¹⁹ There were complaints about the failure to bargain with local communities, inadequate compensation, expropriation without compensation and discrimination in BTC employment practice.⁷²⁰ However, it seems that the BTC Company had calculated all the complaints beforehand and most local people were, in the end, very happy with the pipeline⁷²¹.

Moving on to political obstacles, Akiner writes that poor governance is seen as a serious threat to the stable and prosperous development of the region.⁷²² As in so many other resource-rich countries, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, autocratic regimes were established.⁷²³ One of the issues that usually develop out of poor governance is corruption. Therefore, one of the immediate problems that foreign investors in the Caspian states had to come to terms with was the level of corruption amongst senior

⁷¹⁴ BTC Project Executive Summary for ESIA, Nov. 2002, pp.1-6.

⁷¹⁵ The First Oil Celebration Issue, p.8.

⁷¹⁶ BTC Project Executive Summary for ESIA, pp.6-8.

⁷¹⁷ The First Oil Celebration magazine, p.4.

⁷¹⁸ R.Hrair Dekmejian and Hovann H. Simonian, *Troubled Waters, the Geopolitics of the Caspian Region*, (London and New York: I.B.Tauris, 2003), p.45.

⁷¹⁹ International Fact Finding Mission Report, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline -Turkey Section, Kurdish Human Rights Project Platform, The Corner House, Jun. 2003, pp.60-62.

http://www.baku.org.uk/publications/Tu_FFM.pdf, retrieved, Jun. 18. 2011.

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.63-64.

⁷²¹ Environmental and social impact assessment, Baku –Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil Pipeline Azerbaijan Vol.2: Environmental and social route maps, Dec. 2002.

http://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp-country/en_az/pdf/ESIAs/BTC-ESIA/BTC-ESIA-Azerbaijan-environmental-and-social-route-maps.pdf, retrieved, Mar. 24, 2010.

⁷²² Akiner, *ibid.*, p.370.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, p.371.

officials.⁷²⁴ Reports from organisations such as Transparency International and Freedom House indicated that, at the end of the first post-Soviet decade, the incidence of corruption in the Caspian states ranked among the highest in the world.⁷²⁵ One example of such corruption can be seen in the infamous ‘Kazakhgate scandal’ which started with the arrest in New York on 30 March 2003 of James Giffen, a consultant and close associate of President Nazarbaev. An American citizen, Giffen was arraigned as a result of an extensive US grand jury investigation. The charges laid against him included receiving an estimated \$115 million in illegal commissions and fees from Western oil companies between 1995 and 2000, thus violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (the US law banning bribery of foreign officials).⁷²⁶

The past ten years show the ease with which conflicts in the Caucasus tend to spill over into the territory of other countries. This has been the case for the Chechen conflict, spilling over into the territory of Georgia and into Dagestan in Russia. Azerbaijan is not protected from this and should political or criminal groups destabilize the situation in one region of the Caucasus, the risk that a conflict may spill over into Azerbaijan cannot be ignored.⁷²⁷ In turn, this could threaten the stability of the country’s energy infrastructure. The most recent event which created political turmoil in the region was the Russia-Georgia war over South Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008, an issue which is yet to be fully resolved. Indeed, the Transcaucasus – which consists of the three republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia – is particularly unstable, greatly complicating oil projects in the area. In the Caucasus, including the Russian sector between the Caspian and the Black Sea, no less than eight areas are suffering sporadic violence or continuing conflict with at least four others at risk of instability.

One of the most important problems of the Caspian Sea resources is the Nagorno-Karabag dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia that led to a long war in the 1990s.⁷²⁸ The Nagorno-Karabakh war and the associated political manoeuvrings of all involved have had a detrimental effect on oil development and export projects. Although a cease-

⁷²⁴ Ibid., p.374.

⁷²⁵ Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2002, http://archive.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/bpi/bpi_2002, cited by Akiner, p.377.

⁷²⁶ Giffen was nicknamed ‘Mr 7½ cents’ after allegedly securing a fee of \$0.075 on every barrel produced from the Tengiz field. Cited by Akiner, *ibid.*, p.377, and Peter Maass, ‘The Fuel Fixers’, *The New York Times*, Dec. 23, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/23/magazine/23wwln-phenomenon-t.html?pagewanted=print&r=0>, retrieved, Jun. 12, 2014.

⁷²⁷ Cornell and Ismailzade, *ibid.*

⁷²⁸ Francesco Strazzari, ‘Nagorno-Karabakh: From Nobody’s to Everybody’s Intervention’, In *From the Adriatic to the Caucasus, viable Dynamics of Stabilization*, Edited by: Stefano Bianchini and Suzan Woodward, Longo Editore Ravenna, (Ravenna: University of Bologna, 2003), p.168.

fire has held since May 1994, Armenia and Azerbaijan are still far from reaching settlement. The tenuous nature of the cease-fire, deeply embedded ethnic hatreds, and the failure of both governments to control renegade extremist groups in the region would probably make companies and banks balk at the prospect of financing a pipeline venture in the region. Turkey is also directly linked with the Karabag dispute as it closed its borders with Armenia causing major financial problems for both Armenia and the areas of Turkey bordering Armenia. Even though aforementioned protocols signed between Armenia and Turkey in Switzerland, following the stage of “*football diplomacy*”, signalled some sort of progress, unfortunately no further developments took place.

Georgia, which is thought to be the pipeline junction (as it is geographically positioned between energy suppliers of the Caspian and the consumers) and has the BTC pipeline running through its territory, is also unstable due to disputes among the various ethnic groups in its territory.⁷²⁹ The Russo-Georgian war in 2008 also made Georgian territory especially vulnerable as the wounds of the war have yet to mend. For Turkey, although, at the time of writing this thesis, the risks are very low due to an active effort by the JDP government to make peace with the PKK in a democratic manner, this group – designated a terrorist organization – could still potentially pose a problem for the security of any pipeline running through Turkey.⁷³⁰ However, over the past decade, Kurdish terrorism has abated and, in addition, the Turkish government has offered to provide security for any pipeline running through its territory.⁷³¹ So far there has been no major threat from the terrorists to the pipeline.

According to Shimizu, the oil deposits of the Caspian Sea can be seen as both a powerful tool for the Caucasian Republics’ economic development, and a weapon, which could change the balance of power in the region.⁷³² Armenia especially has deep concerns about the future oil development in Azerbaijan, while Azerbaijan is intent on turning the region’s situation into one more favourable to itself.

The general political instability of the region deters potential investors, not only because of existing tensions and disputes, but because of the risk that further disputes may erupt in the future. For example, although not very likely, a possible US led

⁷²⁹ Forsythe, *ibid.*, p.19

⁷³⁰ As of August 2015 clashes between Turkish armed forces and the PKK intensified as PKK is blamed with the deadly attack on border town of Suruc in Southeastern Turkey.

⁷³¹ Forsythe, p.18.

⁷³² Manabu Shimizu, *The Caspian Oil and its Impact on Eurasian Power Games*, (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 1998), p.33.

mission to achieve regime change in Iran. Riches points out that if war were to break out in the region, “there will be delays in implementation, disruption of operations, financial burden and damage to companies reputations”.⁷³³ This is a strong deterrent to energy companies, given the amount of investment required to develop a means of distributing Central Asia’s energy reserves.

Yet the BTC pipeline *was* built, in spite of all these obstacles. Akiner writes that a key factor was the fact that by the turn of the century it had been established that the ACG reserves were of sufficient magnitude to ensure the commercial viability of the route through Turkey. At this point, BP, the operator of the ACG and Shah Deniz Production Sharing Agreements, took the lead in driving forward the BTC pipeline.⁷³⁴ Kazakhstan’s commitment was also a major boost for the BTC as the Kazak foreign minister İdrissov clearly stated that Kazakhstan supports future contribution to the BTC pipeline with Kazak resources.⁷³⁵ Although regional cooperation was important, it is appreciated that the political and economic backing of the USA and the EU were of the utmost importance at every stage of this pipeline.

Considering the political, social and economic interests placed on it, the BTC pipeline is of incalculable importance to Turkey. The economic benefits from becoming an energy transit state, together with the investment in the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan, were in addition to the benefits of being able to supply its own domestic energy market. There would also be an easing of traffic through the Bosphorus.

The political benefits were even greater. Turkey’s international standing with the US and Europe would be improved, as would Turkey’s position as a regional power. Turkey was able to recover some of the geo-strategic importance that it had lost at the end of the Cold War. The pipeline set a precedent for other major pipeline projects such as Nabucco or TANAP to be built from the Caspian via third party countries.

There were environmental, social and political challenges to the building of the pipeline, however, these were overcome by the vast benefits promised by the outcome. Apart from the commercial viability of the BTC route the advantage of avoiding the Bosphorus was another key factor.

⁷³³ Piter Riches, ‘Perspective on the Political Risk System for Western Multinational Oil Company Investment in Central Asia’, in S.N. Cummings (ed.), *Oil, Transition and Security in Central Asia*, (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), p.162.

⁷³⁴ Ibid, p.366.

⁷³⁵ Interview of author with Erlan İdrissov.

The BTC opened on the 14th of July 2006 with great expectations for Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia. It is not yet very clear if the BTC will meet these high expectations for the next 50 years. However, for Turkey, the project has already had some successes. According to Turkish President Erdoğan, the BTC, which he calls the New Silk Road, meant that “Turkey became much more important for the EU”,⁷³⁶ while also noting the importance of the BTC for the security and the stability of the region.

There have been gains for Turkey in terms of employment and foreign investment too. At a more local level, property and land prices in Ceyhan rocketed after 2005;⁷³⁷ local people profited if they managed to sign a deal with major companies connected with petroleum products.

Turkey has also won a political victory over her rivals for influence in the region, in particular Russia and Iran. The BTC project created an environment which meant that cooperation in the region was more beneficial than competition. Perhaps it is due to the success of the BTC that the European leadership started thinking about building more pipelines through Turkey to feed European energy needs. Perhaps it was because of this political and economic backing that the Nabucco deal was signed in Ankara on July 13, 2009.

Although it did not come to fruition due to a variety of different reasons, for over 5 years, it excited people who were working on the topic of Eurasian energy politics. Due to the amount of planning and negotiations invested in Nabucco, Turkey also pushed for the building of a smaller version of this pipeline called TANAP. Below, I will give a brief outline of the Nabucco project before moving on to explain why it failed and what other alternatives were offered by Turkey to the European energy networks.

The idea of diversifying European energy supply: The fourth energy corridor

After envisaging many nightmare scenarios over the transportation of gas through the Ukraine, the European Commission decided to open a fourth energy corridor, ‘the Southern Corridor’ with the support of the USA. This corridor will have three major

⁷³⁶ Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, ‘Prime Minister’s Speech to the Nation,’ *Haberturk*, Jun. 29, 2006

⁷³⁷ ‘Ceyhan’da arsa fiyatları tavan yaptı yatırımcı kaçtı!’, *Yeni Şafak*,

<http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/politika/ceyhanda-arsa-fiyatları-tavan-yaptı-yatırımcı-kacti-288977>, Nov.22, 2010, retrieved Jan. 11, 2013.

pipelines including Nabucco (now replaced by a smaller scale TANAP), Turkey-Greece-Italy Interconnector (ITGI) and TAP.⁷³⁸

Within the Southern Corridor, the new grandiose project for the diversification of the energy supply of the EU was the cross continental gas pipeline of Nabucco, which connects the Caspian and Middle Eastern energy resources with Europe through Turkey. Strongly backed by both the EU and the USA, this project was seen as a rival to the Gazprom-led South Stream Project which is a proposed gas pipeline to transport Russian natural gas through the Black Sea to Bulgaria and further to Italy and Austria. Russia was against Nabucco and tried passionately to keep Europe (mainly East and Central Europe) within its orbit to continue its method of doing business. On the other hand, the Central Asian/Caucasian states have been signalling for years that they seek other outlets. As Norling argued at the time:

The Nabucco pipeline, connecting Turkey with continental Europe, is the essential link to realize these emerging opportunities and tie these states to Europe.⁷³⁹

In December 2003, the European Commission awarded a grant totaling 50% of the estimated total eligible cost of the feasibility study including market analysis, and technical, economic and financial studies for Nabucco. On 28 June 2005, the joint venture agreement was signed by five Nabucco partners. The ministerial statement on the Nabucco pipeline was signed on 26 June 2006 in Vienna. On 12 September 2007, Jozias van Aartsen was nominated by the European Commission as the Nabucco project coordinator.⁷⁴⁰

After a very enthusiastic start, there were years of delay, before the project was finally aborted in June 2013 due to complications on transit issues and the availability of enough gas to supply the pipeline. The transit issues were the main concerns at the start of talks as they were linked to the Turkish EU accession process. As Winrow

⁷³⁸ It has to be noted that during the process of writing this thesis there have been several changes to the pipeline projects. While the original Nabucco pipeline was cancelled, another major project titled the South Stream was also scrapped in December 2014. After a summit between Russian President Putin and his counterpart Erdoğan in Turkey, Putin announced that the South Stream would be scrapped and replaced with a pipeline of similar capacity that would cross Turkey and stop at its border with Greece. The new pipeline does not have an official name yet but unofficially it has been called as the Turkish Stream. The announcement of this project was hailed as a great strategic asset for Turkey. Once it is completed Turkey would become a key energy transit country and exercise more influence in the region. Additionally the project is would give Ankara a strong leverage position in its negotiations with both Russia and the EU.

⁷³⁹ Norling, *ibid.*, p.27.

⁷⁴⁰ 'Hopes revived for stalled Nabucco Pipeline,' Sep. 18, 2007, <http://www.euractiv.com/energy/hopes-revived-stalled-nabucco-pi-news-218704>, retrieved Jul.12, 2014.

writes, there is a general sense in Ankara that the Europeans are demanding various concessions from the Turks without offering anything in return – blocking the opening of the energy chapter for example. On the other hand, there appears to be a feeling among officials in Europe, and among some energy companies, that if Turkey wants to be a full member of the EU it should immediately sign up to European norms and regulations. Misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication appear to have further clouded the picture.⁷⁴¹

Finally on July 13, 2009, EU governments and Turkey signed a transit agreement for the Nabucco gas pipeline, which clearly aimed to reduce Europe's energy dependence on Russia. Transit countries of Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria signed the accord in Ankara, giving the €7.9 billion project a major political boost. After the signature of the agreement, Barroso, the President of the European Commission said:

We are starting to confound the sceptics, negotiations once seemed irrevocably blocked, but now we have an agreement and I believe this pipeline is inevitable not impossible.⁷⁴²

He later added that:

The Nabucco project is of crucial importance for Europe's energy security and its policy of diversification of gas supplies and transport routes. The signature will show that we are determined to make this pipeline a reality as quickly as possible. I am extremely pleased that Turkey and the Member States of the EU have reached an agreement based on the principles of mutual solidarity, mutual equality and interdependence."⁷⁴³

The EU's Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs also showed his appreciation after the signature of the agreement in Ankara by stating that Turkey and the EU have found the right balance in the Nabucco intergovernmental agreement. He expressed his views further by saying:

Let's hope that this is a starting point for further fruitful cooperation in our bilateral relationship, between supplier and consumer countries and to give all players the freedom to pursue their own interests, within a secure legal framework.⁷⁴⁴

Many politicians, including Turkey's then Prime Minister Erdoğan, connected the Nabucco project with Turkish membership to the EU. During the Nabucco Summit in

⁷⁴¹ Gareth Winrow, 'Problems and Prospects for the "Fourth Corridor": The Positions and Role of Turkey in Gas Transit to Europe', *Oxford Institute for Energy Studies*, Jun.2009, p.23.

⁷⁴² 'EU-Turkey sign Nabucco gas transit agreement,' *Reuters News Agency*, Jul. 13, 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSLD6376220090713>, retrieved May 19, 2010.

⁷⁴³ Press releases, Jul.10, 2009, www.europa.eu, retrieved May 19, 2010.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid.

Ankara, after mentioning Turkey's progress in adjusting its domestic energy market rules with those of the EU during the negotiation process, Erdogan argued that:

It is a historic moment. The Nabucco project will lay the groundwork for further improvement of Turkey's relations with the EU in energy as it shows that Turkey belongs in EU. We are taking an important step for our countries, friendship and peace, and the welfare of upcoming generations. This project raises Turkey's importance in energy security and being the fourth main natural gas artery in Europe is among our main targets.”⁷⁴⁵

Nabucco was seen as a significant project. According to the agreement, the pipeline would be constructed both from the Turkish-Georgian and Turkish-Iraqi border (centring in the Turkish gas hub city of Erzurum) to the Baumgarten Hub in Austria. It was anticipated that the lifespan of the pipeline would be 50 years. The route of the 3300 km (potentially up to 4000 km depending on the feed line concept) meant that the Nabucco Pipeline would stretch from Turkey to Austria, crossing Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary.⁷⁴⁶ The proposed diameters of the steel pipes were 56 inches wide and 20 to 36 mm thick, buried at a minimum of 1m below the surface. There were going to be two control centres as well as in-country control centres in each of the countries that the pipeline crossed.⁷⁴⁷

The construction of the pipeline was scheduled to start at the end of 2011 and the first gas was expected to flow at the end of 2014. In the first construction phase, a link was to be built between Baumgarten in Austria and Ankara in Turkey. When this phase was completed, existing pipeline links between the Turkish-Georgian and Turkish-Iranian borders were to be used to allow the pipeline to start operating.⁷⁴⁸ The capacity would, however, be limited to 8bcm. The second construction phase was supposed to start in 2012 and last until the end of 2013, when the links between the Turkish border to Georgia and Iran were expected to be completed.⁷⁴⁹

After completion it was expected that the full discharge capacity of 31bcm per year would be reached by 2020 at the earliest. Half the gas would be used by shareholding nations; the rest would be offered for sale. Estimates suggested that in the high scenario,

⁷⁴⁵ Tarihi Nabucco Anlasmasi Imzalandi, *Radikal*, Jul. 13, 2009, News Real from various Turkish TV channels and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57VTw-O17cU> (from CNN Turk), retrieved Oct. 18, 2009.

⁷⁴⁶ Tracy C. German, *Pipeline Politics: Georgia and energy Security*, Paul B. Rich, *Crisis in the Caucasus, Russia, Georgia and the West*, (London and New York, Routledge: 2010), p.103.

⁷⁴⁷ www.nabucco-pipeline.com, accessed in several occasions.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁹ Norling, *ibid.*, p.27.

16 out of 31bcm per year would be supplied to Europe, and in the low case scenario, 13.5 out of 25.5bcm per year.⁷⁵⁰

As mentioned before, if built, although not greatly significant in terms of capacity, Nabucco would have been the fourth main gas supply corridor for Europe. The importance of Nabucco was not the amount of gas it would supply to Europe, but the fact that it would have opened an alternative corridor to European markets. Although the gas transported at full capacity would account for less than 5% of the EU's forecasted demand by 2030, the project resonated well with a continent-wide agreement to increase the number of pipelines that connect Europe with non-European fields. Therefore, top EU officials always showed their support on different platforms for the construction of the pipeline. As written by Pogany:

Expansion and diversification of the transmission network is taken as a precondition to reducing overdependence on any given supplier and any specific route, above all the one that crosses Ukraine.⁷⁵¹

If successfully built Nabucco was going to be a significant project for Turkey. As argued before, having control over another strategically important pipeline would increase Turkey's international influence. As seen in the BTC's case, it is evident that the benefits of having a pipeline are greater than its drawbacks.. Thus, although Nabucco did not go ahead, Turkey came up with an alternative: TANAP. This was also to be used as a strategic tool. However, it should be noted that, without the support of the EU for such projects, the energy suppliers would not be as keen to build their pipelines through Turkey against the wishes of other powers in the region, such as Russia. This is because it is felt that Turkey pays more attention to its own interests rather than the gains of suppliers.

Although Turkey could sufficiently maintain the security of a long range pipeline, many Turkish officials, including Prime Minister Erdoğan, saw Nabucco as something of a political tool rather than merely a pipeline. This has created some resentment in Europe as they would prefer EU negotiations should not be mixed up with energy issues. Some European officials have also been uncomfortable with remarks made by Turkish officials about Turkey becoming an international energy trade hub, rather than

⁷⁵⁰ F.Yeşim Acollu, 'Major Challenges to the Liberalisation of the Turkish Natural Gas Markets,' *Oxford Institute of Energy Studies*, Nov. 2006, <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/2006/11/major-challenges-to-the-liberalization-of-the-turkish-natural-gas-market/>, retrieved Jan. 7, 2014.

⁷⁵¹ Peter Pogany, 'Nabu, Nabucco, Nabukov', *Energy Bulletin*, Sep.7, 2009.

just a physical energy hub at the time of the Nabucco project. This relates to the idea held by European negotiators who thought that Turkey would re-sell 15% of the gas that was transported through its territory; However, BOTAS⁷⁵² made it clear that it was not their intention to become a trading hub for the near future using Nabucco⁷⁵³. Turkish officials were also not pleased with the suggestions of Van Aartsen, the EU's coordinator, who wrote in his activity report about natural gas hubs where, instead of arguing for Turkey to become a single hub, he proposed the somewhat unrealistic aim that four alternative natural gas hubs should be developed for the southern, or fourth, corridor in Azerbaijan, Romania, Greece and Austria.⁷⁵⁴

Turkish officials have noted, somewhat optimistically perhaps, that even without Nabucco, the realisation of the ITGI and/or the TAP, could still make Turkey part of a fourth gas corridor.⁷⁵⁵ However, it should also be noted that, in order for Turkey to become an energy hub, its domestic pipeline grids need to be upgraded and extended to meet the new demand. If TANAP and other proposed projects are constructed Turkey has to invest around €6 billion to handle the increased volume of gas. Therefore, in a wider sense, these projects would help Turkey improve its own domestic energy grid.

However, on 26 June 2013, after almost a decade of work on the Nabucco project, it was cancelled and TAP won the bid to carry Azeri gas to Europe via Turkey. This was deemed to be more profitable for the Azeris. Gerhard Roiss, chief executive of the Austrian energy company OMV, made the announcement which formally ended Nabucco stating that “The Nabucco project is over for us. The question of whether that

⁷⁵² BOTAŞ (Boru Hatları ile Petrol Taşıma A.Ş. or Petroleum Pipeline Company) is the state-owned crude oil and natural gas pipelines and trading company in Turkey. It was established in 1974.

⁷⁵³ There is a difference between “energy transit state” and “energy hub state”. An “energy transit state” refers to a state where pipelines are laid to connect an energy-producing state with an energy-consuming state. A physical energy hub refers to a state in which there is substantial energy infrastructure—ie., pipelines and facilities such as refineries, storage units, terminals, petrochemical factories, gas liquefaction plants, etc. The Strategic Plan for Turkey covering the period 2010-2014 prepared by the MENR noted that the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan could become a wholly integrated hub by 2015. There are strategic, political and economic benefits for a state which becomes a physical energy hub. Gareth M. Winrow, ‘The Southern Gas Corridor and Turkey’s Role as an Energy Transit State and Energy Hub,’ *Insight Turkey*, Vol.15, No.1, 2013, pp.145-163, http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight-turkey-vol_15_no_1_2013_winrow.pdf, retrieved Jun.18, 2014.

⁷⁵⁴ Jozias V.Aartsen, Activity Report, Project of European interest, Sep. 2007- Feb. 2009, http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/doc/axis/2009_axis_linking_activity_report_2007_2009.pdf, retrieved Jul. 9, 2014 and Gareth M. Winrow, Problems and prospects for the “fourth corridor”: the positions and role of Turkey in gas transit to Europe, *EGF*, Jan. 6, 2009, <http://gpf-europe.com/context/publications/?id=5383>, retrieved Jan 18, 2011.

⁷⁵⁵ Winrow, *ibid.*, pp.26-27.

is a fig leaf for a political decision I leave to you to judge.”⁷⁵⁶ Roiss questioned whether higher gas prices could really be achieved in austerity-plagued Greece or already well-supplied Italy, both of which lie on the TAP route, in a clear reference to the fact that politics played a greater part in the decision making process than economics.

The Nabucco pipeline, sponsored by the EU, had already been reduced in length in summer 2012 from the original 3,900 km to 1,300 km. The eastern section, which was to have run from Azerbaijan across Georgia and Turkey to the Bulgarian border, was abandoned. Instead, TANAP, which will be linked to TAP on the Turkey-Greece border (funded by Azerbaijan and Turkey) is due to come into operation in 2018.⁷⁵⁷ The consortium did not rule out Nabucco West (the original Nabucco) indefinitely, saying they might consider this at a later date when more natural gas is developed in the Caspian region or if more countries join the supply chain. But the importance of EU support to any such projects became very clear.

Although the failure of Nabucco was a blow to Turkish objectives, Turkey continues to pursue its aim to become the energy bridge for Europe through the building process of TANAP and its active engagement with the Middle East and Caspian regions in selling their reserves to Western markets. Of course, the EU is still the most crucial tool in making sure Turkey’s dreams are realised, since Europe is the only real market for the gas carried in these pipelines.

Alternative to Nabucco: TANAP

The TANAP project intends to transport natural gas which is produced in the Shah Deniz II field and others in Azerbaijan (but possibly also from neighboring countries) through Turkey to Europe. Azerbaijani natural gas is absolutely essential to the development of the Southern Corridor. As noted previously, Azerbaijan will supply all the natural gas for the TANAP pipeline and the forward project to Europe (at least in the short term).⁷⁵⁸

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the governments of Turkey and Azerbaijan on December 24, 2011 in Ankara. The companies appointed upon a

⁷⁵⁶ ‘EU-backed Nabucco Project over After Rival Pipeline Wins Azeri Gas Bid,’ Jun.27, 2014 <http://www.euractiv.com/energy/eu-favoured-nabucco-project-hist-news-528919>, retrieved Mar.18, 2014.

⁷⁵⁷ Clara Weiss, ‘European Union’s Nabucco Pipeline Project aborted’, Jul.13, 2013, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2013/07/13/nabu-j13.html>, retrieved, Mar.13, 2014.

⁷⁵⁸ Michael Ratner et al., ‘Europe’s Energy Security: Options and Challenges to Natural Gas Supply Diversification,’ Aug.20, 2013, p.20 <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42405.pdf>, retrieved Mar.18, 2014.

joint consortium dedicatedly constituted for this project by both countries comprise of State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR), and Petroleum Pipeline Corporation of Turkey (BOTAS) and/or Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO).⁷⁵⁹

It is expected to cost \$7 billion and will transport 16bcm of gas each year from Azerbaijan through Georgia to Turkey, with the most gas volume going to Europe. Deliveries of Azerbaijani gas are expected to begin in 2017 while project planning started in 2013. Although the volume of the gas is less than the original Nabucco project⁷⁶⁰, TANAP still officially represents the opening of the coveted ‘southern gas corridor’ to EU states.⁷⁶¹

As noted before, Turkey plays a key role in the EU’s energy security equation and its possible role in linking the energy resources of the east with Europe is frequently mentioned in official EU documents concerning energy. According to Cehulic at al., Turkish interests were revealed by two key agreements, concluded at the end of 2011, the first was signed on December 27, 2011 for the construction of TANAP that aims to transport Azeri natural gas from Shah Deniz II across Turkey to Europe. The second agreement, which was cancelled in December 2014 in favour of the Turkish Stream, was signed in Moscow on December 29, 2011, and called for cooperation in the field of natural gas through the construction of the South Stream pipeline.⁷⁶²

The first agreement with Azerbaijan stated that Turkey would be able to use 6.6bcm of the 16bcm of natural gas that will flow through TANAP for its own needs. This would eventually help Turkey to diversify its own energy needs as Azerbaijan has proved to be a more reliable energy partner than others, especially Iran. Azeri gas will also be cheaper than Iranian gas which Turkey buys via a ‘take-or-pay’ pricing rule that forces them to buy a pre-agreed amount of gas whether it uses it or not.⁷⁶³ Under the initial terms, Azerbaijan would own 80% of the pipeline and Turkey the remaining 20%. Later on, BP, which is going to be generating the Shah Deniz natural gas, will be

⁷⁵⁹ What is TANAP?, <http://www.tanap.com/en/what-is-tanap> retrieved Feb.19, 2014.

⁷⁶⁰ Nabucco was going to carry 45-90bcm per year.

⁷⁶¹ Michael Cain et al., ‘Linking the Caspian to Europe,’ (Washington DC.: Rethink institute, Rethink Paper 06, Oct. 2012), p.1.

⁷⁶² Lidija Cehulic, et.al., ‘Energy Security in South East Europe,’ in Shaping South East Europe's Security Community for the Twenty-First Century: Trust, Partnership, Integration, in Sharyl Cross et al., (Ebook: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.114-134.

⁷⁶³ Ibrahim Mazlum, ‘Twenty First Century Energy Security Debates: Opportunities and Constraints for Turkey,’ in Nursin Atesoğlu Guney (ed.), *Contentious Issues of Security and the Future of Turkey*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), p.140, and Cain at al., *ibid.*, p.7.

included in the process as a third partner.⁷⁶⁴ The pipeline is going to extend the transportation infrastructure for natural gas coming from Shah Deniz II across Turkey to Europe, as well as Turkmen, Kazakh, and even Iranian natural gas, provided if favourable conditions for expanding the market can be created.⁷⁶⁵

As well as political backing, both projects need concrete financial support in order to be completed. It should be noted that despite great political support from the US and the EU, Nabucco was halted. As Cain et al. have argued, the fate of Nabucco,

suggests an important lesson for international relations in the 21st century that regional politics when combined with commercial interests and local market development can trump geopolitical resource competition.⁷⁶⁶

When focusing on the diversification and reliance on Russian energy it should also be made clear that Russia has been a reliable partner for Europe in terms of energy for many decades. However, disruptions to Russian natural gas deliveries to Europe affect and worry Russia –especially in terms of finance- as much as the EU. For example, Russia is not happy with the interruption of its energy deliveries to Europe and it blames Ukraine for undermining the safe transportation of Russia gas to Europe.

Apart from Russia, the EU also relies heavily on Norway and Algeria. For a great political and economic entity like the EU, it is crucial that there are more than three main supply routes. In case of interruption from one corridor, others must be available to substitute.

Therefore, the Southern Corridor initiative is not only aimed at curbing the reliance on Russia, but also preventing any other transportation issues that the EU might face in the future, as no one can guarantee that one day Algerian or Norwegian deliveries will not be interrupted by political or other issues.

However, many people agree that in evaluating the energy concerns of Europe the problem of the EU not being able to speak as a single voice features as the most important issue. EU states try to protect their own interests rather than the collective interests of the union in general. This was also identified by the EC in official documents with Commissioner for Energy, Günther Oettinger, who noted that:

The EU energy policy has made real progress over the last several years. Now, the EU must extend the achievements of its large internal energy market beyond its borders to ensure the security of

⁷⁶⁴ Cehulic et al., *ibid.*

⁷⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶⁶ Cain et al., *ibid.*, p.1.

energy supplies to Europe and foster international energy partnerships. Therefore, the Commission proposes today a coherent approach in the energy relations with third countries. This needs to improve internal coordination so that the EU and its Member States act together and speak with one voice.⁷⁶⁷

The EU decided to take further action to deal with this issue and, at the time of completion of this research, started moving towards the Energy Union with the initiative of the President of the EC, Jean-Claude Juncker. The official document stated:

The EU's energy strategy is driven by three main objectives: providing secure and reliable energy supplies; creating a competitive energy market that ensures affordable energy prices; and creating sustainable energy by lowering greenhouse gas emissions. But today, achieving these objectives is made more difficult by the fact that the EU internal energy market is not yet complete; there is a lack of energy interconnectors between EU countries; and some countries remain entirely dependent on one external energy supplier. We need to create a European Energy Union that will pool our resources, connect our networks and unite our negotiating power with non EU countries. If we are united, achieving the goals of Energy Union will be faster, cheaper and more efficient.⁷⁶⁸

The EU leaders who agreed on a new energy and climate target for 2030 outlined the priorities of the Energy Union as:

- Ensuring security of supply for Europe
- Deeper integration of EU national energy markets
- Reducing EU energy demand
- Reducing carbon emissions from the energy sector
- Promoting research and development in energy⁷⁶⁹

The Energy Union idea will definitely have a positive impact on Turkey's energy policy as most European countries want to open the fourth corridor via Turkey.

As the EU is so keen on developing the Southern Corridor, with the support of the US, it actively encourages Central Asian states to cooperate in energy deals. For example, in September 2011, the Council of the EU approved opening talks with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan to facilitate an accord on building a trans-Caspian gas

⁷⁶⁷ European Commission Press Release, 'Speaking with one voice – the key to securing our energy interests abroad,' IP/11/1005, Sept.07, 2011, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-11-1005_en.htm?locale=en, retrieved Feb.18, 2014.

⁷⁶⁸ Energy Union, <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy/energy-union>, retrieved Feb.18, 2015.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.

pipeline. Such a link would provide additional gas to ensure adequate supplies for the planned Southern Corridor pipelines. Hailing this decision, EU Energy Commissioner Oettinger stated that “Europe is now speaking with one voice.”⁷⁷⁰

So long as the EU acts as one, supplier and transit countries feel more secure in their dealings with it. Future proposed projects connecting energy resources to Europe will only come to fruition if there is strong political and financial unity and backing as they all have the same implications as BTC had before it was finally built.

Conclusion

Energy security is one of the most important issues the EU faces in the future and diversifying energy supply routes has therefore become an important policy matter for it. Worried about relying on few sources, the EU actively started looking for more routes to supply its ever increasing energy needs. Turkey, due to its geopolitical positioning, seemed like the natural energy bridge between the energy producing regions of the Caspian and the Middle East and Europe.

Turkey wants to use Europe’s energy needs as a tool during its accession negotiations as its location is its greatest asset in this game. For Turkey, energy is not only an economic issue, but a political bargaining tool enabling it to have influence over relations with the EU and with energy producing countries. Becoming an indispensable energy partner for the EU would definitely boost its bid for full membership of the union.. While Turkey has been promoting itself as a trustworthy partner of the West since the end of the WWII, new worries about Russia’s growing contribution to European energy consumption has meant that the EU has also began to see Turkey as an alternative route to meet its consumption demands. Having proved itself to be a safe transportation country by successfully running major projects like BTC, Turkey seeks to build more international pipelines to enhance its aim to become an energy bridge. Being a major transit country not only benefits the EU, but also Turkey’s own increasing domestic consumption. Turkey’s influence over the Caspian and the Middle Eastern region also rises if it can facilitate the safe delivery of energy resources to Western markets. In this sense, every pipeline is considered as a political and economic win for Turkey.

Of course, strong US backing is as important as EU support for Turkey’s aim considering that the former is trying to weaken the influence of Russia and Iran in the

⁷⁷⁰ Ratner, et al., *ibid.*, p.16.

region while trying to boost the prominence of its long lasting ally – Turkey. The US clearly supports a closer partnership between the EU and Turkey. This policy then plays a key role in Turkey’s quest in Eurasian energy politics.

As implied before, any future pipeline connecting eastern energy reserves to the West via Turkey needs to be checked against the BTC pipeline, considering they are likely to have numerous similarities with any future pipelines in terms of political and economic issues. Although the now-cancelled Nabucco pipeline and the BTC would have transported different items (one gas and the other oil) both projects had plentiful similarities in terms of physical, social and environmental conditions.

Political factors were the driving force behind the choice of route in both cases. BTC was not the best option, but it was chosen by the US, the EU and Turkey against the will of less powerful forces at the time. When looking at the TANAP pipeline, it is very clear that its benefits in financial terms are not as great as many hoped considering it would only meet 5% of European gas needs. However, it is a strategic choice rather than an economic one, as was the case for BTC.

Support and opposition to both pipelines exhibit great likenesses too. Russia was against the BTC and is against any other Caspian pipeline that bypasses its territory. While the US and the EU both supported the BTC and they are both in favour of TANAP because it weakens Russia’s grip over the Central Asian states and its role in Europe’s energy policy. In addition to the technical similarities, another important similarity between the two pipelines is their heavy financial cost; due to this, both projects were supported by consortiums.

All in all, BTC’s success encouraged European countries and international companies to support other projects involving Turkey. While these projects push Turkey closer to the EU and make it an important regional power, the EU will also surely benefit from them by diversifying its energy resources. Furthermore, projects such as BTC will boost the economy and political clout of energy producing regions too. Therefore large scale energy projects Turkey is trying to take on will eventually help every party involve in them including Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan and European countries. They will not only bring more wealth to the producers and consumers but also to transit countries. Additionally Economic income from the energy projects will no doubt help positive political developments to flourish among the involved countries as well. In Turkey’s case, using the EU candidacy as a tool to become an energy bridge/hub will clearly boost its domestic political, economic and social developments.

Chapter 6

Overall Conclusions

The aim of this thesis was to explain the impact of the EU on Turkey's domestic involvement in three areas: religious political thinking, military-civilian relations and energy policy. The objective was to highlight key changes that have come about, in the areas mentioned above, as a result of Turkey's ever closer relations with the EU after the 1990s. The overall conclusion is that Turkey has successfully utilized the EU candidacy as a tool for its domestic developments. Although Turkey-EU relations appear to have been a non-progressive and endless affair ever since the beginning in the late 1950s, in reality, the relationship is moving and progressing, however slowly this may appear.

Turkey started its application process for membership to the EU in the late 1950s. This was made official with the Ankara Agreement in 1964 which expressed Turkey's desire to be part of the European Community. Although there have been disruptions to this relationship, due to the international rivalry between the USA and the USSR during the Cold War, Turkey always found itself closer to the West. Finally, in 1987, under the leadership of Özal (despite knowing that it would be refused) Turkey applied to become a full member of the Union. The intention here was, as the Cold War was ending, to signal that Turkey would continue to pursue policies aligned to the West by getting closer to the EEC.

As expected, its application was refused but Turkey's request was referred to the Commission for what became a protracted study. This confirmed Turkey's eligibility on geographical and political grounds. With this, the argument that Turkey was not in Europe was discredited once and for all and Turkey again started pushing for closer ties. Finally, in 1996 the Customs Union was put in place. Turkey was the only country that became part of the Customs Union before it becoming a member of the EU. Although the government pushing for closer ties with the EU, not everyone in Turkey wanted this.

Starting from the early 1970s and gaining momentum in the 1990s, religious political thought in the country, mainly led by Erbakan and his followers which included the current President of Turkey, Erdoğan, initially totally disagreed with Turkey's

membership application to EU. To them the EU was a Zionist Masonic conspiracy and a Christian club that was trying to destroy Turkey. They would rather have sought partnership with the Islamic world. But, as Islamic political groups were not in power, the EU turned a blind eye to their rhetoric.

Again, while Turkey was trying to be accepted as a potential member of the EU, military civilian relations were not on a par with European standards. By virtue of the fact that it had a historical impact on the foundations of the Republic, the army gave itself the responsibility of protecting it against internal and external threats. But by doing this the army directly and indirectly interfered in the political system four times after 1960.

The military used excuses such as those centered on the loss of civilian authority and the “religious fundamentalist threat” to the secular Republic for its interferences. Whenever it took power or issued warnings to the civilian government religious political parties were closed. Some of their leaders were sent to prison for their beliefs and some were banned from politics altogether. Therefore the army became the biggest hurdle preventing Islamic political parties coming to power. The heavy presence of the army in politics was not only a problem for the civilian government but it also posed a great worry for the EU as this was against European democratic norms. However, there was a great paradox here because the military ostensibly represented the secularist Westernized outlook in Turkey. The military had economic power via its influence in big industries, and also the media. By using its supporters in the media while portraying itself as the only trustworthy institution, the religious parties were represented as a symbol of backwardness. Although Islamic political parties gained great momentum after the 1990s, with their strong anti-Western rhetoric, it was impossible for them to come to power in Turkey as the military viewed as a threat to the secular Republic.

Realizing this problem, some of the younger politicians in these religious parties, such as Abdullah Gül and Erdoğan split from Erbakan and began to rethink their image and views towards the west and secularism in order to avoid the ire of the military. They began to see the merits and the benefits of European democratic norms. To them, the only way to overcome the intimidation of the military was to take away the main tool from them – that is, the idea that military was the bastion of westernization and secularism. Consequently, under the leadership of Erdoğan, religious political thinking in the country started developing a different character and they underwent an

ideological transformation. In this respect Erdoğan set the goal of EU membership as the most important goal for his party and for Turkey.

Both Islamic political thinking and the EU agreed on the unacceptability of military's presence in politics. As a result, Erdoğan decided to deploy Europeanisation reform programs to diminish the power of the military in civilian politics. In order to meet the Copenhagen Criteria, the so-called "harmonization packages", some of which were already introduced by the Ecevit government after the Helsinki decision in 1999, were now rapidly passed one after the other. These packages touched every aspect of life in Turkey, including the democratization of institutions and the removal of the military's presence in civilian politics. These changes suited to the desires of both the Islamic political groups and the EU.

Under the strong leadership of Erdoğan and the JDP, reform programs were introduced in order to allow Turkey to be recognized as a candidate for full membership to the Union. The economy was functioning much better than ever before, and Turkey also began following an active foreign policy. By initiating good neighborly policies with its surrounding regions, Turkey wanted to assert itself as an energy bridge between the energy producing countries of the East and the energy hungry consumers of the West, which included the EU. Indeed, the EU, which heavily depends on the energy resources of only a few countries, including Russia, put the energy security issue and the diversification of supply routes at the forefront of its agenda. This has become particularly so ever since the major crisis related to the energy transit dispute broke out between the Ukraine and Russia. Turkey, aware of the European quest for an alternative energy corridor, wanted to utilize its geostrategic positioning by contributing to Europe's energy security via building major international pipeline networks such as BTC and TANAP. The idea of Turkey as an energy corridor clearly suited its goal of becoming a member of the Union as well. It also suited the European needs.

The EU responded to Turkey's efforts positively by officially making it a 'Candidate Country' in 2005. This was the most important stage in Turkey-EU relations since 1964. And by this time the EU had had a major impact on Turkey's religious political thinking, the military's presence in civilian politics and on Turkey's energy politics. However, since then relations have not gone from strength to strength or resulted in membership.

There are various reasons to explain why things did not go the way they did with Eastern European countries after the end of the Cold War. Historical memories have

been identified by this thesis as the main catalysts. It is very clear that the history between many EU states and Turkey have impacted their relationship more so than anything else. Negative legacies of interaction have helped establish cultural biases in people's minds that are very hard to get rid of. Both Turkey-sceptics and Euro-sceptics misused historical facts to justify their agendas and work produced by this group compiles the majority of the literature in the field. In everyday life there are many symbols that remind the European public that the Turks were once the Muslim invaders of Europe. These symbols are plentiful, especially in countries like Austria, Greece, Bulgaria, Italy and Malta where there is a general sense that interaction with the Ottomans was negative.

In addition to this, Turkey's bilateral relations with individual countries such as Cyprus, Austria, Greece, Germany and France have also undermined the accession progress. The Cyprus issue has been one of the main constraining elements of Turkey-EU relations. Turkey supported the UN plan (also known as the "Annan Plan") that aimed to reunite the island, separated since the 1974 Turkish intervention. During the 2004 24 April referendum on reunification on the island, 76% of Greek Cypriots voted no, while 65% of Turkish Cypriots voted in favour.⁷⁷¹ With this referendum Turkey showed its willingness to solve the problem in order to get closer to EU membership, while Greek Cypriots continued to complain about the Turkish presence on the island and voted against the unification plan. As a result, the Cyprus issue will continue to create problem for Turkey's EU membership aspirations.

Moreover, both Turkey and the EU have different expectations from one another as well as undisclosed suspicions about each other. Turkey thinks it has been treated unfairly by the EU as it sees itself as no less democratic and developed than the newest members such as Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria. It wants the EU to treat Turkey as at least equal to those countries. Again, Turkey remains worried about the fast spread of Islamophobia in Europe (and the way European countries are dealing with it) and its negative impact on Turkey-EU relations. Turkey contributed to the solidarity march in Paris after the tragic incident involving the Charli Hebdo magazine, with Prime Minister Davutoğlu attending. Erdoğan has, nonetheless, also criticized the Western leaders for not being supportive to other countries threatened by terrorism, such as Turkey, Syria, Nigeria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Mali and Somalia by arguing that,

⁷⁷¹'Cyprus spurns historic chance,' <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3656753.stm>, retrieved Dec.23, 2014.

The issue of terror cannot be resolved with an understanding that your terrorist is bad my terrorist is good. Terror is terror in every country and it is very bad. We must treat all instances of terror across the world with the same approach.⁷⁷²

Erdoğan also expresses on many platforms that there is a deliberate association of ‘terror’ and ‘Islam’ – which is a religion of peace – in much of the Western media that creates more anti-Islamic sentiments across the world.⁷⁷³

On the other hand, the EU often argues that Turkey needs to improve its records on human rights and freedom of speech. It has signalled on several occasions that some controversial cases in the country do not meet “European standards”.⁷⁷⁴ The contentious Ergenekon, Sledgehammer and Odatv cases, and other similar trials, have often been cited as the main examples of this. The imprisonment of journalists, academics, politicians, sports people and military personnel was heavily criticized by the EU for what they saw as lack of concrete evidence and a lack of transparency.⁷⁷⁵

Dismissing the EU’s accusations as baseless and deliberately subjective, the government, then led by Erdoğan, always maintained that these trials were right and that they were in fact making Turkey more democratic by getting rid of threats to civilian authority. However, half the people in Turkey thought these trials were scandalously unjust. To these people, the trials were a “Gülenist plot” to the secular sections of the society as complainants, the security personnel and the judges all happened to be close to the Gülen organisations. In defending these cases, Erdoğan was backed by Gülen and his major media and bureaucratic networks inside and outside the country. The EU, which was against the court case that aimed to ban Erdoğan’s ruling JDP in 2008 was also worried about these trials as it was not satisfied with the way they were handled. To the EC the cases were polarizing the Turkish people and the politics. In the 2012 Progress Report for Turkey the EC stated that “Concerns persisted over the rights of the defense, lengthy pre-trial detention and excessively long and catch-all indictments”⁷⁷⁶

⁷⁷² Joint Press Conference of President Erdoğan and President Keita of Mali, *TRT Haber TV*, Feb. 02, 2015

⁷⁷³ ‘Time to Crack Down on Islamophobia Turkey’s Erdoğan tells EU,’ *The Express Tribune*, Jan. 6, 2015, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/817701/time-to-crack-down-on-islamophobia-turkeys-Erdoğan-tells-eu/> retrieved Jan.25, 2015.

⁷⁷⁴ Daren Butler, ‘Turkey’s Ergenekon Conspiracy trial approaches endgame,’ *Reuters*, Dec. 12, 2012 <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/11/us-turkey-ergenekon-idUSBRE8BA0TY20121211>, retrieved Dec.19, 2014

⁷⁷⁵ The government also, now, thinks these trials were the work of “dark forces” called the parallel state.

⁷⁷⁶ Butler, *ibid.* and the Turkey Progress Report 2012, Oct.10, 2012, p.7

People who were on the other side of the political spectrum were worried that they too would be targeted. This led to major self-censorship in social and mass media as many were worried of being accused of being anti-government. Some people compared these incidents to the times of the Red Scare in USA in 1950s where alleged soviet supporter communists were rounded up and tried. Therefore, during 1950's there was a widespread hysteria over a communist threat pumped up by people like Senator Joe McCarty, Richard Nixon and George Kennan. In that instance, there was a major "witch hunt" where people from different backgrounds, including politicians, writers, artists and journalist were accused of being communist, although proper evidence was lacking. Thousands of people lost their jobs and many ended up in prison. Scientists Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were even executed during the time of the "Red Scare". Year later it was discovered that many people who were accused of being communist while dealing with the "enemy within" campaign were actually innocent, though by this point, their lives had already been ruined. As Yesil explains the situation Turkey after 2008 writes:

The scope of the so-called Ergenekon crimes has been so liberally expanded that anyone who criticizes the JDP is now fearful of being labelled an Ergenekon conspirator.⁷⁷⁷

Nonetheless, things have changed, especially after the 17 and 25 December 2013 scandals when senior ministers of the JDP government, their family members, business people, bank managers and even Erdoğan and his family were linked to an alleged corruption scandal.⁷⁷⁸ These accusations were made by the same judges and the security officials who had tried and sentenced those in the aforementioned trials. Following on from these two scandalous corruption cases, some senior ministers and advisors to Erdoğan publically announced that previous cases against military personal, politicians and journalists were the work of "dark forces" in Turkey and part of the now commonly referenced "parallel state". This parallel state was described as a conspiracy that sought to infiltrate and then take over the Turkish state. Thus the majority of the people serving long term prison sentences as a result of the previously mentioned cases were all of a sudden set free after the December 2013 scandal. In a sense, the EU was proven right after Erdoğan and senior members of his government issued their statements about problematic elements of the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer cases. By then these trials

⁷⁷⁷ Bilge Yeşil, 'Communication, Culture & Critique, *Press Censorship in Turkey: Networks of State Power, Commercial Pressures, and Self-Censorship*, Vol.7, No.2, 2014, (pp.154-173), p.162

⁷⁷⁸ John Peet and Anton LaGuardia, *Unhappy Union: How the Euro crisis -and Europe- can be fixed*, (London: Profile Books, 2014), p.149.

had led to much hardship and eight people lost their lives; some died in prison of natural causes while others committed suicide as a form of protest at what they saw as wrongful sentencing.⁷⁷⁹

The government accused the Gülen organisations of being behind these trials and labelled them as part of the “parallel state” that wanted to take over the state by overthrowing the democratically elected government through the use of engineered trials supported by forged evidence. Such evidence was produced by Gülen’s massive network within the police, judiciary and bureaucracy which was established over decades. Not surprisingly, Erdoğan began a vicious war against the group, beginning with harsh criticisms during mass rallies across the country attended by millions. Arrests and the forceful removal of police officers, judiciary personal and many bureaucrats followed. After local election victories in March 2014 and then in the August 2014 presidential elections the fight between Erdoğan’s supporters and the Gülenist organisation escalated further.

These latest clashes between the government and the Gülen movement in Turkey that goes on as of December 2015 are not helping to ease the EU’s worries regarding freedom of speech and human rights issues in the country. One of the harshest warnings was given to Turkey in a motion released by the European Parliament entitled ‘European Parliament resolution on freedom of expression in Turkey: Recent arrests of journalists, media executives and systematic pressure against media’, where it was stated that the EP,

Condemns the recent police raids and the detention of a number of journalists and media representatives in Turkey. Underlines the importance of press freedom and respect for democratic values for the EU enlargement process, and affirms its belief in the need to continue the accession negotiations with Turkey. Highlights the need for more engagement between Turkey and the EU, particularly on the rule of law and reforms in the area of fundamental rights. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, and the Government and Parliament of Turkey.⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁷⁹ For the list of the people who died during these trials: <http://www.ilk-kursun.com/haber/157957/ergenekon-balyoz-ve-benzer-davalarda-olume-suruklenenler-1/>, and <http://www.odatv.com/n.php?n=iste-ergenekon-ve-balyozun-bilancosu--1505121200>, retrieved Jan.19,2015

⁷⁸⁰ The European Parliament, Joint Motion for a Resolution, Jan.14, 2015, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=P8-RC-2015-0036&language=EN>, retrieved Feb.16, 2015.

These warnings, understandably, were not welcomed by the government and President Erdoğan as they fanned the flames of the government's worry about Gülen's international links and the EU's involvement in Turkey's internal affairs. To Erdoğan and his followers the "National will" is locked in a fight against an international conspiracy and there is no way back from fighting the "parallel state". He has even indicated that there will be an international arrest warrant issued against Gülen who resides in Pennsylvania, USA, so that he can be extradited back to Turkey.⁷⁸¹

June 7th 2015, general elections did not go as Erdogan expected as his former party did not get the majority support. He wanted to achieve a parliamentary majority that will grant him American style presidency. A coalition government was not formed among the four parties, including the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (PDP [Tr.: Halkların Demokratik Partisi, HDP]) due to different demands they all wanted to impose on each other.⁷⁸² Erdogan finally declared Turkey to go for the snap elections in November 2015. Expectation was that PDP and NAP would lose some votes to JDP to make this party again the ruling party in Turkey. He was proven right at the end.

Recent international developments in the Middle East after the Arab Spring have also added to the hysteria in Turkey that the EU can only tolerate a weak Turkey that listens to what it is told to do. Differing opinions on how to deal with Syrian Civil War and the mass scale refugee crisis it has generated is linked to this. While Turkey wanted to create a no-fly zone in Syria to take care of the refugees on the Syrian border with the help of international organisations, the West has resisted such calls without a proper explanation. As a result, millions of Syrian refugees fleeing the civil war crossed the Turkish border in search of a safe shelter. This of course created and will be continue to generate a political, social and, most importantly, heavy economic burden for Turkey.

The issue of DEASH⁷⁸³ (Ad Dawlah al Islamiyah fil ash Sham), also known as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham) is also seen differently in the EU and Turkey. Turkey promoted an international intervention that would involve both land and air forces while the Western countries thought that air strikes alone could end the terror and

⁷⁸¹ Emre Peker, 'Turkey issues arrest warrant for Erdoğan rival Gülen,' *The Wall Street Journal*, Dec, 20, 2014.

⁷⁸² Most importantly, other three parties wanted JDP to be free from President Erdogan's influence.

⁷⁸³ Turkish high politics decided to not use ISIS or IS (Islamic State) for this organisation as they thought the word Islam and their atrocities do not go well together. President Erdoğan said "Some want to portray [the group] as an Islamic terrorist organization. A religion, which means peace, can never sanction terrorism. Mind you, I'm not using 'ISIS' because it is a terrorist organization." 'Erdogan Attempts to rebrand IS,' *Almonitor*, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/11/turkey-isis-becomes-deash-Erdoğan.html##ixzz3Qv0GTp1S>, retrieved Dec.16, 2015.

brutality of this group that has spread across Syria and Iraq. So far US led international airstrikes have proven to be useless in halting the gains of this group as it expands its political and economic grip, thanks partly to the participation of foreign Jihadists in their cause.

The next big issue between Turkey and the EU is the post-Egyptian coup context, but this goes all the way back to the immediate aftermath of the revolution that saw the end of Mubarak's decades in power.⁷⁸⁴ Turkey criticized the west for not being truly democratic due to their lack of support for the legally elected President Mohamed Morsi. Morsi was ousted by a coup led by military head Abdel Fattah el-Sisi who later became president on 8 June 2014.⁷⁸⁵ Western powers did not only keep quiet about this, but also seemingly showed support for him.

There are also serious differences of opinion about Israel's policies in Gaza in particular and more generally in Palestine. Turkey, especially after the JDP came to power, began asserting the idea that Turkish people have a historical responsibility to take care of Palestine due to the Ottoman legacy in the country. On different platforms Turkey has condemned the Israeli blockade on Palestinian territories and has lobbied internationally to stop further occupation of Palestinian territory. In this respect, while Turkey has wanted to show support for Hamas, the political Islamic organisation in power in Gaza after it won democratic elections in 2006 – elections which the West initially also supported - after Hamas' victory the West decided to continue its hostile stance towards the group by keeping it on their list of terror organisations⁷⁸⁶.

As can be seen from the above, there are a lot of issues between Turkey and EU. These issues make it very hard to reach a middle ground. Additionally, while the historical legacies continue to effect current relations and policy makers' somewhat deliberate attempt to find more differences rather than focusing on the similarities, this relationship will never end with the desired goal.

⁷⁸⁴ Turkey supported the Islamic Brotherhood Movement and its leader Mohamed Morsi as they come to power in after winning the elections. However about a year later Morsi was ousted by the army led by the head of Egypt armed forces Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. This move was not welcomed by Turkey as it was seen anti-democratic. EU countries as well as the USA stayed short of criticising the military take-over. In fact some of them even welcomed it as they thought although Morsi was elected democratically he was not as secular as they wanted. Turkey criticized Western countries for being hypocritical.

⁷⁸⁵ Henry Dsouza, *The Age of Neo-Imperialism: essays on contemporary global history*, (Bloomington: Authors House, 2014), p.101.

⁷⁸⁶ Rafea Ben Achour, 'On the Need to Respect Democratic Principles to Combat Terrorism,' in Pablo Antonio Fernández Sánchez (ed.), *International Legal Dimension of Terrorism*, (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009), p.21.

In truth the EU does not really want Turkey to become a member but cannot officially end the negotiations as it would send a negative message to the rest of the Muslim world. Nor does it want Turkey to ally itself with any other power such as Russia, Iran, China, or, most importantly, the wider Islamic world. The EU is happy to ensure Turkey remains a democratic country that looks to the West as an ally. Turkey protects the EU's south-eastern borders while offering it a safe energy transit route through its territory, thus it is crucially important for the EU's political and economic security (the recent immigrant crisis Europe face evidently proved this right).

It is also very clear that Turkey no longer has any real intention of becoming an EU member as it does not believe that this can happen. It is no longer desperate to proceed further with accession negotiations. People are in the mind-set that the EU is not Turkey's friend but instead almost a foe. At the same time, Turkey has no intention of ending the negotiations due to the fact that being closer to the EU represents a favourable image for Turkey in the eyes of its neighbours and the Islamic world at large. It is beneficial for Turkey to be seen as a candidate country. Overall, Turkey is a better place to live in now than before the 2000s and this is due to its desire to join the EU.

All told, both Turkey and the EU have reached a clear conclusion that their accession negotiations are mutually beneficial and there is more to gain than to lose by continuing them, albeit at a very slow pace. They also realise that ending negotiations may produce unexpected losses. Turkey and the EU will want to continue with their relationship as no side dares to end it outright. However, if there is no major change in the politics of particular EU member states such as France, Germany, Austria and Cyprus, and the politics of Turkey too, then the latter will have to continue to wait for a long time (if it does not form other major alliances) to become a member of the Union – if in the near future the EU remains united that is. Turkey, potentially a regional superpower, with its cultural and historical links to the Balkans, the Middle East, North Africa, Iran and Central Asia can assert its own agenda while cooperating with the EU. On the other hand the EU might want to offer Turkey a 'privileged partnership' rather than full membership, though this is likely to be refused by Turkey.

To conclude, the chief question this thesis posed at the beginning was "if it is not a properly accomplishing and progressive relationship, then what do Turkey and the EU want from each other and how much impact has this relationship had on the evolution of domestic politics in Turkey?" In light of the detailed evaluations in this thesis, the answer to this question is that although not resulting in Turkey's membership of the EU,

Turkey-EU relations have nonetheless been part of a generally progressive relationship. Both Turkey and the EU want to continue relations and neither wants to see ties severed completely. This relationship has had major impacts on the evolution of Turkey's domestic politics, especially concerning religious parties, the military's position in civilian affairs and energy politics. It can clearly be said that EU candidacy have been cleverly used as a tool by Turkish governments to improve the domestic political, economic and social conditions.

The EU impacts since 1990s have largely been very positive for Turkey as a nation. There is no doubt this relationship helped Turkey to become politically a more democratic and economically more developed country in the recent years. And it will surely be more realistic and beneficial for Turkey to continue its quest to become the full member of this Union than giving up on it if the EU is going to stay as a union in the near future. EU will surely be considering its status as a Union especially with the major refugee crisis and threats of terror it is facing as a result of the problems accuring in the Middle East and Africa. Moreover Turkey with a properly functioning democracy and flourished economy will also be a great asset to the wellbeing of the EU and the Eurasian region as a whole as it holds a key position in between the West and the East. Turkey would rather be an energy corridor for the West than an immigration corridor as it was clearly expressed by the policy makers. However the same policy makers also implied that it depends on how the EU as a whole responds to Turkey's quest for the full membership.

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Experts and politicians interviewed or consulted during the research process

Ahmet Yücel; Teacher (Turkey), political activist, several occasions;

Aya Hino, expert in political theories, several times during research;

Ayhan Avanoglu, Political activist and teacher

Aytaç Odacılar, Lecturer in political philosophy; Oct.2014;

Catherine Tookey, Political activist (UK), several occasions between 2009 and 2015;

Cavit Öztürk, Freelance worker, Sep. 2014;
Clare Tubridy, Citizenship teacher (also teaches EU studies) Jun. 2012;
Dr. Esmâ İğüs, Lecturer in History of Art; Dec.2014;
Dr. Katarina Lezova, expert in Balkan studies, several times during research;
Dr. Geoffrey King, expert on Middle Eastern affairs, Mar.19, 2010;
Dr. Shirin Akiner, expert on the former Soviet Republics, the Caucasus and energy politics of the Caspian Region; in many occasions between 2004 and 2010;
Erlan İdrissov, Foreign Secretary of Kazakhstan, Apr. 13, 2006;
Erşat Salihi, Chairman of the Iraqi Turkmen Front and MP in Iraq, Oct. 2015
Hasan Torun, Accountant, Sep. 2014;
Faruk Filiz, Agricultural Engineer, several occasions;
Gökhan Tuğral, Business Manager, Jul. 2014;
Gökhan Başarar, Teacher in Turkey, Several occasions;
İmdat Avcı, Businessman in France (regarding Customs Union), several occasion;
İsrafil Memmedov, Politician, Azerbaijan Embassy in UK;
Jeremy Corbin, MP and Leader of the Labour Party in the UK, Apr.18, 2010;
Lisa Emerick, Sociolog from US, several occasions between 2006 and 2015;
Melike Odabaşı, Refugee aid worker (works for a US charity), Oct. 2014;
Mehmet Emin Cebeci, Imam (Muslim preacher) Aug. 2014;
Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, Turkish politician and the late leader of the GUP, May, 1, 2008;
Musellem Adem, Mathematician, Several occasions between 2005 and 2015;
Mutlu Yücebaş, Computer Scientist, Aug. 2014;
Oktay Vural, Turkish MP, May 2013 (questions via social media and in a public talk);
Oral Güngör, Businessman, Sep.12, 2014;
Osman Nuri Cengiz, Pilot, Aug. 2014;
Professor Ahmet Taşağıl, expert on Turkish history, Feb.17, 2013(several occasions);
Professor İlber Ortaylı, expert on Turkish history and a public figure; Dec. 18, 2009;
Professor Süleyman Kızıltoprak, expert on Ottoman History, Middle East and Turkish foreign policy, Mar. 5, 2013 (and several other occasions);
Sarah Maynard, Operations Manager at BP's Azerbaijan endeavors;
Sundus Saqi, Leader of the Iraqi Turkmen Front in the UK, several times;
Interview with two Erasmus students (one German and one Turkish);
Some Turkish and European MP's as well as academics spoke on condition of anonymity.

Appendix: interview questions and responses

Interview with more educated group

Questions asked:

What do you know about Turkey-EU relations and how do you know this?

Do you think Turkey and the EU really want to integrate with one another?

Do you consider Turkey as a European country and will Turkey become a member of the union one day?

Do you think religion plays part in Turkey-EU relations?

Are there historical memories hanging over the relationships between Turkey and the EU?

Will Turkey be good for European energy security? Why is this good for Turkey?

What makes you think the way you think?

Answers (generalised):

It is seemingly ever lasting relationship and it will not last soon as the EU does not even know what to do with itself.

It is a positive thing if Turkey becomes a member of the Union.

Historical legacies are established deeply within the European and Turkish culture that it is hard to get rid of the effects of them. Christian heritage plays great part.

It is a strategic relationship. Although Turkey will not become a member, by being a candidate of the EU it is developing its own democracy. For the EU, it is better to have a Turkey as an ally than it merely being a neutral country. Both countries need better dialogue and integration in terms of financial issues and mostly concerning the energy security issues.

The EU will of course accept Turkey if it fulfills the required criteria in every aspect, but it will take time.

Turkey is as developed as some of the EU members. There must be religious element in the reasons why it is not allowed to join.

The EU has a great history and culture. Turkey will add to the EU's great diversity.

Interview with less educated group

Questions asked:

Do you think Turkey should be a member of the European Union?

What do the EU and Turkey want from each other?

Will Turkey be good for European energy security? Why is this good for Turkey?

Do you think Turkey's religion plays part in Turkey-EU relations?

Is there a major impact from history on Turkey-EU relations?

What makes the people in this group think the way they think?

Answers (generalised):

Turkey should not be a member because the EU cannot handle more immigrants and the EU will destroy Turkey's culture

Turkey is a pleasant, beautiful and relatively cheaper destination for European tourists.

It has a good culture; people are friendly, the food is good. It must be a member.

The EU wants to use Turkey as a buffer zone and Turkey wants to exploit its financial strength.

Cooperation on energy will be good for both sides.

Yes, history is important. Turks are Muslims and they are mostly the enemies of European countries and Europeans are the arch enemies of the Turks and Muslims. EU is a Christian organization.