

# Reconsidering the Incompatibility Between European Orientation and Cyprus Policy: Westphalian and Post-Westphalian Approaches to Turkey's Cyprus Policy and the EC/EU

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## **Abstract**

*The recent changes in Turkey's Cyprus policy have spurred a new debate as to whether Turkey's foreign policy has been Europeanized, now that the previous sources of tension have seemingly been abated. Focusing on how this policy has been defined in the official discourse in relation to Turkey's European orientation, hence taking European orientation as a domestically constructed discourse, this study seeks to show that it would be problematic to view the government's tendency to refrain from framing the issue as a security issue as an intractable process of according with the EU's stance on the issue. By the same token, if 'Europeanness' is liberated from the preset values and situated in its domestic context, it would be equally misleading to interpret Turkey's security-centered approach to Cyprus as a non-European feature of Turkish foreign policy, and to view the recurrent Cyprus crises as a deviation from Turkey's European orientation.*

**Keywords:** *Turkey's Cyprus policy, European Orientation, Security, Discourse, Identity*

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## Introduction

For many in Turkey, the European Union (EU) has made the biggest mistake in admitting the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) to the EU before the resolution of the Cyprus issue. Nevertheless, a notable part of the literature considers the EU as an address for conflict-resolution, and Turkey's security-centered Cyprus policy and non-European characteristics as a major hurdle for Turkey's EU membership and European orientation. Many have pointed out that the issue had been kept primarily as a security matter and beyond the realm of democratic debate until recently (Kirişçi, 2006; Kaliber, 2005). In this vein, the "daring" (Mufti, 1998) changes in Turkey's handling the issue in the last decade were explained by reference to the democratization, 'civilianization' (Kirişçi, 2006), Europeanization and/or desecuritization of Turkish foreign policy in the context of Turkey's EU integration. In this regard, the literature refers to the role of the solution-oriented foreign policy of the Justice and Development Party (JDP) (Aras & Karakaya Polat, 2008; Diez, 2005; Kaliber, 2005), Turkey's EU accession process and EU conditionality (Aydın & Açıkmeye, 2007; Diez, 2005; Barkey, 2000; Öniş, 2003, Kirişçi, 2006), the diminishing role of the military in shaping political processes in Turkey (Karaosmanoğlu, 2000), globalization (Bilgin, 2005) and attempts of the civil society/societal actors to prioritize the EU agenda (Rumelili, 2005; Bilgin, 2007). Some, on the other hand, have been skeptical of the success of this shift and argued that the attempts of the JDP government to frame the Cyprus issue outside the national security terms were not successful since the government could not take societal actors along its solution-oriented policy (Bilgin, 2007). Bilgin, for instance, argues that the government's discourse remained marginal *vis-à-vis* the security-centered arguments in relation to Cyprus (Bilgin, 2007: 564).

Indeed, the recent debates on the opening of Turkey's ports to the RoC showed that there has not been a clear departure from the security-centered policy towards the Cyprus issue. What is more, the EU's suspension of the negotiations on eight chapters upon Turkey's refusal to fulfill the terms of the Additional Protocol signaled a new mismatch between the EU's and Turkey's views on the issue. In this context, this article investigates the following questions: Should we understand Turkey's security-centered approach to the Cyprus issue as irreconcilable with her European orientation? Can we talk about Turkey's European oriented foreign policy only in those instances when her behavior is not at odds with the EU's stance towards an issue?

This article contends that the juxtaposition of the security identities of Turkey and the EU as well as the characterization of Turkey's Cyprus policy as a deviation from Turkey's EU orientation is misleading if one focuses on how 'Europe' is defined in the domestic context. Relying on the premises of poststructuralism and taking

constructions such as 'European identity', 'European orientation', and 'national cause' as a point of contention, rather than exogenous to the discursive processes (Hansen, 2002: 5), this study examines how certain conceptions of 'Europeanness' get articulated in the concepts that structure the discourses on the Cyprus issue. In pursuing this line of argumentation, I focus on the approach that views Cyprus as a national security issue (the Westphalian approach) and the one that seeks to remove the national security element from the Cyprus policy (the post-Westphalian approach) and examine whether the Cyprus policy was seen as an anti-European move or an extension of Turkey's European orientation from these perspectives. The analysis shows that while there are certain differences in the way these approaches defined the European identity, neither of them saw Turkey's Cyprus policy as a deviation from Turkey's European orientation. In addition, there has not been any dramatic chronological shift in Turkey's Cyprus policy from a security-centered/Westphalian approach to a security-free/post-Westphalian one. Rather, both have co-existed and have been employed by the same political elites on different occasions. Neither was the government exempt from a security-centered discourse, nor were the other parties raising exceptionally security-centered arguments in relation to Cyprus. This is because the main discursive clash that is at stake here is not between the governmental and societal discourses, but rather between the Westphalian and post-Westphalian approaches to the Cyprus issue which transcend the borders between different parties in Turkey, regardless of their social democratic or conservative identities.

### **Approaches to the Cyprus Puzzle**

Turkey's refusal to comply with the terms of the Additional Protocol may be puzzling from the rationalist perspective, which assumes that the 'carrot' of membership and the 'stick' of the suspension of the negotiation process would pave the way for a more compromising approach towards the sensitive issues such as Cyprus, especially after the RoC gained membership in the EU. Similarly, Turkey's recent foreign policy move remains puzzling if one assumes a pre-given set of European norms and a conforming mode of behavior by the countries that are undergoing a process of Europeanization. This perspective is based on the premise that, as a country gets closer to being a member and socializes into the European norms of behavior, it gradually moves away from a defensive or aggressive approach built on threats towards an understanding of security that is built on mutual trust and cooperation.

According to this view, acting upon the immediate national security threats is characteristic to a Westphalian/modern state. The Westphalian model (a sovereign state with exclusive authority within its own territorial boundaries) is a basic concept for describing the characteristics of the state that purportedly emerged after the Peace of Westphalia 1648.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it has been the common reference point (especially for the neo-realist and the neo-liberal institutionalist approaches) in describing the modern state as a unitary rational actor operating under an anarchic environment and struggling to enhance its welfare and security (Krasner, 1995, 1996: 121). The basic norms and values of this system are the following: ability to exercise control over a given territory, self-reliance and independence in matters of security and foreign policy, the protection of national security against the potential threats from other states, and the *right* to enter into international alignments (ibid). Juxtaposing these values to those of the contemporary Europe, the EU, it is argued, is the most developed example of a post-Westphalian/postmodern state system, exhibiting the characteristics of mutual interference in the internal affairs and mutual surveillance, the rejection of force in the resolution of disputes, as well as the growing irrelevance of borders, and representing security through transparency, mutual openness, and interdependence of mutual vulnerability (Cooper, 2000).

This view outlined above takes the EU as a post-Westphalian security community, which involves a unique security identity based on these values. The EU, from this perspective, represents an evolution whereby the definition of security exclusively as 'the protection of sovereign national borders from military threat' is replaced by 'mutual cooperation' (Rieker, 2000). In such a system, it is argued, states no longer rely on balance of power mechanisms and deterrence but develop a high degree of trust, common identity, and a common vision for the future, as the integration is seen as a bulwark against the previous insecurity caused by the balance of power, war, and nationalism (Wæver, 1996). According to this view, a successful desecuritization process, defined as moving an issue off the security agenda and back to politics, could be possible only within a post-Westphalian institutional environment of the EU (Wæver, 1998; and Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998) and only if the EU is seen as a 'peace community' rather than an 'international organization' (Rieker, 2000). Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (1998) observe that security referents within post-Westphalian Europe have gradually moved from 'nation-state' to 'society' and 'individuals'. In such a system, soft security and non-military measures, such as

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted here that some scholars oppose the idea that there was ever such a golden age of the Westphalian state by arguing that it has never been an empirical regularity: the violations of the Westphalian model have been an enduring characteristic of international politics (Krasner, 1999: 9) see also Osiander (2001).

'engagement', are preferred to hard-security measures such as 'containment' (Larsen, 2002; Oğuzlu, 2003; Tocci, 2007).

Due to this peculiar security identity, the European integration is also expected to have a "catalytic effect" of conflict resolution, by means of a conforming identity transformation in the EU's neighborhood (Diez, 2000, Oğuzlu, 2003; Tocci, 2007). Some underline that this security identity defines the EU's response to the enlargement such that the adoption of the EU's security model is considered to be more important than the geopolitical significance of the candidate countries or their fulfillment of the accession criteria *per se* (Engelbrekt, 2002; Grabbe, 2002; Oğuzlu, 2003). It is against this context that Turkey's EU policy is considered to highlight the lack of understanding of the EU norms and identity (Tocci, 2007: 16). Since the style with which Turkey had pursued the Cyprus policy, mainly, "bullying" and "blackmailing", did not accord with the above-mentioned 'European' way of dealing with the issue, it is argued, the pre-2002 Turkey was too hard as a security actor to accede to the Union (Oğuzlu, 2003: 294; Oğuzlu, 2004: 108; Melakopides, 2006: 74; see also Buzan & Diez, 1999).

The problem with this approach is that it assumes a fixed to-be-acquired 'European' identity and rationality for the countries that are undergoing the process of European integration. Indeed, neither the discourse of the EU countries could be expected to be *beyond* the modernist discourse to talk about an ideal postmodernist view on security (Diez, 1999), nor could the applicant countries be categorized to represent the totality of the modernist discourse. Admittedly, inter-state fears are still present in conflicts in the EU, e.g. the Baltic states, Hungary and its neighbors, in the Balkans, and between Turkey and Greece (Buzan & Wæver, 2003: 365). What is more, in any given foreign policy discourse, the identities involved therein are all contested since "there is no underlying principle of fixing - and hence constituting the whole field of differences" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 111). Hence, if one focuses on how European integration is domestically defined via the concepts that already exist in the discursive arena, and stays at the level of discourse, one cannot expect to find a homogeneous construction of what the European integration means, as well as whether the material concerns prevail over the ideational ones, or whether the securitizing tendencies prevail over the desecuritizing ones in an applicant country. Both Westphalian and post-Westphalian discourses co-exist instead of representing isolated periods of construction. Thus, a nationalist twist in the course of European integration (as seen in Turkey's refusal to fulfill the terms of the Additional Protocol because of its commitment to the Cyprus cause) could arguably decelerate (if not reverse) this discursive process whereby post-Westphalian meanings are attributed to the modernist elements that are available in the domestic repertoire.

Indeed, if one understands Europeanization as a redefinition of domestic elements in terms of European integration without assuming a pre-given European identity, Turkish foreign policy can be argued to have long been Europeanized. While remarkable changes have taken place in the last decade, the acknowledgment of apparent desecuritization should not come at the expense of overlooking how the securitizing approach in the Turkish context may also have pursued a pro-integration discourse. The task ahead is to analyze how these approaches in the Turkish context have legitimized Turkey's Cyprus policy, how they defined the European identity, and last but not the least, whether they identified the Cyprus issue as a confirmation of or a move against Turkey's European vocation.

### **Main Concepts of Turkish Foreign Policy:**

The statements made in the government programs reveal that continuity, rather than change, seems to represent the main parameters of Turkish foreign policy. The Turkish political elite have reassured to keep the main principles of the Kemalist foreign policy intact. There is a general consensus on defining these principles as 'full-independence', an objective that originated during the Independence War; 'peace at home, peace in the world', which is taken as the non-adventurist and the non-aggressive characteristic of the Kemalist foreign policy; 'adherence to the international law', which is seen as dependent on the former principle; and 'civilizationism', which is also defined as 'raising Turkey to the level of the contemporary civilization' (Feyzioğlu, 1984). Based on these principles, the Kemalist foreign policy has been characterized as a non-aggressive, rationalist, and non-submissive policy, which has the goal of protecting the national honor and interest, serving as a model to all the oppressed nations, and increasing respect for Turkey among the Western states. It has been a long tradition to state in the government programs that the foreign policy of the government would advance the Kemalist foreign policy by adhering to the principles of 'peace at home, peace in the world', full-independence, sovereignty, respect for territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs. However, these objectives have also been identified by the political elite as part of the traditional foreign policy without making a direct reference to Kemalism.

Taken as such, the concepts attributed to the Kemalist foreign policy show similar patterns with the values of the Westphalian state discussed above. The emphasis on the independence, non-interference in domestic and foreign affairs, equality (reciprocity) and freedom of action in the conduct of the foreign policy reflect the vision of the state as a sovereign entity that acts upon self-reliance and independence in matters of security and foreign policy. The principles of 'peace at

home, peace in the world', 'serving as a model to the oppressed nations', and 'raising Turkey to the level of the contemporary civilization', on the other hand, do not reveal a conception that is based on self-reliance as such. Yet, it would be sufficient to argue here that their meaning depends on how they are defined in the Turkish foreign policy context.

### **Westphalian Approach to Cyprus and the EC/EU**

#### **Cyprus as a Strategically Important Territory**

At the core of the Westphalian approach is an emphasis on the concepts of sovereignty, national security and freedom of action. From this perspective, the security priorities of Turkey were to protect the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the country, preserve the gains of the 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty and the 1960 arrangements on Cyprus, and maintain the strategic preponderance in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean (Oğuzlu, 2003). Cyprus was seen as Turkey's 'national cause' due to its strategic location and, considered important for Turkey's national security due to its role in preserving the balance of power between Greece and Turkey. The possibility of *Enosis* (the unification of Cyprus with Greece) haunted the political elite that approached Cyprus from this perspective since 1950s, as it would not only disrupt this balance, but also pose a grave threat against Turkey's strategic interests in the region. Indeed, shortly after the inter-communal clash began in the island, the Prime Minister and the Head of the Democratic Party Adnan Menderes, referring to the Turkish Independence War, declared: "This reminds us the dangerous and sad years and the great sacrifices we made for our national existence" (Fırat, 2000b: 25). At the London Conference of 1955, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fatin Rüştü Zorlu expressed the strategic importance of Cyprus for Turkey and that if the previous status quo were to be disrupted, that should be by handing the island to Turkey (ibid.) In a similar vein, İsmet İnönü, the Head of the Republican People's Party RPP), stated in 1956: "It is obviously a security cause for us to ensure that Cyprus does not pass on to the hands of Greece" (Erdemir, 1959: 10).

Cyprus as a 'national cause' was also legitimized by viewing the Turks living on the island as "a part and an extension of the Turkish nation" (Erim, 1963: 3), and considering the territory of Cyprus as an extension of Turkey's territory. In this sense, while fighting against the *Enosis* plan of the Greek Cypriots and hence 'saving' the Turkish Cypriots from colonization formed the former element of the 'cause' that was seen as Turkey's "honor debt" (ibid), exercising control over the Cyprus territory because of its strategic importance for Turkey constituted its latter dimension. This was

well expressed in the remarks of Alparslan Türkeş, the Head of the Nationalist Action Party, who defined the Cyprus cause as the “Independence War of Turks against the Greek imperialism” by recourse to the narrative that had emerged after 1955 (Türkeş, 1979: 191,192):

A military plane that takes off from Greece cannot return to Greece after bombarding Ankara or Erzurum. But whoever has the island acquires the opportunity to bombard Ankara and Erzurum and go back [...] In addition, the fact that 130,000 Turks live on the island makes the island an important territory for Turkey. Last but not least, Turkey has historical rights over Cyprus. Cyprus has never belonged to Greek sovereignty [...] Hence, the fairest solution would be to hand Cyprus over to Turkey (Türkeş, 1979: 276, 277).

While *Enosis* was considered as an imminent possibility until the mid-1970s, the events that took place in the 1990s and especially the RoC's application to the EU once again triggered the same narrative. In December 1993, Greece and the RoC launched the Joint Defensive Dogma with the aim of defending the Hellenic space against Turkey, which involved joint military exercises and the construction of a military base (Süvarierol, 2003). This prompted Bülent Ecevit, the Head of the Democratic Left Party to state that Northern Cyprus should be autonomous from Turkey only in its 'domestic affairs' and that Turkey should reject negotiations with those who do not recognize TRNC (Fırat, 2000a). When the RoC announced its decision to deploy S-300 missiles with a range of 150 km in 1997, this once again turned the Cyprus issue into the main security problem for Turkey and produced a vigorous response by the Turkish Army that this attempt would be perceived as a *casus belli* and that a preventive bombing would take place (Süvarierol, 2003). In the same vein, İsmail Cem, the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced that any attack against the TRNC would be perceived as an attack against Turkey and that Turkey would go ahead with her plans to integrate Northern Cyprus should the EU launch accession talks with the island's Greek Cypriot government. (İsmail, 1998). By the same token, in the program of the coalition government composed of the Motherland Party, Democratic Left Party and the Nationalist Action Party, it was stated that Cyprus had a great significance for Turkey's national security and that this importance increased (Fırat, 2000a).

It was within this context that when the European Council's Luxembourg Summit of 1997 declared that the EU would start the accession negotiations with Cyprus and excluded Turkey from the list of candidates for the next round of enlargement, the integration plans between the TRNC and Turkey were accelerated. As a symbolic response to the Summit's decision, the first meeting of the Association Council



between the two countries took place on the date the EU began negotiations with Cyprus (see İsmail, 1998; Haktanır, 1999; Manisalı, 2000). Interpreting the accession of Cyprus in the Union as a threat to the existential interests of Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean, the corollary balancing move involved supporting the confederation thesis of the TRNC and redefining the peace at home peace in the world principle accordingly: "‘Peace at home, peace in the world’ is not a product of a passive policy but an active one that can transcend itself...a positive, bold step that is oriented to building the future" (*Dışişleri Bakanı İsmail Cem*, 1999: 658). Similarly, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit remarked that, in case Cyprus became a member of the EU before a settlement, Turkey might as well go and annex Cyprus (Süvarierol, 2003). Yet the securitization of the opening of the accession talks with Cyprus did not parallel the securitization of Turkey's EU vocation. The following statement of Cem is illustrative in this respect: "We have no tendency or intention to use Cyprus against the EU in our evaluation of the problems between the current situation of Cyprus and the EU (*Dışişleri Bakanı İsmail Cem*, 1999: 60).

#### **Europe as an Unreliable Ally and the Concepts of 'Independence' and 'Non-Interference in Domestic and Foreign Affairs'**

A Westphalian approach to Turkish-EC/EU relations have mostly emphasized the principle of non-interference in domestic and foreign affairs and rejected the intervention of the EC and later the EU countries to the conflict. The Turkish elite were of the view that a secure relationship between Turkey and the EC/EU required the respect for Turkey's Cyprus policy since it emanated from Turkey's legal and historical rights. So long as these rights and principles were respected, Turkey, on its part, would act to protect the Western European strategic interests around her borders to have her European identity acknowledged (Oğuzlu, 2003). Viewing the EC/EU just as any other Western intergovernmental organization, and especially NATO, where Turkey stood on par with her Western allies, the Turkish elite hoped that her equal status with the countries in the EU would lead the EC/EU act in accordance with Turkey's sensitivities in relation to Cyprus (Oğuzlu, 2003; Bilgin, 2003). According to this perspective, Turkey had a *right* to join the EC/EU but was excluded from it for various security and political reasons. Notwithstanding this suspicious view of the EC/EU, these arguments did not define the EC/EU in antagonistic terms but rather as an untrustworthy strategic ally.

In viewing the EU as a biased player and reassuring Turkey's intentions to resolve the conflict, this narrative not only rearticulated the suspicions with regard to the EC/EU but also reconstituted Turkey's identity as adherent to international law.

While Turkey was consistent and sincere in her intentions to both integrate with the EC/EU and resolve the Cyprus issue, this was blocked by the EU, which ignored the Greek Cypriots' role in the conflict and made Turkey's revision of Cyprus policy a condition for Turkey's membership in the EC/EU.

Cyprus issue, from this perspective, was one of the cards the EEC/EU was unfairly playing to distance Turkey from her European orientation. The following statement by President Evren is illustrative: "They are trying to make us disincline from our European vocation by demanding that we remove our military forces from Cyprus [...] See how they are interfering in our domestic affairs?" (*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devlet Başkanı*, 1988: 269). As this statement indicates, Turkey's holding on to her Cyprus cause was not viewed as a departure from her European orientation but that the EEC was considered to pursue a clandestine plan to push Turkey off this path. The emphasis on 'non-submission', 'sovereignty', and 'non-interference in domestic affairs' in the above-quoted remark also reveals that Cyprus is seen as a domestic problem in which the EC had no right to interfere.

This suspicious and non-submissive approach to the EC/EU was apparent especially after the RoC became a member in 2004. Defining Cyprus as a national security issue (Erdoğan, 2003c), and emphasizing that Turkey did what she needed to do, Prime Minister and Head of the JDP Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated that any further imposition by the EU was unacceptable (Erdoğan, 2004a).

For the then Head of the RPP, Deniz Baykal, on the other hand, the national foreign policy of Turkey could only be based on Turkey's survival and security (Baykal, 2006). As the EU was interested in keeping Turkey as the "permanent candidate for the EU" (Baykal, 2005a), a submissive policy would prevent Turkey from gaining an honorable and respected status in the international arena. Based on this, Baykal stated that Turkey should not make any concessions on her 'national causes', mainly, her Cyprus policy, interests in the Aegean Sea, and the minority rights perspective that is grounded in the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 (Baykal, 2005b).

Notwithstanding this suspicious view of the EC/EU, the Westphalian discourse on Cyprus did not constitute an anti-European identity, since Europeanness found a domestically-driven definition. In this regard, Cem had noted: "Turkey has already been European for 700 years. She does not have a problem or an obligation to have her Europeanness verified by foreign countries." (*Dışişleri Bakanı İsmail Cem*, pp. 1-2). Thereby, both Turkey's Cyprus cause and the European orientation were reconciled by virtue of having a domestic origin and being 'deserved'. A similar view was reverberated in 2004 in the words of Baykal. Stating that Turkey should not open her ports to Cyprus given the uncertainty as to the arrival of yet other demands by the

EU, he said that Turkey should be able to stand up and say that both the EU membership and Cyprus are Turkey's rights (Baykal, 2004). In the same vein, Erdoğan stated:

Turkey hopes that the EU conducts its relations with Turkey openly, honestly and fairly. Who dares to belittle Turkey's Cyprus cause! Who dares to look down upon the Turkish state! Who dares to turn the Northern Cyprus, every inch of which is covered with the Turkish nation's blood, into an issue of political haggling! Our government sees the Cyprus issue as a matter of realist diplomacy, rather than a tool for a conflictual policy (Erdoğan, 2006).

### **The post-Westphalian Approach**

Apart from the defensive approach discussed above, the foreign policy articulations regarding the Cyprus issue and the EC/EU also involved a desecuritized version of the domestic elements of Turkish foreign policy. Those who employed this approach did not consider the EU or the Cyprus issue as a national security issue but rather emphasized the role of Turkey in integrating the European ideals and spreading it elsewhere by serving as a peculiar role model to the countries in Turkey's neighborhood. From this perspective, the EU was not regarded as a rival, an untrustworthy ally or a negative Other against which Turkey needed to protect her own national interests and sovereignty, but rather as a coalition of values.

### **Protecting the Rights of the Turkish Cypriots as a 'National Cause' and Exporting 'Peace' and 'Democracy'**

The Cyprus intervention of 1974 was not only considered as a national security issue for Turkey, but also, and predominantly, as an operation that purported to export the 'peace and democracy at home' to Cyprus. Redefining Turkey's 'national cause' as the protection of the rights and interests of the Turkish Cypriots, the government program of the Justice Party stated: "In order to resolve the Cyprus question, which is our *greatest national cause*, in a way that ensures the rights and interests of the Turkish community is an unchanging objective of our government [...] It is inconceivable that Turkey will be ignorant to Turkish Cypriots' colonization" (Dağlı & Aktürk, 1988: 125). The following remarks of the then Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit prior to the operation are also illustrative of how the representation of the Turkish Cypriots as 'oppressed' by the Greek dictatorship reconstituted Turkey as a 'liberator' and a 'hero' that was driven by the sole purpose to democratize and hence rescue the one in need: "The victory to be achieved in Cyprus will not be a victory for the Turkish nation alone, but will also be

the victory of democracy over dictatorship; it will be the triumph of freedom over oppression." (*Milliyet*, 21 July 1975).

In a similar vein, Ecevit stated the following on another occasion: "The RPP believes that the Turkish Cypriots also have the right to free democracy, which Turkey considers to be inalienable" (*Milliyet*, 23 July 1974). This was in line with how the 'peace at home, peace in the world' principle was defined prior to the operation. By the same token, the election declaration of the RPP stated that the party would "realize 'peace at home, and peace in the world' not through pressure, punishment or fear, but through freedom, love and respect" (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, 1973: 213). The following remark also reveals how the concepts of 'democracy' and 'freedom' were used with an emphasis on 'the aim of spreading them' to redefine the common identity of the Western alliance:

Our friends in the West have usually evaluated Turkey according to the contribution that Turkey might make to collective defense through the bravery of our people, but I think Turkey deserves to be evaluated according to other criteria as well, particularly according to the criteria of her success in democracy because, after all, our alliance is not merely a military alliance [...] It is an alliance aiming at strengthening and spreading democracy and freedom (*Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit*, 1978: 159).

In this sense, the redefinition of the 'national cause' in the 1960s and the 1970s in terms of protecting the interests and rights of the Turkish Cypriots was not immune from either the values attributed to the Western community or the concepts in the domestic repertoire, which were revised to integrate these concepts. While the above-quoted reference situated these values within a general 'Western' identity which was the main discursive instrument of the Cold War politics, specific references to the 'European identity' were also abundant during the same period. The main discursive move in this regard was to define 'spreading the freedom and democracy' as an extension of Turkey's goal of 'reaching the level of the contemporary civilization'. The following statement delivered by the then Prime Minister and the Head of the Justice Party, Süleyman Demirel also shows how the concepts employed to define the EEC were seen reconcilable with Turkey's domestic goals and hence with Turkey's national identity:

Great Atatürk's direction to be followed by the Turkish Republic in political, economic and social justice terms is the pathway towards the West... For Turkey, the EEC is a real success of the democratic order. The reason why Turkey takes part on the side of the EEC without hesitation is because it shares the same ideal and understanding of democracy with it. The economic order the EEC

represents is the one that Turkey chose for herself. Turkey believes that this order, which gives priority and great value to the individual and the private entrepreneurship, is the one that will take the nations to welfare and happiness (*Milliyet*, 17 May 1967).

This narrative was reproduced in the discourse of the successive governments during and after the Cold War, and most recently in the discourse of the Prime Minister Erdoğan, who stated: “We do not see membership in the EU as a goal but as a means to raise the Turkish people to the level of the contemporary civilization which they deserve (Erdoğan, 2003b). While viewing the European vocation within the context of ‘reaching the level of the contemporary civilization’ reconstituted the old narrative, Erdoğan added new concepts to this chain by arguing that “what makes Turkey European is the fact that Turkey embraces the values that Europe represents: mainly, the participatory democracy, pluralism, the rule of law, human rights, secularism, and freedom of thought and conscience” (ibid). Again, as before, it was underlined that Turkey could help the strengthening and the spread of these values by serving as a model to other countries.

It is interesting to observe how this pro-EU stance paralleled an attempt to frame the Cyprus issue as a ‘problem’ rather than a ‘security matter’ (Bilgin, 2006). Before the EU’s Copenhagen Summit of 2002, the JDP government undertook to initiate a new understanding of the Cyprus issue, called as “the policy of solution” (Erdoğan, 2003a). This approach suggested that Turkey should take an active role as a guarantor state in resolving the conflict, and push for an immediate settlement, instead of viewing the issue from a security angle (Erdoğan, 2003d). While this pragmatist desecuritizing take was not new, since a prior failed attempt was made by Turgut Özal in the 1980s (Barlas, 1994; Fırat, 2000a; Uzgel, 2007), it definitely diverged from the Cyprus policy of the previous governments and challenged their view. Similar to Özal’s approach to the issue, Erdoğan argued that a policy that resists any compromise and is centered on Turkey’s national security interests had been contrary to Turkey’s goals, exacerbating the resolution of the conflict, leading to further isolation of the Turkish Cypriots instead of bringing peace, and becoming an ever-present obstacle for Turkey’s EU membership (ibid). However, in contrast to Özal’s suggestion to remove the Cyprus policy from the top agenda, Erdoğan did not see a reason to denationalize the cause while attempting to desecuritize it. In this context, “to demand a solution” meant not only protecting the interests of Turkey but also “safeguarding the future of the Turkish Cypriots” (ibid).

In defining the final version of the Annan Plan, which aimed for the integration of Cyprus into the EU as a unified state, as an extension of the ‘harmony of civilizations’

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thesis, this discourse integrated yet another concept that sat well with the concept of 'pluralism' which Europe was argued to represent (Gül, 2006). This was also legitimized by means of the domestic concepts available in the Turkish discourse. In this vein, by redefining Turkey's support for both the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots in their goal of 'reaching the EU standards' as an extension of Turkey's own goal of 'reaching the level of the modern civilization', Turkey would not only contribute to the spread of the European norms and values (ibid) but would also, as stated by Erdoğan during his visit to the TRNC in 2002, "prove the world that democracy and Islam culture could coexist" (Erdoğan, 2002b).

### **Revising the Concepts of 'Full Independence', 'Sovereignty', and 'Non-Interference in Domestic Affairs'**

While the Westphalian articulations employed the concept of non-interference in the domestic affairs within the context of EU conditionality and, securitized the RoC's entry in the Union, the post-Westphalian arguments desecuritized the EU conditionalities and removed the "non-interference in the domestic affairs" from the context of Turkey's accession to the EU. Instead, the concept was emphasized in relation to the sovereign rights of the TRNC which furthered the view that Turkey respected the independence and democracy of Cyprus and preferred to refrain from deciding on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot state. Responding to a question whether Turkey would intervene after the Greek Cypriots voted "no" in the referendum for a unified Cyprus, Erdoğan said: "Cyprus is an independent state. As an independent state, she will make her decisions herself. We cannot intervene" (Erdoğan, 2002a).

In a similar vein, the JDP also gave priority to individualism as illustrated in Demirel's remarks above. While the security dimension was also absent in the earlier forms of this approach, the change in the discourse of the JDP from the earlier versions of this discourse involved the juxtaposition of the security-centered values to those based on individual rights:

Our party sees Turkey's full membership in the EU as a natural consequence of our modernization process... The ideological attitudes of the anti-EU segments of the population with regard to national sovereignty, national security, national interest, national and regional culture hinder the realization of the Copenhagen criteria. Our party subscribes to the view, which replaces these concepts that aspire to maintain the bureaucratic and statist tradition, with a democratic, civilian and pluralist understanding that ascribes a higher value to the individual and with that which is centered on the participation of the public (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, 2002).

Here we also see how this approach diverges from the Westphalian approach in the way it interprets the concepts of 'full-independence' and 'sovereignty'. While the Westphalian approach to these concepts underlines Turkey's ability to employ a foreign policy independently from the involvement of other states, according to the post-Westphalian approach, these principles are not seen irreconcilable with having a common policy with other states. As the remarks quoted above show, the post-Westphalian approach employs the concepts of 'sovereignty' and 'independence' in relation to the rights of the Turkish Cypriots rather than focusing on how the EU's interference in Turkish 'foreign' policy impinges upon the sovereign rights of Turkey.

In this regard, having a more compromising view on Cyprus has not been seen as submissive towards the EU, or as being undertaken only for the sake of becoming a full-member but as an extension of Turkey's 'domestically owned' concepts. Hence, from this approach too, there is no incompatibility between Turkey's European vocation and the Cyprus cause by virtue of this link and because both serve to reach the same goal.

### **Conclusion**

This contribution argued that it would be problematic to see Turkey's European orientation and the Cyprus cause as representing divergent paths of development if one takes the European integration not as the conformation of a country to a pre-set European identity or rationality but as a contested discursive process whereby the values attributed to European integration and identity resonate with the concepts available in the domestic repertoire. Remaining at the level of the discourse has led us to pursue a different form of inquiry as to whether certain policies represent a deviation from the general foreign policy orientation and how the identity construction takes place along this process. Hence the article proceeded to show how the European identity was discursively constructed, instead of examining the degree to which a proper European identity has taken roots in the Turkish context. Thought of this way, it would be erroneous to conceptualize a security-centered (or Westphalian, as discussed in the previous article) discourse as a representative of a non-European identity. Equally misleading would it be to assume stability within the party discourses given the contested nature of the each concept that is employed in the discursive arena.

Drawing on this insight and based on the differentiation made between the Westphalian and the post-Westphalian approaches, this study examined the main legitimating criteria for both European orientation and the Cyprus cause in the Turkish

foreign policy context. Indeed, such a differentiation has not proven unproblematic either, as these discourses were not mutually exclusive. Yet, the categorization chosen here mainly centered on how the former defined the Cyprus issue as a matter of Turkey's own national security and Turkey's EU accession as uncertain if not impossible, and how the latter sought to remove the security dimension out of the definition of the Cyprus as a 'national cause' and Turkey's European orientation. It was shown that both of these approaches attributed different meanings to the same concepts. It was also demonstrated that the legitimization of the Cyprus cause and Turkey's European vocation in terms of these concepts, as well as their translation in terms of the values attributed to the European integration, did not permit viewing the Cyprus cause and Turkey's European vocation as separate paths to be chosen over the other.

A more national security-centered interpretation of these concepts paralleled the securitization of the EU accession of the Republic of Cyprus and the involvement of the EU in the conflict. On the other hand, despite its occasional offensive moves, this approach did not suggest an alternative to Turkey's European vocation, but rather saw it as a right, pursued despite the 'surreptitious' efforts by the EU to exclude Turkey. In contrast, the post-Westphalian approach argued for the need to move away from this narrative as it was seen as derailing both the solution of the Cyprus issue and Turkey's aspiration to be a full member of the EU. Yet, as this study showed, this approach was not exempt from the concepts used by the Westphalian approach either, but merely constructed a different narrative out of them.

As to whether the recent post-Westphalian overture of the JDP can be seen to represent a lasting process, further remarks can be made here. While the post-Westphalian approach had long been present in the Turkish foreign policy discourse, it is reasonable to submit to the view that it gained more resonance after a clear timetable was set for Turkey's EU membership. Yet one should not read this as the dependence of the discourse solely on the dynamics between the EU and Turkey, although Turkey's security-centered approach reached its peak when Turkey was either far from acceding in the EEC (1970s) or excluded from EU's enlargement framework (the 1997 Luxembourg Summit). The remarks made after the suspension of the EU negotiations have confirmed this line of argumentation. Stating that even if the negotiations ended in a deadlock Turkey would still not move away from its European vocation revealed that the EU is seen as a *means* to 'reach the level of the contemporary civilization goal' that has been set long before the EU integration. It would then be fair to argue that not the prospect for membership but an affirmative

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interpretation of the dominant concepts circulating in the foreign policy discourse can serve as an *anchor* for Turkey's Europeanization.

Admittedly, the recent developments showed that one should not take the recent affirmative interpretation as an inevitable move towards a gradually more compromising attitude towards the Cyprus issue or an incremental divergence from the Westphalian approach that has occasionally entered the discursive repertoire of the present government. Just as the discourse of the JDP has provided a post-Westphalian approach to the Cyprus cause immediately after it came to power, it has not refrained from employing the nationalism of the opposition parties after being accused of challenging the foundational principles of the Republic. This is not surprising at all, given its oft-stated aspiration to be *the* center party of Turkey. This was crystallized into a rather Westphalian statement in the new program of the JDP government, which states:

As a result of our active policy on Cyprus pursued as of 2002, Turkey, which has long been beleaguered by the international pressure regarding Cyprus, has gained a great capacity for maneuver in the international arena without making any concession on our national interests. Until now, not a single soldier has been withdrawn from Cyprus, and not even a square meter of territory has been given away (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, 2007).

In the light of what has been argued above, it can be claimed that while a move from a Westphalian interpretation in the course of European integration is not a smooth or intractable process, its sustainability does not only depend on *who* hegemonizes the 'domestically-owned concepts' but also *which* meanings are seen as more legitimate in the domestic context. The above-quoted statement reveals that a total disappearance of the Westphalian approach to the Cyprus issue does not seem possible given the present discursive dynamics in Turkey. On the other hand, as the present contribution has endeavored to show, viewing the Cyprus cause as a policy to be pursued at the expense of European orientation is not possible given the present consensus on associating Turkey's European vocation with the maxim of 'reaching the level of the contemporary civilization.' The latent rhetoric on the ideational importance of the EU orientation is arguably another confirmation of this stance. This suggests once again that what has really anchored Turkey to her European orientation is more to do with how 'Europeanness' was defined in the local context rather than how 'European' Turkey was seen from abroad.

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