

Turkey Lost?

- An Attempt to Find a Roadmap for Turkey's
Integration into Europe -

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1998-99

Cambridge, May 1999

(Note: The analysis, views, ideas or policy suggestions as well as all errors and omissions contained herein are those of the author alone. Nothing in this paper should be taken as representing official or unofficial positions of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the German Federal Government.)

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Margaret Schotte, recently graduated from Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences, for her important contribution to this paper by way of both research and valuable suggestions.

I also wish to thank Donald D. Halstead for his critical questions and friendly suggestions while drafting this paper and his enormously valuable support in editing the final text.

Finally, I thank Steve Bloomfield, Tricia Hughes and Jason Lambert of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Fellows Program, for their encouragement and friendship over the past year.

As soon as the operation of the Agreement has advanced far enough to justify envisaging full acceptance by Turkey of the obligations arising out of the Treaty establishing the Community, the Contracting Parties shall examine the possibility of the accession of Turkey to the Community
(Article 28 of the Ankara Agreement¹)

Sooner or later, Turkey will take its rightful place in the European integration process without making any concessions from its national rights
(The 56th Government's Program, presented to the Turkish Grand National Assembly by Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit on 12 January 1999)²

We do not believe that European unity and integration will be fully successful if a key European country is set uniquely alone and apart
(Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, 14 October 1998)³

INTRODUCTION

This paper takes a European, specifically a German view. Nonetheless, it tries to take other opinions into due consideration, Turkish as well as American. It is partly based on personal experience and is meant as a practitioner's – not a political scientist's – independent contribution to a difficult and often highly emotional debate.

¹ Association Agreement between the European Economic Community and Turkey, signed on 12 September 1963, in force since 1 December 1964, usually quoted as the 'Ankara Agreement', see excerpts in Annex, p. 69.

² www.byegm.gov.tr/56hukumet/programme.html.

The paper does not try to answer the question,

Why is Turkey, in spite of its evident geopolitical and strategic importance, not yet a member state of the European Union?

Instead, it looks more into,

What can be done, what should be done, to make Turkey become a member of the European Union?

In order to do so, it addresses the following questions:

- Can or should Turkey become a member of the EU simply for geopolitical reasons? (Chapter 1)
- Does Turkey still aspire to EU membership? (Chapter 2)
- What alternative options does Turkey have? (Chapter 3)
- If Turkey's accession to the EU principally remains on the table (as the author believes), does the EU have the political will to integrate Turkey? From an EU viewpoint, what are the main obstacles? (Chapter 4)
- What is the background of these problems in Turkey? (Chapter 5)
- Are there additional political, cultural, or religious preconditions for Turkey's EU membership? (Chapter 6)
- Turkey and Germany: Is the integration of Turks in Germany a test case for Turkey's integration in Europe? (Chapter 7)
- What can/should be done (policy recommendations)? (Chapter 8)

³ Turgut Özal Memorial Lecture: "U.S.-Turkish Relations in an Age of Interdependence", Washington Institute on Near East Policy, October 14, 1998, http://www.state.gov/www/policy_remarks/1998/981014_talbott_turkey.html.

Relations between Turkey and Greece, as well as the **Cyprus issue**, are obviously of paramount importance for Turkey's accession perspective. Under the rule of unanimity for the acceptance of new EU members, Greek consent to Turkey's accession is necessary.

In view of the complexity of both issues, however, this paper does not try to propose new solutions in substance. Enough has been written about both issues. Nonetheless, the author believes that solving at least some of Turkey's domestic problems and, incidentally, those pending between the EU and Turkey, might help create an approach to peaceful settlement of these long-standing bitter conflicts.

1. GEOPOLITICAL AND STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

Geopolitical and strategic considerations are at the heart of the arguments of the Clinton administration⁴ and many US political scientists⁵, both of whom favor the inclusion of Turkey in the ongoing EU enlargement process, and ask that Turkey be given a status equal to the eleven other official candidates for membership. In view of Turkey's shaky internal situation and the recent Islamist trends in Turkish politics, the US fears that Turkey might be lost as an important ally in a strategically crucial location. American mainstream opinion, not familiar with the small print of EU procedures – and not burdened with the consequences, obviously – considers an EU membership perspective to be the best antidote for stemming the tide of Turkish domestic turmoil and enabling Turkey to continue the modernizing reform process begun in 1923 under Kemal Ataturk. This would, hopefully, harmonize the internal political, economic and social situation, as well as the development of the country with its longstanding external status as an important member of the Western security community. This US view coincides with the positions of many Western-oriented Turkish politicians and government officials, who have often used geopolitical arguments to strengthen Turkey's case with the EU.

No doubt, Turkey holds the center stage in a number of issues that are of great interest for the foreign policy, security, and economies of the US and the EU member

⁴ *ANA* December 6, 1997 (meeting of President Clinton with acting EU President, Prime Minister Juncker, and EU Commission President Santer in Washington, before the Luxembourg European Council).

states, as well as for future developments in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Near and Middle East.⁶ The EU member states fully agree with the US on the strategic importance of Turkey (“a political, economic and security relationship crucial to the stability of that region”).⁷ However, they have not reached the same conclusion. To them, Turkey’s accession to the European Union does not seem to be a matter for speedy decision. The European partners evidently have different priorities.⁸

In order to address these differing points of view, one has to ask:

- Should geopolitical and strategic arguments in Turkey’s case prevail, even when structural problems of an internal nature (e.g. human rights, Kurdish question, the state of Turkish democracy) make accession difficult?

The answer is clear: There is no hierarchy between geopolitical approaches and other sources of political decision-making. In fact, the geopolitical thinking of Turkish politicians may have caused even them to underestimate the real nature and weight of the problems in their relations with the EU, and to overestimate their leverage.

⁵ Brzezinski, p.204; Fuller, pp. 164-167; Blackwill and Stürmer, Conclusions (pp 299-305) p.301; Larrabee (1998) pp.188-189; Larrabee (1997), p.144 (referring to testimony of Richard Holbrooke), and p.152 (pivotal role in the Persian Gulf, Middle East, and Caspian region).

⁶ See Kramer and Müller, p.182f.

⁷ See Presidency conclusions of the European Council in Madrid (15 and 16 December 1995), in Annex to this paper, p. 72/73.

⁸ Kramer and Müller, p.183.

Geopolitical analysis helps to identify foreign policy objectives, particularly for longer term planning. It can enhance the political will to achieve such goals and set the bearings for the right course.

Geopolitical analysis, however, cannot substitute for the nitty-gritty work of precise mapping and of steering the boat in heavy weather. Europe is not a large ocean with free passage everywhere. It is more like a shallow sea, full of visible and invisible reefs and shoals, altering the course of European politics, making it more of a zigzag than a straight line.

Procedures in the EU often seem overly complicated to outsiders; however, decision-making based on unanimity, i.e. the search for compromise, *is* the political reality in the EU. Therefore, both Turkey and the US should take European discussions about structural problems in Turkey's relations with the EU far more seriously.⁹ Otherwise, there is the risk that the whole policy of Turkish accession as soon as possible will break down, and that more damage is done than benefit created.

Conclusion

Geopolitical arguments alone are not sufficient to make the case for Turkey's EU membership.¹⁰

⁹ Ibid., p.185.

¹⁰ Balkir and Williams, (Introduction: *Turkey and Europe*, pp.3-21), pp. 17 and 18: "The EC's relationships with Turkey are dictated less by geopolitics and more by economic logic and domestic politics".

2. DOES TURKEY STILL WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER STATE OF THE EU?

Under present circumstances, official Turkish policy shows little interest in joining the EU. After the December 1997 meeting of the European Council in Luxembourg, the Turkish government froze its political relations with the EU. Only the economic cooperation in the framework of the existing Association Agreement and Customs Union continues. Turkish public opinion, as expressed in the often highly emotional media, changed abruptly from firm support for Turkish membership to contempt. The decisions of the Luxembourg European Council, which did not include Turkey in the official list of candidates, have clearly hurt Turkish national pride and self-esteem, an effect that will not easily disappear.

Even traditionally Western-oriented Turkish politicians and intellectuals are today at best lukewarm about Europe, not to mention those who have had their doubts all along. The cool words on Europe in Prime Minister Ecevit's government program of January 1999 reflect the present climate well: "Rightful place" and "no concessions" are the key words. The results of the April 1999 elections do not seem to have changed this state of affairs.

3. TAKING A SHORT- OR MID-TERM PERSPECTIVE, IF EU MEMBERSHIP IS NO LONGER ON THE TURKISH AGENDA, WHAT ARE ITS OPTIONS?

- An independent role as a great regional power, distancing itself from the West and relying strongly on its own military potential, developing its trade and economic relations in the region and exploiting its geostrategic position at the crossroads between Western Europe, the Balkans, the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia – including the Caspian oil routes.¹¹
- Alternatively, continued, possibly even strengthened co-operation in and with Western organizations (e.g. NATO, WEU, Council of Europe, OSCE) but acting largely independently and without further aspirations to EU membership;
- A special relationship with the EU, based on the existing customs union and the “European Strategy for Turkey”,¹² but – if at all – only a possible long-term option for EU membership.

First Option: Independent Regional Power

This option clearly is the strategic nightmare scenario for the West, especially if it were combined with an increased Islamist influence in Turkish politics. In view of the results of the recent elections, however, the latter prospect now seems to be less likely.

Implemented under ‘secularist’ auspices, however, this option could be attractive for

¹¹ See Buzan and Diez, p. 51.

¹² Commissioned by the European Council Luxembourg in December 1997, see Annex, p. 74/75, paragraphs 31-36 (“a strategy to prepare Turkey for accession by bringing it closer to the European Union in every field”).

traditional Kemalists, because it would seem to reflect Kemal Ataturk's original concept of making Turkey strong and independent. Turkish official and public reactions after Luxembourg pointed in this direction.¹³

Nonetheless, there are flaws in it, which make a successful realization of this option rather unlikely:

Turkey's relations with its Arab neighbors in general remain difficult. The historical Ottoman legacy is still a burden for Turkish foreign policy; the cultural gap continues and mutual mistrust prevails.¹⁴

Relations with **Syria** are tense. The Syro-Turkish conflict over the Euphrates's water, resulting from the GAP project¹⁵ in southeastern Anatolia, remains unsolved. Long term Syrian support for PKK-chief Ocalan, when he was resident in Damascus, has poisoned the atmosphere. Turkey's massive policy to get Syria to expell him was successful, but did not improve the climate. Syria's claims to the formerly Syrian Hatay province (Alexandrette) are still maintained.

With **Iraq**, Turkey shares certain common interests regarding the Kurdish question: both want to impede Kurdish independence in northern Iraq, which might develop into the core of a larger state, affecting Turkey as well.¹⁶ However, the problem of repeated

¹³ Compare Fuller, pp.37-97, for Turkish options and problems.

¹⁴ Rouleau, p.115.

¹⁵ The Southeastern Anatolia Project, which envisages the construction of dams and irrigation networks on both the Euphrates and the Tigris.

¹⁶ Randal, pp.270 and 271.

Turkish violations of Iraqi sovereignty by military interventions against PKK positions in northern Iraq equally divides both governments. Iraq was, and potentially might be again in the future, an important economic partner for the Turkish southeast. But this alone does not provide for a stable relationship, which is – as in the case of Syria – damaged by a serious conflict of interests over water resources (i.e., the Euphrates and Tigris).

As with Iraq (and potentially even Syria), Turkey also shares common interests with **Iran** in keeping the Kurds down. Like Syria, however, Iran has played the Kurdish card against Turkey, supporting Talabani's PUK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan), and undermining Barzani's KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) in northern Iraq, which enjoys Ankara's favor in exchange for keeping (at least at times) the guerrillas of Ocalan's PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) away from Turkey's borders. In addition, both countries are in a traditional competition for regional power. Tense ideological relations between the secular Kemalists in Sunni Turkey and the mullahs in the Shiite Iranian theocracy remain a great and longstanding problem; this, all the more, as Turkey continues to host a large number of Iranian refugees within its borders. Turkish Prime Minister Erbakan's Islamist initiative in 1996 to improve relations and build up economic ties was rather short lived, if not stillborn.

The military cooperation with **Israel** – initially an anti-Islamist move of the Turkish military against Erbakan's attempts for a more independent, pro-Islamic foreign policy – does not really eliminate these problems. In reality it could become more of a problem for Turkey than a long-term solution, by alienating and antagonizing Turkey's Arab and

Islamic neighbors (Syria, Iraq, Iran, as well as Egypt), thus creating a greater security problem, should Turkey distance itself from the West at the same time. Even if there are obvious short-term advantages for both partners (e.g. military cooperation, transfer of weapon technology to Turkey, training facilities for the Israeli airforce, possible intelligence sharing), the security benefits for Turkey in a long-term perspective are rather doubtful.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of the above option might be Turkey's relationship with **Russia**.¹⁷ Historical antagonism and rivalry over the Caucasus and Central Asia are still alive. Turkish animosities over constant heavy Soviet pressures during the Cold War are not simply a matter of the past. "Belied at a superficial level by the successful trade relationship...in the 1980s and 1990s....diplomatic tensions are never far from the surface".¹⁸

The threat analysis of the Turkish General Staff continues to be focused on Russia.¹⁹ In May 1994, General Gures, chief of the Turkish General Staff, expressed the true feelings on the military side when he criticized Russia for continuing to pursue an imperial policy in the region and thus posing a considerable threat to Turkey.²⁰ As do others, Turkey follows Russia's policy in the 'near abroad' with open mistrust.²¹

A list of Turkish-Russian conflicts of interest includes:

¹⁷ Fuller, pp.176 –177.

¹⁸ Pope, pp. 79 and 80.

¹⁹ Larrabee (1997), p.146, sees a shift in Turkish threat perception from Russia southward; however, he agrees that Turkey still is considerably concerned about Russia.

²⁰ Pope, p.19.

- Turkey's handling of its control over the Black Sea straits
- Deployment of Russian troops in Armenia and Georgia
- Competition for influence in Azerbaijan and the Central Asian republics
- Pipeline routes for the transport of Caspian oil and gas to the West
- Russian attempts to gain a foothold in Cyprus (Russia's S 300 air-defense-missile deal with the Greek-Cypriot government, even if it has in the meantime been cancelled)
- Russian policy towards the Kurds (PKK)
- Turkish role in the Chechnya crisis.

This is not compensated by the relatively few areas of closer Turkish-Russian co-operation, mostly in the economic field:

- Trade (especially the Turkish construction industry in Russia)
- Black Sea Economic Co-operation (initiated by Turkey in 1990)
- Possible arms sales by Russia to Turkey (where Western allies restrict exports in view of the internal Turkish situation and Kurdish issue),

The establishment of the independent **Central Asian republics** and **Azerbaijan** in 1992 gave birth (or a Pan-Turanist²² rebirth?) to the Turkish vision of a community of Turkic republics and peoples that would extend from Turkey to the borders of China.

The corresponding foreign policy initiative under the leadership of Turgut Özal, however, bore little fruit. When Turkey blared the trumpet to take the lead in shaping the new

²¹ Larrabee (1997), p.146.

²² The ideal of political unification of Turkey with the Turkic-speaking populations of Central Asia and western China, also called Pan-Turkism.

world order in Central Asia, there was little following in the region. Certainly, the new leaders in the former Soviet republics were interested in receiving as much political support and economic assistance as possible. However, they had no plans to replace one 'big brother' with another. Independence for them meant keeping all their options open, and they saw (and see) no necessity in using Turkey as an intermediary in their relations with the industrialized West, which they prefer to pursue directly. In addition, the limits of Turkish economic potential soon became visible, even if Turkish business and small enterprises continue to be very present in these markets. The ethnic, linguistic, and cultural linkages, as well, are not nearly as intimate as Turkish politicians often like to believe. In any case, the first euphoria is long gone; there is no real place for Turkish leadership in this field.²³

Equally questionable are the auspices for a strong Turkish position in the **Caucasus**, where Russian troops continue to project Russian power. Relatively close political, economic, and cultural relations exist only with **Azerbaijan**. Turkey continues to support the Azeri position in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. As a consequence, historical and present conflicts still dominate Turkey's relationship with neighboring **Armenia**. More or less normal relations exist with **Georgia**; this is not a great asset, however, for demonstrating Turkish leadership in the region.

In its geographic location Turkey offers some of the most important and interesting alternatives (e.g. Black Sea straits, Baku-Ceyhan) to transporting the **Caspian energy**

²³ Rouleau, pp.111-112.; Larrabee (1997), p.146, differs from this assessment; he sees "new opportunities and options [for Turkey] in Central Asia and the Caucasus". His assessment, however,

resources to the Western markets. However, these routes represent only a few of several possible alternatives. Turkey itself does not want to endanger the Bosphorus and Istanbul by massive international oil-transport. The alternative Baku-Ceyhan route, although largely supported politically by the US administration, would be extremely expensive, which, with the present low oil prices, makes this route for a pipeline more a longer term vision than a short-term perspective. In addition, there is no guarantee for exclusivity. As a possible transit corridor, Turkey has to compete with Russia, Roumania, Bulgaria and Greece (and possibly Iran). The producing countries themselves are definitely more interested in diversified transport routes than in depending on one country alone for their market access.

The **Black Sea Economic Cooperation** that Turkey initiated is an interesting long-term project. It is, however, far from providing Turkey with a stable, long-term economic option.

Conclusion

Turkish political analysts often describe Turkey as a country surrounded by enemies. This may be exaggerated, but there is a grain of truth in this scenario: Turkey has few friends among its many difficult neighbors. Overall, the option for a role as great regional power, acting largely independently, is not at all a safe one; it would be more the role of the lonely wolf. Turkey would have to face considerable security risks (as perceived by Turkey itself), which could even increase, because of the probable alienation from the Western partners (NATO), even if it further developed its military capacities. On the

still seems to reflect the initial euphoria in Turkey (and elsewhere), which has lost ground in the

other hand, it would gain only marginal economic benefits, if any at all. The main markets for Turkey remain in the West (EU and US).

Second Option: Western Security Umbrella, Otherwise Acting Independently.

This option would only continue the present situation, including all its inconveniences. It could serve as a possible interim plan, but not as a long-term solution.

Third Option: 'Special Relationship' With The EU, Based On The Existing Customs Union And The European Strategy For Turkey, But, If At All, With Only A Long-Term Membership Perspective.²⁴

For Turkey, politically and economically, this option might be the most interesting one, leaving Ankara with far greater independence of foreign policy action than being a 'candidate' with a shorter term membership perspective. Under this arrangement, Turkey would continue to enjoy free access to the Single European Market. In the framework of the 'European Strategy for Turkey', economic and political cooperation, as well as cooperation in other fields, could be developed further, depending on how far Turkey wanted to engage. The door to the EU would be kept open, at least in principle. Turkey would be free to decide if, when, and how it would want to extend this relationship.

Until recently, however, Turkish officials and politicians have rejected this option. Their insistence on having Turkey recognized officially as a 'candidate' and treated completely equal to other candidates for EU membership reflects the fear that such a 'special relationship', instead of serving as a possible intermediate phase, even for a longer

meantime.

²⁴ Buzan and Diez, pp. 52 – 54, seem to favor this option.

period, would become permanent, ultimately leaving Turkey in limbo and practically excluding accession to the Union.

Furthermore, this option would not satisfy important Turkish interests in taking an active part in co-deciding matters that address immediate Turkish interests (e.g. EU trade and tariff policies), being linked to the EU through the customs union but not being part of the EU decision-making process itself.

Conclusion

Although these alternative options for Turkish foreign and security policy are certainly being considered at present in the Turkish government and foreign policy establishment, in the end, none are satisfying, at least not in a long-term view.

Rather, experience shows that Turkey has never completely given up its European aspirations. Turkey-EU relations have seen somber moments before (in the 1970s and 1980s after military coups).²⁵ In spite of all the setbacks, however, the question of how to extend Turkey-EU relations, and the Turkish ambition to join the EU, has always come back on the table, for various reasons:

- Turkey's economic interests, as well as security policy interests, in a broader and long-term view, make EU membership the most attractive strategic option. Other options may be more satisfying to Turkish national pride, but only in a short-term perspective.

²⁵ Buzan and Diez, p.43.

- A sincere ambition to belong fully to Europe (overcoming the somewhat limited Kemalist modernization or Westernization idea) and to be accepted as full-fledged European, in every sense equal to other European nations (hence the profound irritation after Luxembourg!), has taken deep roots in Turkish politics and society.²⁶

Whatever the short-term developments, Europe should eventually expect a proud Turkey come knocking on its door again, and prepare for this case.²⁷

²⁶ Larrabee (1997), pp.159 and 168. Also compare Rouleau, pp. 115-116.

²⁷ Balkir and Williams, (Conclusions: "Looking to the Future", pp. 241-243) p. 243.

4. DOES THE EU WANT TURKEY AS A MEMBER?

Obviously, there is not just one “European” view. Different EU governments in the past, in public or in private, have reacted quite differently to Turkish demands (if they reacted at all).

As a rule, one may differentiate reactions of EU member states depending on the immediate impact of a possible Turkish accession on their specific national interests. Greece reacts differently from Ireland. Turkish migration may be a problem for Germany, or the Netherlands, but not for Portugal. Scandinavian countries, for their own political reasons, concentrate prominently on human rights issues in Turkey; others show less profile in this regard. As a rule, the less directly concerned a country or government is, the more open is its (declared) position vis-à-vis a possible Turkish membership.

However, even if there are hesitations and certain doubts, the EU as a whole has a genuine interest in closely embracing Turkey, as repeatedly expressed in the conclusions of the European Councils.²⁸

The Development Of EU-Turkey Relations

Preamble and Article 28 of the Ankara Agreement (see Annex , p. 69) give Turkey a membership perspective. After a rather frosty period in the aftermath of the 1980

²⁸ See Annex, p. 71 – 77.

military coup, Turkey applied for membership in the European Community in 1987, a surprise for many observers inside and outside Turkey.²⁹

The Community did not react completely negatively, but it adjourned *sine die* the decision on Turkey's application.³⁰ The EC Commission stated that "it could not recommend starting accession negotiations with **any** country before 1993 at the earliest", until the EC was reshaped internally (objectives of the 'Single Act'). The Commission also concluded that Turkey would have difficulties adjusting itself economically to the medium-term constraints in the case of accession. In addition, the Commission mentioned "certain substantial political problems such as the expansion of political pluralism....human rights and the rights of minorities, the persistence of disputes with a Member State [Greece] and the lack of a solution to the Cyprus problem." However, in view of the EC interest in strengthening its relations with Turkey, and "without casting doubts in any way on Turkey's eligibility to accede," it proposed measures to help Turkey in modernizing politically and economically. The EC Council adopted the Commission opinion on 5 February 1990.³¹

During the following years, efforts to re-enforce this cooperation concentrated mainly on moving to the final stage of the customs union, as foreseen in the Ankara agreement, and resuming financial cooperation (which had been blocked by a Greek veto). After an internal EU compromise in March 1995 (linking customs union and financial cooperation

²⁹ Eralp, "Turkey and the European Community", p. 33.

³⁰ Compare Eralp, *ibid.*, pp. 36-41.

³¹ Bull. EC 12-1989 pt.2.2.37 (see Annex, p. 70).

with Turkey with accession negotiations with Cyprus), the customs union formally entered into force on 31 December 1995.

The Turkish government of Prime Minister Tansu Ciller celebrated the customs union agreement as a step to full membership. The EU gave no such assessment.

During the preparatory phase for the December 1997 **European Council in Luxembourg**, Turkey emphasized that it expected the European Council to accept Turkey formally as a candidate, with the same status as the Central and Eastern European applicants, including participation in the pre-accession strategy and financial programs. Otherwise, Turkey would withdraw from its political relations with the Union.³²

The Luxembourg European Council confirmed for the first time on the highest EU level "Turkey's eligibility for accession to the European Union,"...."judged on the basis of the same criteria as the other applicant states". While the Council did not include Turkey in the pre-accession strategy developed for the other Central and Eastern European candidates, it decided to draw up a separate strategy "to prepare Turkey for accession by bringing it closer to the European Union in every field" (see Annex, p. 74 and 75, paragraphs 31 – 36). The European Council also announced that Turkey would be invited to the 'European Conference'.

Although this **European Council** position **practically equated Turkey with the other candidates**, it did not fulfill Turkish expectations. **Turkey reacted sharply**.

³² Foreign Minister Ismail Cem: "if the EU does not consider Turkey to be a candidate, then that is the EU's problem – there is nothing we can do about it....That would lead to dropping the EU from Turkey's political agenda." *BBC News*, 25 November 1997.

Immediately after the council, the Turkish government stated that Turkey considered “its candidature for full membership to the European Union a right deriving from the Ankara Agreement.” It declared Turkey had been discriminated against by “not [having] been evaluated within the same well-intentioned approach and objective criteria as the other candidates.” “Partial, prejudiced and exaggerated assessments were made about Turkey’s internal structure and its foreign policy including the issue of Cyprus.”

“Attempts have been made to impose unacceptable political conditions, which have concealed intentions.” Ankara also announced that it would not come to the European Conference and, while maintaining the association relations, suspended the political dialogue with the Union (i.e. Cyprus, relations with Greece, human rights, Kurdish issue).³³

Turkish Complaints

In their dealings with the EU over the past few years, Turkish politicians have countered European critiques of conditions in Turkey by a number of complaints vis-à-vis the EU:

- **Turkey has a right of accession**, based on the Ankara Agreement. However, the EU disregards this obligation, a betrayal of former promises.

This interpretation of Article 28 and the preamble of the Ankara Agreement is legally weak. The agreement establishes a right and an obligation “to *examine* the possibility of the accession of Turkey to the Community” as soon as Turkey could fully accept the obligations of the Treaty [of Rome].³⁴ It does not give Turkey an unconditional or

³³ Statement of the Turkish government, 14 December 1997.

³⁴ See Annex, p. 69.

unilateral right of accession, and it leaves open what the result of such examination would be.

- **The EU does not fulfill its obligations**, referring principally to the fact that several Finance Protocols, and stipulated financial support to overcome the initial difficulties arising for Turkey out of the establishment of the customs union, were not honored by the EU.

This complaint is valid. Due to repeated Greek vetoes during the internal EU decision-making process, the EU has in fact failed to honor these contractual obligations. The positions among EU member states regarding this problem are clearly 14:1 (Greece). However, under existing procedural rules in the EU, consensus is necessary. In addition, in view of the human rights situation in Turkey, the European Parliament blocked funds destined for Turkey in 1996, except for programs concerning the promotion of democracy, human rights, and civil society.

- **Discrimination against Turkey** by applying better treatment and financial conditions for Central and Eastern European (CEE) candidates (pre-accession strategy).

This Turkish critique ignores the fact that, in their preparation for EU membership, the CEE candidates economically will have to go a longer way and overcome greater difficulties than Turkey. Their starting points are different. While Turkey has long had a market economy, the CEE countries face far more complex challenges in adapting to the EU. They have to substitute capitalist market economy for socialist command

economies. In the view of the EU, this important difference justifies a different strategy: different cases should be treated differently.

- **Unequal and unfair treatment:** While the CEE candidates have to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria for accession, Turkey is asked to do so already to qualify as a 'candidate'.

While this complaint might appear more as a question of semantics than of substance, it actually mirrors difficulties within the EU in agreeing on a common language vis-à-vis Turkey. It also reflects Turkish expectations that once it has been recognized as an 'official candidate' it might also participate in the financial benefits of a pre-accession strategy. However, there is no such differentiation in timing regarding the the accession criteria in comparison with the CEE candidates as Turkey maintains. The European Council in Luxembourg has clearly confirmed "Turkey's eligibility for **accession** to the European Union. Turkey will be judged on the basis of the same criteria as the other applicant countries" ³⁵

The 'Philosophy' And Development Of The European Union

The main question therefore is: Does Turkey politically and economically fit into the European Union, as it has developed since the early days of the Treaty of Rome in 1957?

³⁵ Annex, p. 74, Par. 31.

A comparison of Articles 1 – 7 of the Treaty on European Union (EUT), as amended in Amsterdam in 1997, with the original provisions of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, illustrates the important transformation of the EU from a mere economic community to a true political union, “founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States” (Article 6 (1), EUT).³⁶

The invitation to other European states still stands: “Any European State which respects the principles set out in Article 6(1) may apply to become a member of the Union” (Article 49 EUT).³⁷

In comparison to 1963, however, the conditions for EU membership, as set out in the ‘**Copenhagen criteria**’ adopted by the Copenhagen European Council on 21-22 June 1993, certainly have become considerably more complex and difficult to fulfill.³⁸

- “Accession will take place as soon as an associated country is able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions required.”
- “Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.

³⁶ Annex, p. 77.

³⁷ Full text see Annex, p.78.

³⁸ Balkir and Williams, (Introduction: “Turkey and Europe”, pp. 3-21), p. 15.

Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including the aims of political, economic and monetary union."

- "The Unions capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is also an important consideration in the general interest of both the Union and the candidate countries."³⁹

It is important to keep in mind that these 'Copenhagen criteria' were not invented for Turkey; nevertheless, they apply to Turkey as to any other candidate.⁴⁰ They reflect not only the economic, but in particular the political development of the European Union, as reflected in Article 6(1) EUT.⁴¹

Turkish politicians and officials do not always seem to understand or accept this, when they speak of unfair 'additional political conditions' and 'concessions', which Turkey will not make. Focused on the early membership perspective given by the Ankara Agreement, but obviously not really familiar with the political development of the EU in the meantime, they seem to have believed it would be possible to 'have their cake and eat it too'; that is, maintain Turkey's political (and military) internal and external independence and freedom of action on the one hand, while pursuing economic integration with the EU on the other. It seems that, in their view, the EU has continued to be nothing more than a free-trade group and economic community, not a

³⁹ Annex, p. 71/72.

⁴⁰ Conclusions of European Councils in Luxembourg, paragraph 31 (see Annex, p. 74) and Vienna, Annex III (see Annex, p. 76/77).

⁴¹ When Kramer and Müller, p.186, argue that the European goal of an "ever closer union" becomes obsolete with an EU enlargement to twenty-five member states, and that Turkey's participation should be re-evaluated under that perspective, they disregard the essential necessity to provide

community of values. Consequently, they reacted rather critically to attempts from the EU to discuss political matters in Turkey (such as human rights and the Kurdish question), either rejecting this as illegitimate interference into internal affairs, or by glossing over the existing problems.⁴²

In recent years, Turkish officials have repeatedly asked for a precise list of what the EU is expecting of Turkey. In addition to the 'Copenhagen criteria', the first **Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession**⁴³ of 4 November 1998 provides for exactly that. In so far as it does so, it is an important reference document for the future development of EU-Turkey relations. Based on the 'Copenhagen criteria', it spells out all existing problems in great detail, in particular in the political field, while at the same time fully appreciating whatever progress Turkey has made, especially in the economic area. It is factual and fair in its observations, without glossing over anything.

Examining the **economic criteria**, the report gives a rather positive assessment.

In view of the **adoption of the 'acquis' of the EU**, the report is also basically positive.

Considerably greater problems, however, are listed regarding the **political criteria**.

even such a looser union with a common set of democratic values, as identified by the 'Copenhagen criteria'.

⁴² Eralp, "Turkey and the European Community", p. 32.

⁴³ EU Bulletin 11-1998; also in website <http://europa.eu.int>.

The assessment by the Commission corresponds largely to the results found by the US administration in the "Turkey Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1998", published by the US Department of State in February 1999.⁴⁴

In both documents the key role the **armed forces** play in the Turkish body politic and the lack of civil control over them are viewed rather critically. In addition, the EU report mentions the **Turkey-Greece dispute** and the **Cyprus** conflict as problem areas in Turkey's relations with the Union.

Despite the critical aspects of the Commission's report, Turkey reacted positively to its positioning in the context of the 'candidates'. When he presented the report, Commissioner van den Broek confirmed the revaluation of Turkey as the "12th candidate." In a way, the report and its subsequent general approval by the General Affairs Council and the European Council in Vienna may have broken the ice in EU-Turkey relations, or at least started to melt it.

⁴⁴ U.S. Department of State, *Turkey Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1998*, 1999, www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1998_hrp_report/turkey.html.

5. THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN TURKEY – WILL TURKEY BE ABLE TO FULFILL THE ‘COPENHAGEN CRITERIA’?

On its website, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs describes Turkey, among other things, as follows: “World’s only secular Muslim democracy....Mature democracy: free elections (13 in 50 years); multi-parties (11 in 1995 election....including one purporting to represent Kurdish interests); free media (most private TV channels in Europe)....Free and varied privately-owned media able to criticize all government officials, policies, programs....Tradition of human rights: freedom of religion (welcomed persecuted Jews in 1492, again in WW II); women’s rights (full suffrage 1934)....Full Western legal system.”⁴⁵

Nonetheless, Turkey is receiving strong criticism for insufficiency of democracy, violations of human rights, and abuse of minorities, especially the Kurds. There is abundant evidence that such criticism is not unfounded. The constitutional reality seems to contradict written law.

Most of the problems mentioned in the EU and US reports have been subject to intense debate for a long time, internationally and in Turkey as well. Little, however, has changed over the past years. The constitutional reforms of 1995 in part still remain to be implemented in regular legislation. In recent years, Turkish governments have repeatedly announced important reforms but have largely failed to deliver. Reforms are often discussed, but rarely happen. Former Prime Minister Tansu Ciller ran her 1995

⁴⁵ “Snapshot of Turkey”, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, “www.byegm.gov.tr/snapshot.htm.” 17 February 1999.

election campaign under the banner of an early EU accession, warning against the imminent risk of an Islamist takeover, if Europe did not respond positively. She promised far-reaching changes and reforms in Turkey to the European Parliament and Turkey's partners in Europe. Yet, she herself later formed a coalition with the Islamist leader, Necmettin Erbakan, making him prime minister.⁴⁶ Will a future Turkish government have a majority large enough in parliament to vote for and implement the necessary reforms?

Is Turkey unable to reform? To answer that question, one has to look at the roots of the problem, not the symptoms (e.g. human rights, Kurdish issue).

The basic problem of contemporary Turkey seems to be how to reconcile Kemal Ataturk's legacy with the developments in modern Turkish society.

Stephane Yerasimos defines **Kemalism**, which was launched as an **official ideology** in May 1931, as:

The attempt at a transformation of society according to the Western model, perceived as the universal model of civilization and progress, and considering this transformation of social structures – of mentalities – as a necessary, and sometimes sufficient, precondition for economic progress. In its authoritarian – even autocratic – character, this transformation was elitist, if one considers the

⁴⁶ Randal, p.255.

results achieved and aimed, and despite an ostensible quest for popular roots, it attacked a large part of popular culture.⁴⁷

Hugh and Nicole Pope argue that, "in many ways, Ataturk has not yet relinquished the hold he had on his nation when he was alive....He led Turkey on the path of Westernization, but left it stranded half-way to full democratization because, deep down, he was not a democrat."⁴⁸

The inherent contradiction between "Modernization" or "Westernization" on one side and the need to hold the Turkish state and society together on the other, has led the republican establishment to the strategy of emphasizing again and again **nationalism and state authority as overriding principles**, while putting less emphasis on the equally "Western" principle of individual freedom and development. **Turkish nationalism-patriotism in fact replaced Islam** as the ideological basis of social organization and political culture.⁴⁹

The personal, almost religious **cult of Ataturk** (who died sixty-one years ago) demonstrates a stand-still that has blocked a harmonious development of Turkish politics and society, and, at the same time, prevented them from developing his ideas further and truly modernizing the country in a continuous way.

⁴⁷ Yerasimos, pp.91 and 92; Vaner, p. 238.; see also Buzan and Diez, p.44.

⁴⁸ Pope, p.51.

⁴⁹ Ahmad, p. 61.

The Indivisible State

The Turkish Republic, as it is today, is the result of the successful resistance of Kemal Ataturk and his followers against carving up the rests of the Ottoman Empire in the **Treaty of Sevres (1920)**, which had only left the Turks in control of territory in Central Anatolia and along the Black Sea coast. Many Turks still believe that Europeans have never given up their plans of dividing Turkey up and interpret Western criticism of Turkey's Kurdish policy correspondingly.

Although Kemal Ataturk successfully secured Turkey's territory in the **Treaty of Lausanne (1923)** after three years of bitter fighting (1919-1922), fear of territorial dismemberment – the “Trauma of Sevres” – remains an important psychological factor.⁵⁰ Safeguarding the **territorial unity and integrity of the republic** is an absolute priority and longstanding *leitmotiv* in Turkish politics, embedded not only in the Turkish constitution, but in every politician's mind.

Nationalism

The traumatic experience of threatened statehood also finds its expression in the Kemalist doctrine of a **unified Turkish nation**, regardless of the existence of numerous different ethnic groups (Kurds, Arabs, Laz, Bosnians, Albanians, Tartars, Circassians, Abkhazians, Kyrgyz, Uighurs and others) within the borders of modern Turkey. The Kemalist reformers inherited a society in which the notion of a Turkish identity was nonexistent: the very term ‘Turk’ in the late Ottoman Empire was used

⁵⁰ Randal, p. 255.

derogatorily to denote backward peasants and tribesmen.⁵¹ Thus, after being founded in 1923, the Turkish Republic had first to create its own nation. Consequently, the original republican concept of the “Turks” embraced all (Muslim) people living on Turkish territory, whatever their ethnicity, officially recognizing only Greeks, Armenians and Jews as minorities. Interestingly enough, this definition of minorities is based not on ethnic but religious differentiation. This makes the Turkish republic both an heir of the French revolution (the egalitarian idea of the *citoyen*, independent of ethnic background) and of the Ottoman Empire (the religiously defined *millet*s of the non-believers).

In the attempt to assimilate not only those minorities who had been living in Anatolia for long time, but also embracing the numerous refugees from former Ottoman lands, the ‘nation’- concept gradually became more ethnically defined as being “Turkish” by race, language and history. As a consequence, **nationalism** figures prominently among the **six Kemalist “fundamental and unchanging principles”**, which were incorporated into Article 2 of the Constitution of 1937: “The Turkish State is Republican, Nationalist, Populist, Statist, Secularist, and Revolutionary-Reformist”.⁵²

Secularism

These revolutionary Kemalist principles aimed at **modernizing the country** and discontinuing the Ottoman tradition, in which **Islam** defined individual identity as well as political legitimacy, and functioned as a mechanism of social control.⁵³ Republican reformers and intellectuals viewed religion as an impediment to progress. Of all the basic

⁵¹ Ahmad, pp. 77 and 78.

⁵² Ahmad, p. 63f; see also Buzan and Diez, p.44.

⁵³ Toprak, *Islam and the Political Development in Turkey*, p. 123.

principles of Kemalism, **secularism** is the line of demarcation between conservatism and reformism.⁵⁴ In his attempt to modernize and Westernize Turkey, Ataturk wanted to eliminate any conservative influence of Islam from political, legal, educational and social life. Republican secularist reforms aimed not only at a separation of state and religion, but at the **state** in effect **taking control of religion** in all affairs pertaining to the public sphere.⁵⁵ Religion was to become a strictly personal and private matter.

While this certainly changed the character of the state, one must question whether it changed Turkish society. The cultural gap between the Westernized elite and the more traditional masses who have kept their Islamic roots persists.⁵⁶ In addition, as Feride Acar points out, republican ideology and Ottoman legacy “share more commonalities than first meets the eye.” Kemalism “did not promote individualism and individual rights....On the contrary, it emphasized communitarism, by substituting ‘nation’ for the ‘community of the believers’ as the object of unconditional allegiance and loyalty.”⁵⁷

The Role Of The Military

Opinion polls in Turkey show, by an overwhelming majority, that the armed forces are the most trusted institution in the country. They are considered to be truly honest in their aims and immune to corruption.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.122.

⁵⁵ Acar, p. 220.

⁵⁶ Toprak, *Islam and the Political Development in Turkey*, p. 122.

⁵⁷ Acar, p.224.

Based on this remarkable popular support, the Turkish generals claim to be the true preservers of Ataturk's revolutionary ideas and the advocates for modernity and progress.⁵⁸

Since the 1960s, the military has developed into a virtually **autonomous institution within the Turkish state**.⁵⁹ Reliance on state authority instead of civic engagement, on reform from above instead of following the political will expressed by the Turkish people in elections, finds its best expression in the strong position the Turkish Constitution of 1982 provides for the military in the form of the **National Security Council**. This constitutional and political situation is reminiscent of the 'national security doctrine' that spread throughout Latin American countries in the 1960s and 1970s.

The basic dilemma of the military as well as many of the traditional Kemalist party leaders is that they do not really trust their own people's ability to find the right way, even after seventy-five years of the republic. Their views and actions are authoritarian, not democratic.

The military does not trust the politicians either, deeming it necessary to voice their concerns (and suggestions) in systematic ways, which Turkish leaders are well advised not to disregard (Erbakan learned that in 1997): All really important political decisions need the backing of the National Security Council in which the top generals play a decisive role.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ For a more detailed analysis of the role of the military in Turkish politics, see Vaner and Hale.

⁵⁹ Ahmad, p.12.

⁶⁰ Pope, p.150.

Turkish society today is probably too advanced and pluralistic to be kept much longer under such military guardianship. At the same time, however, the political strength of the military is the direct result of the weaknesses in the civil political arena.

Political Parties

Political parties in Turkey have been and continue to be dominated by leaders who – one could say – almost “own” them. Party politics are mainly based on personalities, not programs. Ideological and programmatic differentiation between the various parties, both on the right and the left, is rather limited. The party leaders themselves choose the candidates for elections; they alone distribute the benefits of holding political office. Their strong position, supported by inner circles of confidants, makes inner-party democracy almost nonexistent.

The hierarchical and authoritarian structure of political parties leads to dissident members of parliament often deserting the party for which they were elected and joining another; or they found their own party. Personal antagonism among party leaders makes building stable coalitions very difficult, and frequently impossible. Constructive opposition between parties is virtually unknown. In addition, cases like the famous Susurluk scandal,⁶¹ have revealed the inclination of clientelistic party politics towards corruption, as well as the inability of the political establishment and legal system to deal with fighting it successfully.⁶²

These circumstances have led to electorate frustration and dissatisfaction with some of the traditional parties and certain party leaders, favoring, as a result, the ascendance of the Islamists in their changing incarnations. The Islamists owed at least as much of their electoral success not to firm Islamic believers, but to the protest votes of citizens

⁶¹ Randal, p. 252f.

⁶² Kramer and Müller, p.180.

dissatisfied with the established political set-up, and the inability of the secular parties to cope with Turkey's problems.⁶³

The 'Secularism vs. Islamism' Debate

The struggle over the role of the Islamists in Turkish politics and the recent anti-Islamist campaign of the military demonstrates the political crisis which has befallen the Turkish political system.⁶⁴ For a long time, ostracizing political Islam deterred the emergence of ideological challenges to Kemalism.⁶⁵

But today, a minority of religious and protest voters openly oppose the Kemalist heritage in its essence by voting Islamist, thereby calling the whole political system into question. Binnaz Toprak probably is right in his analysis that the "Islamic 'revival' should be understood within the Turkish context as the outcome of an increasingly pluralistic society."⁶⁶ As Feride Acar writes, one could see in this development "the rise of an inclusionary ideology of peaceful co-existence of different groups...a positive sign of social and political development in the scale of contemporary world values."⁶⁷

Even if the Islamist success in 1995 with 21.3 % of votes was only relative, it created a major problem for the secular political and military establishment. Under the Kemalist definition of secularism (and authority), Erbakan and his followers had broken the rules

⁶³ Larrabee, (1997), p.149 and p.166.

⁶⁴ Larabee (Ibid., p.148) underlines the paradox that the military themselves earlier supported the Islamists when they used them as a means of countering communism and the spread of left-wing ideas.

⁶⁵ Toprak, *Islam and the Political Development in Turkey*, as quoted, p.123.

⁶⁶ Toprak, "The Religious Right", p.230.

⁶⁷ Acar, p. 223.

with their electoral victory, and they seemed to be getting out of control. When the 'secular' political parties and their leaders who together still held a solid eighty percent of the vote, proved incapable of forming a stable coalition government excluding the Islamists from power, the military leaders perceived it as their time to act. They did this not by the conventional way of direct military intervention, but by giving a stern warning.⁶⁸ The result was the same, and the Erbakan government was ousted.

The Islamist problem, however, did not disappear. While they did not repeat their 1995 success in the recent general elections, the Islamists are still in third place with 15 percent of the votes, and are stronger than either the ANAP or DYP.

By conventional Kemalist wisdom, the "solution" to the Islamist, as well as the Kurdish problem in party politics is to ban political parties that do not conform to the system.⁶⁹ The 1982 Constitution provides for the necessary legal instruments to do so.

Most of the other internal problems of Turkey listed in the EU and US reports – deficiencies in the organisational structure of public administration and the judiciary, violations of human rights, limitations of fundamental freedoms, freedom of opinion and the press – are mere symptoms of this deeper problem: authoritarian political thinking and authoritarian tradition. In addition, one has, of course, to take the effects of the Kurdish conflict into account, which has clearly had a negative influence on the ethical

⁶⁸ Twenty point ultimatum of the National Security Council to Erbakan, February 1997, see Larrabee (1997), p.151.

⁶⁹ On May 7, 1999, the Turkish Chief Prosecutor asked the Turkish Constitutional Court to ban the Islamist 'Virtue' Party for not observing laws against mixing religion with politics. *The New York Times*, May 8, 1999.

standards of the security organs and the military. Longer term improvements are only to be expected, when this conflict is over.

The Kurdish Issue

The inability of the Turkish political leadership to solve the Kurdish problem in a democratic fashion is also largely a result of the authoritarian Kemalist tradition of centralized power and administration, in which regional and minoritarian dissent easily become 'separatist'.⁷⁰ The Turkish political structure lacks a responsible local or regional level of government, based on local political structures that could be an outlet for Kurdish or other regional ambitions.⁷¹ In view of the fact that Kurds today live everywhere in Turkey, not only in south-east Anatolia, but in greater numbers in the large western cities, autonomy in the sense of a federal state seems neither feasible nor necessary, but cultural rights and a more decentralized way of government are.⁷² These would help to solve the Kurdish identity problem, and should find their expression also in the educational system, which is overburdened with Turkish nationalism. Economic development would certainly help to overcome the deep split which was created by both PKK terrorism and the unlimited employment of military force by the Turkish army and *jandarma*, who operate virtually uncontrolled by civil authorities. Relying solely on military means for solving the Kurdish problem ultimately only favored the PKK.⁷³

⁷⁰ Gunter, p.3.

⁷¹ Barkey and Fuller, pp.197-199.

⁷² Mango, *Turkey – The Challenge of a New Role*, pp. 49 and 50; Rouleau, p. 123.

⁷³ Rouleau, p.124.

The failure to establish a political middle ground for the Kurdish south-east was critical in the growth of support for the PKK from the late 1980s onwards. It was one of the fundamental political mistakes of nationalist Turkish politicians and military from the very beginning not to allow the Kurds a legitimate political representation, which, though it might perhaps have had contacts with the PKK, in the end could also have developed into a civil and democratic alternative, attracting Kurds who disagreed with Ocalan's aims and methods.⁷⁴ Banning or harrasing all and every Kurdish party, be it HEP, DEP or HADEP,⁷⁵ excluded the option for a loyal opposition, and ultimately only favored the PKK, as well as other radical Kurdish organizations in exile. It alienated and drove even loyal Kurds towards the PKK.

Conclusion

- Under present conditions, Turkey does not fulfill the 'Copenhagen criteria' and will have to go quite a long way to do so. The deeply rooted reliance of the Turkish state and the political elite on the combination of authoritarian methods and strong nationalism constitutes the greatest difficulty in coming to a better understanding with the EU. The Turkish military are guarding the Grail of a frozen ideology, which was revolutionary, modern and progressive in the 1920s and 1930s. The political method of eliminating ideological competition or ethnically

⁷⁴ Mango (ibid.), p.50; Barkey and Fuller, pp. 192-195; Robins, p.663.

⁷⁵ HEP (Peoples Labor Party), founded in July 1990, closed down in July 1993; DEP (Democracy Party), founded in July 1993, closed down in June 1994; HADEP (Peoples Democracy Party) founded in 1994.

based dissent by purely authoritarian means does not conform with democratic pluralism, even if these means have a superimposed legal coating.⁷⁶

- Nonetheless, despite this presently rather gloomy picture, one should be relatively optimistic. Change is possible. Three of the Mediterranean EU member states still had authoritarian or dictatorial regimes in the 1970s; today, they are liberal democracies. Turkish society is probably more pluralistic, civil, innovative and advanced than the Kemalist-oriented political and military elite on the one hand and the Islamists on the other assume. Turkey has already proven its ability for radical reform in the past: why should it fail now? Of course, there is no compelling evidence that a capitalist market economy and a fully developed civil society necessarily follow each other, but the dynamic economic development in Turkey shows the overall potential of Turkish society. The example of the Özal period in the 1980s and early 1990s proves that restoring a 'normal' relationship between civil and military powers in Turkey essentially depends on strong civil leadership.⁷⁷
- Civil society in Turkey has made progress in recent years. Numerous homegrown NGOs have established themselves, ranging in activity from human rights and environmental questions to many other areas.

⁷⁶ Larrabee (1997), p.166: "These forces [Islamists and Kurds] have become an important part of contemporary Turkish reality. They cannot simply be suppressed. Instead they will have to be politically accommodated."; see also de Bellaigue, p.147.

⁷⁷ See Evin, "Demilitarization and Civilianization of the Regime", pp.23-40, in: *Politics in the Third Turkish Republic* (eds. Heper and Evin)

- The Turkish business community has developed into a very outspoken advocate for fundamental reforms. Already in 1995, TOBB, the association of Turkish chambers of industry and commerce, published a remarkable report on the situation in southeastern Anatolia and the Kurdish problem, showing that the Kurds wanted not independence (as the PKK and the Turkish government equally asserted), but equal political (and cultural) rights as citizens⁷⁸. The report included far-reaching proposals for a peaceful solution of the conflict and was also published in major Turkish newspapers. This was all the more astonishing, as the report referred directly to the PKK and was based on a polling of Kurds in the area. In the meantime, a number of other, similar publications have followed. While a critical public discussion of these matters was virtually impossible in the early 1990s, Turkish media today can do this, although direct reporting from the theater of operations, if possible at all, is still censored.

- TÜSIAD, the influential association of Turkish entrepreneurs and industrialists, now demands a comprehensive package of far-reaching political, economic and social reforms. In the view of the association, putting an end to the Kurdish conflict, strengthening civil rights, and creating greater transparency within the political system have absolute priority. TÜSIAD recommends changing Article 8 of the notorious anti-terror law, excluding military judges from the bench. In view of public frustration with the political party system, the association suggests legally embodying internal party democracy. The industrialists ask for the strengthening of local government, including adequate financial resources on the

⁷⁸ Randal, p.254.

local level. In order to facilitate reconciliation in the southeast, the association proposes passing as quickly as possible an amnesty law for repentant PKK fighters. In addition, a comprehensive economic and social development program for the southeast of a minimum of one billion US dollars should be started soon.⁷⁹

- These few examples show that Turkey has all the potential to overcome the present political stagnation and crisis itself. It is another question whether and how this process might be supported from outside. This could in fact prove to be more difficult than expected, because of great political and psychological sensitivity in the Turkish political environment to outside intervention and pressure.

⁷⁹ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 April 1999.

6. ARE THERE ADDITIONAL POLITICAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS TO ACCESSION TO THE EU AS MANY TURKS BELIEVE? IS THERE A HISTORICALLY MOTIVATED EXCLUSION OF TURKEY FROM EUROPE, AN OLD ANTAGONISM EXPRESSED IN MODERN FORM?

Another set of Turkish complaints raises the question of whether the EU – as Turkey maintains – has established additional conditions in addition to the ‘Copenhagen criteria’ for the case of Turkey:

- Turkey’s bilateral problems in its relations with Greece and Cyprus have nothing to do with the EU; raising them in the context of a Turkish accession perspective is discriminatory.
- The Europeans reject Turkey for cultural reasons, and therefore always create new conditions and barriers.

Are There Additional Political Conditions?

Any EU decision concerning the inclusion of new members needs the consent of all existing member states. Even if further reforms of EU procedures bring more majority voting, this particular practice will certainly not change.

This makes the Greek-Turkish problems (and Cyprus) an inevitable factor in the EU equation. Additional complicating elements are possible political linkages between the

necessary Greek consent to the enlargement of the EU by Central and Eastern European countries, and the accession of Cyprus to the EU on one side, and Turkish objections to both a solution of the Cyprus question and EU-Cyprus negotiations. Ignoring or denying this does not solve the problem.

Turkey argues that the dispute with Greece is strictly a bilateral matter that has nothing to do with Turkey's EU-relations: The EU should therefore keep out of it. Certainly, the EU would like to do this; fourteen of its fifteen member states would be extremely happy to be rid of the problem, but they cannot do so, because of the consensus rule. This does not mean creating new political conditions, but taking a realistic political approach.

Exclusion Of Turkey For Cultural Reasons?

When Turks fear exclusion from Europe for cultural reasons, the first question should be: What is Europe? Is there a 'European identity' which excludes Turkey?⁸⁰

There is no clear definition of Europe, apart from the **geographical** one, which is in itself arbitrary, cutting off a small part of the Asian landmass and calling it a continent. Except for a small part of (eastern) Thrace and Istanbul, Turkey geographically does not belong to Europe; Anatolia is Asia Minor. Bordering Syria, Iraq, and Iran, mainland Turkey is itself clearly located in Asia.

⁸⁰ Van Oudenaren, p.133, seems to share that view.

This fact, however does not at all prevent Turkey from being a member of important and doubtlessly European organizations (e.g. Council of Europe, Western European Union, OSCE).⁸¹ This alone proves:

- first, that the **political** and the geographical definitions of Europe do not correspond to each other
- and second, that Turkey is not in principle excluded "from Europe."

On the other hand, some 'European' political organizations do not necessarily include all European countries. They can be selective, depending on their specific aims. Others, like the OSCE, include clearly non European states (e.g. US, Canada, Central Asian republics).

The **European Union**, in colloquial political terms often erroneously identified with "Europe," is one of the selective organizations, not by its self-definition as such, which leaves ample room for adherence, but by what it demands to become a member and by its common aims.

When it comes to the question of an EU identity, its foundations – in a way comparable to the United States – are common values (Article 6 EUT): In distinction to the US Constitution, it makes the respect of the different national identities (Article 6 EUT) and cultures (Article 151 ECT) of the member states a specific goal. Consequently, national identities and national cultures play important roles in the context of the EU as a community of values.

⁸¹ Rouleau, p. 116.

This leads us to the consideration of whether Turkish critics might, perhaps, be right in their contention that Turkey will be excluded for a lack of affinity to the identities and/or cultural patterns of the present EU member states. This could be the case if the sum of these identities and cultures in some way could be described as specifically “European,” without Turkey being part of it.

Common language, culture, religion, and history – or at least part of these – are usually listed as constitutive elements for forming a common identity.

Applied to the European case, the results appear meager: There is no common European **language**. The days when at least the elite spoke Latin – or later, French – are long gone; and English has not yet taken their place. It is also rather questionable whether something like a common European **culture** can be distilled from the existing great diversity. Moreover, there is no common European **religion**. Christian denominations have been divided and fighting each other bitterly for centuries. Furthermore, any definition of European-ness based on religion would exclude large segments of the populations of former Yugoslavia and Albania. Considerable Muslim minorities also live in France, Germany, the United Kingdom and other northern and western European countries.⁸²

However, a common perception of **history** is one of the most important elements forming national identities. There is a common European history, full of bloody conflicts and bitter antagonism. As the example of a nation like Serbia shows, perceptions of

⁸² Balkir and Williams (Introduction: *Turkey and Europe*) p.19.

history as an identity-forming element need not always be based on positive recollection and historical success: defeat and grief can equally form a common identity. The same could be said of Europe as a whole. The founding of the European Economic Community, later transformed into the European Union, was a conscious political effort to finally get over the divisions of this common history, in particular its bitter parts.⁸³

If this is the case, and if conflict and antagonism can be resolved in this way and bring nations together, Turkey should take part in this process as well. For long centuries, it played an important role in European history, including the bitter times. From this historical view, Turkey certainly belongs to Europe, as much as Spain, Britain, or Germany do.

Nonetheless, many are skeptical that Turkey's inclusion on this ground is possible. They think that Turkey, although deeply involved in European history, "never truly shared its history with one of the great European cultures." In fact, Turkey escapes any easy categorization: "European, Western, Eastern, Islamic, fascistic, anarchic"⁸⁴ – a bit of everything.⁸⁵

If the idea of a community of values and the intention to overcome the divisions of European history are constitutive elements for the identity of the European Union, it might help to look at the Turkish perception. Where do Turks position themselves?

⁸³ Buzan and Diez, p. 51.

⁸⁴ Pope, p. 2

⁸⁵ Rhein, p.47: "Turkey has never been fully considered a European country, but neither is it considered fully Asian. It is at the crossroads between two continents, two cultures, and two destinies."

'Modernization' or 'Westernization', as integrated into the Kemalist ideology, did not necessarily mean linking Turkey's political existence to Western nations. Kemal Ataturk's vision of a modern Turkey has to be understood in the light of the international political scenario of the 1920s and 1930s, which did not yet know a world as clearly divided ideologically between East and West, communism and liberal democracy, as in the aftermath of the Second World War. For Ataturk, 'Westernization' in his time meant learning from the Western industrialized countries, and radically breaking with the pre-modern Ottoman past and its cultural traditions.

"We were defeated because of our backwardness. To take revenge, we shall adopt the enemy's science, learn his skill, steal his methods" (Ziya Gökalp).⁸⁶

This meant adapting his new country, the Turkish Republic, to a completely new political cast and lifestyle, introducing new, 'Western' techniques, rather than binding Turkey to the Western democracies in the sense of a political or ideological affinity.⁸⁷ A capitalist market economy was as little on Ataturk's agenda as liberal civil liberties. His republic had to be strong and centralized. Introducing Western-style political and legal institutions, the European calendar, the Christian Sunday as the day of rest, the Latin alphabet, and adapting to Western clothing styles by no means signaled the adoption of Western political culture in its democratic essence. Dependence of any kind was not what Ataturk was looking for; to the contrary. His aim was to make Turkey strong and independent, perhaps comparable to Japan.

⁸⁶ quoted after Pope, p.21.

Later, in the Cold War era, Turkey nonetheless clearly bound its fate to the West. Its longstanding NATO membership is the strongest argument for this commitment, and it should not be ignored.

Turkey's historical perspective, however, is different. In spite of Atatürk's radical and revolutionary rupture with the past, Turkish self-perception continues to be essentially based on the remembrance of Ottoman greatness and the grandiose role of the Turks in the past. This perception of Turkey and the Turks finds its expression in the way Turkish students are taught, using a syllabus that is essentially different from that used to teach Western European children and even their fellow Muslims of the Middle East. Turkish schoolbooks paint a picture of their ancestors' national origin in Central Asia, with the Turcic tribes migrating to the West, led by a mythical grey she-wolf; making Attila the Hun (the terror of Europe) a national hero, and emphasizing the military arts as a centerpiece of Turkish civilization. They "learn their history from the other side of the battle lines."⁸⁸ This also explains the enormous prestige the Turkish army enjoys in the population: Military virtues were at the origin of greatness – of the empire as well as the republic.

These virtues are not necessarily the values addressed in Article 6(1) EUT. Exaggerated nationalism, chauvinism, and militarism have no place in the European Union. But that is a different point; it is not an argument in favor of *excluding* Turkey for historical, i.e.

⁸⁷ Buzan and Diez, p.45.

⁸⁸ Compare Pope, pp. 8-12.

cultural, reasons. If Turkey finally decides to embrace the basic values of the Union as laid down in Art 6 EUT and the Copenhagen criteria, it must be accepted.

Is The EU A “Christian Club”?

Other skeptics see Turkey's character as an **Islamic country** as incompatible with its membership in the EU.

In fact, any discussion about Turkey's place in Europe or its membership in the EU will have to take into account that the religious question, openly or between the lines, plays an important role on **both** European **and** Turkish sides.⁸⁹ This is not simply because ninety-nine percent of Turks are Muslims. It also reflects concerns in many Western countries of developments in parts of the Islamic world (e.g. revival of fundamentalism, Iranian revolution, Islamic terrorism, and the Algerian conflict). Paradoxically, such concerns are also nourished by the Turkish General Staff, when it declares Islamism in Turkey a danger greater than the threat of the Kurdish PKK, thereby involuntarily emphasizing the role and influence of Islam on domestic developments in Turkey.

The presence of a large number of Muslim Turkish immigrant workers, identifiable by differences in dress, language, and social habits, also makes quite a few members of Western European societies ask: Can 'Muslim' Turkey as a whole be integrated into 'Christian' Europe?

⁸⁹ Acar, p.218.

It would, therefore, be a mistake to dismiss this approach as simply politically not correct. Instead, one has to ask:

- Does religion, the fact of Turkey being an Islamic country, preclude it from membership in the EU?
- Does the fact of Turks being Muslim prevent their integration in European countries?

The answer to the first question is negative. The European Treaties do not refer to religion. Article 6 of the Treaty of European Union (EUT) does not mention religion; nor does the Treaty Establishing the European Community (ECT) contain any such clause. To the contrary, Article 151 ECT, as well as Article 6 EUT emphasize the respect for national identity and cultural diversity of the member states, which certainly includes religious denominations.

Many Turks themselves, nonetheless, regard the EU as a Christian community and are convinced that Turkey is excluded for religious and cultural reasons.⁹⁰ This brings us nearer to the second question.

Many Turks still remember the words of nineteenth century European leaders regarding their country, when Tsar Nicholas I coined the phrase "the sick man of Europe" and Europe's attention was focused on the fate of Christian populations in the decaying Ottoman empire, or when Gladstone wrote "*The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*", and others called for firm reaction in view of Armenian massacres, mostly

⁹⁰ See website of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as quoted (footnote 45, p. 30), no. 7: "Test case for the EU. If EU admits former Warsaw Pact adversaries and rejects the only NATO ally, with

based on Christian argumentation. In fact, the language of nineteenth century European criticism of the Ottomans often looks very similar to that employed by the West today when denouncing Turkish abuses of human rights and their treatment of ethnic Kurds.⁹¹ Many Turks take this as proof for the continued existence of Christian prejudices.

Even more important in shaping recent Turkish views were statements by several party leaders after a meeting of the European People's Party (Christian Democrat and Conservative) in Brussels on 4 March 1997, when the Belgian chairman, Wilfried Martens, declared: "In our view Turkey cannot be candidate for EU membership. We are in favor of extensive cooperation with Turkey, but the European project is a civilisational project. Turkey's candidature for full membership is unacceptable."⁹² News agency reports also quoted Italian Prime Minister Prodi saying that the participants unanimously excluded a speedy accession of Turkey to the EU, and Luxembourg's Prime Minister Juncker as reaffirming the European Union's interest in a close relationship with Turkey, while keeping a clear distance from the idea of Turkish membership.⁹³

Turkish politicians, officials and journalists immediately saw their long-held suspicions confirmed: 'Europe rejects Turkey for religious and cultural reasons!' Remarkably enough, the Turkish media concentrated their anger mainly on German Chancellor Kohl, who took part in the meeting, but made no public statement.

longest-standing membership application, sends the wrong message to Turks, other Muslims and all those in Europe who are 'different' – based on race or religion".

⁹¹ Pope, p.38.

⁹² Quoted after Andrew Mango, "Turkey and the enlargement of the European mind", footnote 3.

⁹³ *AFP, Reuters*, March 4, 1997; *Financial Times*, March 5, 1997, p.2.

In November 1994 the Turkish foreign minister, Mumtaz Soysal, had already expressed similar preoccupations in Bonn⁹⁴, when he maintained Turkey might never be accepted as a member of the European Union, even if it completely adapted itself to Western standards (which it could) and fulfilled any and all conditions for membership, because of the cultural and religious prejudices of Europeans against Turks.

This statement showed remarkable pessimism at a time when leading EU governments (Germany as acting EU presidency) were working hard to overcome Greek opposition against establishing the customs union between the EU and Turkey. But it also reflects a deeply rooted perception on the Turkish side of being different. Being different, as Muslims, also corresponds to the feelings of many Turks living in Europe, especially those in Germany. They often perceive Western European culture and its liberties (which some view as 'libertarian and depraved') as a threat to the Islamic moral and ethical standards of their families. Forming Turkish ghetto-societies in Western European cities, therefore, might not only be a reaction to an unfriendly social environment, but could also be interpreted as a form of "self-protection" against the risks to the traditional Turkish way of life and religion. This could also be an explanation for the astonishing success of Islamist organizations in the Turkish Diaspora.

Conclusion

⁹⁴ Speech at which the author assisted, not published.

- It would be a mistake to deny the existence of certain **cultural and religious problems**, mostly problems of self-perception. But to understand them as a kind of test case for Turkey's overall capability to integrate within Europe, or Europe's willingness to accept Turkey, would be equally wrong. Europe, as it is now, is already a cultural and religious quilt of extreme variety.

- However, if the cultural and religious dimension is politically relevant, one has to ask: Who, the Europeans or the Turks themselves, is creating a cultural barrier for Turkey's EU accession? This question must be answered not by the Europeans alone, but by the Turks as well. Both sides have to work on these problems, in order to achieve political consensus.

- If there are cultural and religious questions to discuss, they should be discussed openly. There are, nevertheless, no cultural or religious **conditions** laid down in the Treaties. The EU is no 'Christian club'. Rather, it is based on common secular values that include tolerance for cultural and religious diversity as fundamental principles. This diversity in itself is an essential part of the European Union's foundations. To argue differently would mean to put the whole philosophy and construction of the European project into question.

7. TURKEY AND GERMANY: A TEST CASE FOR TURKEY'S ACCESSION?

- Many Turks believe that Germany's position is decisive for Turkey's possible EU accession.
- Many Germans see the integration of Turks in Germany as a test case for Turkey's overall ability to integrate with the EU.

Luxembourg Irritations

The Turkish government obviously but erroneously assumed that Germany had a commanding role in the EU regarding the question of Turkey's candidacy for membership.⁹⁵ Based on a joint German-Turkish press release (with Federal Chancellor Kohl) on 30 September 1997, Prime Minister Yilmaz seemed to believe the deal for Luxembourg was made⁹⁶. Perhaps the Turkish Prime Minister, although fluent in German, misunderstood the statement; or perhaps he misinterpreted it on purpose, to win a point at home. Claiming or believing to have won Kohl's unconditional support,

⁹⁵ Lesser, p.110.

⁹⁶ The press release was published in German. The relevant passage (translation by the author) reads as follows: "The Federal Chancellor reaffirmed to Prime Minister Yilmaz the European vocation of Turkey. He declared that he supported the aim of a later (*späteren*) membership of Turkey in the European Union. In doing so, he starts from the assumption that Turkey, in conformity with the conditions of the European Union, will make its own contribution to achieve this goal. In the framework of its possibilities, and in the spirit of the traditional German-Turkish friendship, the Federal Government will insofar support Turkey. Realization of the membership perspective in due course requires that a solution, satisfying both sides, is found for the question of the free movement of people. In addition to that, the Federal Chancellor emphasized the importance of a durable reconciliation between Turkey and Greece as well as a speedy solution of the Cyprus question for the future of Europe. He asked Prime Minister Yilmaz to use all possibilities to promote a solution."

Yilmaz raised expectations at home that Turkey would be formally recognized as a 'candidate' in Luxembourg, together with the other applicants.

He proved to be wrong, and then searched for a scapegoat. In an interview⁹⁷ Yilmaz held the German government responsible for the negative outcome of the Luxembourg EU summit, accusing Germany of repeating the *Lebensraum* policy of the Nazis; later he declared Federal Chancellor Kohl to be the "new enemy".⁹⁸ The Turkish media echoed these verdicts; some commentators, however, also criticized Yilmaz for these chauvinistic gaffes.

The waves have calmed in the meantime. Both countries have new governments. Chancellor Schröder, Foreign Minister Fischer, and high officials of the German foreign office have already publicly described Turkey as a 'candidate' for EU membership. Nevertheless, on the European level, the question remains formally unresolved.

The case is interesting, as far as it sheds light on how Ankara, or the Turkish political elite, seems to perceive realities in Europe and the EU decision-making processes. If my analysis is correct, their foreign-policy thinking continues to be dominated by two concepts: bilateralism and *realpolitik*, based on hard power. On this basis, Yilmaz' approach was only logical: Germany, being the strongest power in the EU, would be able – and willing – to keep the supposed promise and hand Turkey the formal status of 'candidate' at the Luxembourg European Council, overcoming any possible opposition by other EU member states, including Greece. While this view is definitely wrong and

⁹⁷ *Financial Times*, 6 March 1998.

reveals a lack of understanding of how the EU works, it is, nonetheless widely held in Turkey.

Turks In Germany

In view of integration problems in Germany, many Germans are afraid of further unrestrained Turkish immigration as a consequence of a Turkish EU membership. It is significant that Federal Chancellor Kohl made this point when he met with Prime Minister Yilmaz before the Luxembourg summit (see footnote 97, p. 57).

Up to now, Germany has had neither a comprehensive policy nor legislation on immigration and integration; administrative competencies remain largely with *Länder* (state) or local authorities. Questions of naturalization and status of foreigners are regulated in various separate laws. Large parts of the German political elite and public continue to share the view that 'Germany is no country of immigration' (as compared to the U.S., Canada, Australia and others). This view, however, ignores the fact, based on very real figures, that over the last decades Germany has been the destination of a very considerable de facto immigration (*Gastarbeiter*, refugees, asylum-seekers, and others), creating a new situation.

At the end of 1997, of a total population of eighty-two million in Germany, 7.4 million were foreigners (8.9%). Turkish nationals, with a total of 2.1 million (28.6% of all

⁹⁸ 30 March 1998 in Antalya.

foreign residents) formed by far the largest group. This raises the question of how to integrate them. Although a political debate about immigration and integration policy began years ago, until recently it focused more on how to police foreigners better and prevent further immigration, rather than on how to resolve the integration issue.

The present integration debate in Germany focuses mainly on the legal situation. After taking office in October 1998, the new German government of Social Democrats and Greens immediately tabled a new bill reforming the existing laws on German citizenship to promote the integration of foreigners. The draft bill originally included a clause that would have allowed all newly naturalized citizens to keep a dual nationality. However, having lost the state elections in Hesse, and with it the necessary majority in the *Bundesrat* (the second chamber of the federal parliament), the federal government negotiated a compromise with the Liberal opposition (FDP).⁹⁹ Under this compromise, children born in Germany of foreign parents, who have been legal residents for eight years or more, will be Germans, independent of any other nationality. At the age of twenty-three, they must then decide which nationality they will keep. For adults and children not born in Germany, the necessary time of residence in Germany before an application for citizenship will be reduced to eight years.

While it is hoped the new legislation will promote a better integration of foreigners in Germany, it will not resolve all problems. Citizenship alone is no guarantee of social peace.¹⁰⁰ Apart from nationality law, when considering a basically new approach to the

⁹⁹ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Munich, 12 March 1999.

¹⁰⁰ Janes, p.222.

integration issue, the German side will have to decide in principle on the final goal: full assimilation or something less?

Mainstream political opinion in Germany still favors full assimilation, hoping for cultural homogeneity. However, any debate about Germany ideally being culturally homogeneous or multicultural, seems to have been already overtaken by reality.¹⁰¹ The fact alone that large groups of foreigners, visible and separate minorities, are living there, demonstrates the de facto existence of a multicultural situation. For Germans who are still used to thinking in terms of cultural homogeneity, this is a new experience. The challenge for the German political elite, therefore, is to develop a coherent and tolerant concept for this new situation, in the framework of a pluralistic democratic society. Integration under these conditions, in my view, can only be a gradual process, which will need adequate public support for the acquisition of language, professional, and social skills in the new environment. Full assimilation may occur, in individual cases and with the work of time and generations; however, to aim at it from the very beginning of the integration process could, in fact, endanger any possible perspective of success. Rather, it would work as a deterrent. Integration, in my view, can therefore only mean sufficient accommodation in state and society while living with a separate cultural identity, if one so desires.

Integration, however, is not a one-sided operation. It needs support from all parties involved, including the Turkish government, which currently not only takes an understandable interest in, but also exercises a strong political influence on Turkish

ioglu, p 152.

expatriates in Germany. Not all, but a number of Turkish organizations and associations in Germany are closely linked to the Turkish embassy and consulates. This network provides an excellent instrument for political management of at least parts of the Turkish community in the country.

And Turkish politicians have made use of this instrument. Before the last German federal elections, Prime Minister Yilmaz recommended that naturalized Turks in Germany not vote Christian Democrat, while after the arrest of Abdullah Ocalan in Rome, he encouraged demonstrations in Germany of national-minded Turks.¹⁰²

Furthermore, protests by Turks living in Germany against supposed German opposition to Turkey's EU membership gave the impression of being orchestrated from Ankara. Moreover, secularist Turkish parties, like the 'Motherland' and the 'True Path' parties, have established sub-organizations in Germany.¹⁰³ It is at least questionable whether maintaining such direct links, and using them, helps promote integration.

Some of the Turkish organizations in Germany have understood the problem and try to limit official influence from Ankara, because of negative German reactions.

Working closely with these groups, the German authorities should ask their official Turkish partners to encourage the Turkish community more than they have up to now towards a sense of integration and to stop using the 'German Turks' as a pressure group.

¹⁰² *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 9 January 1999.

¹⁰³ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 January 1999.

Conclusion

The essential point is to make a new beginning in this complicated German-Turkish relationship, which today has all the signatures of a love-hate relationship. Both sides have to make greater efforts towards integration than they have until now. It is in their mutual interest. With or without a Turkish EU membership, the integration question in Germany remains on the table.

8. APPROACHES TO A SOLUTION

Some Principle Observations

- Difficulties in finding solutions that satisfy both sides have often been created by different tactical methods. Turkey's (Ciller, Yilmaz) ultimative demands for quick, often purely declaratory solutions and shortcuts to membership were diametrically opposed to the EU's gradual and slow approach. This created a dangerous credibility gap. Both approaches failed to convince the European and the Turkish public. In addition, they demonstrate a peculiar difference in political culture that should be discussed openly and taken into account.

- The problem was made worse by a relentless and irresponsible involvement and use of the media, especially on the Turkish side. Where discrete diplomacy and skilled negotiation still might have produced considerably positive results, megaphone-diplomacy destroyed everything in an instant and closed channels that otherwise might have been very useful. The same is true with respect to Turkish-Greek relations.

- In the view of the EU there is a clear difference between Turkey (and Cyprus) on the one hand, and the CEE candidates on the other: the latter still have to overcome the burden and consequences of communism. The accession-perspective for the CEE candidates could, perhaps, be best compared to "affirmative action" in

the international context. The firm EU position that different cases have to be dealt with differently will not change and in practice leads to a different accession track for Turkey.

- Also, in view of its size (and the size and nature of its problems), Turkey can hardly expect to be treated completely equally to the CEE candidates. The European Council in Copenhagen explicitly mentioned as an "important consideration...the Union's capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration." This is a legitimate consideration for the EU. In no case must enlargement lead to the weakening or overburdening of the Union.

- Achieving the objective of a Turkish EU membership will only be possible if there is a clear political will on both sides. Any new approach to Turkey's accession should also carefully look into short-, mid-, and long-term aspects. Drafting a roadmap for Turkey's accession also demands that the parties involved, including friendly partners like the US, do not work against each other, but truly join in their efforts, mutually sharing and respecting their interests.

- As in the case of the CEE candidates, setting up a precise timetable for Turkey will not be possible, because progress and ultimate success depend not only on the EU, but equally on the performance of the candidate. Setting up a timetable would also increase the risk of renewed frustration, when short-term expectations are not fulfilled (or exploited by irresponsible political actors).

Under present circumstances, the following considerations might be helpful:

On the side of the EU

- A clear definition of the ultimate objective (membership of Turkey under the 'Copenhagen criteria') and formal recognition as a 'candidate' by the European Council;¹⁰⁴ corresponding individual statements of EU member states.
- Full implementation and further development of the "European Strategy for Turkey" in cooperation with Turkey, strengthening political and cultural cooperation, wider inclusion of Turkey in EU programs, as well as other steps to bring Turkey intermediately closer to the Union, especially if the process as a whole is more likely to be of a longer term nature.

On the side of Germany

- New comprehensive approaches to immigration and integration policies, complementing new legislation on citizenship and the naturalization of foreigners, with a priority in the fields of schools and public education. Language skills and professional and vocational training are essential for integration.

¹⁰⁴ Larrabee (1997), p. 168; Kramer and Müller, p.186.

- The German public and politicians should understand that a positive development in this field is of extreme importance, independently of the question of Turkey's possible membership in the EU.¹⁰⁵ The integration of Turks in German state and society remains an important objective in itself and is in the national interest of Germany even if – or especially when – Turkish relations with the EU do not develop positively. Otherwise, this question could evolve into a serious danger for peace and social stability in the country.
- The successful integration of the Turks in Germany would, on the other hand, provide an important argument for the accession and integration of Turkey as a whole in the EU. Having that in mind, both countries should pursue and promote integration. They should use this opportunity to renew their traditional friendship.

On the side of Turkey

- The Turkish government and the Turkish political elite, including the military leadership, will have to make up their minds regarding the EU. It will be impossible for Turkey to keep all possible options open, acting as an independent and strong regional power on the one hand and becoming a member of the EU on the other. Furthermore, antagonizing the EU does not help to join the club.

¹⁰⁵ Compare Kramer and Müller, p.185.

- The government and the public in Turkey do not seem to be fully aware of the profound political development of the EU since 1963. If they reach a consensus to become a member state, they will have to develop a far better understanding of the “European Project” and its consequences for national sovereignty, state, society and political culture. In light of the strong nationalistic Kemalist tradition in Turkey, this asks for a more profound, informed, and public debate in the Turkish political arena and public than has hitherto taken place. Profound reforms are necessary for Turkey to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria.

- Until now, Turkey has concentrated mostly on the legal and contractual side of its relations with the EU, while rejecting critical approaches to its domestic situation as illegitimate interference in internal affairs and disregard of Turkish sovereignty. This demonstrates a lack of understanding of the basic values that unite EU member states. Changing this attitude would not only allow for better relations with EU member states, but for further development of civil society in Turkey.

- In order to prove Turkey's capability (and political will) to integrate fully in Europe, and to refute allegations that Turks are culturally or religiously unable to do so, the Turkish authorities should see the integration of Turks in Germany as a positive test case, cooperate more constructively in this regard, and seriously encourage the Turkish minority to integrate. They should stop all attempts to use and influence them as a political pressure group.

Turkey and Greece

- Both sides are blocking each other in what they respectively consider essential national questions, a dilemma for both. There will be no Greek-Turkish settlement in the Aegean or a Cyprus solution without Turkish consent, which Turkey will deny as long as Greece blocks not only any clear Turkish membership perspective but virtually every single step in that direction.
- Since Greece is a member state, the EU cannot credibly mediate in this conflict, even if it is suffering directly from its consequences. Individual member states have tried to help, until now without success.
- The only logical solution for this Turkish-Greek dilemma seems to be a gradual bilateral approach that tackles the disputed questions in detail, at best in the looser framework of a broader understanding that opens possibilities for 'détente' and could give both sides not only a certain security against extortion or unilateral exclusion of part of the problems, but also provide for a true *do-ut-des* situation. Both sides can only win if they show more ability to compromise. Until now, proposals coming from either side do not seem to reflect that. Both have to stop seeing their mutual problems as a zero-sum game.

ANNEX

Texts [extracts] referring to the Turkish EU accession perspective

1. Contractual Bases

Association Agreement between the European Economic Community and Turkey, signed on 12 September 1963, in force since 1 December 1964

[Preamble] [French text, official English text not available, translation by the author]

- Reconnaissant que l'appui apporté par la Communauté économique européenne aux efforts du peuple turc pour améliorer son niveau de vie facilitera ultérieurement l'adhésion de la Turquie à la Communauté [...will facilitate, at a later stage, the accession of Turkey to the community...]

Article 28: As soon as the operation of the Agreement has advanced far enough to justify envisaging full acceptance by Turkey of the obligations arising out of the Treaty establishing the Community, the Contracting Parties shall examine the possibility of the accession of Turkey to the Community.

Decision No 1/95 of the EC-Turkey Association Council of 22 December 1995 on implementing the final phase of the Customs Union (96/142/EC)

[Preamble]

- Having regard to the Agreement establishing an Association between the European Economic Community and Turkey, hereinafter referred to as the Ankara Agreement
- Considering that the objectives set out by the Ankara Agreement, and in particular by its Article 28, which established the Association between Turkey and the Community maintain their significance at this time of great political and economic transformation on the European scene

- Considering that the Customs Union represents an important qualitative step, in political and economic terms, within the Association relations between the Parties

2. Statements By The EU

Opinion of the Commission of 17 December 1989 on Turkey's 1987 application for membership (Bull. EC 12-1989)

...The Commission...stated that, unless exceptional circumstances intervened, it could not recommend starting accession negotiations with any country before 1993 at the earliest. As far as Turkey is concerned, the Commission, having reviewed in depth the economic and social situation in that country, concluded that Turkey would find it hard to cope with the adjustment constraints with which it would be confronted in the medium term if it acceded to the Community. There was also the need to bear in mind certain substantial political problems such as the expansion of political pluralism, the continuation of the positive trend with regard to human rights and the right of minorities, the persistence of disputes with a Member State and the lack of a solution to the Cyprus problem. Nevertheless, the Community wished to strengthen its relations with Turkey within the framework of the 1963 Association Agreement. Accordingly, without casting doubt in any way on Turkey's eligibility to accede, it proposed a set of measures aimed at helping the country to modernize politically and economically.

Conclusions of the Council (General Affairs) of 5 February 1990 (Bull. EC 1/2-1990)

With a large majority in favour of the approach adopted by the Commission, the Council noted the Commission's intention to place before it rapidly practical and appropriate proposals with a view to strengthening cooperation with Turkey in the framework of the Association Agreement.

Extracts from Presidency Conclusions of European Councils:

Lisbon, 26 and 27 June 1992

The European Council considers that, if the challenges of a European Union composed of a larger number of Member States are to be met successfully, parallel progress is needed as regards the internal development of the Union and in preparation of membership of other countries.

In this context the European Council discussed the applications which have been submitted by Turkey, Cyprus and Malta. The European Council agrees that each of these applications must be considered on its merits.

With regard to Turkey the European Council underlines that the Turkish role in the present European political situation is of the greatest importance and that there is every reason to intensify cooperation and develop relations with Turkey in line with the prospect laid down in the Association Agreement of 1964 including a political dialogue at the highest level. The European Council asks the Commission and the Council to work on this basis in the coming months.

Copenhagen, 21 and 22 June 1993

With regard to Turkey, the European Council asked the Council to ensure that there is now an effective implementation of the guidelines laid down by the European Council in Lisbon on intensified cooperation and development of relations with Turkey in line with the prospect laid down in the Association Agreement of 1964 and the Protocol of 1970 as far as it relates to the establishment of a customs union.

[Copenhagen criteria (under the heading 'Relations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe')]

Accession will take place as soon as an associated country is able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions required. Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection

of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

The Union's capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is also an important consideration in the general interest of both the Union and the candidate countries.

The European Council will continue to follow closely progress in each associated country towards fulfilling the conditions of accession to the Union and draw the appropriate conclusions.

Essen, 9 and 10 December 1994

The European Council...confirms the great importance it attaches...to concluding the negotiations with Turkey on the completion and unrestricted implementation of the customs union and to reinforcing relations with this partner.

Cannes, 26 and 27 June 1995

The Union...intends...to implement the customs union with Turkey as part of a developing relationship with that country.

Madrid, 15 and 16 December 1995

[Introduction]

The European Council notes with satisfaction...the European Parliament's assent to the customs union between the European Union and Turkey, which opens the way for the consolidation and strengthening of a political, economic and security relationship crucial to the stability of that region.

The European Council also confirms the need to make sound preparation for enlargement on the basis of the criteria established in Copenhagen...

[Paragraph on Turkey]

The European Council reiterates the priority it attaches to the development and strengthening of relations with Turkey and welcomes the assent given by the European Parliament which will enable the final phase of the Customs Union with Turkey to enter into force on 31 December 1995, together with the arrangements for strengthening political dialogue and institutional cooperation. It hopes that the Regulation on financial cooperation with Turkey will enter into force as soon as possible.

The European Council recalls the importance it attaches to respect of human rights, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms and strongly supports all those in Turkey endeavouring to put reforms into practice. In that spirit, it welcomes the measures already adapted by the Turkish authorities and urges them to continue along that path.

Florence, 21 and 22 June 1996

The European Council, recalling the decisions of 6 March 1995, stresses the priority it attaches to the strengthening and deepening of relations with Turkey and looks forward to the early creation of the appropriate conditions for successfully holding the Association Council.

Dublin, 13 and 14 December 1996

The European Council reaffirms the importance it attaches to the further development of the European Union's relation with Turkey in both the economic and political fields. It notes with regret, however, that certain issues remain to be resolved in the relationship. The European Council welcomes the Turkish Government's stated intention to take measures to improve the human rights situation. In the context with closer partnership with the European Union it emphasizes the need for the observance of the highest standards of human rights.

The European Council invites the Presidency to continue its efforts following the Council's declaration of 15 July 1996 to promote an acceptable solution to the situation in the

Aegean area in accordance with established international norms and to pursue contacts with the Turkish Government with a view to an early Association Council.

The European Council urges Turkey to use its influence to contribute to a solution in Cyprus in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions.

Luxembourg, 12 and 13 December 1997

[In the chapter 'European Union Enlargement' and under rubrum 'The European Conference']

- Paragraph 5: The members of the conference must share a common commitment to peace, security and good neighbourliness, respect for other countries' sovereignty, the principles upon which the European Union is founded, the integrity and inviolability of external borders and the principles of international law and a commitment to the settlement of territorial disputes by peaceful means, in particular through the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in the Hague. Countries which endorse these principles and respect the right of any European country fulfilling the required criteria to accede to the European Union and sharing the Union's commitment to building a Europe free of the divisions and difficulties of the past will be invited to take part in the Conference.
- Paragraph 6: The States which accept these criteria and subscribe to the above principles will be invited to take part in the Conference. Initially, the EU offer will be addressed to Cyprus, the applicant States of Central and Eastern Europe and Turkey.

[In the same chapter, under rubrum 'A European strategy for Turkey']

- Paragraph 31: The Council confirms Turkey's eligibility for accession to the European Union. Turkey will be judged on the basis of the same criteria as the other applicant States. While the political and economic conditions allowing accession negotiations to be envisaged are not satisfied, the European Council considers that it is nevertheless important for a strategy to be drawn up to prepare Turkey for accession by bringing it closer to the European Union in every field.
- Paragraph 32: This strategy should consist in: development of the possibilities afforded by the Ankara Agreement: intensification of the Customs Union;

implementation of financial cooperation; approximation of laws and adoption of the Union acquis; participation, to be decided case by case, in certain programmes and in certain agencies provided for in paragraphs 19 and 21 [refers to programmes for Central and Eastern European candidates].

- Paragraph 33: The strategy will be reviewed by the Association Council in particular on the basis of Article 28 of the Association Agreement in the light of the Copenhagen criteria and the Council's position of 29 April 1997.
- Paragraph 34: In addition, participation in the European Conference will enable the Member States of the European Union and Turkey to step up their dialogue and cooperation in areas of common interest.
- Paragraph 35: The European Council recalls that strengthening Turkey's links with the European Union also depends on that country's pursuit of the political and economic reforms on which it has embarked, including the alignment of human rights standards and practices on those in force in the European Union; respect for and protection of minorities; the establishment of satisfactory and stable relations between Greece and Turkey; the settlement of disputes, in particular by legal process, including the International Court of Justice; and support for negotiations under the aegis of the UN on a political settlement in Cyprus on the basis of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.
- Paragraph 36: The European Council endorses the guidelines that emerged from the General Affairs Council of 24 November 1997 on future relations between the Union and Turkey and asks the Commission to submit suitable proposals.

Cardiff, 15 and 16 June 1998

[In the chapter 'Enlargement']

- Paragraph 63: The Union's priority is to maintain the enlargement process for the countries covered in the Luxembourg European Council conclusions, within which they can actively pursue their candidatures and make progress towards taking on the obligations of membership, including the Copenhagen criteria. Each of these candidate countries will be judged on the basis of the same criteria and will proceed

in its candidature at its own rate.... Much will depend on the efforts made by the candidate countries themselves to meet the criteria....

- Paragraph 64: The European Council welcomes the Commission's confirmation that it will submit at the end of 1998 its first regular reports on each candidate's progress towards accession. In the case of Turkey, reports will be based on Article 28 of the Association Agreement and the conclusions of the Luxembourg European Council.
- Paragraph 68: The European Council also welcomes the Commission's communication of 4 March 1998 on taking forward the European Strategy to prepare Turkey for membership. It agrees that, taken as a package, this provides the platform for developing our relationship on a sound and evolutionary basis. The European Council invites the Commission to carry forward this strategy, including the tabling of any proposals necessary for its effective implementation. The Strategy can be enriched over time, taking into account Turkey's own ideas. The European Council further invites the Presidency and the Commission and the appropriate Turkish authorities to pursue the objective of harmonising Turkey's legislation and practice with the acquis, and asks the Commission to report to an early Association Council on progress made. Recalling the need for financial support for the European Strategy, the European Council notes the Commission's intention to reflect on ways and means of underpinning the European Strategy, and to table appropriate proposals to this effect.

Vienna, 11 and 12 December 1998

[In the chapter 'Enlargement']

- Paragraph 58: The European Council welcomes the Commission's first Regular Progress Reports on the basis of its conclusions in Luxembourg and Cardiff and endorses the annexed Council conclusions of 7 December 1998 on European Union enlargement. The European Council stresses that each country will continue to be judged on its own merits.
- Paragraph 63: The European Council underlines the great importance it attaches to the further development of relations between the EU and Turkey taking forward the European Strategy to prepare Turkey for membership. In this context it recognises

the central role of the further implementation of the European Strategy in line with its conclusions in Luxembourg and Cardiff.

[In Annex III – ‘Council conclusions on European Union enlargement (General Affairs Council, 7 December 1998)’]:

- The Commission’s analysis with regard to Turkey was generally shared by the Council which noted the need for particular efforts by Turkey to ensure the rule of law in a democratic society according to the Copenhagen criteria and the relevant conclusions of European Councils; it also stressed the importance of further developing relations with this country on a sound and evolutionary basis. In this process the Council reaffirms the importance of the European Strategy for Turkey. The Council recalled the great importance which it attaches to the treatment of minorities, an area which needs continued attention. The Council underlines the need for the rhythm of legislative approximation to be accelerated and matched by the development of corresponding implementation capacity. The transposition of the acquis is not sufficient in itself but must be followed by effective implementation and enforcement. Therefore the development of administrative and judicial capacities is a crucial aspect of preparation for accession and the existence of credible and functioning structures and institutions an indispensable pre-condition for future membership.

3. European Treaty Texts

Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union (EUT)

1. The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States.
2. The Union shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, as general principles of Community law.

3. The Union shall respect the national identities of its Member States.
4. The Union shall provide itself with the means necessary to attain its objectives and carry through its policies.

Article 49 EUT

Any European State which respects the principles set out in Article 6(1) may apply to become a member of the Union. It shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after consulting the Commission and after receiving the assent of the European Parliament, which shall act by an absolute majority of its component members.

The conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the Union is founded which such admission entails shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant State. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

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