European Identity in the Making?: Turkey in a Postnational Europe

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While the relationship between Turkey and Europe historically dates back to the Ottoman times and to the 1960 institutionally, it is only very recently that they have become deepend and intensified. In December 1999 Turkey has been granted a full candidate status on the condition that it will fulfill Copenhagen political criteria. In December 2002 the European Council decided that the full acsession negotiations will start without delay depending on Turkey's progress in fulfilling the Copenhagen political criteria. In December 2004 this time the decision by the European Council was to commerce the full accession negiotions with Turkey on 3rd of October 2005. As a matter of fact on that date Turkey's negotiation process has officially started. Over these five years this process of deepening and intensification has been achieved mainly by Turkey's unexpected sucess in enhancing its democracy and modernity. Indeed, Turkey's democratic reform process to start the full accession negotions with the European Union (the EU hereafter) has been very impressive. Since August, 2002, Turkish parliament has made a number of extremely important legal and constitutional changes to upgrade Turkish democracy in accordance with the level of democracy in Europe. Although there is still a considerable amount of effort is required to implement these reforms in state/society relations, they were nevertheless enough to indicate that the Copenhagen political criteria was met to the degree of starting the full acession negotiations.

Paradoxically, however, although the process of full accession negotiations has begun on 3, October, 2005, its outcome still remains uncertain. In other words the recent deppening and intensification in Turkey/The EU relations has not yielded certainty in terms of the outcome of the full acession negotiations. In fact, the more Turkey fulfils Copennhagen political criteria and demonstrates political and societal will to be closer to Europe, the more uncertain the outcome becomes. This is precesily due to do the fact that even though Turkey continues its democratic reform process and successfully implements these reforms, its full membership will still entail what has come to be known as "the absorption capacity of Europe". In other words when it comes to the decision about Turkey's full membership, the Copenhagen political criteria constitutes not a "sufficient" but a "neccessary" condition. If that is the case, then, how are we to account both the process of recent deepening and intensification in Turkey/the EU relations on the one hand, and the lack of commitment by the EU institutions to recognize Turkey as having a legitimate claim to full membership on the other. In what follows I will attempt to provide an answer to both of them by underlining their coexistence. In so far the future of Turkey in Europe will also determine the future of Europe both in terms of the formation of European identity and with respect to the role of Europe in today's global relations. It is also in this sense that the decison about Turkey is the most historical decision that the EU has ever taken in the process of its enlargement, since it has the potential to have drastic and crucial impacts not only on the future of Turkey, but also that of Europe and global relations. In other words, in deciding about the future of Turkey, Europe is also decing about its future. If this is the case, then the crucial question to be answered is: how to analyse this complexity in a way that we can also establish objectivity and fairness in the process of full accession negotiations and its outcome.

Turkey as a constitutive-outside of the future of Europe

The recent crisis within the European Union triggered by the rejection of the constitution in France and Holland brought the tensions that lay simmering underneath European politics to the surface. The euro-skeptics successfully utilized the symbolism of the fact that the constitution was rejected by the popular vote in both France and Holland to argue that the people of Europe rejected the elite driven process of a federated Europe. Immediately after the constitutional crisis, the row between Britain and France over the EU budget, and the last minute bargaining to convince Austria not to veto the start of accession negotiations with Turkey, raised further doubts not only about the governability of the EU but also the future direction of the European project. It seems that the optimistic outlook of a united Europe, which was articulated after the collapse of the socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and the subsequent policy of simultaneously widening and deepening Europe, is in disarray. The principal aim behind establishing a constitution was the creation of a framework for deepening and to construct an effective governing mechanism for significantly enlarging Europe. At least, for now, it seems that such an ambitious project of simultaneously widening and deepening Europe is on hold. The crisis within the EU, however, is neither accidental nor unexpected. There are several key developments within the larger context of European politics that signal the origins of the current crisis. The first one is the role the Europe plays in the current geopolitical configuration with respect to the growing unilateralism of the United States. The second one is the governability of the European Union. The current constitutional crisis reveals a particular challenge facing the European project in terms of reconciling the tension between postnational forms of governance and a nation-state model. The third, and final, development is the constitutive role of cultural pluralism in the framing of the European identity. The racial and ethnic tensions in France, the growing hostility towards the Muslim community in Holland and in other European countries, and the failure of citizenship policies to incorporate various ethnic and religious groups in Germany and in other European countries indicate that current configurations of citizenship policies in European countries are far from being able to respond to the growing demands of increasingly multicultural populations. This ambiguity towards cultural plurality and an unwillingness to rethink the parameters of inclusion and exclusion find their resonances in the efforts of defining the European identity.

Turkish membership to the EU becomes particularly important within the above mentioned context as it triggers tensions and crisis in all three problematic areas of the European project. Very often, Turkish membership is viewed as a 'Turkish problem' and is framed as Turkey's inability (or ability) to meet the demands of becoming a member. In this paper I argue that rather than being a Turkish problem, the inclusion of Turkey in the European Union is actually a European problem. Put differently, Turkey's membership tests Europe's ability (or inability) to deal with the questions of geopolitics, postnationalism and cultural plurality.

In the following section, I first look at the relationship between geopolitics and Turkey's membership. Following this, I discuss the impact of Turkey's membership on

postnational Europe. Finally, I focus on debates around European identity and the impact of Turkey's membership on these debates. The paper argues that the resolution of each of these three areas of tension very much depends on Europe's ability to resolve questions of cultural pluralism and that Turkey's membership will play a key role in the resolution of these tensions.

The European Union and the Geopolitical Configuration of World Politics

In the wake of the US invasion of Iraq, Habermas and Derrida issued a jointly written manifesto calling for a commonly defined European identity supported by a clearly defined role for Europe in world politics. In fact, for Habermas and Derrida the role the EU plays in the larger geopolitical configuration of world politics is directly linked to the question of European identity. Reflecting on the role of Europe in world politics in the wake of an international order dominated by a unilateralist superpower, Habermas and Derrida assert that Europe should counterbalance the hegemonic unilateralism of the United States (Habermas and Derrida, 2003:293). According to Habermas and Derrida, counterbalancing the hegemony of the United States should not be limited to the visibility of Europe in world politics as an influential player, but should in fact be differentiated by an alternative vision of world politics. Contrary to the unilateralist approach of US foreign policy, Habermas and Derrida foresee a European-influenced world politics that is based on a cosmopolitan order informed by a strict adherence to international law. As an alternative to the US dominated hyper-realist world order, in which states are believed to pursue their interest at the expense of international law, Habermas and Derrida put forward a vision of word order in which states share a significant portion of their sovereignty with international institutions operating within the confines of a cosmopolitan legal framework (Habermas and Derrida, 2003:293).

Even though the US invasion of Iraq made Europe's inability to influence global politics painfully visible, the lack of coherent European policy in foreign affairs is nothing new (Peterson and Pollack, 2003; European Commission, 2004; Hill and Smith, 2005; Marsh and Mackenstein, 2005). In fact, the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, and the subsequent wars in Bosnia and Kosovo, revealed that the EU lacked a coherent foreign policy approach and was unable, as a result, to resolve the crises within its own backyard. If the invasion of Iraq once more questioned the place of the EU within the global state of affairs, Kagan's blunt declaration, that the US and Europe no longer share a common view of the world, reminded Europeans that they need to provide an alternative vision to the Hobbesian vision of world politics advocated by Kagan and the current Bush administration.

The EU in the larger geopolitical context presents a cosmopolitan alternative to US unilateralism as, according to Habermas and Derrida, its increasingly postnational orientation is based on a unified legal framework requiring member states to share their sovereignty with the EU. However, this postnational character also requires a cultural base, an identity upon which this legal framework can be build. The question that remains to be answered is how the very nature of this cultural identity is to be formulated. In their manifesto, Habermas and Derrida seek the origins of such cultural identity in the

historical roots of Europe which evolved from the Judeo-Christian tradition, secularization and Roman Law among others (Habermas and Derrida, 2003:296). Clearly, it is not the intention of Habermas and Derrida to imagine a culturally sealed European identity. It is, rather, an exercise to seek the roots of an alternative cosmopolitan international order grounded in the history of European traditions. This is why, in their manifesto, Europe appears to be a unified entity. Despite variations, a single linear narrative defines the cultural characteristics of Europe and its cosmopolitan orientation. Whether the cultural basis of the European identity should be based on such a singular narrative is a current debate within the EU and problems associated with such a narrative are well-documented (Delanty, 1995; Shore, 2000; Elbe, 2001). What is interesting, however, is that Habermas and Derrida, and also recently Bauman, establish a connection between Europe's geostrategic role in the global world and the cultural identity of Europe (Bauman, 2004). In other words, what would enable Europe to play its strategic role in the global world and provide an alternative vision of world politic to the Hobbesian world of the US is its unique identity rooted in its history. It seems that there is a correspondence between the cosmopolitan ideal on which the alternative international order should be based and the principles on which the European identity should be based.

But, why would people living in other parts of the world accept such a culturally specific project as the basis of alternative global order? Probably a more important question is whether the EU, in its current institutional configuration, has the capabilities of influencing various aspects of global politics. While the manifesto issued by Habermas and Derrida, which was echoed by other influential voices in Europe, aims to address the question of Europe's geopolitical place in global state of affairs, in fact it is not about geopolitics but is more about the cultural framework of the European identity. Various debates within Europe that focus on Turkey's membership and the future role of Europe reveal the uneasy relationship between cultural identity of Europe and Europe's place in the world affairs. Put differently, debates about Turkey's membership force Europe to discuss what are often contradictory visions of Europe's place in the world. For instance, one of the arguments in favor of Turkey's membership is that in order to balance American unilateralism, the EU has to develop capabilities in the areas of military, population and economic productivity and Turkey's incorporation into the union would only strengthen the EU's role in the world (Sauron, 2004; Ostanhof, 2005). Notwithstanding the population and army, another argument that supports the view that Turkey's inclusion would contribute to the geopolitical standing of Europe is that Turkey's membership provides Europe with the opportunity to make a statement that the European project is not culturally sealed, but also allows Europe to bridge the gap between the West and Muslim countries (Touraine, 2004; Touraine, Morin et al., 2004). In fact, this point about bridging the gap between the West and Muslim countries is commonly used to argue that contrary to the US "war on terror" which is based on security and conflict, incorporating a predominantly Muslim country into the European Union would resolve tensions that have emerged between the West and Muslim countries (Benessia, 2004). Some suggest that just as Monnet defined the main objective of the European Union as being one of securing peace among European nations, in a similar fashion, it is argued that Turkey's membership would serve the purpose of providing peace among cultures (Duisenberg, 2005). Similarly, it is also argued that incorporating

Turkey into its borders would prevent Europe from becoming increasingly isolated, culturally closed and irrelevant in the global state of affairs (Kuntz, 2004).

However, others argue equally forcefully that incorporating Turkey into the EU would pose insurmountable institutional challenges and would further weaken the EU's place in world politics. Even though many agree that Turkey's geopolitical condition is hard to ignore, incorporating Turkey into the EU would be too difficult due to important cultural differences between Turkey and Europe. According to this line of argument, it is therefore more desirable to establish a "privileged partnership" with Turkey that would be effective in incorporating Turkey's geopolitical advantages into the sphere of European influence without importing cultural incompatibilities into the domestic sphere of the EU (Pfaff, 2004). Notwithstanding cultural differences, Turkey, with its large and relatively poor population, would become a big drain on EU resources and a potentially large source of immigration, which would overwhelm the domestic configurations of European countries (Welfens, 2004).

This polarized debate about Turkey's geopolitical place within the European project is mostly a debate about the geopolitical place of Europe in the global world. While the arguments about Turkey's geopolitical importance for Europe point out that Turkey's inclusion into the European project would benefit Europe, through the creation of a highly dynamic economy and a possibility of bridging the gap between Europe and Muslim countries, they also indicate that Europe's geopolitical significance in the global world mostly depends on its ability to go beyond a culturally sealed and essentialist European identity. However, arguments against the geopolitical importance of Turkey tend to downplay the cultural pluralism and do not necessarily see multiculturalism as an integral part of the geopolitical strength. This ambiguity between geopolitics and cultural identity is further pronounced in the future characteristics of the EU as a postnational organization.

Postnational Europe and Cultural Identity

The tension between the geopolitical significance of the EU and how much of this geopolitical significance should be derived from European cultural identity is further complicated by the internal organization of the EU. From the beginning, European integration has been influenced by two simultaneously developing trends: the gradual and piecemeal development of European unity, on the one hand, and the attempt to forge a shared European identity, on the other. Since the deepening of European integration, with the passage of the Single European Act in 1986 and the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, greater emphasis has been placed on developing a postnational European political, economic and cultural landscape based on a shared European identity. However, this model has been challenged by the persistence of national loyalties and by successive waves of enlargement that have seen the EU expand from 12 to 25 countries since 1986. While the future direction of European unification remains unclear, current debates suggest that there are two distinctive trajectories to choose from: a vision of European integration that will remain limited to the close economic and political cooperation of

member states or a broader vision that eventually transforms these member states. This second broader vision is usually referred to as that of a postnational Europe that envisions integration extending far beyond simple cooperation between member states to the creation of a distinctive European identity. With the recent expansion eastward, now more than ever before, the membership of the European Union is growing more culturally diversified. While this cultural diversity adds a new dimension to the question of European unity, most of the debates about a postnational Europe are centered around the procedural framework within which integration would progress (Rusconi, 1998; Habermas, 2002). These arguments emphasize the fact that differences among national cultures make the formation of a supranational European identity highly controversial. As a result, it is argued that the Europeanization process should be free from all such cultural attachments and based instead on shared principles informed by a universal constitutional-legal framework (Habermas, 1998; Lacroix, 2002).

Calhoun correctly points out that, while the procedural aspect of constitutional patriotism may provide a contractual community, the European project still lacks a real sense of public sphere around which a real political community can be built. In other words, the lack of a European public sphere seems to be one of the biggest obstacles in creating a political community that goes beyond simple contractual governance. The postnational future of the EU is disadvantaged from the beginning as nation states derive a great deal of loyalty from the national public spheres while the EU has no common political community from which to derive a similar loyalty (Calhoun, 2003). The concept of European citizenship is believed to be one of the ways to facilitate "European social space", leading to a supra-national public sphere which can de-link citizenship practices from their national base and act as a necessary condition for creating solidarity among European peoples (Eder and Giesen, 2001; Lavdas, 2001; Lehning, 2001). Furthermore, this line of reasoning suggests that European citizenship might provide a mechanism for providing legitimacy to other community-building institutions and processes such as a monetary union and a common foreign policy (De Beus, 2001). However, it has also been suggested that neither the idea of a constitutional-legal framework, nor the concept of European citizenship as a way of creating political community, are sufficient to create a postnational Europe as there is a lack of cultural attachment to the idea of a European identity (Shore, 2000). This lack of cultural attachment to the idea of Europe appears, then, to be one of the main obstacles to the creation of a postnational European space (Burgess, 2004).

Debates over the postnational future of the EU are also indications of the current impasse over whether further integration will remain as simply one of economic and political cooperation or whether it will evolve in a more radical direction. Whether this postnational future should be based solely on a procedural framework, as described by Habermas' constitutional patriotism, or whether it should require a more elaborate construction of political community that is similar to national public spheres is further complicated by the increasing cultural diversity of the EU. It is now clear that Habermas' emotionally disengaged Constitutional Patriotism may provide the EU with contractual governance but it certainly lacks the emotional attachment that would turn the EU into a real political community. It seems that the crucial question around the

postnational future of the EU is centered around whether it is desirable to form a European public sphere that would provide citizens of member states with political attachment and shared political and social space. The more important question is whether this European public sphere is going to be any different from its national counterparts. National public spheres are integral parts of national narratives that play a crucial role in consolidating national identities. The long history of the modern national public sphere is full of examples of national publics that are not hospitable to plurality, difference and multiculturalism.   In fact, in most cases, national publics have been sites of homogenization and marginizalitation of differences in national discourses (Eley, 1992). Imagining a postnational Europe that depends on a European public sphere appears to be running the risk of ignoring the growing cultural plurality within European countries. Yet, emulating the model of national public spheres is just what the EU appears to be doing in order to counter the deep loyalties felt by Europeans to their national identities (Shore, 2004). Symbols such as the European flag and anthem, projects geared towards rewriting European history, and events like song contests, are all similar methods to those used by nation states to create consolidated national identities.   Yet, creating a postnational Europe as another form of national project goes counter to the growing cultural plurality of Europe.

This is why, in contrast to the arguments imagining a postnational Europe, either in the form of a procedural framework or in the form of a yet another national identity, there are others who see the postnational future of Europe as lying in the cultural plurality and multiculturalism of Europe.   The need to emphasize the multicultural aspect of European identity is not just simply an attempt to overcome the problems of turning European integration into another nation building project, but is also dictated by the visible cultural plurality within European countries and by the further enlargement of the EU. The EU is unavoidably multicultural because growing transnational linkages between member states, increasing the points of contacts between citizens of member states, enables new forms of identifications to develop. In addition, populations of European countries are increasingly multicultural and diverse, making it difficult to sustain the traditional representations of European countries as homogeneous political communities. However, the very existence of multiculturalism and the growing cultural plurality in Europe also appears to be the main source of contention about the postnational future of the EU. While supporters of a postnational Europe, based on a multicultural and pluralistic European identity, argue that European identity should not be grounded upon a particular cultural framework, others, such as the Christian Democrats, have argued that the boundaries of a European cultural tradition is defined by its Christian heritage and shared history.   However, with each wave of enlargement, defining the cultural boundaries of Europe has become more difficult, requiring a great deal of imagination on the part of the European elite. After the European Union gave the green light to start membership negotiations with Turkey, opponents of Turkey's membership began emphasizing the civilizational dimension of the European project to indicate that there is no space for a predominantly Muslim country in the European project. As a result, there are now two competing visions about how to define the cultural framework of European integration. The first sees Europe as a multicultural project and envisions a postnational Europe created by the diverse cultural traditions within European countries (Llobera 2003,

Debeljac 2003). In contrast, the second vision views Europe as a civilizational project, framed by the cultural boundaries of a Europe defined by Christian heritage and a shared history grounded in the Enlightenment tradition (Elbe 2001, Delanty 2003). Turkey's membership amplifies the tensions around the creation of a common European identity since it requires incorporating a predominantly Muslim country into the cultural framework of Europe. More importantly, it forces Europe to deal with the question of cultural pluralism as an integral part of the creation of a postnational Europe. In the next section I will discuss in detail the tension-ridden process of defining European identity and the way the Turkish membership forces this debate to come into the public light.

The European Identity In the Making

The piecemeal development of the EU provided a simple enough reason to avoid the difficult issues of what European identity is, how it is defined, and what it includes and excludes. After all, the institutional development of the EU was identified with a certain degree of pragmatism that did not require a more ambitious project of creating a European identity. Despite the fact that, with each wave of enlargement, the borders of Europe have been called into question, the fundamental question of what European identity is has never been seriously debated. However, the increased deepening and widening of European integration has exhausted the limits of this pragmatism. The pressing issues of the geopolitical significance of Europe, the future shape of the EU, the nature of further integration, and whether this integration would lead to an organization that is more than simply one of regional cooperation, are now directly related to the identity of an emerging European society. If European integration has progressed relatively smoothly during its early days, it was mainly due to the fact that it appeared to be a highly technical and bureaucratic project that did not arouse emotions nor grab the attention of large numbers of people. However, imagining a future European identity is hardly a technical matter. In fact, what Europe was, let alone what European identity now is, has never been clear and the meaning of Europe has changed and shifted throughout history (Delanty, 1995). While it was fairly easy to avoid questions about cultural identity in the early days of European integration, pressing issues such as the geopolitical significance of Europe and the postnational future of the EU are increasingly linked to questions of cultural identity. It has been suggested that at the center of the legitimacy crisis of the EU lies its identity crisis or lack of it (Burgess, 2004). However, as John Gray has pointed out, this ambiguity surrounding what constitutes European identity is not just simply the product of recent developments but has been a part and parcel of the European tradition since the Enlightenment project (Gray, 2005).

Turkey's membership plays a critical role then in this particular context as it forces the debate about European identity into the public. In other words, through Turkey's membership, Europe is forced to debate the nature of its own identity. There are arguments against Turkey's membership on the basis of cultural difference and there are others challenging the cultural exclusion argument by emphasizing Turkey's Europeanness. It may, in fact, be possible to provide counterarguments on the basis of geography, history, or culture, explaining why Turkey is a European country. However, the more interesting story lies in an analysis of understanding the way these arguments

function as attempts to define what Europe is. In other words, arguments against and for Turkey's membership are in fact arguments about what Europe is and what it will be in the future.

One of the strongest objections to Turkey's membership came from the former French President, Valery Giscard D'estaing, who argued that Europe is defined by the cultural richness of ancient Greece and Rome as well as the creative energy of the Renaissance and its impact on rational and scientific thinking. According to Giscard D'estaing, Turkey could not be a member of the EU because of the simple fact that it has never been part of this European history and has never participated in the cultural traditions of Europe (Giscard D'estaing, 2004). He further stated that the EU needs to have strong core identity which would encourage Europeans to realize that they are part of a larger community and to develop European patriotism (Giscard D'estaing, 2004). According to Giscard D'estaing, including Turkey would not only result in diluting the European identity and but would also turn Europe into nothing more than a United Nations. Giscard D'estaing is not the only one who has questioned Turkey's membership on the grounds of historical, cultural and geographical belonging (Wagner, 2003; Schuster and Koppel, 2004; Winkler, 2004) . Others have also stated that the outer border of Europe is the border of gothic churches which include the orthodox countries (Besancon, 2002). While East European countries are qualified to join the European project due to their Christian character and their affinity with the Enlightenment project, Turkey should be kept outside the European project as it was part of the nomadic traditions of Asiatic culture (Besancon, 2002). As a result, mixing fundamentally different civilizations by accepting Turkey would be a risky enterprise that would benefit neither Turks nor Europeans (Besancon, 2002). Pope Benedict XVI, while he was a cardinal, declared that because Turkey always constituted an antagonism in the European history and presented a danger to Christianity, it should not be included in the European Union (Editorial, 2004). The Dutch commissioner of the EU, Frits Bolkenstein, stated that if Turkey was let into the EU, "the battle of 1683 which ended the siege of Vienna by Turks would have been in vain" (Reynolds, 2004).

There are equally powerful voices arguing against this culturally sealed version of Europeanness by pointing out historical, geographical and cultural reasons for Turkey's inclusion to the EU (Clerc, 2002; Kuntz, 2004; Velga, 2005). Some, for instance, argue that the European culture starts in the eastern Mediterranean and, therefore, includes Turkey (Gnisci, 2004). Others have indicated that, historically, the Ottoman Empire was part of the European State system and that Turks were part of European history for six hundred years (Besson, 2004). Still others have pointed out the multicultural and multireligious nature of the Ottoman Empire as an example of tolerance and inclusion, which later found its way into core European values (De Trazegnies, 2003). More importantly, it has been noted that Turkey's inclusion into the European project would lead to a truly multicultural Europe, which refuses an exclusionary and culturally closed interpretation of European identity (Ferry, 2004).

The debate as to whether Turkey is a European country reveals a great deal about the various imaginations of Europe and its emerging identity. Arguments against the

membership of Turkey have two central assumptions. The first one is that European history represents a linear progression from ancient Greece to Enlightenment. The product of this linear and uninterrupted history is a homogeneous European culture that is shared by all European countries. The second assumption is that this homogeneous European culture and its values are culturally sealed and essentially internal to its participants. Therefore, even if Turkey internalizes these values, it still cannot be a European country due to its Otherness. Commentators who argue that Turkey has never been part of the European cultural tradition also argue that this absence from the European history is not just a simple exclusion but also an essential lack that eternally prevents Turkey from becoming a European country. This essentialized interpretation of European culture has already been demystified as nothing but a social construct (Delanty, 1995; Elbe, 2001). Contrary to this neat picture, European history has been full of discrepant moments and discontinuities which have resulted in many different meanings of Europe that have constantly shifted over the course of history.

Arguments that emphasize the changing and shifting meanings of Europe, in contrast, indicate the diverse and discontinuous nature of European history. They point out the fact that the very meaning of Europe is defined by the existence of these discrepant moments and the interventions made by marginal identities, who have constantly reinterpreted European values. As a result, it is not possible to have a fixed and unchanging notion of European identity. Instead, the very meaning of European culture is defined and framed by diverse and sometimes conflicting cultural traditions. In this respect, the growing presence of Muslim communities within European countries and Turkey's membership to Europe are not examples of Europe losing its identity but are examples of a redefinition of what Europe will come to represent in the global age.

Democratization and Fairness in Turkey-EU relations

Of course, it should be pointed out that the ability of Turkey to play a crucial and effective role in the redefinition of what Europe will become and represent in world affairs depends on its capacity to consolidate and deepen its democracy. The more democratic Turkey is the more its impact on Europe becomes effective. It is true that Turkey has demonstrated a strong political will to initialize a set of legal and constitutional changes to upgrade its democracy. Yet it is equally true that these changes have still to be implemented in state-society/individual relations. The problem of implementation, that is, the problem of democratic consolidation still remains to be one of the crucial problems in Turkey-EU relations. Turkey has still a long way to become a democratic society, to have its democracy as human rights, and to consolidate its democracy in a way that "it becomes the only game in town". In order for its democracy to be consolidated, it is necessary, if not imperative, for Turkey to maintain a strong political will to implement the legal and constitutional changes that it has initialized to meet the requirements of the Copenhagen political criteria. Democratic consolidation is an on-going process of creating a type of society in which "no one can imagine acting outside democratic institutions" and the language of rights and freedoms constitutes the basis of the regulation of state-society/individual relations. Turkey has begun its journey

in this process, and the more certain and deeper Turkey-EU relations are, the more likely Turkey's ability to make its democracy consolidated becomes.

Yet, the possibility of Turkey's success in the process of implementation requires also a fair and objective treatment that EU employs and displays in its relation with Turkey as a potential full and equal member. As the former EU's enlargement Commissioner, Gunter Verheugen, has suggested, Europe should "use the same methodology and benchmarks, the same criteria and same rules" that have been applied to other new members of the EU, should not have "higher or lower standards for Turkey", and should not involve "double standards": "we cannot have double standards. We cannot have 100 percent of implementations. We do not do that even with our own countries".[1] In other words, Europe should be "fair and objective" in its view of Turkey and its full membership, that is, the principle of fairness and objectivity should be applied as the normative ground of Turkey-EU relations. As a normative ground the principle of fairness and objectivity entails, firstly that the progress reports written on Turkey and decisions taken about Turkey's success in full accession negotiations should be *universal* and *impartial*. The EU should treat Turkey not as a special case, but as one of the candidate countries for the full-membership status (that is, the norm of universality). At the same, the EU's distance to Turkey's full-membership should be as equal to its distance to the full-membership of the other candidate countries (that is, the norm of impartiality). In concrete terms, the norms of universality and impartiality indicate that the decision about Turkey would be fair as long as it is not framed by a reference to Turkey's Muslim population or Turkey's geography. It should be based on the ability, the capacity, as well as the will of Turkey to become a more democratic and modernized country.

However, the recent talks about Turkey in EU have involved references to religion and geography, as well as to the inability of Turkey to become democratic due to its Kemalist political history that gives primacy to the state and military over society and democracy. For the references to religion and geography, there is nothing that Turkey can do, since it cannot change its cultural identity or its geographical location. Such references are culturalist, and any decision about Turkey and its place in Europe, which has been taken on the basis of religion and geography, would say something not about Turkey, but about Europe and its culturally essentialist orientation. In this case, there is not much need to discuss more analytically about Turkey, its problems in terms of democracy and modernization, and its ability and capacity to adapt itself to Europe. But in Turkish talks, references that have been made to direct our attention to the problems of democracy as human rights and its consolidation, in order to suggest that Turkey still needs more political reforms to be successful and also proceed in the process of full accession negotiations, should be taken seriously. Such universal and impartial references, which are political rather than cultural and geographical, require more conversation, more discussion and more dialogue about Turkey's ability to become a consolidated democracy and a liberal/plural modernity.

Secondly, fairness and objectivity entail that it is *the Copenhagen criteria*, that is, the level and the nature of democratization and its consolidation in Turkey, which constitutes

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[1] In J. Dempsey, "EU appeals for fairness over Turkish talks", *Financial Times*, 28, May, 2004.

fairness in Turkey-EU relations. Democracy as human rights constitutes the content of the Copenhagen criteria. The Copenhagen criteria outline the political conditions attached to membership, and involves a transition from formal democracy to substantial democracy. As noted, this transition is in fact "a process" which includes both the formal procedures (free and recursive elections, multi-party system and the ability of the opposition parities to criticize the governing party or the governing coalition in a given country) and the substantial democratization of the state-society relations through the respect and protection of individual/group rights and freedoms. Defined in this way, the logic of the Copenhagen criteria and the consolidation of Turkish democracy appear not to be contradictory with one another, but on the contrary to be complementary processes where the former is the logical consequence of the later. Indeed, the Copenhagen criteria can be considered as a logical consequence of the process of the making of modern Turkey which had started in 1923 with the political reform process, initiated by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his followers.

Thirdly, a fair and objective benchmark against which to judge Turkey's success in *implementing* the Copenhagen political criteria in the state-society relations should derive from an understanding of democratic consolidation as a "never-ending process". This means that as different from authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, in democratic regimes the process of implementation of rights and freedoms never ends. This is the main differentiating-point between democratic regimes and its alternative authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. Whereas democracy involves an ongoing process of negotiation between state and society about the content and scope of rights and freedoms, that negotiation is limited in authoritarian regimes, and almost non-existent in totalitarian regimes. For this reason, if Europe constitutes a democratic political space, then the process of the implementation of the Copenhagen criteria involves not only the candidate countries, but also the existing member states, since by definition no democratic regime can have the process of implementation in its fullest form. This also means that the implementation process continues in a given candidate country during the full accession negotiations, even after receiving the full-membership status. In this sense, it can be suggested that the decision of the EU about Turkey would be fair, if it is founded upon the understanding that Turkey is demonstrating a strong political will and effort to take necessary measures to implement the Copenhagen criteria.

The norms of universality and impartiality, the understanding of Copenhagen criteria as embedded in the idea of democratic consolidation, and the way of thinking about the process of the implementation of the Copenhagen criteria as a never ending process, together constitute what can be called "the principle of fairness and objectivity" in Turkey-EU relations. It should not be forgotten that while Turkey's political will is essential, if not imperative, to make the possibility of democracy as human rights an achieved reality, there is no doubt that the fair and objective approach that Europe employs in its view of Turkey is also of utmost importance to Turkey's success in its full accession negotiations. The more Turkey-EU relations are framed by the principle of fairness and objectivity, the more likely Turkey's success in achieving democracy as human rights becomes. While recognising that the negotiation process is a highly technical endeavour dependent on successful harmonisation with the EU *acquis*, one

should also be aware of the fact that the 'political' is still inherent in the pre-accession period through the linking of successful compliance with the Copenhagen political criteria with progress in accession negotiations. A fair and objective evaluation hence becomes crucial not only for the consolidation of Turkish democracy but also for successful accession negotiations. The choice here is not only Turkey's, but also Europe's...

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