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# Europeanization, Framing Competition and Civil Society in the EU and Turkey

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# Europeanization, Framing Competition and Civil Society in the EU and Turkey

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## Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between the European Union and Turkey with a particular focus on the Europeanization of Turkish civil society. The *Occupygezi* movement has revealed that a more comprehensive approach needs to be taken in order to understand the deep socio-political drives underpinning the Turkish bid for EU membership. Understanding the broader processes of Europeanization in political and social terms in Turkey is crucial for us to capture the real drives of the European integration process. In this regard, the paper will pay special attention to the ideational factors shaping the political discourse in Turkey concerning the attitudes towards the EU. This is important not only to understand what push and pull factors are animating and perhaps transforming Turkish society, but also to see how the debates in Turkey and the EU reciprocally shape each other. Subsequently, this paper focuses specifically on three different framings developed by civil society organizations in Turkey with regard to the Europeanization process since the 1999 Helsinki Summit of the European Union. These three main frames are *Euro-enthusiastic*, *Euro-sceptic* and *critical Europeanist* attitudes generated by different civil society actors as a response to the changing political, social, economic and cultural climate between Turkey and the European Union as well as within Turkey itself. Consequently, this paper also shows the transformative effect of the *Occupygezi* movement on the mindsets of secular groups, who were previously Euro-sceptic.

## Introduction

In this article, we aim to examine the relationship between the European Union and Turkey from the specific angle of the process of Europeanization. We believe that economic or geopolitical arguments do not exhaust the debate on Turkey's EU accession. A more comprehensive approach needs to be taken in order to understand the deep socio-political drives underpinning the Turkish bid for EU membership. From this perspective, understanding the broader process of Europeanization in political and social terms is crucial in order to capture the real drives of the European integration process in its entirety. In this vein, special attention needs to be paid to the ideational factors that shape the political discourse in Turkey concerning the attitude towards the EU. This is important not only in order to understand what push and pull factors are animating and perhaps transforming Turkish society, but also for two other reasons. First, it is important to correctly understand the debate in Turkey because only by doing that can the EU develop an effective discourse in its approach to Turkish political elites and society more broadly. Second, understanding the debate in Turkey also helps in understanding the debate within the EU, either through contrast or through illuminating the extent to which the EU debate is also influenced and reshaped by the debates in its neighborhood.

This article focuses specifically on three different framings developed by the civil society organizations (CSOs) in Turkey with respect to the European integration process, which is believed to have deepened since the 1999 Helsinki Summit of the European Union. These three main frames are *Euro-enthusiastic*, *Euro-sceptic* and *critical Europeanist* attitudes generated by different civil society actors as a response to the changing political, social, economic and cultural climate between Turkey and the European Union as well as within Turkey itself. Theoretically, the *Euro-enthusiastic* frame proposes a positive assessment of European development and detects some problems in the implementation of the project, which are believed to be resulting from the EU institutions. The *Euro-sceptic* frame tends to read the regional integration process as a set of detrimental dynamics that threaten the communitarian bases necessary for the sustainability of the local and national political projects. This frame is a more local and nationalist interpretation of European integration, which is perceived as a direct intervention in the sovereignty of the nation-states. The *critical Europeanist* frame searches for a more social and democratic Europe rather than a market-based Europe. As will be further delineated, this last frame was developed during and after the Gezi movement,

which spilled over to the entire country in June 2013 as a popular form of resistance against the authoritarian rule of the Justice and Development Party, which has governed the country since 2002. It will be argued that it was this last form of framing that has made at least some Turkish civil society actors embrace the European integration process as an anchor for the democratization of the country.

The paper proceeds according to the following structure: it first sets the stage conceptually by examining the role of civil society in the political arena and specifically in the context of Europeanization. It then identifies the major functions played by CSOs within the European governance system. Special attention is paid to the three different overall framings underpinning the debate in Europe over European CSOs. Once the EU side is clarified, the paper turns its focus to the Turkish debate itself. It first provides an interpretation of the Europeanization process in Turkey and then applies the framings of the debate in Europe to the Turkish debate and tests to what extent those framings can offer a better grasp of this debate. It further deepens the analysis by examining the specific actors in the Turkish national debate on Europe and their differing stances. The paper concludes by suggesting ways to better understand the actual and potential interaction between the EU debate and the Turkish debate on Europe, and hence the relationship between the EU and Turkey more generally.

## Understanding civil society in the context of Europeanization

The mainstream understanding of civil society sprung from specific historical, political and socio-economic backgrounds. The early philosophical debates on civil society emerged from and were grounded in Western Europe, in contexts of state formation (Hobbes, Locke and Ferguson), emerging capitalism and class struggle (Hegel and Marx) and democratization and democracy (Gramsci and Habermas). Likewise, in the 1970s and 1980s civil society activity and literature was firmly grounded in the West, having played an active role in issues such as nuclear disarmament, environmental sustainability and gender and race struggles. Since the end of the Cold War, the more recent wave of civil society literature is also mostly grounded in the West, this time couched in the wider framework of globalization and international relations studies. A specific and more recent trend in the study of civil society concerns the process of Europeanization. This study fits into this latter trend.

The specific contexts in which these literatures are embedded are often taken for granted. Rarely are the implications of context in the development of civil society openly acknowledged and taken into account.<sup>1</sup> Yet a study of the role of civil society in the wider Europeanization process must account for the role and implications of context. Hence a first variable in this analysis of civil society is the context within which it operates. In this respect, several core questions need to be raised at the outset. Can and does civil society exist in contexts beyond the traditional background of the state? The underlying premise of this chapter is that civil society can and does exist in these situations. Yet its nature as well as its role and functions are fundamentally shaped by the specific context in question, i.e. the context of Europeanization within the EU and in the candidate country Turkey. Insofar as civil society is both an independent agent for change<sup>2</sup> and a dependent product of existing structures,<sup>3</sup> we are likely to encounter a wide range of civil society actors carrying out a wide

1 David Lewis, "Civil Society in Non-Western Contexts: Reflections on the Usefulness of a Concept", in *Civil Society Working Paper series*, No. 13 (October 2001), <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/29052>; Raffaele Marchetti and Nathalie Tocci, "Conflict Society: Understanding the Role of Civil Society in Conflict", in *Global Change, Peace and Security*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (June 2009), p. 201-217.

2 Robert D. Putnam with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Y. Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992.

3 Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, Mayer N. Zald (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements. Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

range of actions in this context. In this paper, we aim to suggest that in order to understand the relation between the EU and Turkey, and in particular Turkey's process of accession, we need to take into account the full complexity of this interaction, including its development in the domain of civil society. This may indeed prove crucial for the sustainability in the long term of the prolonged EU accession process in which Turkey is involved.

While the standard definition of civil society identifies it as the space outside of the government, the family and the market in which individuals and collective organizations advance allegedly common interests in a competitive environment (see fig. 1 below), a more encompassing definition understands civil society as referring to the sphere in which citizens and social initiatives organize themselves around objectives, constituencies and thematic interests with a public nature, be it local, national or transnational. Accordingly, civil society organizations usually include community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social movements, labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, media operators, academia, diaspora groups, lobby and consultancy groups, think tanks and research centers and professional associations and foundations (with political parties and private companies remaining the most controversial cases). An even wider definition of non-state actors also includes criminal networks, terrorists and combatant groups. Analytically, four broad categories of civil society organizations (CSOs) can be distinguished: membership organizations, interest organizations, service organizations and support organizations.<sup>4</sup>

The term civil society was rediscovered after the fall of the Wall and was frequently deployed in the policies formulation in the laboratory of Central and Eastern Europe as well as Latin America and East Asia. In this context, a particularly important dimension of the action of civil society organizations was its relation with the state. In general terms, this relation is seen alternatively as either competitive or cooperative. According to the first perspective deriving from John Locke, popular control of political institutions requires an external, independent actor, and civil society constitutes a fitting functional counterpart to the institutional power. On the opposite side, according to the tradition of cooperation inspired by Montesquieu and Hegel, civil society is seen in its integrative function either as cooperating with the institutions in terms of inputs (CSOs have an associative function that generates legitimacy of the state, close to communitarianism) or as a subcontractor for facilitating the outputs. From this perspective, the sense of community and solidarity is grounded in the broad societal environment (lifeworld). CSOs have precisely the role of transmitting such sense into the public institutions: they are intermediaries, but at the same time they are also constitutive of the social cement underpinning any political endeavor.

In particular, concerning the relation between civil society and democracy, CSOs are usually seen as democracy-enhancers. Accordingly, CSOs are expected to play a significant role in the different phases of the democratic transition. In the moment of liberalization of the autocratic regime, CSOs are usually united in the strategic fight against the *ancient regime*. In the phase of institutionalization of democracy, they tend to cooperate in the building of the new regime. And finally, in the process of consolidation of democracy, CSOs are understood as schools of democracy, contestation and pluralism, as in the reflexive function. It has to be noted, however, that such a democratic reading of civil society is normatively biased insofar as it precludes the possibility to analyze the whole range of actors engaged in politics from a non-governmental stance. It is usually based on a very specific notion of what constitutes a "good" CSO, thus excluding from the radar many politically significant organizations. Hence, it is important to recognize that the contribution to democracy enhancement may come from many different directions and through indirect paths.

4 Annette Zimmer et al., "The Legacy of Subsidiarity: The Nonprofit Sector in Germany", in Annette Zimmer, Eckhard Priller (eds.), *Future of Civil Society. Making Central European Nonprofit-Organizations Work*, Wiesbaden, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2004, p. 681-711.

In the context of the EU, civil society is usually understood in a functionally broad way, though it may be limited in political terms. It is functionally broad in that definitions of civil society usually include different kinds of interest groups: non-governmental organizations, social movements, advocacy and promotional groups, functional interest groups (such as trade unions and employers' organizations), sectoral organizations (such as entrepreneurs' and consumers' associations) and also universities, research institutes and epistemic communities. In the EU, CSOs are usually expected to play the collaborative role (rather than only enacting contentious politics) in a procedural manner within the policy-making process. As we will see, EU procedures tend to favor a functional, output-oriented conception of civil society involvement. For this reason, politically antagonistic groups are usually marginalized, if not ostracized and even criminalized.

From a civil society perspective, Europeanization has to be understood as a complex process of European integration that transforms actors and makes them supranationally part of a single demos, a single public space in which CSOs interact transnationally. More formally, Radaelli interprets Europeanization as a

construction; diffusion; and the institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ways of doing things, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies.<sup>5</sup>

In sum, it is a process (of diffusion, learning, adjusting and the reorientation of politics), an effect (of engagement with Europe), a cause (of further integration) and a relation (between the EU and other actors).<sup>6</sup>

## The EU's openings to civil society<sup>7</sup>

The topic of civil society participation entered the EU agenda after the foundation of the European Union in 1993 with the Maastricht Treaty. Setting the goal of the political union, the treaty indirectly generated a long term debate on the democratic deficit and more generally on the increasing politicization of the EU integration process. This discursive shift signaled the end of the "permissive consensus" of the elite-driven project: from that moment on the previously depoliticized process of the EU integration became more contentious.<sup>8</sup> In this context, participation of civil society became more and more essential from the point of view of both CSOs and practitioners who saw CSOs as a solution, as legitimacy-enhancers that could solve their problems. Together with civil society, the other strategy to enhance legitimacy was to strengthen the European Parliament and shift from the output (result-based) to the input (participation-based) dimension of legitimacy.

The European Commission has a long history of consultation with civil experts, but it has changed and expanded its attitude over time.<sup>9</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s the Commission focused on "consultation" within European economic integration and on dialogue with primarily

economic experts within industrial and agrarian interest groups.<sup>10</sup> Other CSOs were still outside of this interaction with the EEC, except the long-standing European federalist movements.

Later on in the 1980s and 1990s, the Commission focused on developing a "partnership" with nongovernmental actors within the Social Dialogue on specific policy areas such as security, social and educational policy.<sup>11</sup> While the Commission demanded greater participation of civil society, European civil society itself expanded its reach to the regional level. A multitude of associations opened their branches in Brussels, such as the European Trade Union Confederation. Better IT technology and improved European coordination facilitated this scale shift towards the EU level.

However, only in the 1990s and 2000s was attention moved to the idea of "participation" itself and the concept of participatory democracy.<sup>12</sup> The White Paper on Governance drew the framework for such cooperation,<sup>13</sup> and the Leaken Conference of 2001 established a qualitative milestone for the recognition of NGO participation in European governance by including for the first time the representation of civil society in the convention working on the Constitutional Treaty. The most recent development in the integration of civil society is constituted by the Lisbon Treaty, which further enhances the European Social Dialogue and institutionalizes citizens' initiatives. Today, "Your Voice in Europe," an online consultation system, offers the opportunity for all recorded groups to express their views during the Commission's policy formation phase. As a result, the process of policy formation has widened beyond the traditional intergovernmental method to include voluntary, informal, inclusive and participatory forms of coordination, the so-called new era of the EU's multilevel governance.

These transformations in the EU's attitude towards civil society created a structure of opportunities that CSOs repeatedly use to influence the decision-making process at the European level. In fact, we can expect that "the more political decisions are dispersed, the more open (and less repressive) a system is considered. The prevalent assumption is that the greater the number of actors who share political power (the more the checks and balances), the greater the chance that social movements will emerge and develop."<sup>14</sup> The EU governance structure tends to be fairly open to the inputs of civil society, if compared with similar political regimes throughout the world. While it is fairly clear by now that the system is more open to conventional, pragmatic lobbying than to ideological and disruptive action, it still leaves room for windows of opportunities for different kinds of mobilizations on different levels. Depending on the circumstances, CSOs may, for instance, adopt strategies of either domestication (putting pressure on the national constituencies) or externalization (targeting the EU institutions) in order to adapt better to the political opportunity structure that is presented to them, or, alternatively, adopt multiple strategies in which both the local and the European level is targeted. Especially in specific sectors such as the defining of the EU democracy and human rights external policies, civil society has played a significant role in setting the agenda. A recent case in point is represented by the successful mobilization of the LGBT groups that managed to include

5 Claudio Radaelli, "The Europeanization of Public Policies", in Kevin Featherstone and Claudio M. Radaelli (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 27-56, at p. 30.

6 Karolina Borońska-Hryniewiecka, "Europeanization of Non-State Actors: Towards a Framework for Analysis", in David Armstrong, et al. (eds.), *Civil Society and International Governance. The Role of Non-State Actors in Global and Regional Regulatory Frameworks*, London, Routledge, 2011, p. 73-91.

7 This section is based on Raffaele Marchetti, "What Function? Which Frame? Dilemmas for Civil Society in the EU System", in *WPFD Blog*, 3 December 2013, <http://wpfdc.org/blog/our-columnists/raffaele-marchetti/18940>

8 Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus", in *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January 2009), p. 1-23.

9 Christine Quittkat and Barbara Finke, "The EU Commission Consultation Regime", in Beate Kohler-Koch, Dirk De Bièvre, William A. Maloney (eds.), "Opening EU-Governance to Civil Society. Gains and Challenges", in *Connex Report Series*, No. 5 (February 2008), p. 183-222, at p. 184, <http://www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de/d7/en/node/2413>.

10 In 2009 there were 1,316 EU-level interest representatives on the EC register, with approximately 60% stemming from business and trade associations and the rest representing diffuse or public interests.

11 The European social dialogue refers to discussions, consultations, negotiations and joint actions involving organisations representing the two sides of industry (employers and workers). It takes two main forms: a tripartite dialogue involving the public authorities, and a bipartite dialogue between the European employers and trade union organisations.

12 Economic and Social Committee, *Opinion on 'The role and contribution of civil society organisations in the building of Europe'* (1999/C 329/10), 22 September 1999, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:51999ie0851:en:not>.

13 European Commission, *European Governance: A White Paper* (COM(2001) 428 final), 25 July 2001, p. 428, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52001dc0428:en:not>; and Kenneth A. Armstrong, "Rediscovering Civil Society: The European Union and the White Paper on Governance", in *European Law Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (March 2002), p. 102-132.

14 Donatella Della Porta and Manuela Caiani, *Social Movements and Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 7.

their political goals in the official agenda of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, or EIDHR.<sup>15</sup>

## Functions and Framings of CSOs within the European governance system<sup>16</sup>

The debate on the specific role played by CSOs within the European governance system is very intense.<sup>17</sup> Two of the principal options in the reading of the functions assigned and played by CSOs within the EU system are as functional collaborators or as constitutive sources for the creation of a European public space, as summarized in Table 1 (see Annex).

Among the European institutions, the European Commission has by far the greater role vis-à-vis CSOs. The European Parliament only comes second on this. The Commission deploys an activation strategy for the inclusion of CSOs in the predominantly supranational policy formulation. Over the years, the Commission has tried to institutionalize CSOs' structures along policy areas (so called NGO families) by expanding the notion of civil society as a provider of information and input in its policy-making. The highly developed system of comitology is characterized by the extensive use of informal practices beyond intergovernmentalism, a type of problem-solving interaction, and the spillover effect of socialization on participants.<sup>18</sup>

It is by now clear that the mode of interaction of the European Commission is highly biased towards CSOs rather than less organized grassroots movements. Institutionalized, professional CSOs are part and parcel of the functional mode of governance insofar as they act as governance partners in the implementation of sector-comprehensive strategies on different policy levels, while at the same time providing alternative, deliberative paths for the re-legitimation of the EU. It is clear, however, that a difference remains between participatory governance (with stakeholders) and participatory democracy from below. In principle, participatory governance remains centered on an instrumental input legitimacy and an output legitimacy anchored on the private-public partnerships (PPPs), whereas participatory democracy is based on a mode of intrinsic input legitimacy in which discursive involvement in the policy formation is promoted by a growing transnational and European civil society. The Commission is currently implementing the first and only aspiring to realize the second.

Such fracture between instrumental and intrinsic logic of legitimacy is also evident in the assessment of the actual and potential impact of CSOs on the EU system. At times CSOs are conceived as a threat to input legitimacy as based on formally institutionalized representative democracy. Often, CSOs are seen as an asset to increase the quality of policies and services delivered by the EU (outputs), but also as a pragmatic answer to shortcomings in input legitimacy that cannot be fully overcome due to the multilevel system of governance. More rarely or rather in principle, CSOs are ideally perceived as a carrier of an emerging EU order with a genuine EU public sphere and input legitimacy in its own right. The contrast between these differing

readings also entails a serious political dilemma, possibly the most crucial dysfunction in the relation between the EU institutions and civil society: "the conditions civil society has to meet to participate limit the very virtues for which the Commission pursues its normative and material activation strategy."<sup>19</sup> The more the Commission seeks professionalized NGOs, the less it will have bottom-up and contentious civil actors, which limits the potential for fulfilling the legitimizing and communicative role of civil society. It is a sort of catch-22 situation in which CSOs need to be highly professionalized in order to have a voice in Brussels, and yet at the same time, CSOs are also supposed to remain deeply rooted in order to provide genuine legitimacy from below. It seems that all the attempts developed by the EU institutions to engage with civil society and to bridge the EU with the European citizens have simply created a pro-Brussels CSO elite working in the interest of deeper integration and left behind all the other politically significant actors. Such tension can also be noted by looking at the frames developed by CSOs with reference to the European project itself.

The Europeanization of the public sphere is growing through the development of a number of ideational references that are increasingly shaping the mobilization of civil society actors at the European level. Common framing, controversies, parallelism of themes and cross-referencing are contributing to the definition of a common and yet plural European social agenda. In this vein, "the growing Europeanization of social movements is cognitively driven: as with the nation-state, social movement organizations and actions tend increasingly to move towards the EU institutions due to a growing acknowledgment of the increasing competences of the EU, as well as a preoccupation with the direction in which the competences are used. Cognitive processes include not only the increasing shift of the target (and therefore of prognostic and diagnostic frames) towards the EU, but also a growing recognition of similarities among national causes and, therefore, the construction of a shared European identity."<sup>20</sup>

Three main frames can be distinguished in the current debate among European CSOs. The predominant frame (at least before the eruption of the crises) for the political action of many CSOs is the *Euro-enthusiastic* attitude. Despite entailing different degrees of support for the European project, the *Euro-enthusiastic* frame proposes a positive assessment of the European development so far, and more importantly detects in the insufficient implementation of the project the actual origin of the current problems of the EU institutions. A second frame is constituted by the classic *Euro-scepticism*. This frame suggests a reading of the regional integration process as a set of detrimental dynamics that threatens the communitarian bases necessary for the sustainability of the local and national political projects. Finally, a third growing frame is represented by the *critical Europeanists*. According to this, a social Europe should be strengthened in opposition to the Europe of markets. A more political Europe, it holds, is needed to counter the apolitical and elite-driven Europe that we have known so far. The process of Europeanization is seen from this angle as developing also by contestation: a contested public debate is the surest path towards supranational legitimacy.

In the remainder of this paper, the aforementioned notions of Europeanization, Euro-framings and CSOs will be applied to the case of Turkey to see to what extent Turkish civil society has been part of the wider Europeanization trend, how the Euro-frames have been received and revised in the Turkish public debate, what the key facilitating elements or indeed the major obstacles to its limited participation have been and, finally, what its potential for future developments in this direction is. In what follows, starting with the deepening of the Europeanization process of Turkey since the 1999 Helsinki Summit of the European Union, three different forms of framing were generated by the civil society actors with regard to the European integration: a) *Euro-enthusiastic attitudes* developed by organized civil society

15 Council of the European Union, *EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy* (11855/12), 25 June 2012, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf).

16 This section is based on Raffaele Marchetti, "What Function? Which Frame? ...", cit.

17 Olivier De Schutter, "Europe in Search of Its Civil Society", in *European Law Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (June 2002), p. 198-217; Erik Oddvar Eriksen and John Erik Fossum, "Democracy through Strong Publics in the European Union?", in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (September 2002), p. 401-424; Chris Rumford, "European Civil Society or Transnational Social Space? Conceptions of Society in Discourses of EU Citizenship, Governance and the Democratic Deficit: an Emerging Agenda", in *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (February 2003), p. 25-43; and Carlo Ruzza, *Europe and Civil Society. Movement Coalitions and European Governance*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2004.

18 Deirdre Curtin, "Private Interest Representation or Civil Society Deliberation? A Contemporary Dilemma for European Union Governance", in *Social and Legal Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 2003), p. 55-75; and Christian Joerges and Jürgen Neyer, "Deliberative Supranationalism? Revisited", in *EUI Working Papers*, No. LAW 2006/20 (2006), <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/6251>.

19 Eva G. Heidebreder, "Civil Society Participation in EU Governance", cit., p. 19.

20 Donatella Della Porta and Manuela Caiani, *Social Movements and Europeanization*, p. 171.

actors ranging from ethno-cultural and religious groups to business associations; b) *Euro-sceptical attitudes* generated by various political parties, business circles and various other civil society organizations that blamed the European Union for the transformation of the country between 1999 and 2005, the period immediately prior to the beginning of the accession negotiations; and c) *critical Europeanist attitudes* cultivated mainly by individual actors, oppositional political parties, Alevis, LGBT members, anti-capitalist Muslims and middle class and upper-middle class youth, who have all been eager to express their growing opposition to the authoritarian and condescending rule of the AKP, the policies of which were previously embraced by the European circles.

## Europeanization of Turkey<sup>21</sup>

One of the peculiar aspects of the Turkish political culture is that Europeanization and "EU-ization" are two different concepts for Turkish citizens. While Europeanization refers to a long-standing transformation process on the societal level in terms of values, "EU-ization" refers to the technical and structural transformation of the political and legal systems in terms of the implementation of the *acquis*. To put it differently, the procedural elements of Europeanization are assigned to the EU, while Europe is perceived in a more identity-related basis.<sup>22</sup>

The term 'Europeanization' is often understood differently in various national discourses. In Turkey, references to the recent Europeanization are generally legalistic and are related to the broad and deep process of reform undertaken since the late 1990s. Yet, in other national contexts where such deep reforms and transformations were not necessary, the term is used to signify other things, such as "adopting European issues into national political discourses," "Europeanization of political parties," "undertaking necessary socio-economic and agricultural reforms, first to have a claim for EU funds and then for compatibility with the single market," "general programs for increasing public awareness about Europe and the EU," or else referred to the reformulation of the candidates' foreign policies and relations so that they broadly conform to EU policies.<sup>23</sup> The Europeanization process in Turkey goes back to the early 19th century. Deeming it to be part of its Westernization, modernization and secularization efforts, Turkey was very quick to establish relations with the EU. It was in 1959 that the Menderes government in Turkey tried to establish a relationship with the European communities of the time. After a long period of problems and obstacles, the negotiations for membership between the two parties began in the year 2005. The period between 1999 and 2005, when Turkey was granted candidacy status and the negotiations started, was a period in which Europeanization in political terms was at its peak level. Yet by the end of 2005 this virtuous cycle quickly turned back into a vicious one.<sup>24</sup> The carrot of the promise of membership does not seem to work in the same manner as in Central and Eastern European countries, for the prospect in the case of Turkey seems to be getting more and more indefinite. Currently, there are many impediments in the way of the negotiations, one of which is the recognition of Southern Cyprus. Furthermore, the brutal acts of the state security forces against the *Occupygezi* protesters in May and June 2013 made it even more difficult for the European heads of state and public to deepen the negotiations with the Turkish state.

Turkey's enthusiastic hopes and efforts towards integration into the European Union and the Helsinki Summit were path-breakers in

the rupture of a number of traditional discourses in Turkish society. The post-Helsinki period corresponds to Turkey's willingness to go through certain constitutional and legal changes in many respects. These changes have also had an impact on the discourses developed by various ethnic, cultural and religious groups in the country. For instance, the discursive shift from *homogenization to diversity* owes a lot to the Helsinki Summit decisions in 1999 declaring Turkey a candidate country to the EU,<sup>25</sup> as well as to the democratization process which accelerated in the aftermath of the Summit.

At the Helsinki Summit in December 1999, the European heads of state and government offered Turkey the concrete prospect of full membership in the European Union for the first time, more than four decades after Turkey's application for association with the European Economic Community (EEC) in July 1959. Subsequently, in 1963, Turkey signed the Ankara Agreement, which foresaw the establishment of a Customs Union between Turkey and the EEC. Although the Customs Union was an economic cooperation model, Article 28 of the Agreement stipulated Turkey's membership as a long-term goal. Accordingly, this stipulation had ramifications in the political realm; the economic interests of elites had a "conditioning effect" on democracy.<sup>26</sup> In 1987, Turkey applied for full EEC membership. Although Turkey was deemed eligible for membership, the Opinion of the Commission in 1989 stated that there were several economic and political difficulties that needed to be addressed before membership, "such as the expansion of political pluralism, the state of democracy, the persistence of disputes with a Member State (namely Greece), the lack of a viable solution to the Cyprus problem, relative economic backwardness, especially in macroeconomic terms, the Kurdish question, and problems related to human rights."<sup>27</sup> However, the official reason for this rejection was the internal dynamic of the EEC, namely, the ongoing process of establishing a single market.

The decision taken in Helsinki was in almost direct opposition to that taken at the Luxembourg Summit of 1997, which made Turkey's hopes for EU membership crash. European leaders had chosen then to ignore Turkey because there was no chance that Greece would not veto Turkey's candidate status, as this was a period of high intensity in the Turkish-Greek conflict. Besides, as the summit took place in December, the EU's "disqualification of Turkey" was very much influenced by the perception of Turkey's instability as proven during the 28th February 1997 military intervention targeting the growth of Islamist forces in local administrations.<sup>28</sup> In view of this, they did not want to give the same position to Turkey as to the other candidates who were left out of the "Luxembourg group" of countries that were to commence their accession negotiations in 1998 (Poland, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary and Slovenia). In the aftermath of the Luxembourg Summit, the public response in Turkey was immediate and harsh. Popular nationalism, minority nationalisms, Kemalism, religiosity, Occidentalism and Euro-scepticism all reached their peaks shortly afterwards, but thanks to the Helsinki Summit, this destructive atmosphere in Turkey did not last long.

The EU perspective delivered to Turkey in Helsinki owed much to the letter that had been sent by Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit to the German Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, in May 1999.<sup>29</sup> The letter was crucial because it expressed Turkey's willingness to undertake structural reforms in the political, social and economic spheres in order to fulfill the Copenhagen political criteria. These commitments

21 This section is based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey. The Myth of Toleration*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, p. 3-6, 55-58.

22 Alper Kaliber, "Türk Modernleşmesini Sorunsallaştıran Üç Ana Paradigma Üzerine" [On Three Main Paradigms Problematising Turkish Modernization], in Uygur Kocabaşoğlu (ed.), *Modernleşme ve Batıcılık* [Modernization and Westernism], İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2002 (Modern Türkiye'de siyasi düşünce 3), p. 107-125.

23 Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 4.

24 Ayhan Kaya and Ayşe Tecmen, "Turkish Modernity: A Continuous Journey of Europeanization", Turkish Case Report for the FP7 project *Identities and Modernities in Europe* (IME) - Work Package 4: The state of the art: various paths to modernity, 2010, p. 29, <https://www.academia.edu/540133>.

25 Hakan Yılmaz, "Europeanisation and its Discontents: Turkey, 1959-2007", in Constantine Arvanitopoulos (ed.), *Turkey's Accession to the European Union. An Unusual Candidacy*, Berlin and Heidelberg, Springer, 2009, p. 53-64.

26 E. Fuat Keyman and Ziya Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World. Global Dynamics and Domestic Transformations*, İstanbul, Bilgi University Press, 2007, p. 61.

27 Meltem Müftüler-Bac, "Through the Looking Glass: Turkey in Europe", in *Turkish Studies*. Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 2000), p. 21-35, at p. 22-23.

28 For a further analysis of the 28th February military intervention, or "postmodern coup", see Murat Belge, "Between Turkey and Europe: why friendship is welcome", in *OpenDemocracy*, 15 December 2004, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/node/2268>.

29 Şahin Alpay, "EU's Soft Power: The Case of Turkey", in *Fokus Türkiye*, No. 3/2006 (December 2006), p. 3, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/tuerkei/04799.pdf>.

were optimistically interpreted by the political elite of the EU member states and particularly by the German Greens and Social Democratic Party. The letter was sent in the immediate aftermath of the arrest of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) leader, Abdullah Öcalan, in January 1999. As one can imagine, the capture of Abdullah Öcalan was regarded as the end of a traumatic reign of terror and violence, both for the political establishment and the nation in general. Furthermore, one should also bear in mind that the most fundamental difference between the 1997 and 1999 summits was the change of the Greek stance towards Turkey's application. It was only after the mutual agreement between Turkey and Greece in 1999 to work closely on mutual rapprochement and to resolve their bilateral disputes by 2004 that Greece lifted its veto and recognized Turkey as a candidate. Furthermore, recognizing Turkey's candidacy at this moment allowed the EU not to put the later 2004/2007 entrants and Turkey at the same level. In fact, Turkey was recognized as candidate only after the rest of the "Helsinki group" of the future 2004 and 2007 entrants was allowed to start negotiations.

In 2002 the Copenhagen Summit introduced new concerns and discussions regarding the nature of European identity, the notion of Europeanization and the borders of Europe, which led to identity-based concerns regarding Turkey's place in Europe and the situation of Islamic identity in European societies. According to Keyman and Öniş, the main concern was whether the EU aspired to become a global actor or rather preferred inward-oriented integration. Subsequently, while the former aspiration was accommodating towards Turkish membership, the latter perceived Turkey as a liability given the social, political and economic disparities between the EU member states and Turkey.<sup>30</sup> The Copenhagen Summit and the subsequent discussions linked for the first time the question of culture with European enlargement and the EU's capacity to embrace cultural differences.

The discussions over Turkish accession revealed another dimension of "absorption capacity," that of "cultural" and "social" absorption, which are directly related to the "identity" of the Union. Jean-Louis Bourlanges, a MEP from a French center-right party who is vocal about Turkish accession, argued that the accession of Turkey would not only have a huge economic impact on the EU but would also introduce a great deal of cultural and social heterogeneity that would endanger the formation of a solid and democratically organized political community.<sup>31</sup> José Casanova, on the other hand, has a completely different perspective about Turkey's entry into the Union. He argues that as one territorial expansion "comes to an end and Europe closes its borders to further immigration in order to protect its cosmopolitan, universal values, what remains is exclusionist fortress Europe."<sup>32</sup>

## The competing frames in Turkish discourse on Europe

In this section, different types of euro-framings generated by the Turkish CSOs will be delineated to see to what extent Turkish civil society has internalized and/or externalized the wider Europeanization trend. In this regard, three different forms of framing will be discussed: a) *Euro-enthusiastic attitudes*; b) *Euro-sceptic attitudes*; and c) *critical Europeanist attitudes*.

## Turkish Euro-enthusiasm<sup>33</sup>

The European Union perspective offered in Helsinki has radically transformed the political establishment in Turkey, opening up new prospects for various ethnic, religious, social and political groups in Turkish civil society. Kurds, Alevi, Islamists, Circassians, Armenians and a number of religious and ethnic groups in Turkey have become true advocates of the European Union in a way that has affirmed the pillars of the political union as a project for peace and integration. The normative and transformative power of the EU provided immediately after 1999 a great incentive and motivation for numerous groups in Turkey to reinforce their willingness to coexist in harmony. What lies beneath this willingness no longer seems to be the *glorious retrospective past*, which has lately been perceived to be full of ideological and political disagreements among various groups, but rather the *prospective future*, in which ethnic, religious and cultural differences are expected to be embraced in a democratic way.<sup>34</sup> The EU has thus appeared to be the major catalyst in accelerating the process of democratization in Turkey, or in other words, a lighthouse illuminating Turkey's road to modernization and liberalization.

The 1999 Helsinki Summit decision stimulated a great stream of reforms in Turkey. In fact, the country achieved more reforms in just over two years than during the whole of the previous decade. With the rise of political and economic incentives in the aftermath of the Summit, several pressure groups, such as civil society organizations and business associations (TUSIAD and MUSIAD) emerged as pro-European actors, which supported the reformation process. Several laws were immediately passed in the National Parliament to fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria (democracy, free market and human rights). These included the right to broadcast in one's mother tongue, freedom of association, the limitation of military impact on the judiciary, more civilian control over the military, bringing extra-budgetary funds to which the military had access within the general budget of the Defence Ministry, removing military members from the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) and the Board of Higher Education (YÖK), removing military judges from the State Security Courts (DGM) and eventually the abolition of those Courts, the extension of civil rights to officially recognized minorities (Armenians, Jews and Greeks), reformation of the Penal Code, the abolition of the death penalty, release of political prisoners, the abolition of torture by the security forces and greater protection for the press.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, strict anti-inflationist economic policies have been successfully enforced along with the International Monetary Fund directives, institutional transparency and liberalism have been endorsed and both formal nationalism and minority nationalism have been precluded. Broadcasting in languages other than Turkish, such as Kurdish and Circassian, has also been permitted, and socio-economic disparities between regions have also been dealt with.

The EU perspective has also provided the Turkish public with an opportunity to come to terms with its own past, a Turkish "*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*" (coming to terms with the past).<sup>36</sup> Two widely debated and polemical conferences on the "Ottoman Armenians during the Demise of the Empire" and the "Kurdish Question" were organized at the Istanbul Bilgi University on 25th-26th September 2005 and 11th-12th March 2006, respectively, a point to which we shall return shortly. Although the judiciary acted favourably towards the lawsuits instituted by some ultra-nationalist lawyers, both conferences paved the way for public discussion of two subjects that

33 This section is based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 59-62.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 245.

35 Ergun Özbudun and Serap Yazıcı, *Democratization Reforms in Turkey*, Istanbul, TESEV, 2004.

36 For a detailed overview of the German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past) see Ernst Nolte, "Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will"; in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 June 1986; Jürgen Habermas, "Eine Art Schadensabwicklung. Die apologetischen Tendenzen in der deutschen Zeitgeschichtsschreibung"; in *Die Zeit*, 11 July 1986; and Jürgen Habermas, "Vom öffentlichen Gebrauch der Historie"; in *Die Zeit*, 7 November 1986.

30 E. Fuat Keyman and Ziya Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World*, cit., p. 48-50.

31 Michael Emerson et al., "Just what is this 'absorption capacity' of the European Union?"; in *CEPS Policy Briefs*, No. 113 (September 2006), p. 3, <http://www.ceps.be/node/1219>

32 José Casanova, "The Long, Difficult, and Tortuous Journey of Turkey into Europe and the Dilemmas of European Civilization"; in *Constellations*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (June 2006), p. 234-247, at p. 246, <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/publications/the-long-difficult-and-tortuous-journey-of-turkey-into-europe-and-the-dilemmas-of-european-civilization>.

had hitherto been taboo in contemporary Turkish history. Also, the protests of the few activists at this conference were a kind of “show business” motivated by media interest. This was also a time when the debates revolving around the Habermasian idea of *constitutional patriotism* became more vocal.<sup>37</sup> All of these legal and political changes bear witness to the transformation of Turkey regarding its position *vis-à-vis* the notion of diversity. This transformation corresponds to a discursive shift which officially recognizes Turkey as a multicultural country. That is to say, multiculturalism is no longer just a phenomenon in Turkey; it is also an officially recognized legal and political fact.

One should also bear in mind that the Justice and Development Party government has successfully made use of Turkey’s Islamic identity to boost the discourse of *alliance of civilizations* in which Turkey has been presented as a bridge between the East and West, or between Islam and Christianity. The moderate Islamists in the AKP government have also seen the importance of EU membership for Turkey as an instrument to consolidate and solidify their own position against the danger of any kind of possible attack coming from the ultra-laicists as well as other segments of Turkish society, such as the middle and/or upper-middle classes and Alevis. Hence, as Ziya Öniş rightfully stated, European integration has become a mechanism to preserve Turkey’s Islamic identity and make “it more compatible with a secular, democratic and pluralistic political order.”<sup>38</sup> Hence, during the first half of the 2000s, many civil society organizations as well as the government were content with the positive assets of the European integration leading Turkey to a more democratic level of governance.

### Turkish Euro-scepticism<sup>39</sup>

In the Turkish debate on Europe, however, there have been moments and dimensions that have been critical of the EU. From 17th December 2004 to 3rd October 2005, when EU state and national government leaders decided to start negotiations with Turkey, tensions began to rise between nationalist, patriotic, statist, pro-status-quo groups on the one hand and pro-EU groups on the other hand. This was the time when the *virtuous cycle* of the period between 1999 and 2005 was replaced by the *vicious cycle* starting in late 2005. A new nationalist and religious wave embraced the country, especially among middle class and upper middle-class groups. The actual start of the accession negotiations in 2005 was a turning point towards Euro-scepticism. This was also observed in several previous cases during the accession negotiations of the 2004/2007 entrants. The political elite and the government had come to realize that accession negotiations are not in fact “negotiations” but rather a unilateral imposition from the EU. The only “negotiable” matters that would benefit the candidates are generally some minor exceptions and few transition periods.

Furthermore, this reality of actual accession negotiations is often abused by politicians to unfoundedly blame many governmental actions on the EU. Whether the “blaming of Brussels” is honest or not, the overall impact on public support was almost surely negative. The electoral cycle of presidential and general elections witnessed militarist, nationalist and Euro-sceptic aspirations coupled with rising violence and terror in the country prior to the elections in 2007. The fight between the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the other statist political parties, backed by the military establishment, became crystallized during the presidential election in May 2007.

Preceding the presidential election, tension arose between the government and the General Staff of the armed forces, which

37 Ayhan Kaya and Turgut Tarhanlı (eds.), *Türkiye’de Çoğunluk ve Azınlık Politikaları. AB Sürecinde Yurttaşlık Tartışmaları* [Majority and Minority Policies in Turkey. Citizenship Debates on the way to the EU], Istanbul, TESEV, 2005, <http://www.tesev.org.tr/turkiye-de-cogunluk-ve-azinlik-politikalari--ab-surecinde-yurttaslik-tartismalari/content/169>.

38 Ziya Öniş, “Turkish Modernization and Challenges for the New Europe”, in *Perceptions*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Autumn 2004), p. 5-28, at p. 16, <http://sam.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/ZiyaOnis.pdf>.

39 This section is based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 62-67.

became known as the “e-Coup” affair. Just before midnight on 27th April 2007, the General Staff posted a declaration on its website cautioning the Prime Minister against nominating his right-hand man, the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gül, for the presidency. Erdogan did the unthinkable and publicly warned off the military the following day. It was later argued that the “e-Coup” strengthened the AKP in the subsequent general elections to the tune of an additional 10 percent of the vote. However, Mr. Gül did not fit the expectations of Turkey’s traditional political and military establishment, and he failed to attain the required two-thirds majority in the Parliament. This failure was a result of the fact that the presidential post has had a symbolic importance in Turkey since it was first occupied by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey. The establishment argued that, as someone with pro-Islamist values and a wife who wore a headscarf, Abdullah Gül was an inappropriate candidate for the office of president. The conflict even led to military intervention in politics on 27th April 2007, an intervention notoriously labelled “e-intervention” because of the way it was announced on the web page of the military’s Chief of Staff. However, the nationalist-military alliance against the AKP was unsuccessful in the general election, and on 22nd July 2007 the party won a landslide victory, with 47 percent of the votes cast. Following the elections, Abdullah Gül was elected to the office of president.

However, prior to the constitutional referendum in late 2010, minorities had become outspoken again to contribute to the idea of creating a completely new and democratic constitution. This constitution was to be prepared in the new Parliament summoned after the general elections of July 2011, which consolidated the power of the AKP with a landslide victory of more than 50 percent of the vote.<sup>40</sup> Economic prosperity, growing Turkish Lira nationalism, strong political determination against the traditional legacy of the Turkish army, Turkey’s becoming a soft power in the region, developing friendly relations with Middle Eastern, North African, the Caucasus and former Soviet countries, the creating of a political climate receptive to the claims of several different ethno-cultural groups in the process of preparing a new constitution and other similar factors were all decisive in the consolidation of the AKP’s power in Turkey.<sup>41</sup>

Minorities have now become more vocal in raising their claims to see a more democratic and inclusive constitution, which should be prepared with the inclusion of all the segments of society. They express their willingness to see a country in which rights are granted to all communities in Turkey without having to resort to violence or racism. In the meetings held by various ethno-cultural and religious groups in different cities of Turkey between 2010 and 2012, it was commonly agreed that the constitution should be renewed to better ensure individual rights and to remove any mention of ethnicity, specifically referring to their wish to see a change in Article 66 of the Constitution defining Turkish citizenship: “Everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk.” The other claim raised in these meetings was the need to ensure that rights are granted in Turkey on the basis of citizenship rather than on ethnicity favoring Sunni Muslim Turks.

Similar to the divide during and after the Democratic Party rule of the 1950s, the recent social and political divide in Turkey has both internal and external sources. The divide actually seems to have economic reasons, as the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has so far represented the interests of newly emerging middle class groups with rural origins and conservative backgrounds, who are competing against the established middle and upper-middle classes with urban backgrounds. The divide also springs from the fact that the legitimate political centre is now accessible to several social groups including not only laicists, republicans, Kemalists and liberal business circles, but also Muslims, Kurds, conservative business circles and several

40 Gözde Yılmaz, “Is There a Puzzle? Compliance with Minority Rights in Turkey (1999-2010)”, in *KFG Working Papers*, No. 23 (January 2011), [http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/en/v/transforeurope/publications/working\\_paper/wp/wp23](http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/en/v/transforeurope/publications/working_paper/wp/wp23).

41 Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey’s ‘Demonstrative Effect’ and the Transformation of the Middle East”, in *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (April-June 2011), p. 33-55, [http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight\\_turkey\\_vol\\_13\\_no\\_2\\_2011\\_kirisici.pdf](http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight_turkey_vol_13_no_2_2011_kirisici.pdf).



other groups. International sources of the divide are the internal crisis of the European Union, enlargement fatigue of the Union, ongoing instability in the Middle East, changing American interests in the region, the rise of political Islam as a reaction to the ongoing Islamophobia in the world and the global evocative ascendancy of civilizationist/culturalist/religious discourse.

Euro-scepticism, nationalism and parochialism in Turkey were triggered by the sentiments of disapproval towards the American occupation of Iraq, the limitations on national sovereignty posed by the EU integration, the high tide of the 90th anniversary in 2005 of the Armenian "deportation"/"genocide" among the Armenian diaspora, the "risk of recognition" of southern Cyprus by Turkey for the sake of EU integration, anti-Turkey public opinion in the EU countries framed by conservative powers (e.g. France and Austria), and Israel's attacks on Lebanon in 2006. Against such a background the state elite has also become very sceptical of the Europeanization process. The best way to explain the sources of such scepticism among the state elite is to refer to the "Sèvres Syndrome," which is based on a fear deriving from the post-World War I era and characterized by popular belief regarding the risk of the break-up of the Turkish state.<sup>42</sup> AKP immediately stepped back after 2005 from its pro-European position, as it was perceived by the party that the EU no longer paid off. Actually, it was not the nationalist climax in the country that turned the AKP into a Euro-sceptic party, but rather the decision of the European Court of Human Rights *vis-à-vis* the headscarf case *Leyla Şahin v. Turkey*, which challenged a Turkish law banning wearing the Islamic headscarf at universities and other educational and state institutions.

In 2005, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) made a decision on the headscarf case between a Turkish citizen, Leyla Şahin, and Turkey. In this case, the conflict between Şahin wearing a headscarf in a Turkish university and the Turkish state was discussed in relation to the right to publicly express religious belief as well as the right to education. Drawing on the principle of fundamental rights, the Court decided that the interference of the Turkish state with Şahin's education was rightful and legal since the state intended to protect the right of others to education and to maintain public order.<sup>43</sup> It was a monumental development that the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR agreed to hear Şahin's case at all, since two previous applications concerning the Turkish headscarf issue had been ruled inadmissible. In Şahin's case, however, the outcome was a temporary defeat for headscarf supporters. The court ruled that there had been no violation of Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights (freedom of thought, conscience and religion), Article 10 (freedom of expression), Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) and Article 2, Protocol No. 1 (right to education).<sup>44</sup> In short, the Grand Chamber concluded that in the case of the headscarf, the interference with fundamental rights might be necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and maintain public order. While the Chamber recognized that the ban interfered with Şahin's right to publicly manifest her religion, it stated that the ban was acceptable if it was imposed to protect the rights of third parties, preserve public order and safeguard the principles of secularism and equality in Turkey. Since the ECtHR is an institution within the framework of the Council of Europe, in which Turkey has been a member since 1949, it could be difficult to see how its judgment could have an impact on the support for EU membership. The only interpretation, then, would be that Euro-scepticism is understood as a general perception and attitude of civil society towards Europe, not only towards the EU and the prospect of membership. This is actually a remarkable phenomenon, indicating that "Europe" and "European Union" are often used interchangeably in Turkey.

42 Ziya Öniş, "Turkish Modernization and Challenges for the New Europe", cit., p. 12.

43 See Ayhan Kaya, "Turkey-EU Relations: The Impact of Islam on Europe", in Jørgen S. Nielsen et al. (eds.), *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*. Vol. 1, Leiden, Brill, 2009, p. 377-402; Ayşe Saktanber and Gül Çorbacıoğlu, "Veiling and Headscarf Skepticism in Turkey", in *Social Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Winter 2008), p. 514-538.

44 For further discussion on the decision of the ECtHR see, Ayşe Saktanber and Gül Çorbacıoğlu, "Veiling and Headscarf Skepticism in Turkey", cit.

The public frustration about the European stance on Turkey's membership and the associated Euro-scepticism reached high levels. The Transatlantic trend survey of the German Marshall Fund undertaken in 2013 reveals this negative mood within civil society.<sup>45</sup> When asked for the relation between Turkey and the European Union, 37 percent of the Turkish public indicated a negative relation, 33 percent a mixed relation and only 20 percent a positive relation. When asked for the countries that Turkey should act in closest cooperation with on international affairs, the EU scored only 21 percent (countries from the Middle East dropped significantly between 2012 and 2013 from 20 to 8 percent). In the meantime, 38 percent argued that Turkey should act alone. Additionally, when asked for a general assessment of Turkish membership in the EU, while 73 percent of the Turkish public considered an EU membership a good thing in 2004, the rate had declined to 44 percent by 2013. Furthermore, while in 2004 only 9 percent considered EU membership a bad thing, 34 percent viewed it as undesirable in 2013. However, after the *Occupygezi* movement, which will be discussed in the following section, the support for European Union membership went up to 48 percent.<sup>46</sup>

### Turkish critical Europeanism

*Occupygezi* is one of those new global social movements which has similar characteristics to its predecessors such as Tahrir Square, Occupy Wall Street and the European Indignado movement. The Gezi movement has become very instrumental in the sense that Turkish civil society actors have reframed European integration. Following the Gezi Movement, Turkish civil society has become more pro-European, and the European Union circles have also changed their perceptions of Turkish society. In the meantime, the main oppositional party, Republican People's Party (CHP), has also become more pro-European after the Gezi movement. The leader of the CHP, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, even wrote a letter to German Chancellor Angela Merkel urging her not to block Turkey's EU accession talks.<sup>47</sup> It was very remarkable that the Gezi movement actually made the CHP as well as some other civil society organizations like the labour unions (e.g. the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions, or DISK) and certain oppositional newspapers such as *Sözcü* and *Cumhuriyet*, which were previously Euro-sceptic, become pro-European, or critical Europeanists.<sup>48</sup> In a way, they have generated a more critical stance on Turkey-EU relations as they have become more in favour of a socially, democratically and politically prosperous European Union.

The *Occupygezi* movement also bears various characteristics similar to its predecessors such as Tahrir, Occupy Wall Street, and *Indignado* protests. Alain Badiou argued that Tahrir Square and all the activities which took place there, such as fighting, barricading, camping, debating, cooking, bartering and caring for the wounded, constituted the "communism of movement" in a way that posited an alternative to the neoliberal democratic and authoritarian state.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, Slavoj Žižek claimed that only these totally new political and social movements without hegemonic organizations and charismatic

45 German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trend Survey 2013*, <http://trends.gmfus.org/transatlantic-trends>

46 According to the Eurobarometer spring 2013 survey, 48% (+8 since autumn 2012) of respondents in Turkey think that Turkey would benefit from European membership. The number of respondents who share this view has fallen to 43% in autumn 2013. See European Commission, *Standard Eurobarometer 79 (Spring 2013)*, and *Standard Eurobarometer 80 (Autumn 2013)*, [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb\\_arch\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm).

47 EU leaders including Angela Merkel heavily criticized Erdogan's AKP for being so intolerant to the peaceful civilian protests and threatened to cut off Turkey from the accession negotiation talks. See "Main opposition urges Merkel not to block Turkey's EU path", in *Hurriyet Daily News*, 22 June 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?PageID=238&NID=49191>.

48 See Hüseyin Hayatsever, "World socialists discuss Gezi protests in Istanbul", in *Hurriyet Daily News*, 11 November 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?PageID=238&NID=57727>.

49 Alain Badiou, *The Rebirth of History. Times of Riots and Uprisings*, London, Verso, 2012.

leaderships could create what he called the “magic of Tahrir.”<sup>50</sup> And, Hardt and Negri also joined them in arguing that the Arab Spring, Europe’s indignado protests and Occupy Wall Street expressed the longing of the multitude for a “real democracy” against corporate capitalism.<sup>51</sup> The *Occupygezi* movement is similar to the others in the sense that it provided us with a *prefigurative form of politics*, as it symbolized the rejection in all walks of life of Erdogan’s vanguardism and engineering of the lifeworlds of Turkish citizens: raising “religious and conservative youth”, his call to mothers to have at least three children, his direct intervention in the content of Turkish soap operas, his direct order banning alcohol on university campuses, his intention to build mosques in Taksim Square and Camlica Hill, his condescending say over the lives of individuals and his increasing authoritarian discourse, which is based in Islamic references.

As Marina Sitrin put it in the context of the Occupy Wall Street protests, the purpose of the Gezi movement was “not to determine *the* path the country should take but to create the space for a conversation in which all can participate and determine together what the future should look like.”<sup>52</sup> Rejecting all kinds of hierarchies and embracing prefigurative politics, citizens of all kinds (youngsters, socialists, Muslims, nationalists, Kemalists, Kurds, Alevi, gays/lesbians, ecologists, football fans, hackers, artists, activists, academics, anarchists, anti-war activists, women’s groups, and others) gathered in Gezi Park in Taksim. Gezi Park has in the past been a site for left-wing working-class demonstrations, to create a multiplicity of spaces such as social centres, graffiti walls, libraries, collective kitchens, music venues, conference venues, day care corners, bookfairs, barter tables, utopic streets and squares<sup>53</sup> and democratic forums, which provide room for experimentation, creativity, innovation and dissent. These civil utopias brought about a form of solidarity which is cross-cultural, cross-religion, cross-ethnicity, cross-class and cross-gender. Respecting difference was also embedded in these civil utopias, where practicing Muslims respected atheists, atheists respected practicing Muslims, all respected homosexuals, Kemalists respected the Kurdish activists, Kurds respected the Kemalists, Besiktas football fans respected Fenerbahce fans and the elderly respected the youngsters. In the spaces of communication created by the demonstrators, individual civil society actors coming from different ideological grounds had the chance to experience a form of deliberative democracy. In one of her works on the current social movements, Donatella Della Porta draws our attention to the critical trust generated by the demonstrators in such deliberative settings:

By relating with each other - recognizing the others and being by them recognized - citizens would have the chance to understand the reasons of the others, assessing them against emerging standards of fairness. Communication not only allows for the development of better solutions, by allowing for carriers of different knowledge and expertise to interact, but it also changes the perception of one’s own preferences, making participants less concerned with individual, material interests and more with collective goods. Critical trust would develop from encounter with the other in deliberative settings.<sup>54</sup>

The Gezi movement also provided its participants with an experience of direct democracy by which the holders of different points of view

interact and reciprocally transform each other’s views.<sup>55</sup>

As in Tahrir Square and Zucotti Park, the demonstrators of Gezi Park also made a point of keeping the park clean throughout the demonstrations to show the capacity of “the people” to govern themselves.<sup>56</sup> The *Occupygezi* movement was also meant to be an attempt to reassemble the social sphere, which had been polarized in different spheres of life between the so-called secularists and the Islamists. It was revealed that most of the demonstrators had not been involved in any organized demonstration before.<sup>57</sup> Gezi Park provided those youngsters who usually only communicate online with a meeting ground where they experienced communicating face to face. Against the segregation and isolation of everyday life, *Occupy* offered participatory structures and open communication. It invited passive citizens to experience an active sense of what James Holston calls “insurgent citizenship” by which they could see what an inclusive and egalitarian society might look like.<sup>58</sup> The Gezi movement was about creating alternative pathways for political organization and communication to prefigure the real democracy and active citizenry to come. The movement introduced millions of citizens all around the country to the experience of direct democracy. It radicalized an entire generation of previously discouraged and apathetic youth, and it built test zones for imagining and living out a post-capitalist utopia organized outside profit, competition and the corporate world.<sup>59</sup>

As Engin F. Isin put it very well in the aftermath of World War II, we witnessed different practices that were originally deemed to be outside the political and which assembled themselves as relatively routinized, durable and effective strategies and technologies, making, enacting, and instituting political demands and translating them into claims for citizenship rights.<sup>60</sup> These practices were, at first, interpreted as social movements, then as cultural politics. Now, these practices are increasingly being perceived as *insurgent citizenship practices* by members of civil society. Thomas Janoski and Brian Gran define active citizens as those citizens who participate in political activities and have concern for the people in their group.<sup>61</sup> Active citizens are often engaged in conflict with established elites and most often approach problems from the grassroots level. They may belong to a political party, social movement or some other active civil society organization involved in promoting an ideology of change. They are not necessarily left or right, but tend to be in the opposition and among the more radical of each political persuasion. They are often social reformers of an established party, grassroots organizers of any political position or radical revolutionaries with an activist orientation. They believe that many things can be done altruistically for “the people” or for “the country.” However, in dealing with the opposition, they can be somewhat ruthless.<sup>62</sup> What is narrated here defines very well the type of citizenry experienced in the Gezi movement. As John Stuart Mill had already stated in the second half of the 19th century, active citizenship widens individuals’ horizons and deepens their sense of how their lives are involved with others, including the lives of people who are unknown to them.<sup>63</sup> In this way participation

55 Ibid., p. 41.

56 For further information on Zucotti Park see Craig Calhoun, “Occupy Wall Street in Perspective”, in *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (March 2013), p. 26-38.

57 Konda public survey: *Gezi Parkı Araştırması. Kimler, neden oradalar ve ne istiyorlar?*, 6-7 June 2013, <http://t24.com.tr/files/GeziPark%C4%B1Final.pdf>.

58 James Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship. Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2008.

59 Ayhan Kaya, “Right to the City: Insurgent Citizens of the Occupy Gezi Movement”, paper prepared for the *PSA 64th Annual International Conference*, Manchester, 14-16 April 2014 (forthcoming).

60 Engin F. Isin, “City, Democracy and Citizenship: Historical Images, Contemporary Practices”, in Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, London, Sage, 2002, p. 305-317, at p. 306.

61 Thomas Janoski and Brian Gran, “Political Citizenship: Foundations of Rights”, in Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, London, Sage, 2002, p. 13-52.

62 Ibid., p. 39-40.

63 John Stuart Mill, *Three Essays: ‘On Liberty’, ‘Representative Government’, and ‘The Subjection of Women’*, edited by R. Wollheim, Oxford, Oxford University Press, [1861] 1975, p. 196-197.

50 Slavoj Žižek, “The simple courage of decision: a leftist tribute to Thatcher”, in *New Statesman*, 17 April 2013, <http://www.newstatesman.com/node/194351>.

51 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Declaration*, New York, Melanie Jackson Agency, 2012, <http://antonionegriinenglish.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/93152857-hardt-negri-declaration-2012.pdf>.

52 Marina Sitrin, “What does democracy look like?”, in *The Nation*, April 2012, <http://www.thenation.com/node/166824>.

53 Hrnt Dink Street, Ceylan Özkol Street, Pinar Selek Square and Mustafa Sarı Street are some of those names used by the protestors to demonstrate their solidarity with those who had been exposed to the discrimination of the state machinery either in the past or during the demonstrations. Naming the fictional streets of squares after those persons, the protestors aimed to restore justice which was not secured by the state. Personal interview with one of the activists, Yigit Aksakoglu, Istanbul, 16 September 2013.

54 Donatella Della Porta, “Critical Trust: Social Movements and Democracy in Times of Crisis”, in *Cambio*, Vol. II, No. 4 (December 2012), p. 33-44, at p. 40, [http://www.cambio.unifi.it/upload/sub/Numero%204/02\\_DellaPorta.pdf](http://www.cambio.unifi.it/upload/sub/Numero%204/02_DellaPorta.pdf)

works to overcome individualism. This is indeed what happened in the *Occupygezi* movement.

Another very important element of the Gezi movement was that it was premised on the right to the city and to the public space. Many dwellers of Istanbul as well as other parts of Turkey were becoming more concerned with the decisions of the political centre in Ankara, which was turning their everyday life into a kind of turmoil dominated by chaos, traffic jam, pollution, crowdedness, hopelessness, anomy and confusion. Since the late 1990s, Turkish citizens have been becoming more and more critical, demanding and outspoken in parallel with the Europeanization of the civil society in Turkey. They have been becoming less supportive of the military tutelage in power. As explained earlier, the Turkish *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, the outspoken claims of ethno-cultural and religious minorities and the growing power of civil society organizations were all the signs of Europeanization, of the ways in which public space is being constructed outside of the monopoly of the state. Especially the younger generation with the most education was also becoming more and more concerned with the re-Islamization of Turkish society along with AKP rule in the 2000s. The state in Turkey has so far had the monopoly of shaping the public space. The campaigns of "Citizens speak Turkish!" in the 1930s and 1940s, the headscarf ban of the last decades<sup>64</sup> and the AKP's insistence on the discourse underlining that "Cemevis (Alevi communion houses) are not places of worship" in the 2000s are all examples of the statist understanding of public space. This understanding was recently reproduced repeatedly during AKP rule by the building of shopping malls, skyscrapers, bridges, airports and other gigantic projects without consulting the inhabitants of the cities themselves, e.g. Istanbul and Ankara.<sup>65</sup> The *Occupygezi* movement is a revolt of the citizens, or the dwellers of Istanbul and other cities, against the repressive hegemony of the state restricting the right of individual city-dwellers to the city.

Henri Lefebvre's path-breaking notion of "the right to the city" is probably the most meaningful theoretical intervention to be used to explain what the *Occupygezi* movement actually refers to. Lefebvre defines the city as "an oeuvre," a work in which all citizens participate.<sup>66</sup> Lefebvre does not accept the monopoly of the state in constructing the urban space. The city is a public space of interaction and exchange, and the right to the city enfranchises dwellers to participate in the use and reproduction of urban space. The right to the city is the right to "urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses, enabling the full and complete *usage* of [...] moments and places."<sup>67</sup> Similarly, David Harvey defines the right to the city as being

far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our hearts' desire. It is, moreover, a collective rather than an individual right, since reinventing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is [...] one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.<sup>68</sup>

64 In October 2013, the AKP government lifted the ban on the headscarf for public officers other than the police, judiciary and the army, within the framework of democratic reforms.

65 One could look at the article of Timothy Mitchell to see the similarities between Erdogan's government in Turkey and Mubarak's government in Egypt and their turning of Istanbul and Cairo into huge construction sites in which alternative cities, rich families and gigantic and crazy urban projects were created in a way that has disturbed at least some segments of the urban population. The article also shows that Mubarak's secular government and Erdogan's Islamist government acted very similarly with regard to their neo-liberal projections. See Timothy Mitchell, "Dreamland: The Neoliberalism of Your Desires", in Jeannie Sowers and Chris Toensing (eds.), *The Journey to Tahrir. Revolution, Protest, and Social Change in Egypt*, London, Verso, 2012, p. 224-235.

66 Henri Lefebvre, "The Right to the City", English transl. of the 1968 text in *Writings on Cities*, edited by Eleonore Koffman and Elizabeth Lebas, London, Blackwell, 1996, p. 158.

67 *Ibid.*, p. 179.

68 David Harvey, *Rebel Cities. From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*, London, Verso, 2012, p. 4.

What happened in Gezi Park was a revolt of the masses against the everlasting authority of the state in shaping the public space as well as the city. The revolt was spontaneously organized by youngsters of every kind, who were mobilized through new social media like Twitter and Facebook. The choice of Gezi Park, which is located at the very centre of the city, was also symbolically important, as it was meant to be the space restored from the hands of the corporate world collaborating with the neo-liberal state. Lefebvre finds the use of the city centre by the dwellers of that city to be very important with regard to the materialization of the right to the city:

"The right to the city, complemented by the right to difference and the right to information, should modify, concretize and make more practical the rights of the citizen as an urban citizen (*citadin*) and user of multiple services. It would affirm, on the one hand, the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in the urban area; it would also cover the right to the use of the center, a privileged place, instead of being dispersed and stuck in ghettos (for workers, immigrants, the 'marginal' and even for the 'privileged')."<sup>69</sup>

Hence, the *Occupygezi* movement has become a civil-political venue in which youngsters of every kind have communicated with each other in a deliberative form and become active agents of civil society in a way that has proved the merits of the ongoing Europeanization processes. One should also not forget about the symbolic importance of Taksim Square, in the centre of the city next to the Gezi Park, which is very meaningful to secular segments of Turkish civil society. The historical Republican Monument (*Cumhuriyet Aniti*) symbolizing the independence war and the foundation of the Turkish Republic, the Atatürk Cultural Centre (*Atatürk Kültür Merkezi*) symbolizing Kemalist modernity, modern arts, and music, and Taksim Square symbolizing the history of the working-class movements and May Day celebrations are all very important symbols of modernity, Westernization, secularization and Europeanization, terms which are likely to be used interchangeably by Turkish citizens.<sup>70</sup>

## The actors in the Turkish public debate on Europe<sup>71</sup>

Europe and Europeanization are perceived very differently by various actors depending on the ways in which these two entities have been operationalized by the actors in question. As mentioned earlier, Europe has been an important anchor for the democratization process of Turkey in the last decade or so. Particularly in the aftermath of the Helsinki Summit of 1999, EU harmonization efforts to align Turkey's policies with those of Europe occupied the political agenda and led to various constitutional amendment packages.<sup>72</sup> However, while 1999-2005 marks the rapid reformation of the Turkish legal framework, 2005 marks the loss of momentum for said reformation process along the lines of the Copenhagen criteria. The EU anchor, which was considered to be at its strongest in the 1999-2005 period, hence its being considered the "virtuous cycle," yielded to the "vicious cycle," where the EU anchor weakened and the reformation process came to a halt. This shift in "cycles" also coincided with the rise of Euro-scepticism. Euro-scepticism has certainly influenced the perceptions of state actors towards Europe and particularly the EU. In effect, the state actors' discourses do not necessarily depend on the EU anymore, but rather on the rising significance of Turkey as a global and regional actor. While Europe does not remain the sole anchor for reform, it still constitutes an important element in the transformation of Turkish politics.

Europe and the EU are also framed and discussed with references to

69 Henri Lefebvre, "The Right to the City", p. 170.

70 For a more detailed discussion on the interchangeable use of the terms Europeanization, modernization, secularization and Westernization see Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., chapter. 1.

71 This section is partly based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 183-197; and Ayhan Kaya and Ayşe Tecmen, "Turkish Modernity: A Continuous Journey of Europeanization", cit., p. 37-44.

72 Ergun Özbudun and Serap Yazıcı, *Democratization Reforms in Turkey*, cit., p. 14-16.

globalization. As such, globalization has influenced the formation of different meanings for "identity." Turkish modernization subsequently began to reflect "alternative modernities" with different political discourses of and different future prospects for Turkish social and political life.<sup>73</sup> There are several different social and political actors shaping the Europeanization process of Turkey: major political parties, civil society organizations, trade unions and the media. This section will elaborate on the perspectives of these actors on the EU. In doing so, we shall mainly scrutinize the mainstream actors without touching upon the minor actors due to the space limitations of the work.

## Political parties

From the 1960s onwards, political parties in Turkey displayed different levels of commitment to EU membership, while the left-right division of political parties became more visible and class politics began to emerge as a result of the industrialization process. From the mid-1980s onwards, issues of identity took over the political sphere and in time gained an ideological dimension. The Kurdish issue and political Islam became two important subjects of discussion during this period. Subsequent to the 1999 Helsinki Summit, the prospect of EU membership led to the realignment of political parties with regard to their perceptions on EU membership, yet there was a common element to both pro- and anti-European sentiments. In that regard, the major political parties were not willing to challenge the fundamental precepts of state ideology on key issues of concern such as "cultural rights" and "the Cyprus problem."<sup>74</sup>

In the early and mid-1990s leading up to the Helsinki Summit, ANAP (*Anavatan Partisi, Motherland Party*), the center-right party under the leadership of Mesut Yılmaz, emerged as one of the key political actors supporting EU membership with a rather more evident political stance. However, being the opposition party in the early 1990s, ANAP was not able to implement considerable reforms. As a counterpart, in the early 1990s the ultra-nationalist MHP (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, Nationalist Movement Party*), the far-right party, emerged as the major anti-EU political party with concerns over the effects of EU membership on "national sovereignty and security."<sup>75</sup> However, the military elite, left-wing nationalists and extremists have also repeatedly voiced their concern or opposition on certain EU issues.<sup>76</sup> These concerns were mainly over sovereignty and territorial integrity. It should also be noted that in the late 1990s, the MHP became one of the key political actors, a development attributable to the rise of Turkish nationalism. The rise of the PKK insurgency and the increasing political attention to the situation in the southeastern parts of Turkey leading to the rise of nationalism revived concerns over the territorial integrity of the country. Subsequently, the political debates around EU membership turned into "ideological" confrontations between the nationalists and the rest of the parties.<sup>77</sup>

While the far-right and the center-right took opposite sides on the debate over EU accession, there was another common element to the stances of the political parties. The left had taken a highly nationalistic stand on many of the key issues involved. Parties of the center-right in Turkey do not appear to have been particularly

influenced by the debates on multiculturalism, liberal internationalism and third-way politics that seem to have occupied the European social democratic left during the first half of the 2000s.<sup>78</sup> Consequently, the defensive nationalist characteristics of the left-right political spectrum, which refer to the parties' broad support for membership, were accompanied by a tendency to feel uncomfortable with the key elements of conditionality. While the EU membership is a part of the state-supported Westernization process, the stances of political parties can be distinguished as "hard Euro-scepticism" and "soft Euro-scepticism." Ziya Öniş summarizes the distribution of hard and soft sceptics as follows:

'Hard euroscepticism', entailing the rejection of EU membership, is confined to fringe elements in the party system, namely, extreme leftists or nationalists and radical Islamists, who constitute a very small percentage of the total electorate. Nevertheless, 'soft euroscepticism', involving a certain dislike of the conditions associated with full membership if not the idea of membership itself, is quite widespread and can be identified in political parties across the the political spectrum.<sup>79</sup>

On the other hand, the CHP (Republican People's Party), the major social-democratic party in Turkish politics, traditionally equated Westernization, secularization and modernization with Europeanization.<sup>80</sup> However, in the reign of the AKP, the CHP has displayed a highly nationalistic and restrictive stance in recent years when it comes to relations with the EU and EU democratization reforms.<sup>81</sup> As the founder of the modern Turkish state during the 1920s and afterwards, the main rationale of the CHP became to save the state against any kind of opposition trying to disintegrate the Turkish nation-state, be it the Kurdish separatist movement, radical Islamists or the communist challenge. Furthermore, the CHP's historical alliance with the military, which established the Turkish Republic and helped modernize the country, led it to adopt an inconsistent policy with respect to civil-military relations. Following the 2002 parliamentary elections, and in particular from 2005 onwards, the CHP has tended towards an authoritarian form of Kemalism, adopting an overly laicist and nationalist agenda aligning with the military. In the run-up to the 2007 general and presidential elections, the CHP's ultra-laicist and ultra-nationalist rhetoric peaked.<sup>82</sup> However, the CHP changed its rhetoric on the European integration after the leadership of Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who replaced the former party leader Deniz Baykal in May 2010. Kilicdaroglu's efforts made it possible for the CHP to open a representative office in Brussels to express the party line to the Eurocrats and the relevant bodies of the member states.<sup>83</sup> As explained earlier, Kilicdaroglu's letter to the German Chancellor Angela Merkel during the Gezi movement was instrumental in preventing the EU-Turkey relations from derailing, and from the interruption of the accession negotiation talks. His continuous efforts to express the CHP party line with regard to the European integration process coincided with the increasingly Euro-sceptical attitude of the AKP. CHP has become even more pro-European during and after the Gezi movement in search of new international allies against AKP rule.

Another important political phenomenon in the 1990s was the rise of an oppositional form of political Islam, which brought about a different dynamic in domestic politics. Necmettin Erbakan defined his movement against the West in general, and the Kemalist vision of

73 E. Fuat Keyman and Ahmet İçduygu, "Globalization, Civil Society and Citizenship in Turkey: Actors, Boundaries and Discourses", in *Citizenship Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2003), p. 219-234, at p. 225, <http://portal.ku.edu.tr/~aicduygu/article%206.pdf>; Nilüfer Göle, *The Forbidden Modern. Civilization and Veiling*, Ann Arbor, Michigan University Press, 1996; Ibrahim Kaya, *Social Theory and Later Modernities. The Turkish Experience*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2004.

74 Ziya Öniş, "Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki era", in Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin (eds.), *Turkey and the European Union. Domestic Politics, Economic Integration and International Dynamics*, London, Frank Cass, 2003, p. 9-34, at p. 17.

75 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

76 Gamze Avci, "Turkey's Slow EU Candidacy: Insurmountable Hurdles to Membership or Simple Euro-skepticism", in Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin (eds.), *Turkey and the European Union. Domestic Politics, Economic Integration and International Dynamics*, London, Frank Cass, 2003, p. 149-170, at p. 157.

77 *Ibid.*

78 Ziya Öniş, "Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State", *cit.*, p. 18.

79 Ziya Öniş, "Conservative globalists versus defensive nationalists: political parties and paradoxes of Europeanization in Turkey", in *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (December 2007), p. 247-271, at p. 249.

80 For further analysis of the CHP's constituency, voting structure and ideology, see Ayşe Güneş-Ayata, "The Republican People's Party", in Barry Rubin and Metin Heper (eds.), *Political Parties in Turkey*, London, Frank Cass, 2002, p. 102-121.

81 Mehmet Bardakçı, "Turkish Parties' Positions towards the EU: Between Europhilia and Europhobia", in *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (December 2010), p. 26-41, at p. 30, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1727245>.

82 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

83 See the website of the CHP Representation to the EU: <http://brussels.chp.org.tr>.

Europeanization in particular.<sup>84</sup> Although Erdogan incorporated EU membership into his agenda in the 1999 elections, the formation of the AKP introduced yet another form of political Islam. To that effect, Yavuz suggests that the prospect of European integration had strong influences on political Islamic movements in Turkey. He argues that:

Since the early 1990s, however, a dramatic cognitive shift has taken place in Turkey. Islamic political identity is shifting from an anti-Western to a pro-European position, while conversely, the Kemalist bureaucratic-military establishment, which has defined its historic mission as that of guardians leading the nation westward, has become increasingly recalcitrant in regard to integration with Europe. Today one of the few unifying platforms of Turkey's diverse ethnic and religious groups is one favoring membership in the EU.<sup>85</sup>

In analyzing the wide public support for the AKP, Yavuz also suggests that the party's promotion of accession is a search for political identity through the EU process, which is founded on identification with the European norms of the Christian Democratic parties. In relation to that, he argues that the AKP utilized the process of accession to reduce the power of the military through defining "itself against the military."<sup>86</sup> In other words, he attributes the pro-EU stance of the AKP to the search for self-identification, which occurred in opposition to the military establishment in Turkey. As explained earlier, the AKP became Euro-sceptic after 2005 due to various internal and external factors. A very recent move of the party clearly shows its changing position from Europhilia to Europhobia, i.e. its decision to leave the European People's Party (EPP) group of the European Parliament in which it had an observer status, and to become a member of the Euro-sceptic group of the European Parliament, the Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists (AECR) in November 2013.<sup>87</sup>

Political parties of Kurdish origin were also pro-European due to the democratic results of European integration leading to the freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of expression in mother tongue. It has been the Kurds who have benefited most from democratization and the opening up of the regime with the EU integration process. The Kurds have seen their cultural rights broaden since the 1990s. Rights granted to the Kurds increased in scope and scale in the post-Helsinki era of 1999. Thus, it is not surprising to find that ethnic Kurdish parties were among the most ardent supporters of Turkey's EU vocation.<sup>88</sup> Following the EU accession process, the state of emergency was lifted in the predominantly Kurdish-populated provinces in southeastern Turkey. The expression of pro-Kurdish views was made possible through amendments in Anti-Terror Law, the Turkish Penal Code and the Constitution. Broadcasting in Kurdish was permitted. Restrictions on the use of Kurdish in education were eased. Kurdish parliamentarians who had been in jail for a decade were released in 2003. The AKP government's recent Kurdish initiative promises further expansion of rights for the Kurdish segments of the population.<sup>89</sup> However, the DTP (Democratic Society Party), which was later replaced by the BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) in December 2009 upon the closure of the former by the Constitutional Court, became Euro-sceptic due to the fact that the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) was added to the list of terrorist organizations by the Council of European Union Commission in 2004.

84 M. Hakan Yavuz, "Islam and Europeanization in Turkish-Muslim socio-political movements", in Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein (eds.), *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 225-245, at p. 243. 85 Ibid., p. 226.

86 Ibid., p. 246.

87 See <http://www.aecr.eu/membership>.

88 Mehmet Bardakçı, "Turkish Parties' Positions towards the EU: Between Europhilia and Europhobia", cit., p. 34.

89 Senem Aydın-Düzgüt and E. Fuat Keyman, "EU-Turkey Relations and the Stagnation of Turkish Democracy", in Senem Aydın-Düzgüt et al. (eds.), *Global Turkey in Europe. Political, Economic, and Foreign Policy Dimensions of Turkey's Evolving Relationship with the EU*, Roma, Nuova Cultura, 2013, p. 103-164 (IAI Research Papers 9), <http://www.iai.it/content.asp?langid=2&contentid=914>.

## Civil society organizations

Regarding the nature of civil organizations in Turkey, an important argument was made by Keyman and İçduygu that the direction of Turkish modernization since the 1980s and the increasing participation of civil society actors in the policy-making process is a result of four processes. They are as follows: (1) the changing meaning of modernity, or in other words the emergence of alternative modernities, which refers to, first, the emergence of the critique of the status of secular-rational thinking as the exclusive source of modernity in Turkey, and second, the increasing strength of Islamic discourse both as a "political actor" and as a "symbolic foundation" for identity formation; (2) the legitimacy crisis of the strong state tradition, which occurred as a result of the shift towards civil society and culture as new reference points in the language and terms of politics; (3) the process of European integration, referring to the assertion that reforms also indicate that the sources of democratization in Turkey are no longer only national but also global, and therefore that the EU plays an important role in the changing nature of state-society relations in Turkey, and functions as a powerful actor generating a transformative power in Turkish politics; and (4) the process of globalization in which Turkish politics functions as a significant external variable for understanding the current state of the political process in Turkey.<sup>90</sup>

Although Turkish civil society organizations have been deemed weak policy actors due to the assertion that respect for authority is stressed over citizen empowerment and participation while democracy has been shallow, imposed from above by Westernizing elites on a largely peasant, passive society, in the 1980s and particularly in the 1990s civil society organizations began to proliferate.<sup>91</sup> While it is agreed upon that this proliferation was highly contingent on economic liberalization, Keyman and İçduygu argue that this increase can also be associated with the political parties, such that

the center-Right and center-Left political parties have continuously been declining in terms of their popular support and their ability to produce effective and convincing policies, while at the same time both the resurgence of identity politics and civil society have become strong and influential actors of social and political change.<sup>92</sup>

Ersin Kalaycıoğlu agrees that although the visible statist orientation (étatisme) in Turkey stresses community over the individual, uniformity over diversity and an understanding of law that privileges collective reason, the reasons for this phenomenon are founded on the critical relations between the center and the periphery.<sup>93</sup>

Perhaps as a part of this dynamic, namely the association of the center with the state, Kalaycıoğlu argues that, among others, TÜSİAD (*Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği*, Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association), Türk-İş (*Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions) and TOBB (*Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği*, The Union of Chamber and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey) often benefit from their cooperation with the state, rather than cooperation with other voluntary associations to pressure the state. As a rule, voluntary associations do not seem to consider the state as an adversary, but rather as an ally to be mobilized against their competitors.<sup>94</sup> On the other hand, protest movements and advocacy associations which confront the Turkish state and advocate drastic change in the republican system or in the political regime are not received well by the state, though they receive media attention.<sup>95</sup>

90 E. Fuat Keyman and Ahmet İçduygu, "Globalization, Civil Society and Citizenship in Turkey ...", cit., p. 222-226.

91 Paul Kubicek, "Turkish Accession to the European Union: Challenges and Opportunities", in *World Affairs*, Vol. 168, No. 2 (Fall 2005), p. 67-78, at p. 76.

92 E. Fuat Keyman and Ahmet İçduygu, "Globalization, Civil Society and Citizenship in Turkey ...", cit., p. 222.

93 Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, "State and Civil Society in Turkey: Democracy, Development and Protest", in Amy B. Sajoo (ed.), *Civil Society in the Muslim World. Contemporary Perspectives*, London and New York, I.B. Tauris, 2002, p. 247-272, at p. 250-252.

94 Ibid., p. 258.

95 Ibid., p. 260.

In contrast, Atan argues that certain civil society organizations do not necessarily cooperate with the state and that

[w]hile Turkish civil society is traditionally weak vis-à-vis the state, Turkish PBOs [Peak Business Organisations] appear as significant actors to challenge the government's policy agenda. Familiarisation with the EU-level governance system has provided them with additional resources to act upon the domestic agenda-setting process.<sup>96</sup>

To that effect, it should be noted that TÜSİAD, an association including big business, has been one of the most-discussed civil society actors in literature. In terms of EU membership, Atan argues that TÜSİAD played an important role in the aftermath of 1997 by strengthening their ties with their European counterparts through the EU institutions and governments in order to encourage Turkey's EU membership.<sup>97</sup> Additionally, TÜSİAD prompted domestic policy changes in Turkey in favor of harmonization with the EU member states through the 1997 report entitled *The Perspectives on Democratization in Turkey*.<sup>98</sup> These reports have been discussed and cited by several scholars as a reflection of the growing civil society participation in the domestic policy-making process.

MÜSİAD (*Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği*, Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association) is another business association, which mainly consists of AKP supporters. According to Atan, MÜSİAD appears to be an organization advocating a different model of economic and social development using a certain interpretation of Islam to ensure the cohesion of its members and to represent their economic interest as an integral component of an ideological mission.<sup>99</sup> Consequently, MÜSİAD followed a discourse emphasizing the compatibility of EU membership with the "Islamic and democratic identity" of the Turkish society,<sup>100</sup> a discourse which is quite similar to the arguments made by the members of the AKP. On the other hand, as Yankaya stated earlier in the case of MÜSİAD, the Europeanization process has produced two dynamics: firstly, economic Europeanization as a social learning process and political Europeanization as political opportunism, and secondly, an ongoing Euro-scepticism.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, one could also observe that there is an interesting shift from hard Euro-scepticism based on a civilizational divergence argument towards a soft Euro-scepticism expressed in national interest and in a new Islamic rhetoric in line with the assumption that Turkey is becoming a soft power in its region.

In addition to business associations, it should be noted that the IKV (*İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı*, Economic Development Foundation) was established as an initiative of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce in 1965 to inform the public about the internal affairs of the EU as well as the relations between Turkey and the EU. Similarly, TESEV (*Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı*, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation) is a non-governmental think tank focusing on social, political and economic policies in Turkey. Both IKV and TESEV have been very active in informing the public and the government on EU-related issues. One should also note that there have been several other civil society organizations such as environmental groups (WWF, Regional Environment Centre), human rights organizations (Helsinki Citizens Assembly, TÜSEV, Anadolu Kültür), women rights organizations (KADER, KAGIDER), LGBT groups, and international foundations (Heinrich Böll Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Foundation,

96 Serap Atan, "Europeanisation of Turkish peak business organisations and Turkey-EU Relations", in Mehmet Uğur and Nergis Canefe (eds.), *Turkey and European Integration. Accession Prospects and Issues*, London and New York, Routledge, 2004, p. 100-121, at p. 109.

97 Ibid., p.107.

98 Follow-up reports have been published in 1999 and 2001. For texts of these reports see the archived pages of the TÜSİAD-US website: [http://web.archive.org/web/20071009071123/http://www.tusiad.us/second\\_page.cfm?TYPE\\_ID=12](http://web.archive.org/web/20071009071123/http://www.tusiad.us/second_page.cfm?TYPE_ID=12)

99 Serap Atan, "Europeanisation of Turkish peak business organisations and Turkey-EU Relations", cit., p. 111.

100 Ibid., p. 112.

101 Dilek Yankaya, "The Europeanization of MÜSİAD: Political Opportunism, Economic Europeanization, Islamic Euroscepticism", in *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, No. 9 (December 2009), <http://ejts.revues.org/3696>.

Open Society Foundation, British Council, etc.) advocating the EU in Turkey.<sup>102</sup>

## Trade unions

In comparison to the literature on civil society organizations and political parties, the literature on trade unions with respect to their role in the Europeanization of Turkey during the post-Helsinki period is rather limited. Nevertheless, it is possible to characterize the stances of trade unions as rather cautious and inconsistent. For instance, on the one hand they argue that the Europeanization process would cause unemployment and the disintegration of the country; on the other hand, EU membership is seen as providing an opportunity to move forward and to improve labor rights.<sup>103</sup> However, it is also noted by others that

[m]any of the labor market problems currently experienced in Turkey emerge in a context of rapid structural change. Until quite recently, the bulk of employment was in the agricultural sector, whereas today urban labor force in industry and services is much larger than rural workforce.<sup>104</sup>

In reference to her in-depth interviews with members of the labor unions, Zeynep Alemdar argues that although the literature expects them to appeal to the EU for better labor standards or workers' rights, Turkish domestic actors' use of the EU depends heavily on the domestic environment and their respective perceptions of the EU.<sup>105</sup> In fact, Alemdar's argument in general is also reflective of shifting views towards the EU, but she relies on the premise that the domestic environment, such as the military coups, political party alliances and labor regulations, influences the ways in which trade unions perceive the EU. Consequently, the unions appeal to the EU when they are not satisfied with the domestic politics.

In order to examine the perceptions of the labor unions on EU membership and the reforms it necessitates, scholars tend to look at the cases of Türk-İş (*Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions), Disk (*Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions) and Hak-İş (*Hak İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, Confederation of Justice-Seekers' Trade Union). These unions are all members of the European Trade Union Confederation. Alemdar describes Türk-İş as a state-centric labor union, showing that Türk-İş took an openly anti-EU stance after 2000 but have softened their position since 2005, as membership negotiations began. Türk-İş's position vis-à-vis the EU is very well explicated by Yıldırım Koç, who is one of the advocates of the syndicate:

The European Union's demands for Turkey are in opposition to the Turkish Republic's unitary state system and its independence. Abiding by these demands would tear our country apart and divide it, creating a new Yugoslavia. Turkey is not going to solve its problems through the EU. Turkey is not going to be stronger because of the EU. Turkey is going to solve its problems despite the EU, and it will be stronger. Turkey's admittance to the EU is dependent on this strength.<sup>106</sup>

It is important to note that Koç's argument is similar to the political parties' concerns over territorial integrity as well as the unity of the Republic. While Türk-İş did not necessarily reflect the structure of its counterparts in the EU, Disk, which is considered a supporter of the left wing, reformulated itself in the 1990s in line with the European

102 For a list of some of these organizations see the World Movement for Democracy's website, <http://www.wmd.org/node/26>.

103 Engin Yıldırım, Suayyip Çalış and Abdurrahman Benli, "Turkish Labour Confederations and Turkey's Membership of the European Union", in *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (August 2008), p. 362-387, at p. 363.

104 Fikret Adaman, Ayşe Buğra and Ahmet İnsel, "Societal Context of Labor Union Strategy: The Case of Turkey", in *Labor Studies Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (June 2009), p. 168-188, at p. 175.

105 Zeynep Alemdar, "Turkish Trade Unions and the European Boomerang", in *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, No. 9 (December 2009), p. 3, <http://ejts.revues.org/3774>.

106 Cited in Zeynep Alemdar, "Turkish Trade Unions and the European Boomerang", cit., p. 11.

trade unions.<sup>107</sup> Consequently, Disk has been adamant in pressuring the government and lobbying to harmonize Turkish labor regulations with those of the EU.<sup>108</sup>

Hak-İş, on the other hand, presents a different dynamic in the sense that Hak-İş' attitude towards the EU has been intricately linked with the organization's liaisons with the government. When the government was pursuing the EU, the appeal of the EU was strong, and *vice-versa*.<sup>109</sup> In December 1999, Hak-İş declared its stance towards the EU as follows:

A major challenge to integration with Europe is Turkey's Muslim population. Turkey, because of its historical, moral, philosophical, religious and national characteristics, is not Western. 'Westernization' comes as a betrayal and alienation to Turkish culture [...] if membership in the EU is pushed, this would mean a total surrender [to Western values]. On the other hand, Turkey's application for EU membership means a heavy legal burden for the Constitution and other laws, and constitutes a threat to state's sovereignty and nation's unity [...] the fact that the government and the opposition parties are silent about this raises questions.<sup>110</sup>

However, as the Islamist political parties modified their perceptions of the EU and the notion of Westernization, Hak-İş also followed the same discourse, in line with the AKP.

## Media

First and foremost, it should be noted that similarly to the literature on trade unions, the literature on the role of the media in the process of modernization and Europeanization of Turkey is very limited. Nevertheless, scholars have studied the nature of the Turkish media, which can be used to indicate certain trends. During the period between 1982 and 1993, it is possible to observe a proliferation in media outlets, which was a result of non-media-related capital in the sector altering the structure of the media to resemble industrial enterprises.<sup>111</sup> The technological developments during this period contributed to the establishment of numerous television and radio channels, both local and national. As the intensity of competition increased in tandem with the rise of capitalist ideology, media enterprises began to focus more on sales. In correlation with the increased competition, this period was marked by, among other things, the rise of monopolies in the sector, which in return created support for the government and politicians due to the growing need for "incentives, credits, and public announcements."<sup>112</sup>

Esra Arsan argues that the Turkish media could be categorized as a part of the Mediterranean model. In this model, the journalists take sides as members of the political and literary elites.<sup>113</sup> According to Hallin and Mancini:

The Mediterranean, or Polarized Pluralist Model, is characterized by an elite-oriented press with relatively small circulation and a corresponding centrality of electronic media. Freedom of the press and the development of commercial media industries generally came late; newspapers have often been economically marginal and in need of subsidy. Political parallelism tends to be high; the press is marked by a strong focus on political life, external pluralism, and the tradition of commentary-oriented or advocacy journalism persists more strongly than in other parts of Europe. Instrumentalization of the media by the government, by political parties, and by industrialists with political ties

107 Ibid., p. 14.

108 Erhan Doğan, "Sendikalar ve Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği Siyaseti" [Trade Unions and Turkey's EU Journey], in *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İİBF Dergisi* [Akdeniz University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences Journal], Vol. 3, No. 6 (2003), p. 19-43.

109 Zeynep Alemdar, "Turkish Trade Unions and the European Boomerang", cit., p. 18.

110 Cited in *ibid.*, p. 19.

111 Mehmet Sağnak, *Medya-Politik. 1983-1993 Yılları Arasında Medya-Politikacı İlişkileri* [Media and Politics. Relations between the media and politicians in 1983-1993], Ankara, Eti Kitapları, 1996, p. 55-56.

112 Ibid., p. 51.

113 Esra Arsan, *Avrupa Birliği ve Gazetecilik. Brüksel'den Bildirenlerin Gözünden Avrupalılık* [EU and Journalism. Europeaness from the Perspective of those reporting from Brussels], İstanbul, Ütopya Yayınevi, 2008.

is common. Professionalization of journalism is not as strongly developed as in the other models: journalism is not as strongly differentiated from political activism and the autonomy of journalism is often limited ...<sup>114</sup>

Turkish journalists have also been swinging between Euro-supportiveness and Euro-scepticism while framing the EU beyond traditional institutional news coverage, like "Turkey must fulfill its EU requirements by..." or "the EU must fulfill its promises..."<sup>115</sup> While Arsan depicts the problematic nature of journalists situated in Brussels, it is also necessary to examine the nature of domestic sources of information. In terms of the domestic television channels, Gencel Bek suggests that Turkish media has also gone through a "tabloidization process." As a part of her research, she analyzes the state-owned TRT (*Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu*, Turkish Radio and Television Corporation), and characterizes the quality of the news as follows:

In general, the reports are quite bland accounts of cabinet meetings. There is no setting of context, interpretation, discussion or criticism. TRT just reports that such and such politicians met, in a formulaic way. The news gives no other information such as who else talked in the meeting, who said what, what the main aim of the meeting was, etc. What TRT does achieve, however, is full coverage of all the national ceremonies, reminding the public of national history from the perspective of the official memory. One could call TRT news the 'news of the nation-state.'<sup>116</sup>

The above-mentioned argument is partly a result of the mentality followed by RTÜK (*Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurulu*, Radio and Television Supreme Council), which is a public legal entity that monitors television channels. On that issue Gencel Bek criticizes the operations of the RTÜK for being in favor of the state. She argues:

The peculiar characteristics of broadcasting regulation also have an effect on content: the RTÜK controls content to a far greater extent than media structure, concentration, increasing market mechanisms, etc. Content control and subsequent penalties are mainly directed towards the channels 'which are against the state'. Protecting the state takes precedence over the citizen's right to information.<sup>117</sup>

Even though Arsan and Gencel Bek examine different aspects of the Turkish media, it is possible to infer a common theme, which is that the news media – both journalists in Brussels and the TRT – filter the news before it reaches the public. In that sense, the lack of professional and extensive media coverage from Brussels and the domination of the public service channel by nationalist events indicate that the citizen's right to information about the EU and the process of Europeanization has been overshadowed by political and social interests. Moreover, media coverage depends highly on the relations of media ventures with the government in particular, and with the political parties in general.

The media has been shifting between Euro-scepticism and pro-Europeaness. The EU has always been a practical source of legitimacy for the media in Turkey. *Cumhuriyet* and *Sözcü*, for instance, are two Kemalist daily newspapers with Euro-sceptic coverage prior to the Gezi movement. Both changed their discourses on the EU in parallel with that of the Republican People's Party. Both papers have become more pro-European during and after the Gezi movement. Another very interesting newspaper, which is likely to instrumentalise European integration for its own use, is *Daily Zaman*. It is publicly known that Zaman belongs to the Gülen Community, which was an ally of the ruling party AKP. But lately there is anecdotal evidence that AKP rule is trying to cut

114 Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 73.

115 Esra Arsan, *Avrupa Birliği ve Gazetecilik ...*, cit., p. 72.

116 Mine Gencel Bek, "Tabloidization of News Media: An Analysis of Television News in Turkey", in *European Journal of Communication*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (August 2004), p. 371-386, at p. 378.

117 Ibid., p. 383.

off its alliance with the Gülen community.<sup>118</sup> The divide between the party and the community became visible when Prime Minister Erdoğan publicly declared in November 2013 that they will ban preparatory schools (*dershane* in Turkish), specialized education centers that help prepare students for high school and university entrance examinations. The Gülen community has hundreds of prep schools all around the country, where teachers affiliated with the mission of the community indoctrinate students with a kind of moderate Islam while preparing them for university and high school exams. Interestingly, *Daily Zaman* used Chapter 22 (Regional Policy) to spread its message out to its readers, saying that

the government plan to close down Turkey's prep schools will widen the educational gap created by social and economic inequality and regional disparities in Turkey, and it may endanger the implementation of the recently opened Chapter 22 in Turkey's European Union accession process.<sup>119</sup>

## Conclusions: The future of the Euro-debate in the EU and in Turkey<sup>120</sup>

The analysis developed in this paper points to the relevance of the discursive interaction between the EU internal debate on Europe and the Turkish debate on Europe. The study has shown that similar frames have been developed in the civil society debate in the EU and in Turkey. The fact that these are (partly) overlapping is evidence in itself of the ideational exchange between the two sides. Such exchange is both subterranean, channeled through a myriad of people-to-people micro-practices that create a de facto link between EU civil society and its Turkish counterpart, and explicit and public as reported in the media, in the conventional political debates or in the fora of elites.

In this regards, a particularly significant case study has been provided by the *Occupygezi* movement and its role in transforming part of the Turkish public debate on Europe. The harsh responses of the EU to the brutal acts of the Turkish state have contributed, perhaps unintentionally, to a radical turn in the mindsets of the secular groups, who were previously Euro-sceptic. After the recent events, these groups have become more pro-European than the supporters of AKP rule. This confirms once again that the transformation of Turkish civil society is deeply intermingled with the European integration process. Sometimes it follows a linear trajectory, other times it may follow unexpected paths.

The process of the modernization and Europeanization of Turkey dates back to the early 19th century. The journey is full of impediments, as the process was a rather politically-oriented one leading to the emergence of social divides and fault lines within the nation. The intensification of the process of Europeanization in the aftermath of the Helsinki Summit of December 1999 has brought about remarkable changes in the state elite. From that time onwards, a discursive shift can be observed in Turkey from a rather republican discourse of "unity over diversity" to a more democratic and pluralist discourse of "unity in diversity." However, the period following the decision of the European heads of state to start accession talks with Turkey in late 2005 was marked by a rising tide of Euro-scepticism deriving from both internal

and external dynamics. One should also keep in mind that Turkey's links with the European Union had become stronger during AKP government rule preceding the Euro-sceptic cycle, which started in 2005.

It is evident that the continuation of the democratization process in Turkey and the development of civil society, both in Turkey itself and in its relation with the European counterparts, depend upon the path the EU is likely to take in the foreseeable future. One could also easily argue that Turkey's EU bid strongly shapes the internal discussions within the EU concerning the identity of the Union. It is comprehensible that the Turkish democratization process can be expected to persist alongside a liberal, political and post-civilizational project of Europe that would be ready to welcome Turkey, whereas a culturally and religiously defined Europe would possibly abstain from welcoming Turkey and would thus certainly interrupt the democratization process. Turkey's democracy is strongly linked to the ways in which the EU is being constructed and reconstructed. There are at least two definitions of Europe and the European Union. The first defines Europeanness as a static, retrospective, holistic, essentialist and culturally prescribed entity. The latter emphasizes the understanding of "Europe" as a fluid, ongoing, dynamic, prospective, syncretic and nonessentialist process of becoming. While the first definition highlights a cultural project, the latter definition welcomes a *political project* embracing cultural and religious differences, including Islam.

Accordingly, the conservative *civilizational idea* aims to build a culturally prescribed Europe based on Christian mythology, shared meanings and values, historical myths and memories, the Ancient Greek and/or Roman legacy, and ethno-religious homogeneity. Civilizational Europe does not intend to include any other culture or religion without a European/Christian legacy, hence neither Turkey nor Islam has a place in this project. On the other hand, the progressive post-civilizational idea proposes a politically dynamic Europe based on cultural diversity, dialogue, and heterogeneity. The advocates of a syncretic Europe, or what Jacques Derrida calls "new Europe," or "Europe of hope" promote coexistence with Turkey and Islam, and underline that the EU is, by origin, a peace and integration project.<sup>121</sup> Agency and self-reflexivity are indispensable constituents of such a form of syncretic Europe, which is always in the making and open to new input. Hence, Turkey's future in the EU depends on the weakening of the civilizational and cultural concept of the European Union. A post-civilizational, post-western, post-religious and secular concept of Europe would strengthen pro-European sentiments in Turkey.

118 The spiritual leader of the Gülen community is Fethullah Gülen, who went to exile after the military coup of February 28, 1997. Gülen is now settled in Pennsylvania, and teaches an Anatolian (Hanafi) version of Islam, deriving from the Sunni-Muslim scholar Said Nursi's teachings and modernizing them. Gülen is one of the leading figures of interfaith dialogue in parallel with the Evangelical tradition in the USA. The Community has become widely organized in Turkey as well as in other parts of the world. It is renowned for its Turkish-language schools spreading all around the world as well as for its interest-based global business networks. For further detail on the Gülen movement see Berna Turam (ed.), *Secular State and Religious Society. Two Forces in Play in Turkey*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

119 See Nesibe Hicret Soy, "Ban on prep schools deals blow to EU's Chapter 22", in *Today's Zaman*, 24 November 2013, [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?newsId=332130](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=332130).

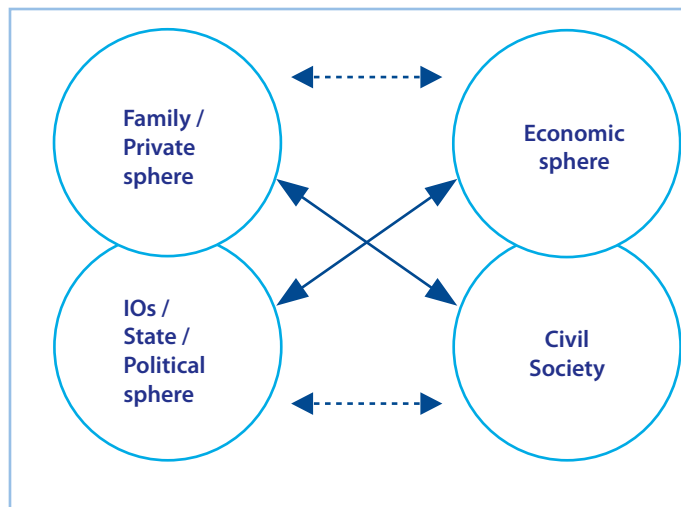
120 This section is partly based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 68-70.

121 Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading. Reflections on Today's Europe*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1992, p. 28. For details about the separation between "civilizational/cultural Europe" and "political Europe", see Senem Aydın-Düzgüt, *Constructions of European Identity. Debates and Discourses on Turkey and the EU*, London and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, ch. 3 and 4.

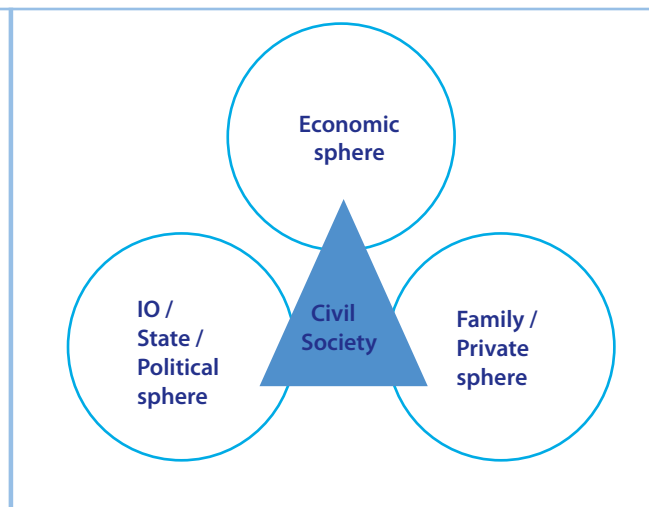


• **Figure 1 | The position of civil society**

a. Civil society as a sector



b. Civil society as an intermediate sphere



Source: Author's elaboration from Thania Paffenholz, *Civil Society and Peacebuilding. A Critical Assessment*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 2010, p. 7.

• **Table 1 | Two main political interpretations of the role played by civil society**

	<b>Collaborator of public bodies</b>	<b>Constitutive source for trans-European public space</b>
<i>Modes of interaction</i>	Multi-stakeholder partnership	Deliberative Europeanization
<i>Official documents</i>	White Paper on Governance, 2001	Convention methods applied in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000), European Convention 2001-2003, the Treaty on a Constitution for Europe (2003) and later in the Treaty of Lisbon (2009)
<i>Types of CSOs</i>	Organized interests, interest intermediation and lobbying	Civil society as a whole, but also as a site of contestation
<i>Functions</i>	Partners, not expected to control accountability	Public sphere for both open participation and challenge to public authority
<i>Activities</i>	Service provision in a demand-offer scheme	Training for social and political virtues, producing social ties and social capital and providing opportunities for mobilization and collective action

Source: Author's elaboration from Eva G. Heidbreder, "Civil Society Participation in EU Governance", in *Living Reviews in European Governance*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2012), <http://dx.doi.org/10.12942/lreg-2012-2>.

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