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ARCHITECTURE**

*by Gulnur Aybet*

Paper presented at the international conference on "US and EU Common Approaches to Turkey"  
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## TURKEY AND THE EUROPEAN SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

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Turkey's relations with Europe have gone through three stages. The first stage was before the modern state of Turkey emerged in the international system, and the identification of the Ottoman Empire and the notion of Turk was defined in terms of the adversarial other. Turkey, although a peripheral European power like Russia at the time was nevertheless involved in the evolution of European politics, alliances, wars and the emergence of the European states system, although it was not considered to be part of this system until the mid 19th century.

The second stage of Turkey's identification vis a vis Europe came with the creation of the modern Turkish state, its pledge to follow a path of modernization to accede to a level of contemporaneity. The commencement of the Cold War and the redefinition of the idea of Europe in terms of what constituted the 'west' brought Turkey into the fold of this redefinition. This saw the creation of a 'western security community' centering around NATO. According to Bradley Klein, this constituted a 'project' to create a 'western system' through a variety of institutions which ranged from the IMF, World Bank, GATT, NATO and ANZUS. But as Klein maintains, the focal point of this system was the transatlantic relationship embodied in NATO. For the *raison d'être* of this system rested on preserving a 'way of life' against another.<sup>1</sup> In this sense Turkey was no longer the other in terms of western identification but very much a part of that 'way of life' that was being preserved and part of the system set up to preserve it. Turkey's

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<sup>1</sup> Bradley Klein 'Hegemony and Strategic Culture: American Power Projection and Alliance Defence Politics', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 14 No.2 1988.

involvement with essentially western institutions commenced in this period. This was a period of rebuilding the west, in which Turkey became part of that architecture.<sup>2</sup>

The third stage of Turkey's role and identity vis a vis Europe commenced with the end of the Cold War, as the 'western security community' inherited from the Cold War searched for a new *raison d'être*. As defending a 'way of life' against another subsided, it became replaced with the promotion of those values that were defended during the Cold War - that is, democracy and free markets- with an added emphasis on human rights, and the utilization of the institutions inherited from the Cold War as a vehicle for achieving this purpose, particularly to radiate these values to the post Communist world. Thus since 1990, a European Security Architecture is being constructed largely for redefining the purpose and legitimacy of these institutions. Whilst Turkey's place in the 'western security community' of the Cold War was not questioned, its place in terms of European identity that is being reforged in political/cultural/historical terms has become unclear. Perhaps not so with the other components of this European Security Architecture such as NATO and the WEU, but more so in terms of its long standing relationship with the EU.

### **Turkey and the EU**

Turkey's relations with the EU as well as being long-standing have also never been static. In this sense, Turkey's bid for EU membership is markedly different from the other candidates in line for membership. Turkey's relations with the EU have evolved over time alongside the EU's own structural development and Turkey's evolving role and identity vis a vis Europe. Turkey's relations with the then EC commenced at a time when Turkey's role and identity was clearly defined in institutional/security terms as being part of the 'western security community'. In this sense, the 1963 Ankara Treaty establishing Turkey's long standing associate membership of the EC was part and parcel of the same package of absorbing Turkey as part of this 'security community' into a

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<sup>2</sup> For an account of the development of the 'western security community' see Gulnur Aybet, *A European Security Architecture After the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy*, Macmillan, forthcoming 1999.

practical working relationship with essentially 'western' institutions. These institutions ranged from the EC - a solely European economic grouping which at that time consisted of the founding six members and hence excluded many of today's prominent voices in the EU, most notably Britain - to the Council of Europe, which Turkey joined in 1949. Turkey's membership in the OECD (then OEEC) in 1948 and its membership of NATO in 1952 completed this package.

Turkey was thus 'absorbed' into the 'western security community' and its role within this community was never questioned during the Cold War. In the post Cold War era, as the *raison d'être* of that 'western security community' is changing from one of collective defence against an identifiable threat to the promotion of the western values of democracy, free markets and human rights to the post communist world, and using the institutions inherited from the Cold War as vehicle to achieve this purpose, so is Turkey's place within this changing 'western security community' being transformed.

As explained in the introduction, what was significant about the early Cold War era which saw the evolution of these institutions and the absorption of Turkey in this system was the nature of this 'project', of absorbing all the units of the so-called 'western camp' into institutional bonds ranging from security to economic and monetary cooperation. The 'west' as such was identified within these relations and practices and found its moral definition and purpose in preserving a certain 'way of life' against 'another'. The dissolution of the 'other' after 1990, left a trail of redefinitions as to what constituted the 'west'. Here, Turkey's identity vis a vis Europe entered shaky ground, as the new objectives of this security community turned towards the 'absorption' of the post communist vacuum. This constituted, as explained above, the second objective of the western security community of radiating stability to regions where it was scarce in the post Cold War era through institutional absorption. Turkey, already a member of the 'western security community' did not fall into this category of those needed to be 'absorbed'. Turkey's absorption had commenced a long time ago in 1948, but somehow it was never complete. And this is where the problem lay in terms of Turkey's grey area

status in Europe. This has become more acute in terms of Turkish-EU relations than with other institutions.

The evolution of Turkish-EU relations runs parallel with the evolution of the EU and the development of democracy and sociological and demographic factors within Turkey. This parallel process which occurred independently from each other was further complicated with the changing parameters of European objectives at the end of the Cold War, which required a renewed institutional rebuilding process, not unsimilar to the institution building process in Europe in the late 1940's and early 1950's. These three ongoing developments shaped the nature of Turkish-EU relations.

When the 1963 Ankara treaty was further enhanced with the Additional Protocol of 1970 which foresaw the establishment of a Customs Union between Turkey and the EC, this occurred at a time when the EC's structural evolution was not yet as wide-reaching and sophisticated as today's EU. For a start, the EC agenda in political terms was not as ambitious. True, there was an EPC process (European Political Cooperation) which was the predecessor to the CFSP (the Common Foreign and Security Policy), but the EPC measures of that time, were more in the context of protecting vital EC economic interests rather than promoting the EC as a major political voice that had an impact of international affairs. The most significant aspect of the EPC process in the 1970's was the Euro-Arab dialogue which reflected European economic interests in terms of the oil embargo. However, nothing as far reaching as CFSP regularly passing joint decisions and opinions on all aspects of global affairs, including the recognition of new states, was existent. Similarly, in terms of the economic and structural development of the EU, the *acquis communautaire* of the 1970's was not as dense as today's. Furthermore, the criteria for admission of new members was still largely defined in the framework of the Rome treaties and any enhancing measures to this criteria as put forward at the Copenhagen summit of 1993 were not yet in place.

At that time, in terms of Turkey's on/off democratization process and the relative internal turmoil it was experiencing, nevertheless, in terms of the stability, it projected in foreign affairs, in contrast to its domestic troubles and its membership of NATO, which at that time was still the cornerstone of the 'western security community', Turkey was undeniably part of the 'west'. If anything, a major consideration for the EC at that time in terms of future Turkish membership would have been more likely based on economic factors rather than political/cultural ones.<sup>3</sup> This is because in the 1970's the Turkish economy was still largely unprivatised and therefore its capacity for competition in international free markets was dubious. Also the prominence of the political/cultural criteria at this stage did not figure very high as three later EU members, Greece and Spain and Portugal were experiencing their own democratic transformations during this era. In fact for both Greece and Spain, negotiations for accession commenced almost immediately after the end of military rule, in 1975 and 1977 respectively, which can be contrasted to the EU's markedly different response to Turkey in the same situation in 1987.

When Turkey finally did apply for EU membership in 1987, this came at an inopportune moment. In terms of Turkey's internal profile however, things ironically looked better than in the 1970's. After the 1980 coup, the restoration of order, the withdrawal of the military and the creation of many new political parties started a new wave of the democratization process. Furthermore, the large privatization process started under Ozal's regime created a more open and competitive economy. However, there were also sociological and demographic factors that had begun to emerge, and would inevitably have a role to play in the redefinition of Turkish politics and identity. This rapid socio-economic change was due to the 'economic marginalization and alienation of lower middle urban classes and fixed income groups'<sup>4</sup> This not only increased migration from the rural eastern areas to the urban western areas but also increased the profile of

<sup>3</sup> However, of all the EU institutions, the Parliament has been the one consistent criticism of Turkey's democratization process. See Balfe report 1985 and the 1988 Werner report, European Parliament.

<sup>4</sup> See Mettem Müller-Bac, 'The Never Ending Story: Turkey and the European Union', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 34, No.4, October 1998, p.248.

political Islamist and ultranationalist movements. The commencement of guerrilla tactics and terrorist activities by the separatist Kurdish group the PKK, in 1984, also occurred within this time. The Turkish state's immediate response to this situation with military operations in the south east of Turkey and later the declaration of a state of emergency in the region, and the repercussions this had on the political voice of some PKK sympathizers coupled with the rise of other extremist movements have all in conjunction proved to be a setback for the post 1980 democratization process, and this has inevitably come to be reflected in the status of Turkish-EU relations. Therefore, these internal developments were already taking place in Turkey at the time of its application to the EC in 1987, ironically coupled with a growing and booming economy.

In the international sphere the timing was also inopportune, because with the culmination of the INF (Intermediate Nuclear Forces) treaty and the removal of all short and medium range land based nuclear forces from Europe, it seemed that at least the Cold War, in its most precarious form had subsided in Europe. By 1989, when the European Commission passed its Opinion that Turkey's application ought to be shelved, it was evident that the Cold War itself was about to come to a close with the commencement of the 'velvet revolutions' in central and eastern Europe and the downfall of the Berlin Wall. ~~Not only~~ Not only were the parameters of European security being re-defined, but also those of what constituted a European culture, as the division of Europe ceased to exist and Europe, east and west, were finding new grounds for bonding in historical/cultural/religious terms. Meanwhile in Turkey, because of the socio-economic revolution explained above, the cultural differences with Europe became more visible. From that point on, Turkey's place in Europe and its future in the European Union became increasingly questionable. The rest of the story consists of an increasingly frustrated western Turkish elite and an increasingly adamant, insistent EU. On the part of the Turkish elite there is surprise and considerable anger that whilst Turkey's place in Europe was not questioned during the Cold War when it had a strategic importance vis a vis the Soviet threat, in the post Cold War era, Turkey's European identity is being questioned on cultural terms, as Europe has united in historical terms. For the EU, the

enlargement to those who most need 'absorbing', ie the post communist east and deepening its structural foundations of integration at the same time, leave no place for absorbing Turkey. Furthermore, as the values of democracy and human rights gain more prominence in the post Cold War era, the EU has turned to be more critical towards Turkey's performance in these areas as well as tightening the screws on criteria for admission by emphasizing these factors.

The end result has been the tightening of the admission criteria at the Copenhagen summit in 1993, particularly emphasizing the conditions for stable democracy, human rights and protection of minorities. Turkey's Kurdish problem in this context has been shown in EU circles as an impediment to fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria for membership. A decade after Turkey's application, 1997 proved to be a particularly bad year for Turkish-EU relations. In July 1997 the European Commission President Jacques Santer proposed 'Agenda 2000', setting the Commission's enlargement strategy. The Commission proposed commencing negotiations for accession with five countries: Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovenia. At the EU Luxembourg summit at the end of that year, it was decided on the addition of Cyprus to the above list, thus constituting the so-called six 'fast track' countries. The second track of countries eligible for accession were listed as Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia. Turkey did not feature in either list. Except, a 'European Conference' comprising of all the above countries and Turkey was established at the summit. The Conference which met for the first time in March 1998 in London, has been boycotted by Turkey, who has refused to participate unless treated on an equal basis with the other acceding states. Another aspect concerning Turkey which was revealed at the Luxembourg summit was the 'European Strategy for Turkey', emphasizing the unique relationship between the EU and Turkey, therefore justifying the reason for treating Turkey's application process separately. Particularly, the one to one meetings between Turkey and the Commission on the Strategy have focused on the payment of EU funds allocated to Turkey which have been blocked by Greece's veto. Additionally the financial compensation due from the

EU to Turkey as part of the Customs Union agreement on 1995 has also not been forthcoming for this reason.

Turkey's non participation in the European Conference and its criticism of the Luxembourg and Agenda 2000 decisions have not gone without notice. The EU's Cardiff summit of June 1998 not only opened the way for the definition of Turkey as one of the twelve acceding states but also emphasized the need for a more detailed working timetable for the Strategy. In pursuant to this, the EU Commission presented a report to Turkey at the same time as the other applicant states, removing the Luxembourg suggestions of Turkey's exclusion from membership negotiations in the near future. At least for the time being there seems to be some earnest search in the EU to help bring Turkey closer to meeting the Copenhagen criteria. This ~~is~~ even includes the possibility of lifting of the Greek veto on payment of due EU funds to Turkey, by making the issue a qualified majority voting decision. At least this seems to be the intention of the Austrian presidency before the EU summit in Vienna in December 1998.

These are efforts to keep Turkey well embedded and bonded with Europe. Much as Europe has had difficulties in clarifying the role and identity of Turkey in a post Cold War Europe, nevertheless, these latest developments also show that a Europe without Turkey is an uncomfortable thought for most EU states. Turkey's policy of insisting on nothing short of membership has proved successful in this sense, that other measures of indirect relations with Turkey without membership such as completing the Customs Union Agreement in 1995, and even Turkey's participation in the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue have not been satisfactory for Turkey as measures in place of membership. At least now that this is clear, there seems to be an earnest search on both sides to come to some agreement on preparing Turkey for accession. As to how long this might take remains an open ended question.

## Turkey and NATO and the WEU

The early stages of the development of a European Security Architecture from 1990-1993 focused on the debate of whether or not to fold the WEU into the EU which would form the defence arm of the CFSP or to enhance the WEU in terms of NATO's European Pillar. The so-called 'Atlanticist' and 'Europeanist' debate came to centre around the crucial question as to whether NATO could develop further that a collective defence alliance in the post Cold War era, and whether it could undertake 'out of area' operations, which technically the WEU is not limited by treaty to undertake. This debate subsided as NATO's involvement in collective security operations, most notably in the former Yugoslavia commenced. NATO had indeed found a new role for itself in the post Cold War era - that of exporting its military 'know how' in coordinating and overseeing collective security missions of a humanitarian nature by involving non-NATO states within this operation. In terms of the 'absorption' of the post communist world into western practices, this became a very valuable asset. The involvement of non-NATO forces in SFOR is an example of this. The growing prominence of NATO's military edge was also of significance, heralding France's rapprochement with NATO military circles since its departure from the integrated military structure in 1966. This also altered the shape of the NATO-WEU relationship, as the WEU's operational capabilities came to rest on NATO, and also since the development of the defence side - the ESDI- of CFSP was not such a smooth evolution as envisaged back in 1991.

In terms of where Turkey fits into this evolving architecture, its full membership of NATO but associate membership of the WEU, once more leaves it in a grey area. ~~In~~ ~~terms of military operations~~, Turkey participates fully in ~~WEU's~~ <sup>WEU's</sup> ~~NATO's~~ <sup>NATO's</sup> post Cold War activities. However, in terms of the WEU, although an associate member, Turkey also has the right to participate in all operational aspects. The closeness of the NATO-WEU relationship makes things a little awkward for the non full member states of the WEU. In 1996, NATO and the WEU signed an agreement for the sharing of intelligence. In 1994, NATO approved the CJTF concept, later adopted in 1996. The CJTF (Combined Joint

Task Force) is a 'deployable multinational, multi-service formation generated and tailored for specific contingency operations.'<sup>5</sup> In this sense, through the CJTF, forces assigned to NATO, trained in NATO exercises, could be used in conjunction with or entirely for WEU operations. The linkage of the WEU's operational role in this way with NATO created 'separate but not separable' capabilities, to be used either by the WEU or NATO. In this sense, Turkey's associate membership of the WEU is no different in operational terms from full membership.

What is different between the two memberships, and a cause of some concern for Turkey is the fact that Turkey is uninformed of EU decisions that have direct bearing on the security and defence dimension of the CFSP, thus the role of the WEU. Turkey claims that this is unfair in the light of non-NATO members who are informed of NATO's policies and have a chance to feedback on these issues through the Partnership for Peace, and now the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, whereas non-full members of the WEU and EU are not party to a similar mechanism. To this effect, Turkey as a participating state in the operational development of the WEU through the WEU's links with NATO and its associate status in the WEU, would at least like to sit in on EU Council meetings that have a direct bearing on that part of the CFSP that touches upon the European Security Architecture.<sup>6</sup> The way that the institutions are hooked up with each other creates these sort of problems in terms of overlapping memberships.

In conclusion, although Turkey's identity in terms of the political/cultural evolution of post Cold War Europe has come under scrutiny, a European Security Architecture cannot be envisaged without Turkey. It is wrong to assume that for Europe, Turkey's strategic importance has decreased. Security in the post Cold War era is no longer identified in terms of building a mass collective defence against an identifiable enemy. Instability, national movements, the control of natural resources in regions of turmoil all have a bearing on European security interests. In this context, Turkey's geo-strategic

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<sup>5</sup> See Anthony Cragg, 'The Combined Joint Task Force Concept: A Key Component of the Alliance's Adaptation' *NATO Review*, July 1996.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with official from the NATO section, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

importance has if anything increased for Europe in the post Cold War era. A country with democratic institutions - which may not satisfy EU criteria for the moment, but are still nevertheless democratic institutions, a country with a competitive free market economy, ~~a country~~ which refrains from unilateral action in times of crises but works through institutional and diplomatic channels as part of the western system, a country which has a long standing working relationship with western institutions in a region of turmoil, instability and the vital strategic interests of natural resources such as oil and gas, has to remain part of a European Security Architecture, otherwise any other alternative would be detrimental to European security interests.

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