

## **Revised Barcelona Process in the Light of Turkish Experience**

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## **Introduction**

The introductory chapter in this volume suggests that development of peace and security requires the development of transnational identities. The assumption is that shared meanings will generate mutual trust, which is perceived as indispensable for the flourishing of harmonious relations among countries. By shared meanings, the reference is to such constitutive norms as rule of law, democracy, respect for the ‘other’, and the like. It is posited that nations will come to adopt such constitutive norms through a process of learning—an active process of collective redefinition and interpretation of reality. The process needs to be pro-active; nations in a given region themselves should determine the contents of the constitutive norms in question. It is argued that such a stance on the part of nations would help them better internalize the said constitutive norms.

The introductory chapter has as its focus the Mediterranean region. The region is defined as comprising Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and the Palestinian Authority, in addition to the 15 European Union (EU) states. The concern is with the prospect of political and religious conflicts alongside two axes: on one hand, modern West versus dissatisfied Islam and, on the other, rich North versus poor South.

The project does not include Libya, presumably because, given its record during recent decades, that country would pose insurmountable difficulties for the flourishing of consensus on key norms. Yet, if the ultimate objective is that of seeing a pluralistic security community arising around the Mediterranean, Libya should have been included in the project. With the same consideration in mind, it is also possible to argue that alongside Syria and the Palestinian Authority, Iraq, Iran, and even, Afghanistan too should also be part of the project. It is true that the last three countries do not have shores on the Mediterranean. Yet, it would not be possible

to have a pluralistic security community in the Mediterranean region if these countries too are left out of the project.

In the aftermath of September 11, the overall concern of the project is the phenomenon of “clash of civilizations”, with its probable tragic consequences. It is for this reason that the confrontation between modern West and dissatisfied Islam is taken as the major axis of conflict in the region. Conspicuously absent in this formulation are the ethnic conflicts in the region. For a long Turkey’s Kurdish problem poisoned relations between Turkey on the one hand and Syria and Iraq on the other, and, at times, that same problem strained Turkey’s relations with Greece and even with Italy.

Concerning Samuel P. Huntington’s well-known view about the danger of the clash of civilizations, it could only be expected that the formulators of the present project have kept it in the back of their minds. After all, Huntington takes civilization as culture and the formulators of the present project place emphasis on “shared meanings.” The September 11 led many people to ask themselves whether that tragic event was indeed a forerunner of the clash of civilizations. However, as the very name of the ensuing armed struggle, “War on Terror,” implied, that struggle was primarily between contemporary civilization and terror, and not necessarily between modern West and dissatisfied Islam. The Muslim countries did not display a united opposition to the United States and its allies in the war against the Taliban. One Muslim country, Turkey, even sent troops to Afghanistan to keep peace there following the removal of the Taliban regime from power.

In the Muslim Mediterranean, excepting some rogue countries like Libya and Iraq and some isolated Islamic militant groups in several countries in the Middle East and North Africa, there seems to be no serious opposition to the modern West that could result in an all-out war between the Christian-Judaic and Islam realms. One rather ominous development here was the 1979 Iranian revolution. However, it did not spread to other Muslim countries, and, since then,

Iran has considerably liberalized its political regime. The post-Saddam Iraq and post-Khaddafi Libya may follow suit.

This does not mean that “dissatisfied Islam” no longer poses a threat to peace and security in the Mediterranean South and East. Libya and, nowadays to a greater extent, Iraq may create serious problems for their neighboring countries as well as to the modern West. The Palestinian question still simmers and, at times, becomes almost intractable. One question here is whether it is possible to create shared meanings and consequently mutual trusts when personal rulers like Khaddafi and Saddam are around and when in an otherwise modern Western country as Israel Sharons can capture power. Concerning the Palestinian question itself, the critical question is whether in the foreseeable future the development of shared meanings and mutual trust is possible across religions, particularly when the relations between the respective co-religionists are strained to the utmost.

It is probably because the formulators of the revised Barcelona Process are also aware of the improbability of an all-out clash of civilizations that they preoccupy themselves with the closure of ranks within the Mediterranean region rather than one between that region and the modern West in general and the EU countries in particular. However, would this particular approach that leaves the countries in the Mediterranean South and East out of the fold of the EU indefinitely and therefore outside of its cultural, political, and economic format, not create rather than resolve the issue at hand? Here, drawing upon the first likely scenario discussed in the “An Exercise in Scenario Building” section of the introductory chapter in this volume, the following questions may be raised: In the absence of some material incentives for developments in the said countries in the direction of Copenhagen criteria, would not the establishment of the rule of law and the institutions of democratic governance become more difficult? Would not the enlargement of the EU towards Eastern Europe while not creating even a special EU status to the countries in the Mediterranean South and East increase the

trade dependence of these countries? Would not such unfavorable developments engender further political instability and crisis of political legitimacy on the one hand and highly visible social and income inequalities and the consequent intermittent mass migration toward the North? Would not under those circumstances the Barcelona process be shelved in favor of closing the EU borders, as it is suggested in the introductory chapter?

For understandable reasons Libya has been left out of the efforts to build a security community in the Mediterranean South and East. Although there is no reason to think that Turkey too should be left of the joint effort or imagine that Turkey cannot make a contribution to that joint effort, Turkey may be considered as a rather special case. Paying attention to the Turkish case in some detail may be useful for refining the strategies toward the building of a security community around the Mediterranean. This is what the present chapter attempts to do in the following pages.

### **The Turkish Case**

#### *European Vocation*

Why one may consider Turkey as a considered a special case for the present purpose? Starting in the last decades of the eighteenth century, Turkey gradually came to have a European vocation. The Ottoman state was founded in 1299. From that date onward, there was a close contact between the Turks and Europeans. In the early centuries, a great of deal mutual acculturation took place between the Byzantines and Turks. During the later centuries, the Christians, Jews, and Muslims similarly influenced each other. During those later centuries, the Turks either fought their European adversaries or had trade relations. Many Europeans--merchants, scholars, and others--traveled on the Ottoman lands; quite a few came to stay. Some converted to Islam. The latter played an important role in establishing communications and maintaining links between the Turks and Europeans.

Early in the game, at least on the battlefield, the Turks had the upper hand vis-à-vis their adversaries in Europe. As their Empire expanded on three continents (from the early fifteenth to the second part of the sixteenth centuries), the Turks found themselves in the middle of European politics. For example, at different times, Francis I, the king of France and a candidate for the Hungarian throne, requested the help of Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Magnificent against the Hapsburgs. In later centuries, the Ottoman Empire experienced into a long period of decline. Yet, Turkey never became a colony. Consequently the Turks have never harbored a deep resentment toward the Europeans. When they started to lose their supremacy over their European adversaries they did not hesitate to "borrow the infidel's ways in order to overcome them." As early as 1719, they sent an ambassador to Paris in order to find out those aspects of European civilization that they could adopt.

The fact that as compared to the contemporary Islamic states the Ottoman state was least Islamic was also a contributory factor to the ease with which the Turks turned their face to the West. Islam played a relatively less significant role in the Ottoman statecraft because it was recognized that Islam regulated personal life and interpersonal relations, and had little to contribute to public affairs. More importantly, having developed into an empire that comprised several religions, sects within those religions, and/or ethnic groups, the Ottoman state could ill afford to impose the orthodox version of Islam upon the motley of people it ruled. The Greek Orthodox, Gregorian Armenians, and Jews constituted separate religious communities. Their lay heads and clergy, who had authority concerning church administration, worship, education, and charity as well as the supervision of the civil status of their co-religionists, governed these communities.

From circa sixteenth century onward, a secular state philosophy based on the notions of "necessity" and "reason" competed with Islamic prescriptions. During the nineteenth century, when in other Muslim countries efforts were made to reconcile Islam with modernization, the

Turks subscribed to the so-called “cast-iron theory of Islam”, the idea that Islam had remained far behind contemporary developments and could not be adapted to them. The founders of the Republic (established in 1923) adopted the dictum of a late Ottoman intellectual, Abdullah Cevdet that “There is no second civilization. Civilization means European civilization. It must be imported with both its roses and thorns.”

The founders of the Republic initiated a radical social and cultural change in Turkey, which is often referred to as “Cultural Revolution.” The major goal was the secularization of polity and society. Having arrived at the conclusion that Islamic institution alone was to be blamed for the demise of the Ottoman Empire (“because it stood in the way of more comprehensive reforms to save the Empire), the founders of the state aimed at creating a new Turk that would not take his/her cues from Islam, but instead draw upon his/her own reasoning faculties. Consequently, the Caliphate, symbolic head of all Muslims in the world, was abolished. Religious courts were replaced by their secular counterparts. From grade school to universities a Western educational system was introduced. The Latin alphabet, which is the common origin of European culture, replaced the traditional Arabic-Islamic script. European theater and music as well as law codes from different European countries were adopted. The new Civil Code of 1926 emancipated people from Islam in their social and economic life. The ultimate goal pursued was the *reformation* rather than the *renaissance* of Islam. The school textbooks of the 1920s contained such prescriptions as, “A Muslim truly worthy of that name has to love his country, respect the laws of the Republic, submit to the progressive guidance of the state officials, apply scrupulously the principles of good hygiene, consult a doctor in the case of an illness to avoid being the cause of an epidemic, and work energetically for the development of his country.”

These and other reforms came to have a significant impact on the identity of the Turks and on their views about the role religion should play in their daily lives. Empirical data show that

increasingly being a Muslim was no longer an essential dimension of their identity. In the late 1960s, when asked, "How do you see yourselves?" 50.3 per cent of the workers in a textile factory in the city of İzmir (Smyrna) on Turkey's Aegean coast considered themselves as "Turks" and 37.5 per cent as "Muslims." In a 1994 nationwide survey, 69 per cent identified themselves as "Turks", 21 per cent as "Muslim Turks", and only four per cent as "Muslims." (Another four per cent said they were "Kurds", and the remaining two per cent mentioned other ethnic identities.) Only a century ago, people in Turkey had identified themselves as either a "Muslim" or "non-Muslim." Turning now to the issue of the role religion should play in the daily life in Turkey, in a 1986 survey, only seven per cent of a national sample thought that the country should be ruled in accordance with the Shari'a (Islamic Law). Later research (1999) has shown that only one per cent of the respondents took Shari'a in its true sense, for example, stoning to death of an adulteress. The rest viewed it as an ambiguous set of rules for leading a moral life. In 1996, in the city of Konya, one of the most religiously conservative cities in Turkey, at schools people preferred an English-language curriculum to intensive religious instruction.

In the Republican period, Islam in Turkey evinced strong signs of the Durkheimian version of religiosity; Islam in Turkey seemed to be basically a means of group solidarity. Many people made resort to religion when they sensed a feeling of alienation. A 1971 study has found that while in the socioeconomically least developed provinces in Turkey the attendance to the Qur'an courses was the lowest, in the most developed ones it was the highest. According to another 1971 study, mosque going was highest among those recent urban migrants who were not economically successful and/or were devoid of traditional social support. Islam in Turkey was also perceived as a source of moral principles. As it is noted below, this was the original motive for establishing religiously oriented parties in that country.

At the turn of the new century, Turkey for the most part was made up of virtually completely Westernized elite and a people cognitively Westernized, yet for the most part clung to their Muslim and other communitarian values. For instance, because they were cognitively secularized, very few of the people voted for a party just because it was a religiously oriented party. The present-day Turkey can be considered both an Eastern and a Western country. However, as noted, in that country the tradition has not been an obstacle to the flourishing of the modern. Turkey continues to make progress in its economy and democracy. There is a thriving private sector in Turkey. The Turks have managed to substitute an export-oriented economy for an import oriented one, thus resolving the chronic balance of payments in their country. Not unlike several other countries, from time to time Turkey too faces economic crises; however, it always manages to set its economy right. At the turn of the century, Turkey was the only Muslim country with a functioning democracy. Turkey went a long way in consolidating its democracy; save a handful and isolated Islamic, leftist, and rightist radicals, democracy has long become “the only game in town.”

Although Turkey has both an Eastern and a Western face its Western credentials are more apparent. It is a member of the Council of Europe, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Turkey is a candidate country for the EU. To many countries, Turkey is a dependable ally with a relatively stable economy and a functioning democracy. These two characteristics go a long way to render Turkey politically stable and free from irredentist aspirations. Turkey applied to the European Economic Community—the predecessor of the EU—as early as in 1959. It was made an associate member in 1963. Ankara asked for full membership in 1987. However, it was not made a candidate state until 1999. And since 1999, Turkey was not promised a date to start the full membership negotiations. Yet, a great majority of the Turks continue to think that Turkey should go on modernizing their country drawing upon Western models. After having

lived under a single-party regime for 22 years, the Turks made a transition to a multi-party regime in 1945. As noted, democracy has now been consolidated in Turkey. In recent years, an overwhelming majority of the Turks continued to think that their country should conform to the Copenhagen criteria, whether or not they are admitted to the EU. This attitude on their part can be explained only in terms of their two centuries-old European vocations.

During recent decades, problematic issues in the otherwise rosy picture drawn above were considered to have been the role of (1) religion, (2) nationalism, and (3) military in politics. All three have been perceived to pose a threat to Turkey's European credentials. It is now in order to turn to each of these issues and gauge to what extent they have really detracted from those credentials. As such, the following analysis aims to establish the extent to which Turkey has made progress toward being a security country in an otherwise troubled region. It would also provide clues the degree to which Turkey would be an active actor in developing the community of the security region the authors of the introductory chapter would like to flourish.

### *Islam in Politics*

The primary rationale behind the founding of the first openly religiously oriented party in the Republican period (National Order Party—*Milli Nizam Partisi-MNP*) (1970-1971) was not that of promoting Shari'a rule in Turkey, but rather that of upgrading morality and virtue in that country. The idea for this what may be considered as the Islamic version of Protestant Ethic came from a certain Mehmet Zait Kotku who was then Sheikh of the Nakshibandi Order in Turkey. According to the MNP program, new generations of people in Turkey were to be patriotic, self-sacrificing, respectful to private property, and equipped with the latest know-how so that Turkey would be the leader country in the scientific, technological, and civilizational race. This particular goal was formulated by the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi-MSP*) (1973-1980), the successor party to the MNP, as the "National View" (*Milli Görüş*). The MSP argued that the state was responsible for promoting moral

development, which was seen as a prerequisite for material development. The MNP-MSP project aimed at revitalizing some tenets of Islam presumed to lay dormant in the conscience of the people. As it is patent, the programs of the two parties did not take Islam as an end in itself but as a means for material development (a secular goal). In the same vein, the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*-RP) (1983-1997), the successor party to the MSP, talked about “Just Order” (*Adil Düzen*), referring to a social order that was both “rational” and “just.” The FP too had a secular mission--that of fulfilling the twin goals of political stability and economic development.

Despite the fact that all three political parties formally had platforms that were not colored by political Islam, all of them were closed for having “tinkered with the secular premises of the Republic,” the MNP and FP by the Constitutional Court and the MSP by the 1980-1983 military intervenors. Among other things, they attempted to turn the Hagia Sofia (the well-known former Byzantine Church in Istanbul) into a mosque and make Friday a weekend day, and objected to the compulsory eight-year secular education. Necmettin Erbakan, a Professor of Engineering who had obtained his Ph.D. in Germany, led the MNP, MSP, and RP. Erbakan may not have been a subscriber to political Islam; however, the appeasement policy he pursued toward the Islamically militant members of the party as well as the media plus his own occasional provocative statements made to the gallery prepared the end of these political parties.

The last religiously oriented party that was also closed by the Constitutional Court was the Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi*-FP) (1997-2001), the successor party to the RP. This party differed from the earlier religiously oriented parties in two important respects. First, its leader Recai Kutan was more moderate than Erbakan. Secondly, this party was split into two factions, one of them being the liberal faction that attempted to put an end to the party's too close

attachment to Islam. However, because the orthodox faction of the party had the upper hand, with some outside help from Erbakan, the FP too was closed by the Constitutional Court.

Although none of the four religiously oriented political parties could survive in a political regime the constitution of which forbade political parties based on Islam, in the 1970-2001 period under consideration these parties consistently moved from the margins of the political spectrum to its center. As compared to the MNP, the MSP tended to view the European Economic Community, the predecessor of the EU, in a more positive light. The party was for “reform” only in some specific political institutions, and to act more carefully about what to say, when, and where.

The RP in turn perceived secular and Islamic world views compatible. The party defined secularism as the freedom to practice one’s religion according to one’s beliefs, without harassment. The RP also for the first time began to criticize the members of the secular parties not as “false Muslims”, but as “incompetent politicians.” In its political discourse the RP made references to “pluralist society,” “basic rights and liberties,” “more democracy,” “privatization,” “decentralization,” and “globalization.” It was also in the RP period that women began to attend party congresses, and men began to wear neckties.

In the following FP period, secularization was defined in a more liberal direction: “religion will not interfere in the affairs of the state and the state will religion alone.” The party members were to avoid delivering sermons to the people; they were now expected to contribute to public policy making. Intra-party criticisms began to take place. At party congresses, other party members began to challenge chairpersons for the leadership position. Women began to attend the party congresses with their hair uncovered and take their places in the municipalities controlled by the party and in Parliament. Some of these women even consumed alcohol openly.

Upon the closure of the FP, not one but two successor parties were established. They were the Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi*-SP) and the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*-AKP). The SP is led by Kutan. The SP contains within its ranks some members of the orthodox factions of the earlier religiously oriented parties. However, the party is more moderate than its predecessor. In any case, it keeps a relatively low profile.

The AKP, led by charismatic Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, was founded by the members of the liberal faction of the predecessor party. According to opinion polls, Erdoğan, who served as the metropolitan mayor of Istanbul in 1994-1998, has great popularity among the people. Erdoğan takes Islam as his basic reference. He derives from it a set of moral principles for only personal and communal life. He once observed: “My reference is Islam at a personal level. Politically speaking, my reference is the Constitution and democratic principles.” He wants to elevate people to a higher pedestal of virtue, not through the establishment of a state based on Islam, but through personal self-improvement. He does not make a distinction between practicing and non- practicing Muslims. He reasons that they were all created by God and, therefore, they are all equal. He is against discriminatory behavior toward non-Muslims too. His municipality in Istanbul helped renovate not only mosques, but also churches and synagogues in that city. Erdoğan once said: “I don’t think a person who is a genuine believer would harm the community no matter what his religion is. In all believers one comes across tolerance, love, and an instinct for helping fellow human beings.” He thinks that a religiously oriented party is not a communal group. As such it should open its arms to everybody. As a political leader he believes in consultation in the widest extent possible. He is for intra-party democracy. In the past, his discourse was colored by themes and concepts derived from Islam. Consequently, his detractors accused him of being a subscriber to Islamic fundamentalism and he was even given a prison sentence of ten months. Erdoğan recently left behind his inclination to use Islamic terminology. He now thinks that one should no longer call a struggle “jihad”

(holy war) when one is not trying to spread Islam by force and, similarly, one should not say s/he is for Shari'a when one is not interested in de-secularizing the constitutional and legal system.

### *Nationalism*

Until the late nineteenth century, ethnicity was an alien concept to the Turks. As already noted, in the Ottoman Empire there were only two identities—Muslim and non-Muslim. It was Europeans that coined the terms “Turkey” and “Turk.” For the Ottoman Turks, the term “Turk” meant an unrefined person. When in the nineteenth century the non-Muslims exited to establish their own independent states, the Turks attempted to hold the country together by making resort first to Ottomanism (when some non-Muslims were still around), and second to Islamism. (when all non-Muslim elements had left).

When, from the late nineteenth century onward, the Turks began to use the term “Turk” in its ethnic sense, they had a defensive purpose. It was true that they began talking about the good qualities of the Turks. However, they did not praise themselves in order to despise other ethnic groups. The rationale behind their acting in this manner was to regain their self-confidence and do away with the inferiority complex that they had begun developing as a consequence of having continuously lost against their European adversaries from the late sixteenth century onward.

At the turn of the century, there were two main conceptions of nationalism. One was based on shared culture. According to this version, the indigenous culture, which was sharply differentiated from civilization, constituted the basic bond that held people together and rendered them a nation. The second conception of nationalism was based on language. This version had the ultimate aim of integrating the Anatolian Turks with the Turks in Russian

Central Asia. Having no policies of irredentism, Atatürk (founder of the Republic) and his associates chose to adopt nationalism based on shared culture.

Atatürk argued that the peoples in Anatolia belonging to different religions and ethnic groups had lived together for several centuries and consequently gone through a mutual acculturation process. As a consequence of the historical merging of cultures in Anatolia, when the Republic was proclaimed what these peoples shared in cultural terms was far greater than those cultural characteristics on which they differed. Atatürk went on to point out that when the need arose to give these peoples a common name, the term “Turk” was chosen because at the time it was the most familiar term.

It follows that the Founders of the Republic subscribed to cultural rather than ethnic nationalism. They took “Turk” as a nominal term, which was as a means of *reference* rather than *definition*. They perceived the Turkish *nation* as a mosaic. In their submission, the Turks, Kurds, Bosnians, Lazes, and others together made up the Turkish nation. Atatürk even talked of “the people of Turkey” rather than “Turkish people.” Thus, at the Lausanne Peace Conference, which was convened following the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1922), the Turkish delegation led by İsmet İnönü readily agreed to granting of such cultural rights as expressing oneself in one’s own language and celebrating one’s special days to the different elements of the nation. Then, the 1924 Constitution introduced civic nationalism. It stipulated that those who profess loyalty to the Republic were Turks. Consequently, legally speaking, the nationalism enunciated by the 1924 Constitution took the non-Muslims living in Turkey too into the fold of Turkish nationalism.

I say “legally speaking,” because despite the clear-cut provision in the Constitution, in practice Turkish nationalism displayed unmistakable signs of cultural nationalism. In the 1940s and 1950s, one came across strong anti-non-Muslim sentiment in Turkey. One such instance was the 1942-1944 Capital Levy, that was enacted to tax unearned wealth that, it was

thought, had accrued to some people through black market transactions. Those were the years when so many goods were in great shortage in Turkey because of the World War II. In the event, only the non-Muslims were taxed, and many to their gills. Another example were the 1957 anti-Greek demonstrations in Istanbul in the heat of the escalating conflict between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus. They were planned by the government but got out of control, leading to the destruction several shops in downtown Istanbul, which were owned by non-Muslims. In recent years, there was no such strong anti-Muslim sentiment in Turkey, even when several Turkish diplomats were killed by the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA.

It should also be noted that in the late 1930s and 1940s some Turkish intellectuals referred to Kurds in Turkey as “mountain Turks” (for long the Kurds had lived in the high fastnesses of southeastern Turkey), and some Turkish statesmen talked of “blood” and “descent” as the constitutive elements of nation. However, the intellectuals in question did not belong to the public decision-making circles in Ankara. Furthermore, after a while they were tried in the courts for being champions of ethnic nationalism. In any case, the target group of these intellectuals was “communists,” and not non-Turkish ethnic groups in Turkey. The discourse of some Turkish statesmen at the time that also smacked of ethnic nationalism was an outcome of the policy of appeasement that Turkish government at the time pursued against the German government’s efforts to persuade Turkey to try to liberate the Turkic groups under the Soviet yoke and thus oblige the Soviets to engage some of their troops in the Asian front.

It should also be noted here that such isolated and/or short-lived diversions toward ethnic nationalism in Turkey came in the wake of some major Kurdish uprisings that in that period intermittently erupted (1925-1938). From the early 1940s to the present the Turks have not entertained ethnic nationalism. It is true that in the 1950s and the early part of the 1960s, the rightist parties embraced the nationalist cause. However, their nationalism too emerged as an anti-communist ideology.

From the late 1960s to the present, the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*-MHP) carried the nationalist flag in Turkey. In his youth, its leader Alparslan Türkeş had toyed with the idea of ethnic nationalism. He had pointed out that those who spoke Turkish with a different accent could not be considered a Turk. Later, Türkeş too adopted cultural nationalism. He came to the conclusion that those people having similar feelings and aspirations make up a nation. Türkeş thought that the Turks and the Kurds have a common culture and together they constituted a homogeneous nation. He stated: “To the extent I am a Turk to that extent a Kurd is a Turk and to the extent a Turk is a Kurd to that extent I am a Kurd.”

During the 1970s, the MHP too took it upon itself the mission of defending the country against communism. Türkeş thought that Turkey was going through a spiritual crisis. In order to overcome that crisis there was a need to return to the Turks’ authentic communitarian values. Türkeş was also preoccupied with the goal of modernizing the country. In order to accomplish this goal he was not averse to resorting to authoritarianism. He also kept his distance toward the outside world. All in all the party had no problems with the Kurds. Even during the post-1984 Kurdish terror in Turkey, Türkeş did not have harsh words on the Kurds in general. He even made important contributions to the prevention of the rise of an anti-Kurd sentiment in the country. In the post-1980 period, Türkeş even shed his earlier authoritarianism; he became a seasoned and respected politician who sought harmony and consensus in politics.

Türkeş died in 1997. Since then Devlet Bahçeli is the chairperson of the MHP. According to Bahçeli, the markers of nationalism are neither race, nor ethnicity, nor imperialism. Bahçeli’s nationalism is based on measured patriotism. Bahçeli has a civic notion of nationalism. He once said: “It is not important which particular identity the [Kurdish] people in the southeast think they belong to. What is important is that they should think that Turkey is indispensable

for them.” In his opinion, a political party should not represent only one ethnic group. Not unlike Türkeş, Bahçeli is also interested in elevating Turkey to the level of contemporary civilization. However, unlike young-Türkeş, Bahçeli has no problems with democracy. In Bahçeli’s view, “democracy would foster respect to different views and ideas and thus make a significant contribution to social peace and harmony.”

Bahçeli’s nationalism is also open to outside world. As he put it, “If there is a national state there would a national identity; if there is a national identity there would be nationalism. However, this would not mean that nationalism should be an inward-looking one.” Bahçeli thinks that the Turkish economy should fully integrate with the world economy. He views globalization as a fact of life and, unlike Türkeş, Bahçeli thinks that the Turks should adopt universal values.

On the other hand, in his opinion, Turkey’s articulation with the world should not have major adverse effects on that country. He thinks that people everywhere would live in peace and harmony if their relations are based on global justice. Bahçeli thinks that some Europeans are trying to promote Kurdish nationalism in Turkey. He says that such efforts may lead to the emergence of a new cultural cleavage in Turkey, which it would be difficult to resolve by democratic means. Bahçeli thinks the EU should make a clear distinction between terror and human rights. He points out that the EU should not display a double-standard concerning terrorism, adding that in all international legal charters terror is considered as an act against humanity. In Bahçeli’s opinion, Turkey should not terminate its relations with the EU. He however, insists that the EU should refrain from engaging in unjust behavior against the Turks.

### *The Military and Democracy*

The Ottoman Empire was founded by a warrior class. Consequently, the military occupied a prominent place in the governance of the new state. The military also played a

particularly important role in Turkey from the end of the nineteenth century to the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923. It first became the *object* and then the *subject* of modernization. For instance, its role in the reinstatement of the constitutional monarchy in 1908 was substantial. Then, in the 1912-1918 period when the Committee of Union and Progress, made up of intellectuals, civil servants, and officers, controlled politics from behind the scenes, officers were involved in day-to-day politics. This did not augur well for professionalism in the military. The military took its lesson; the idea that ultimate authority belongs to civilian governments and, therefore, the military should stay out of politics to the extent it can help it became a maxim to which the military faithfully subscribed to this day.

Being for long the *subject* of modernization, the military believed in rational democracy; in their submission politics consisted of intelligent debate among the well-intentioned and knowledgeable persons for finding out what was best for the country. This led them to take power into their own hands in 1960-1961, 1971-1973, and 1980-1983. In 1960, they were concerned with the growing threats to secularism as well as the beginning of a fratricide between the members of the political party in power (Democratic Party—*Demokrat Parti*-DP) and the opposition party (Republican People's Party—*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*-CHP). In 1971, the pitched streets battles between the left and the right militants prompted the military into action. The reason for the 1980 intervention was the threat of political Islam as well as the glimmers of ethnic terror. In each case, the military came to the conclusion that the politicians in power were not competent enough to deal with the critical problems the country faced.

Since they believed that the ultimate authority belongs to civilian governments each time they took power into their own hands, officers felt an obligation to legitimate their act. In 1960, they found solace in a report prepared by the then most prominent professors of law, which declared that by resorting to anti-constitutional acts the DP had lost its political legitimacy. In the subsequent interventions, they referred to the 1961 Constitution and the

Internal Service Act of the Turkish Armed Forces, both of which rendered the military responsible for averting threats to internal as well as external security of the country and enabled it to use force for those purposes if necessary. In the event, the military in Turkey has not considered its interventions in politics as an illegal act but as a responsibility they could not shirk.

As in the last decades of the nineteenth century, in the twentieth century too the military continued to be the *object* of modernization. Particularly following Turkey's joining NATO in 1952, the military became a modern and professional institution. As such, the colonels' coup of 1960 where several young officers had become members of the Junta was in later years not looked upon with favor. This was because such coups could easily politicize the military, which in turn would have had adverse effects upon professionalism. Consequently, the 1971 and 1980 coups turned out to be generals' coups. Also from 1961 to 1980, the scope of what should the Juntas concern themselves with was consistently narrowed.

A further step that the military took in order to distance itself from active politics to the extent possible was putting an end to their practice of taking power into their own hands. Thus, in 1997 when they came to the conclusion that the coalition government of the religiously oriented Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*) and the secularly oriented True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi*) were rather lax toward what they considered to be a serious threat arising out of political Islam they harshly criticized the government in the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurumu-MGK*) (which is made up of prime minister, deputy prime ministers, ministers of interior affairs, foreign affairs, defense, and justice, and chief of the general staff, four force commanders and chaired by president, and makes recommendations to the government on matters related to the internal and external security of the country), and gave briefings to members of the judiciary, universities, and the media, and encouraged the people to turn off and on the lights in their places as part of the generalized protest toward the

government. Under such pressure the government had no option but to resign. On that occasion, then President Süleyman Demirel who had tried hard to de-escalate the political crisis in question, argued that the commanders in the MGK were not acting there as the representatives of the military, but as top experts on security matters. The military readily agreed with this interpretation.

In recent decades, the military has considered political Islam and ethnic nationalism as the two most critical threats for the internal and external security of Turkey. They have consistently sent unmistakable messages that concerning those two issues they could not remain inactive if appropriate measures were not taken. On one such occasion the Chief of the General Staff General Hüseyin Kıvrıkoğlu pointed out that, “if necessary the 1997-spirit would continue thousand years.” On the other hand, the military wishes not only the consolidation of democracy in Turkey, but also its deepening. This is because the military wants to see Turkey to become a full member of the EU. This is how Associate Chief of the General Staff General Yaşar Büyükanıt gave a response to the rumors that the military was against Turkey’s joining the EU as a full member: “Whoever says this would face God’s wrath. When I read comments along these lines my blood pressure shoots up. How can Atatürk’s secular military that upholds democracy, can be against Turkey’s taking its rightful place in the contemporary world?” It is with the same rationale that the military does not want Turkey to be left out of the European Security and Defense System. Consequently, the Chief of the General Staff General Kıvrıkoğlu stated that, “Turkey definitely wants to be part of... [the European Union]. This is very important for Turkey. Keeping Turkey out of this system would show that Europe wants to keep Turkey at arm’s length.”

As the military wants to see Turkey in the EU, it did not object to have more civilians in the National Security Council. It did not object to the constitutional amendment that the National Security Council should no longer “notify the government of its recommendations,” but that it

should “make suggestions to the government as a consultative organ.” The military also had no qualms about a constitutional amendment that would made it possible to challenge the constitutionality of the legislation enacted during the 1980-1983 military intervention. Last but not least, the military did not disagree with the removal of the military judge from the State Security Courts.

The military also urged the government to complete Turkey’s homework of adapting the Turkish legal system to the Copenhagen criteria. Critical here was the clash of opinion within the coalition government about the abrogation of the death sentence and broadcasting and education in Kurdish. While the other members of the coalition government looked at these changes with favor, the Nationalist Action Party was not enthusiastic about them. The party was of the opinion that the abrogation of death sentence and, therefore, not carrying out that handed out to Abdullah Öcalan, former leader of the terrorist Kurdish Workers’ Party, which is responsible for the death of close to 35,000 people from 1984 to the present, would very badly hurt the feelings of the relatives of those so perished. Furthermore, according to that party, broadcasting and education in Kurdish would have led to the partition of Turkey.

In the past, the military too had thought along the same lines. Recently, however, the military softened its position. It suggested that the death sentence should be abrogated, but along with it, another amendment should be made so that those sentenced to life imprisonment should never benefit from an amnesty. On broadcasting in Kurdish, the military now thinks that news in Kurdish can be broadcast with the proviso that it should be broadcast only on one of the state TV channels and at designated hours. According to them, news should be broadcast in those dialects of Kurdish spoken in Turkey. According to the military, education in Kurdish is unacceptable, because the official language of Turkey, which is a unitary state, is Turkish. However, for teaching different mother tongues that exist in Turkey, including Kurdish,

special courses can be offered in grade schools to the fourth and fifth-year students following the regular classes.

It is patent that not unlike the Turks in general, officers too have a European vocation. However, not unlike the MHP, the military too thinks that Europe should be cognizant of the threats Turkey faces to its internal and external security and, therefore, should not impose on Turkey those changes that would imperil Turkey's vital security interests. On this issue, the Commandant of the War Academy General Nahit Şenoğul had the following to say: "None of the European countries are under the threats that Turkey has faced for a long time. Which European country supported terror organizations that takes as target the partition of a neighboring country? Which European country made the exporting of its regime to another country a state policy? Which European country showed in its official maps the part of the territory of a neighboring country within its own borders?... In none of the democratic countries, neither in the USA, nor in Germany, nor in France, democracy and freedom of speech are exploited for separatist aims. If some international organizations and some European countries would force us to make a preference our first and foremost concern would be our territorial and national integrity." Another spokesman for the military observed: "In none of the international platforms did Europe grant our rights. It did not support our Cyprus policy. It backed Armenia on the Nagorna-Karabag conflict. It placed the presumed genocide issue on the agendas of parliaments." Once, when the Air Forces Commander General Cumhur Asparuk visited a cemetery of martyrs where many who lost their lives as a consequence of he PKK terror are buried, he bitterly remarked: "One should bring here the officials of the EU, so that they see these cemeteries with their own eyes"! Along the same lines, a senior general once remarked: "Today [in Turkey] the man on the street is asking the question of whether it would have been easier for Turkey to join the EU if it had been a communist country and a member of the Warsaw Pact , which threatened NATO for 40 years."

The military would like to see a Europe that is responsive to the vital interests of Turkey. When it concludes that Europe gives cold shoulder to those threats, the military is deeply disappointed. From time to time, such thinking, if not sentiments, on the part of the military led them to argue that “Europe does not want Turkey to be a bridge between the West and the East. However, Turkey is not obliged to have itself accepted by Europeans. Turkey *is* of Europe. It has a European history. The civilizational roots of the Turkish Republic are in Europe.”

The perception that Europe does not want Turkey to be in its fold sometimes prompts the military to consider the promotion of relations with some other countries around Turkey. On one occasion, Secretary-General of the National Security Council, General Tuncer Kılınc, argued that since the EU has an unfavorable attitude toward Turkey that country should seek ways and means of further developing relations with Iran and the Russian Federation. This comment started a heated debate in Turkey. Chief of the General Staff, General Kıvrıkoğlu, however, clarified the military’s approach to the issue in question as follows: “One should scrutinize General Kılınc’s comments carefully. We would, of course, develop relations with Iran, but we cannot have cordial relations with that country. No officer in Turkey can think of setting aside Turkey’s civilizational mission. It is only natural that Turkey should have relations with the neighboring countries. However, Turkey would carefully designate the nature and extent of those relations.” By these remarks Kıvrıkoğlu once more implied Turkey’s first preference—that of becoming a member of the EU because Turkey perceives itself as belonging to the same civilization that EU countries belong to. The military in Turkey thinks that because Turkey belongs to the civilization in question, Turkey would make a contribution to the peace and security in the region. This particular thinking is clearly reflected in the following comment made by a senior general: “It would be Europe’s loss if Turkey is

excluded from the EU. Stability in the region around us can be maintained only by a secular and democratic Turkey that embraces the values of the West and the modern world.”

### **Turkey, the Revised Barcelona Process, and the EU**

It is now in order to turn to the some of the points made in the *Discussion and Main Research Questions about the EMP* section of the introductory chapter in this volume, and discuss them briefly with a view to the Turkish case. I comment upon some of he suggestions made and the questions raised in the said section in the order they have been noted in the said section of the introductory chapter.

First, does it make sense to try to build a region in non-Western ideas that are not culturally homogeneous? Looked at from the Turkish perspective one may suggest that it may not make sense. The Turks think, as compared with many other nations in the region, that they subscribe to a different worldview. They would find it very difficult to make compromises on this matter for the sake of developing a region of peace and security in the region. This would also make collective learning in the region rather difficult.

Second, it may be suggested that the EMP process would not be able to bridge the gap between the West and Islam unless over the centuries countries in the region came to have a certain degree of Western vocation. Otherwise, the moment they arrive at the conclusion that the West is (again) imposing its own preferences on them they would immediately withdraw from the project.

Third, it follows that a regional identity that would not replace, but only supplement national identities, can be consciously constructed only if the gap between the national identities and the envisioned regional identity is not too great. Looked at from this perspective, drawing upon the European experience to promote the Mediterranean security and prosperity may be considered a false start. As compared to the European experience, first, the differences

among the national identities themselves turn out to be too great and, consequently, second, the gap between some national identities and the envisioned regional identity would be substantial. It should not be assumed that Islam has been instrumental in developing in the region a virtually homogeneous cultural pattern and national identity. Here, I do not have in mind the difference between one or two countries and almost all others, but differences among several countries.

Could the EMP process be the corollary of the step-by-step creation of the EU on the rubble of the World War II? This too is doubtful. In the Middle East, defeat does not make leaders lose face; on the contrary, they become heroes. Saddam Hussein is a case in point. Here too the Turkish case is an exception. The Turks tried to Europeanize despite the Europeans. Following the World War I, the latter tried to carve up among them the territory that the Turks were left with. Still the Turks opted for European civilization with its “roses and thorns.”

Turning now to the *Facilitating and Constraining Factors* also mentioned in the introductory chapter, it is true that an all-out war among the countries included in the present Project is a dim probability. Yet, here one should not forget Iraq, or Saddam factor. That country may very well start a chemical, if not, nuclear war. This is another reason for the necessity to bring that country into the equation one way or another.

The Middle East is characterized by deep historical hostilities and prejudices, which are intertwined with ethnic and sectarian divisions. This is, in fact, mentioned among the *Constraining Factors*. Mexican and Australian examples may not very easily be generalized to the Middle East. I fully agree with the seriousness of all the constraining factors mentioned in the introductory chapter.

Which are the most likely scenarios in the foreseeable future? The most likely next step seems to be the triage. Here, however, it should not be forgotten that not all countries in the

Eastern Mediterranean are hopelessly “sick..” Should not one include the countries like Egypt and Jordan in the project? Then there are countries like Israel and Turkey. The former would continue to have close relations with the North America, and the latter, in addition to its close relations with the US, gives its first priority to joining the EU as a full member. Yet, Israel has the Palestinian problem. Turkey, which has developed rather close relations with Israel, does not want Syria, Iraq, and Iran posing problems for it, and seeks measured relations with them. As such both Israel and Turkey would or should have close interest in the development of a security community in the Mediterranean East. In the foreseeable future, the Maghreb Arab countries, the countries like Egypt and Jordan in the Mediterranean East, Israel and Turkey plus the Southern European countries would, or should constructively engage in efforts to begin to create a security community around the Mediterranean.

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Note: Endnotes will be provided in the final version of the manuscript.