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Sharing Sovereignty: Turkey's Sovereignty Culture and the EU Accession

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Sharing Sovereignty: Turkey's Sovereignty Culture and the EU Accession By Ali Tekin

Turkey has a long and deep-rooted sovereign state tradition, and is expected to protect it jealously against outside world. Yet, it yearns for a membership in the European Union (EU), which requires the country to “share” its sovereignty. How flexible is the Turkish state on the sovereignty issue? How does Turkey perceive the effects of sovereignty sharing on its capacity to tackle its problems at home and abroad? This article attempts to analyze discussions on the sovereignty issue in Turkey in the context of its EU accession process. It first looks at the changing nature of sovereignty in general and then examines the evolving sovereignty cultures of the European Union and Turkey. By looking at the historical cases in which Turkey compromised its sovereignty, the article argues that the Turkish state guards sovereign rights related to internal political affairs more energetically than those related to foreign economic and security issues.

Over the last several decades, there has been a lively debate on the conventional concept of sovereignty --the governments with an absolute right to control their own territory and independence of all other states in the international arena, that is to say having no superior authority internally and externally. It goes without saying that the process of globalization has transformed the nature of sovereignty to a great extent especially since the early 1970s. The reflections of globalization can most be seen especially in three distinct areas: economy, human rights and warfare. While one group of scholars declares the death of sovereignty as we know it, a strong strand of literature argues forcefully that sovereignty is alive and well.

This article takes the view that although conventional state sovereignty does not exist anymore, there are no sufficient factors to proclaim the death of sovereignty. It argues that the important question to ask then is whether or not sovereignty is a stable and unchanging institution. As Robert Jackson and Georg Sorenson rightly argues, “sovereignty is an institution based on *norms*.”¹ The word “norm” is used to identify what “normal” at a specific juncture in time. This means that as an institution based on norms it is natural for sovereignty to develop and change in accordance with what is normal at the time. Thus, those who argue that the sovereign state is just about dead are wrong in their assumptions.² It should not be forgotten that the institution of sovereignty and the actual degree of state autonomy are two different things and they should not be confused. The constitutive rules of sovereignty remain intact while the regulative rules of sovereignty have changed inevitably.³ We still live in a world of sovereign states and sovereign statehood still remains very popular. Moreover, states are still constitutionally independent though nowadays there is an intense discussion concerning the relationship between regulative and constitutive rules especially within the European Union. The argument is that integration via modification of regulative rules can proceed so far that constitutional independence ceases to exist in more than purely nominal terms.

Next part deals with an overview of how the concept of sovereignty evolved in the European Union. The following part then dwells on the Turkish case by analyzing the Turkish

¹ Robert Jackson and George Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 281.

² Stephen Krasner, *Sovereignty*, available at <http://globalpolicy.igc.org/nations/realism.htm> accessed on 30.12.2003.

³ Georg Sorenson, ‘Sovereignty: Change and Continuity in a Fundamental Institution’, *Political Studies*, XLVII (1999), p.591.

historical cases of sovereignty sharing and even transfer. Finally, the article attempts to delineate if there are common threads of attitude or a “learning process” involved as the experience accumulated over time.

Post-Modern Sovereignty in the European Union

It goes without saying that the European Union is an organization that drastically challenges whatever that is conventional. For many scholars obsessed about classifying the actors on the world stage, the EU appeared as a nightmare with its matrix of linkages and unique character. Rather than attempting to realize the impossible by trying to squeeze the Union into the traditional classifications, one should develop an understanding of the unique character of the EU.

The EU is an actor *sui generis*; a “post-modern polity;”⁴ it is a “multiperspectival entity”⁵ which has multiple presences in distinct policy areas. The EU is not a federation certainly, and it is much more than a simple international organization. Just like many other features of the Union, the nature of sovereignty within the Union structure is another novelty for the conventional arguments. As put by William Wallace, the EU is widely agreed to constitute a political system, “a framework for governance with some state-like qualities above the state level.”⁶ Some would describe it as a “quasi-state”, or as an “international state”, or as a post-modern pattern of government in a post-modern European order.⁷

The modern concept of sovereignty was a European design dating back to the sixteenth century. Yet, ironically, it is the same Europe that has moved from the concept of modern nation-state to the phase of the post-modern state.⁸ The modern state emerged as a unitary, introverted and national entity leading to an international system based upon the principles of non-intervention and reciprocity. The post-modern European state, in contrast, operate within a much more complex, cross-cutting network of governance where the dividing lines between local (regional), national and foreign realms are blurred. The post-modern state is fragmented, extrovert, and transnationally integrated. Thus, the process of globalization transforms the modern nation-state paving the way for Europeanization as well as localization.⁹ Arguably, the nation now has alternatives to identify itself with: the “European citizen” as supra-national identity and particular sub-national identities. Thus, the processes of micro-regionalization and Europeanization ensue side by side.¹⁰ This is what Peter Ford identifies as “the new layers of

⁴ James Caporaso, “The European Union and forms of state: Westphalian, regulatory or post-modern?”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.34 (1996), pp, 29-52.

⁵ John G. Ruggie, “Territoriality and beyond: problematizing modernity in international relations”, *International Organization*, Vol.47 (1993), pp. 139-74.

⁶ William Wallace, “The Sharing of Sovereignty: the European Paradox”, *Political Studies*, Vol.XLVII (1999), p. 518.

⁷ Wolfgang Streek and Philippe C. Schmitter, “From national corporatism to transnational pluralism: organized interests in the Single European Market”, *Politics and Society*, Vol.19 (1991), p. 159; Caporaso, “The European Union and forms of state: Westphalian, regulatory or post-modern?”, p.33; Robert Cooper, *The Post-Modern State and the World Order* (London: Demos, 1996); Christopher Coker, “Post-modernity and the end of the Cold War?”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol.18 (1992), pp.189-98.

⁸ Robert O. Keohane, “Ironies of Sovereignty: The European Union and the United States”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol.40, no. 4 (2002), pp. 743-65.

⁹ Michael Longo, “European Integration: Between Micro-Regionalism and Globalism”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol.41, no. 3 (2003), p. 486.

¹⁰ Peter Ford, “The New Layers of Europe”, available at <http://search.csmonitor.com7durable/2000/05/22/p1s2.htm> accessed on 30 December 2003.

Europe.”¹¹ While European governments are giving up the key responsibilities to the European Union, local authorities decide how to use about 70 percent of public works spending in Europe, and in many countries it is the regions that set their own transportation facilities, enforce environmental standards, and administer social services.¹²

To sum up, it goes without saying that the EU is inconsistent with conventional sovereignty rules. With each phase of European integration, the member countries are bound to redefine national sovereignty. On the one hand, the process of supra-nationalism questions the external sovereignty of states and the fundamental principles of the Westphalian state system, most importantly the non-intervention principle. On the other hand, the process of localization undermines the “nation”-state and shakes the understanding of absolute control of the government within its borders.

Today, the European Union encompasses supranational institutions that can make decisions conflicting to some member states. The European Monetary Union created a central bank that now controls monetary affairs for three of the Union’s four largest states. The Single European Act and Maastricht treaty provide for majority or qualified majority voting in some issue areas. Moreover, the rulings of the court have direct effect and supremacy within national judicial systems, though never explicitly endorsed in any treaty.

As can be deduced from the discussion above, as an entity evolving to supra-nationalism, the EU requires the relinquishment of a substantial portion of national sovereignty of its members. The question, for the purpose of this paper is, whether Turkey’s culture of sovereignty can adapt to this requirement and be rendered compatible with that of Europe. Before being able to provide an answer to this question, however, the concept of sovereignty in Turkey will be examined.

Path of Sovereignty in Turkish Polity

“Each society is moved by the circumstances of its existence to develop its own approach to foreign relations. This means that diplomacy and for that matter every other social institution, is bound to incorporate the traditions and values peculiar to the civilization in which it is practiced.”¹³

Considering the fact that sovereignty is one of the social institutions mentioned above, it should not be surprising to argue that the concept of sovereignty in Turkey today carries with it the legacies of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴ The concept of “defensive modernization”, that is to say, adapting the institutions of the West to be able to cope with the West was the most observable process during the last phases of the Ottoman Empire. The West was both a source of salvation and a source of threat.

In the 19th century, when the Empire was in decline, the greatest aim of the policy makers was to protect the Sublime Port from fragmentation and “avoid being an object of European great power rivalries as a land ripe for partition.”¹⁵ The Empire saw the salvation in the same source from which the danger was emanating. Beginning from the armed forces and

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Adda B. Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1960, p. 324 as quoted in Ali Karaosmanoğlu, “The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey”, *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.54, no.1 (Fall 2000), p. 199.

¹⁴ See Feroz Ahmad, “The Historical Background of Turkey’s Foreign Policy,” in Lenore Martin and Dimitris Kerides, *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, Cambridge, UK, MIT Press, 2004, pp. 9-33.

¹⁵ Ali Karaosmanoğlu, “The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey,” p.204.

administration, the institutions began to be modernized in accordance with the European ideas and values. Thus, “westernization against the west” is the most prominent legacy of the Ottoman Empire in today’s Turkey.

Turkey inherited from the Empire two contradictory tendencies: Westernization and the “historical reflex”¹⁶ or security syndrome caused by the division of the Ottoman Empire by European powers, first through religion-based and then ethnic-based differentiations. This fact may provide some help for those unable to interpret Turkey’s passion for being a part of the European Union on the one hand and its half-commitment on the other.

“Founded upon the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, the pillars of the new Republic of Turkey were grounded upon and deliberately accounted for what were believed to be the causes of failure of the old regime.”¹⁷ The Kemalist elite identified Ottoman expansionism and national heterogeneity to be the reasons of its decline. Thus, the nascent Republic was based on the creation of an indivisible and homogenous nation, whose territorial borders would not be subject to change with the conquest of foreign lands. The notorious Treaty of Lausanne was signed with a zealous attempt to break from the past. In the 1923 Lausanne Treaty, the Turkish Republic renounced claims to formerly Ottoman territories. The Muslim ethnic minorities (including Kurds) were officially recognized as descendants of Turkish tribes. During this process of breaking with the past, the Islamic cultural expressions were also liquidated by means of reforms.

From then on, the Turkish Republic which was born on the ashes of Ottoman Empire began to see the Treaty of Lausanne as the guarantor of its security and survival and an entrenched idea that any change in the contents of this treaty would produce security risks. The Lausanne Treaty has often been contrasted with abortive Treaty of Sevres of 1920, which had been imposed on the sultan’s government by the European powers partitioning Anatolia, leaving the Muslim-Turkish population with a rump state in the center, and creating territories for Armenia and Kurdistan under Great Power mandate.¹⁸ As Feroz Ahmad writes, “Turks have continued to live with the phobia that it never quite died and could be revived at any moment.”¹⁹

In the Turkish state tradition, the survival of individuals or nations depends on the survival of the state. As a result of the past experience, the Kemalist elite aimed at creating a new, strong, powerful state to resist external pressures and to suppress possible demands of autonomy; in this line of thinking the survival of the state was the primary concern of the founding fathers. In other words, Turkey’s culture of sovereignty derives its basis from the entrenched security syndrome and its off-shoot state-centricism.²⁰ Still, does this mean that Turkey cannot adapt to the sovereignty requirements of the Union? To be able to provide an answer to this question, Turkey-EU relations will be examined under the next heading.

¹⁶ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001), p. 515.

¹⁷ Nathalie Tocci, “21st Century Kemalism: Redefining Turkey-EU Relations in the Post-Helsinki Era”, *Center for European Policy Studies*, available at <http://ceps.be>.

¹⁸ Feroz Ahmad, “The Historical Background of Turkey’s Foreign Policy,” p. 9.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.9.

²⁰ See Umit Cizre, “Demythologizing the National Security Concept: the Case of Turkey,” *Middle East Journal*, vol. 57, pp. 213-229 (2003); Metin Heper, “The Ottoman Legacy and Turkish Democracy,” *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 54, pp. 634-682 (2000); and Metin Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey*, Washington, Eothen, 1985.

Turkey's Relations with Europe

Basing my argument on the above-mentioned legacies of the Turkish Republic and the historical cases of sovereignty pooling/transfer that will be mentioned below, I argue that sovereign rights related to internal political affairs are guarded more energetically than those related to foreign economic and security issues. That is to say, Turkey can more easily adapt to the sovereignty culture of the EU when the issue at the table is not about issues of internal sovereignty.

In line with the inheritance of two contradictory mindsets from the Ottoman Empire, Turkey's European integration shows a bleak picture with apparent inconsistencies. On the one hand, since the establishment of the Republic, Western civilization has always been a reference point for the nation and integration with Europe a cornerstone of Turkish politics. Turkey became a member of the Council of Europe in 1949, of NATO in 1952, concluded an Association Agreement with the then European Community in 1963 and established a Customs Union with the EU in 1995. Turkey is today a candidate for full membership in the EU and amongst all the candidates the one most strongly economically integrated with the EU.²¹

On the other hand, however, whenever the conditionality for European integration touches on the internally sensitive issues such as minority rights and religious freedom and thus suggests alterations in the basis of the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey immediately remembers the other side of the old equilibrium: the West as a source of threat. Then, the demands of Europe in that context are interpreted as threats to national security and sovereignty. This behavior can be labeled as a historical reflex of Turkey.²² In summary, the integration tendencies become reluctant if and when "the required loss of sovereignty touches on national identity."²³ This side of the story will be elaborated with more detail under the next heading; for now I will focus on the historical antecedents of sovereignty sharing/transfer.

Restraining Sovereignty under NATO and ESDP

As indicated above, the young Republic looked up to the West as "the only source of civilization to which Turkey tried to belong."²⁴ Beyond the threat of the USSR after the Second World War, Turkey's accession to NATO derived mostly from a "profound belief in the western values and in the virtues of western political systems."²⁵ The NATO membership was the second incident after joining the Council of Europe to show its preference and commitment to the West.²⁶ Turkey went as far as sending military troops to the Korean War in the early 1950s to show its Western resolve. Today, Turkey is enthusiastically contributing to NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programs.²⁷

²¹ Wolfgang Piccoli, "European Integration in Turkish Identity Narratives: The Primacy of Security," paper presented to the 7th CGES Graduate Conference, Georgetown University, 21/22 March 2003.

²² This reflex has been expressed with various terms, including the Sevres syndrome and security syndrome. Although this reflex or syndrome may come across as being prevalent in all countries, there are strong indications that it is much more entrenched in Turkey than in European countries.

²³ Sieglinde Gsthöl, "Scandinavia and Switzerland: Small, Successful and Stubborn Towards the EU", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.9, no. 4 (2002), pp. 529-49 as quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁴ Hasan Kösebalaban, "Turkey's EU Membership: A Clash of Security Cultures and the Military in Turkey", in note 17, p.130.

²⁵ Ali Karaosmanoğlu, "The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey", in note 15, p.209.

²⁶ George S. Harris, *Troubled Alliance – Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945-1971*, Stanford, CA, USA, Stanford University Press for AEI-Hoover Policy Studies, pp. 38-46.

²⁷ Ali Karaosmanoğlu, "The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey," p. 212.

Together with the membership in NATO, Turkey's willingness to participate in the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) mechanism of the EU may be given as an example to show that when the issue is security-related, Turkey is not reluctant to adapt to EU's culture of sovereignty. Turkey's role in the emerging ESDP mechanism has been a matter of debate between the EU and Turkey for several months. Turkey pledged 4-5,000 troops to the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) and as a former associate member of the Western European Union wanted to participate in ESDP decision-making procedures. One of the most important reasons for Turkey's willingness to take part in this mechanism stems from the fact that Turkey lies in a volatile and unstable geographical position. Out of the sixteen potential areas for the deployment of RRF, thirteen hotspots lie around Turkey and could critically affect its sovereignty.²⁸ While her accession to EU lies probably in the distant future and the possible crisis areas are so near, it is only natural for Turkey to be keen on participating in ESDP. Moreover, much like joining NATO, the willingness of Turkey to participate in a European army may be linked to her desire for confirming a European identity. Turkey believes its security will be damaged if it is excluded from this mechanism.

Turkey and the EU were able finally to reach an accord over the thorny issue of NATO's assets around the time of the EU's Copenhagen summit in 2002. According to this new arrangement, Cyprus will remain outside the area of responsibility of the EU's Rapid Reaction Forces, while Turkey will lift its veto on the EU's assured access to NATO's assets. Behaving this way, Turkey "proved that her intentions were ... to make sure that the EU's evolving security structure develops in close cooperation with NATO and that the process of Turkey's accession to the EU accelerates."²⁹

"Transferring" Sovereignty to the EU under the Customs Union

I will turn now to the relationship between the European Union and Turkey beginning from the Association Agreement in 1963. In the years that followed the formation of the European Community, Turkey presented her application for association right after Greece in 1959. The Turkish government made the application in a sense of urgency without even consulting the Turkish Grand National Assembly on the issue. This act of the government is said to have two reasons: firstly, the entrenched principle of acting together with Europe and participating in the decision-making mechanisms of the Western-based organizations played a very important role, and secondly, this move was a continuation of the traditional foreign policy not to leave Greece alone in the West European organizations.³⁰

Short while after from the application, the negotiations on a possible agreement started. It is important to note here that the most obvious point of diversion during these negotiations was related to the nature of the agreement. While the EC wanted to keep the agreement as one of trade, the Turkish side, by referring to the Athens Agreement, suggested the agreement be more encompassing, also including a Customs Union which might in the future lead to full membership. Eventually, after the elapse of four years from the government's application, the Association Agreement (Ankara Agreement) was signed between Turkey and the EC. The Ankara Agreement is a framework agreement, that is to say, it is concerned with identifying the general principles concerning the relations of association. In this agreement, the authority

²⁸ Nathalie Tocci, "21st Century Kemalism: Redefining Turkey-EU Relations in the Post-Helsinki Era", in note 18, p.34.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.297.

³⁰ Deniz Vardar, "Türkiye-Avrupa Topluluğu İlişkileri", in Faruk Sönmezoglu, *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, İstanbul, Der Yayınları, 1994 p. 124.

to determine the principles regarding especially the Customs Union was left to a later agreement: the Additional Protocol. This protocol came into force in 1973. On 1 January 1996 as the *transition phase*, which lasted for 22 years came to an end, Turkey joined the Customs Union.

The entry of Turkey into the Customs Union without full membership has led to severe debates in Turkey. Those who opposed Customs Union before membership pointed out the disadvantages of such an occurrence. The opponents of this view indicated that under these circumstances Turkey would have to take on a one-sided responsibility to adapt to the customs regimes and tariffs of the Union; besides she would have no say on the phase of determination of these regulations.

However, those who are in favor of the Customs Union argued that this incident was one of the most significant milestones for Turkey to show its effort on the path of being a European state since *Tanzimat* Reform. These people further pointed out to the possible side-effects that non-entrance would bring; in such a case they argued the Ankara Agreement would be rendered debatable and this would mean further alienation from Europe. It was stressed that entrance to the Customs Union despite every possible disadvantage was significant for Turkey in demonstrating its political will.³¹ These antecedents are important to show that in foreign economic relations Turkey is eager to cooperate even if this brings less than positive outcomes.

The Problematic Issue-areas for Sovereignty Sharing: Domestic Cleavages

“Another fear is that Turkey will prove too big and too nationalist for Europe to assimilate. That could bring the EU's integrationist, federalist process to a shuddering halt. That Trojan-horse factor particularly worries traditional Europhiles like the French, Belgians and Dutch. It's also a reason why many Euro-skeptics, such as Britain, are in favor of Turkish accession.”³²

Is it really the case? Is Turkey “too” nationalist or “too” much protective of its sovereignty even to the extent to slow down the integrationist or supranationalist tendencies within the Union? To some extent O. Matthew has merit in his argument if we consider the domestically “sensitive” issues. As I indicated above, Turkey is trapped within the Sevres or security syndrome and whenever the conditionality demanded by the Union touches upon these sensitive issues, Turkey seems doomed to its historical reflex of perceiving Europe as a source of threat. “Despite 75 years of Westernization policies” in other words “Turkish state ideology has not achieved a process of common identification with the West that would diminish its sensitivities to issues of national independence.”³³

As the descendent of a country which had been occupied by the European powers at the end of the First World War and one which was the leading actor in the possible partition scenarios of the European powers for a considerable time period, Turkey is still afraid of the possibility that this scenario may be repeated. As indicated earlier Turkey was founded upon the ashes of an empire and is based on the determinacy not to make the same mistakes that the Ottoman Empire did. Thus, the Turkish Republic needed to emphasize its difference with its precedent. In the external realm, this policy demonstrated itself by being a status quo power

³¹ Muzaffer Dartan, “Türkiye ve Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri ve Gümrük Birliği”, in Mustafa Aykaç and Zeki Parlak, *Tüm Yönleriyle Türkiye-AB İlişkileri*, İstanbul, Elif Kitabevi, 2002, p. 115.

³² O. Matthew “Reality Check: Ready for Europe, or No?,” *Newsweek*, May 2004.

³³ Hasan Kösebalaban, “Turkey’s EU Membership: A Clash of Security Cultures”, in note 17, p.130.

and following Atatürk's principle "peace at home, peace in the world." The repercussions of this policy of differentiation in the internal sphere, however, have been more troublesome.

The nascent Turkish Republic attempted to realize the impossible by trying to create a homogenous nation from the ruins of a multiethnic empire. The republican elites wanted to construct an entirely homogenous nation based on the "civic nationalism" understanding of Atatürk, and while the cultural and religious rights of non-Muslim citizens were protected as minority rights by the Lausanne Treaty, all the Muslim ethnic minorities including the Kurds were recognized by this treaty as Turkish citizens and thus were deprived of minority rights. Similarly, in an attempt to break with the past and to prevent any possible fragmentation within the country based on religious differences, Turkey adapted secularization and liquidated all the Islamic cultural expressions. All these were reflections of the deeper wish to create a homogenous nation identified solely by being Turkish; any other affiliations, ethnic or religious, were regarded as threats to the existence of the state and its territorial integrity. In other words, the Kurdish issue and the issue of political Islam were intrinsically linked to the Kemalist security culture and to a large extent still remain so.³⁴

This historical mindset inevitably creates a ground on which the Turkish people justify calls for security. The entrenched belief in the insecurity of the regime and in the incessant threats to the territorial integrity is why the extensive role of the military is seen as legitimate by the Turkish people. The army in Turkey is regarded as the guardian of the regime and the state itself which is allegedly on its own and threatened by a hostile region. Another reason of this phenomenon may be the fact that as a result of the priority given to the state itself the Turks came to see the state as a precondition for their survival and for a strong state a strong army is seen as essential. In summary, the army is entrusted with the key tasks of ensuring the survival of the Kemalist state and nation against both internal and external threats.

It was inevitable, however, that refractions would happen in this up-to-bottom formula. And that is what happened. Since the 1960s the Kurdish issue is high on the agenda together with the rise of political Islam. These problematic issues together with the role of military in Turkish Republic have also come to be the greatest stumbling blocks for Turkey in its quest for membership in the European Union.

From the beginning Westernization was the very Kemalist policy and it goes without saying that membership in the EU is the final step of Westernization. However, because of the misinterpretation of Kemalism as a taboo the Turkish elites who identified themselves as Kemalists became the opposing wing against membership in the EU. In the post-Helsinki process they continued to express their concerns about the "intrinsic" reasons behind European interest in the Kurdish and human rights issues. This is a total continuation of the Sevres Syndrome. The so-called Kemalist elite are unaware of the fact that Kemalism itself is a temporary formula found by Atatürk to be able to respond to the demands of the immediate policy environment. After all, an independent state was a dream came true and it was natural to give priority to the state and try to protect its integrity by any means possible. But like any other policies or institutions, principles of Kemalism should be developed in accordance with the contemporary time.

However, the discussion above should not come to mean that no steps have been taken by Turkey in these issue areas. On the contrary, despite sovereignty debates inside, Turkey has traveled a considerable distance on the way to the European Union. Since her official application for full membership in the European Community on April 14, 1987, Turkey has made tremendous efforts to back its wish by the political reforms. In 1987, the authority of the

³⁴ Metin Heper, "Turkey: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 1, no. 3 (September 2001), pp. 1-19.

European Court of Human Rights to hear the personal applications of Turkish citizens was accepted. In 1990, a Human Rights Commission was formed by the Turkish Parliament. In 1991, three articles of the Constitution, 141, 142, 143 regarding the prohibition of communist or Islamist activities and freedom of expression were abolished.

In the period before joining the Customs Union in 1996, 18 Articles of the Constitution were amended, giving way to the democratization and civilianization of the Constitution. The same picture has been witnessed after Turkey was given the status of official candidacy at the Helsinki summit of 1999. In summer 2001, the number of civilians within the National Security Council was increased to outnumber the members of the military. Moreover, in early August 2002 in an attempt to adapt Turkey's laws to EU Community Law the Turkish Parliament passed radical laws. In line with these regulations, the use of non-Turkish mother tongues in education and broadcasting has been allowed, capital punishment abolished, and Islamic and Kurdish parties given political legitimacy.

Although the political restructuring continues to date, the European Commission's Annual Progress Report on Turkey in October 2004 clearly stated that Turkey had surpassed the threshold to qualify as a democracy that meets the Copenhagen political criteria –the stability of democracy and institutions guaranteeing the rule of law, respect for human rights, and the protection of minorities. The European Council welcomed the Report in its December 2004 meeting, and Turkey and the EU began full membership negotiations in October 2005. All in all, despite the insecurity feeling felt by the Turkish elites, the European institutions have indicated that Turkey has made sacrifices of its sovereign rights that touch upon the problematic domestic issues.

In Lieu of Conclusion

With the new Constitution, the EU will have taken one more step towards centralization. In order to become a member in the EU, Turkey has to absorb the requirements of an even more centralized Europe. Turkey has to reconcile its concept of sovereignty with that of the EU in the coming years.

It is an undeniable fact that membership in the EU transforms sovereignty. In the official website of the Union it is indicated that “in accepting the European Treaties, Member States relinquish a measure of sovereignty to independent institutions representing national and shared interests.”³⁵ Membership in the EU, however, will have a two-fold effect on Turkey.

As indicated earlier, there is a two dimensional sovereignty culture emerging in the EU: micro-regionalism and supra-nationalism. In other words, “while the European integration melts sovereign states into a supranational entity, ethnic and cultural characteristics are emphasized.”³⁶ That is to say, while the authority of the nation state within its own territory diminishes, those of the localities increase in its stead. The question to be asked here is whether the Turkish elites trapped in the Sevres Syndrome can cope with the granting more authority to local administrations and recognize the social, cultural and ethnic rights of different ethnic communities within its borders. These trends within the EU apparently clash with the basic credentials of the unitary character of the Turkish republic and its state-base definition of national sovereignty.

Therefore, the basic problem seems to stem from the domestic realm in line with the entrenched security culture of Turkey, which was formed during the first years of the Republic in line with the Kemalist principles. Viewing these principles as a taboo, which should not be

³⁵ Quoted in Hasan Kösebalaban, “Turkey's EU Membership: A Clash of Security Cultures” in note 17, p. 140.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.140

touched upon or developed, the Turkish elite seems to be locked in a vicious circle. The debate within Turkey, therefore, should not be based on the concept of sovereignty but on the basics of Kemalism. Only if the elites in Turkey become aware of the fact that the Kemalist principles are the responses that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk found to respond to the necessities of that specific time period can they get rid of this syndrome and its accompanying historical reflex. Again, only then can Turkey finally achieve a common identification of Europe, forget the days of defensive modernization, and look into a European future.

All in all, the analysis of the Turkish patterns of sovereignty sharing in the context of its accession process to the NATO and ESDP, and Customs Union indicates that the Turkish political elites have a relatively positive attitude towards external security and trade issue areas. On a positive note, there also seems to be a learning process carrying over from the external issue areas to the domestic domain, indicated by more relaxed attitude in the domestic realm since the Helsinki Summit of 1999 presumably opening the doors of the EU to Turkey.