

Turkish Modernisation and Challenges For The New Europe

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Abstract

The Europeanisation process that Turkey has been undergoing, under a more credible set of incentives from the EU since 1999, has been helping to transform the country's economy, the nature of the democratic regime and foreign policy behaviour. These transformations, coupled with the forces that are gradually paving the way for a process of political liberalisation if not democratisation in much of the Islamic world, are in the long run, likely to increase the relevance of the Turkish experiment. This is in the context of a changed global environment, where the impact of cross-cultural dialogue and co-operation is recognised as having particular value for global peace and security. At the same time there are questions concerning the key issue of whether New Europe itself will have the capacity to accommodate the more Europeanised Turkey into her orbit. Europe has been helping Turkey to transform in recent years. However, the transformation of Turkey and her stronger claims for membership on that basis will not necessarily generate a stable equilibrium in Turkey-EU relations. Indeed, the process whereby Turkey moves closer to the heart of Europe, will contribute to the on-going debate about Europe's own future - involving her identity, her borders, the depth of integration and the degree of inward or outward-orientation.

Introduction

From a comparative standpoint, Turkey provides an interesting case for studying alternative paths to modernity. The irony of the Turkish experience is that Turkish elites have unambiguously adopted the west as their reference point, and modernisation has typically been interpreted as being identical to westernisation. Developing close, organic relations with Europe was a natural corollary of this style of modernisation. Westernisation, in the Turkish context, meant a commitment to reach not only the standards of economic, scientific and technological development of the west but to establish a secular and democratic political order. Yet, the process of top-down modernisation that Turkey experienced has created tensions not only domestically within a predominantly Muslim society, but also in her encounters with Europe. Turkey's long-standing aspiration to become part of Europe has been the source of a tense relationship, creating divisions and conflicts not only within

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Turkey but also within Europe. During the successive waves of enlargement of the European Community - more recently the European Union - there has not been a case comparable to Turkey that has generated heated debate about the nature of European identity and the very boundaries of modern Europe. Turkey was a rather unique case which appeared to differ from the core of Europe in civilisational terms, but at the same time wished to develop strong relations with Europe. In spite of the rather unusual tensions underlying this relationship, which were present on both sides, a dense set of interactions with primary emphasis on the economic dimension, developed over successive decades. The nature of this relationship however, was not sufficiently strong to create a far-reaching impact on the Turkish economy and Turkish democracy, the kind of impact that countries like Spain, Portugal and Greece experienced during the course of the 1980s and the 1990s. More recently following the key decision by the EU to provide formal endorsement to Turkey's claims for full-membership, the impact of the Europeanisation process on Turkey has been quite phenomenal. Although the process cannot be explained simply on the basis of a changing set of external dynamics, nevertheless, there is no doubt that the more credible commitments made by the EU have rendered the adoption of the Copenhagen criteria a powerful mechanism for transforming the Turkish economy as well as Turkish democracy and foreign policy behaviour.

What is interesting is that the relationship during this recent era has been taking a bi-directional form. As Turkey increasingly approached European norms, the relevance of the 21st Century Turkish Model, as a model of a secular, multi-cultural society appeared to increase, particularly in the novel global context of the post September 11 era, during which cross-civilisational dialogue was perceived by European or western elites as being all the more imperative for global peace and security. Whilst Europe has been helping to transform Turkey, Turkey's active inclusion in the future of Europe, will have influence on the future shape of Europe itself, particularly in relation to questions such as whether Europe will have the ability to establish a genuinely multi-cultural society and whether it will be able to play the role of a global actor, influencing developments in the Middle East, and in other parts of the world. Whilst Turkey-EU relations have been moving on a new trajectory in recent years, the relationship is still in flux. Hence, even if the EU decides to open up accession negotiations after December 2004, the debate surrounding integration with Turkey is likely to remain a source of conflict and active debate for many years to come.

Turkish Modernisation and the European Union: A Historical Perspective

The Kemalist or republican model of modernisation in twentieth century Turkey had a number of important achievements to its credit.¹ It was able to accomplish significant industrialisation and economic development. Through its hyper-secularism, it was able to exclude the alternative, the Islamic political order, in a predominantly Muslim society. Certainly, the progressively more moderate course that the Islamists have been adopting in Turkey in recent years reflects, in part, the impact of the Kemalist modernisation project with its strong emphasis on the principle of secularism. Within the broad parameters of this modernisation project, Turkey was able to make a transition to a democratic political order in the immediate post-war period. The key institutions of representative democracy have been established and despite periodic breakdowns and military interludes, parliamentary democracy has remained the norm throughout the post-war period. In comparative terms, this constitutes a considerable achievement, judged by the standards of countries in other parts of the world, notably in Latin America, East Asia and Eastern Europe at similar stages of economic development.

By the 1990s, however, the Turkish model of modernisation had reached a certain impasse. On the economic front, development had occurred over time; but the pace of development was not enough to produce a dramatic increase in living standards that would produce rapid convergence to western European norms over a short space of time. Turkey experienced a dualistic pattern of economic growth involving a co-existence of rich regions, with substantial pockets of poverty in the presence of rapid population growth. On the political front, the existing democratic order increasingly failed to accommodate societal demands for greater recognition and participation. The combination of hyper-nationalism and hyper-secularism on which the Kemalist modernisation project was based effectively excluded significant segments of Turkish society from active engagement in the formal political arena. A rigid interpretation of the principles of secularism and national identity limited its capacity to incorporate the demands of groups that wished to extend the boundaries of the political arena on the grounds of religious and ethnic identity. Hence, by the end of the 1990s, Turkish modernisation was confronted with two major challenges. First, there was a need to reform the "soft state" in the economic realm so that economic development could proceed more rapidly and equitably without costly crises and interruptions. Secondly, there was a demand to reform the "hard state" in the political realm, creating a space for political opening

¹ On the "Kemalist" or the "Republican" model of modernisation in Turkey, see Şerif Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1994; also Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1997.

for those groups that favoured an extension of religious freedoms or the practice of their minority rights within the broad parameters of a secular and unitary nation state.

In the Kemalist modernisation project, modernisation and westernisation were largely synonymous terms. In this context, developing close relations with Europe was a natural counterpart of the broader project of westernisation. Indeed, Turkey was one of the countries that tried to become involved with the formal process of European integration, right from its formative stages, becoming an associate member in 1963. The depth of the relationship which developed during the period 1963-1999, until the time when Turkey was formally recognised as a candidate for full-membership, should not be underestimated. Important trade and investment links were forged between Turkey and the Community, culminating in the signing of the Customs Union Agreement, which became effective at the end of 1995. There is no doubt that the strong links which developed in the economic realm had a counterpart in the political sphere. The ultimate interest of Turkish elites in full membership of the Community also had a conditioning effect on Turkish democracy. Arguably, the presence of the European anchor was one of the factors that kept the periodic military interludes in Turkey brief by Latin American standards.

Nevertheless, a central point to emphasise is that the type of relationship which developed between Turkey and Europe between 1963 and 1999 was not sufficiently deep or powerful enough to make a dramatic impact on the Turkish economy or Turkish democracy. The European elites during this period wanted to maintain an arm's length relationship with Turkey, focusing their attention on the economic side of the relationship. Whilst the prospect of eventual full-membership of the European Union was not ruled out completely, the European elites were reluctant to offer Turkey a firm prospect of full-membership. Their negative attitude appeared to rest on a number of different considerations, ranging from the country's size, level of development and religion as well as its failure to conform to European norms of democracy and human rights.² The willingness of the European Union to accommodate the membership demands of eastern European countries, recently freed from a long period of communist rule, whilst setting aside the membership claims of Turkey to some unspecified date in the future, rendered the relationship between Turkey and Europe increasingly tense during the course of the 1990s.

² For an elaboration of these points see Ziya Öniş, "An Awkward Partnership: Turkey's Relations with the European Union in Comparative-Historical Perspective," *Journal of European Integration History* 7, 13, Spring 2001, pp. 105-121. For a detailed historical survey of Turkey-EU relations, see Meltem Müftüleri-Baç, *Turkey's Relation with A Changing Europe*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1997.

This cursory historical survey allows one to make the following generalisations. First, potential Turkish membership raised the kind of fundamental questions over the nature and boundaries of European identity that were not present at the time when entry of the eastern European countries was being considered. Second, the ability of the European Union to accomplish a dramatic transformation in improving the economies and the democratic credentials of countries located on her periphery, tended to be rather limited, if a firm prospect of early membership was not provided in the first place. In the absence of such a commitment, the EU anchor for domestic, political and economic change, loses its credibility, strengthening the hand of the anti-reform coalition in the process.³ There is no doubt that the EU, with its growing emphasis on the quality of democracy and human rights standards, was consciously trying to generate both economic and political change in Turkey throughout the 1990s. However, EU conditionality was not sufficiently powerful or credible to generate the kind of outcome desired. In other words, the mix of conditions and incentives that accompanied the signing of the Customs Union agreement, without the definitive prospect of full-membership, was much less favourable to Turkey compared with her eastern European counterparts. This, in turn, was not enough to engineer the kind of large-scale shock to tilt the balance of power within Turkish society, effectively away from anti-reform forces, in the direction of the pro-reform coalition. Consequently, the 1990s was a period of intense turmoil in Turkey in both the economic and political spheres, a period characterised by economic instability, Islamic insurgency and violent ethnic conflict. Turkey's encounters with Europe during this period were important, but not sufficiently strong enough to help resolve these deep-seated problems and tensions in a relatively smooth manner.

The Transformative Impact of the EU on Turkish Modernisation: The Post-Helsinki Context

Turkey's relations with the EU took a radically different turn following the Helsinki Summit of 1999. The fact that Turkey was given formal candidate status in Helsinki had a dramatic impact in terms of increasing the credibility of EU conditionality in the minds of both the policy-making elites and the public at large. The improved mix of incentives and conditions, in turn, was instrumental in accelerating the reform process in both the economic and political spheres. Consequently, Turkey experienced an unprecedented degree of democratic opening

³ See in this context Frank Schimmelfennig, "Costs, Commitment and Compliance: The Impact of EU Democratic Conditionality on Latvia, Slovakia and Turkey," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41, 3, June 2003, pp. 495-518; Mehmet Uğur, *The European Union and Turkey: An Anchor/Credibility Dilemma*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999 and Paul Kubicek "Turkish Accession to the EU in Comparative Perspective," St. Anthony's College Oxford, Occasional Paper, No.1/04, May 2004.

up, over a relatively short space of time, notably between 2002 and 2004. These reforms, though by no means complete, have initiated a process whereby Turkey has been able to make significant progress in terms of consolidating its democracy and achieving a genuinely open, pluralistic and multi-cultural political order. Reforms have been particularly striking in key areas such as human rights, the protection of minorities, improvement of the judicial system and the role of the military. Within the broad area of human rights, significant progress has been achieved in the fight against torture and ill-treatment in prisons, freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly and association. Within the domain of minority protection, important strides have been made in terms of extending cultural rights for the Kurds as well as non-Muslim minorities. More recently, changes have been taking place which have the potential to radically alter the military-civilian balance in Turkish society.⁴

The fact that the membership option became far more credible after 1999 contributed to a process whereby the pro-reform or the pro-EU coalition, became increasingly stronger and more vocal in Turkish politics. The pro-EU coalition, meaning groups in Turkish society which not only favoured EU membership as an abstract idea in itself but also displayed a strong commitment to undertake reform, had already gathered momentum during the course of the 1990s. Civil society organisations rather than political parties have emerged as the forerunners of the pro-EU coalition, and within civil society itself, business-based civil society organisations have played a particularly active role.⁵ After the Helsinki decision, civil initiatives became much more pronounced. Indeed, the very base of the pro-EU coalition became increasingly broader and included key segments of state bureaucracy. The Europeanisation process in Turkey during the 1990s, had produced a rift between state and business elites. The Europeanisation process in Turkey after 1999, however, helped to create major divisions within the Turkish state itself, helping to tilt the balance in favour of the pro-EU coalition. It is quite striking that the main agents of the political order, namely political parties, have joined the queue with a certain time lag. One of the paradoxical features of the Turkish experience after 1999 was that the coalition government in power during the 1999-2002 era, dominated as it was by two highly nationalistic parties on the

⁴ For the details of the reform initiatives see Senem Aydin and Fuat Keyman, "European Integration and the Transformation of Turkish Democracy," Centre for European Policy Studies, EU-Turkey Working Papers, no. 2, August 2004.

⁵ Perhaps the most influential organisation in this respect was TÜSIAD, the association that represented the interests of big business in Turkey. TÜSIAD published a report outlining a blue-print for democratic reforms notably with respect to the extension of minority rights in 1997 which generated considerable controversy and generated critical reaction from key sections of the state establishment. Bülent Tanör, Perspectives on Democratisation in Turkey, TÜSIAD Reports, TY/171/1997 (January 1997), available at: <<http://www.tusiad.org/english/rapor/demokratik/index.html>> (02.09.2004) Other major business associations such as MUSIAD, representative of "Islamic Business" in Turkey followed TUSIAD's lead towards the end of the decade.

left and the right of the political spectrum, was actually quite lukewarm in its approach towards the EU related reform agenda.⁶ Nevertheless, given the magnetism of the EU, the coalition government was not able to swim against the tide, and at the end of the day, it was responsible for some of the most far-reaching reforms in Turkish history.⁷ It was only after the elections of November 2002, however, that the dominant political force of the new era, the Justice and Development Party (the AKP), was able to take over the leadership role in the pro-EU coalition.

The dynamic process initiated by the Helsinki decision also helped to diminish the power and resilience of the Euro-sceptic elements or, stated somewhat differently, the anti-EU coalition, in Turkish society. The term Euro-sceptic or anti-EU coalition, embodies a specific meaning in the Turkish context. It refers to those segments of the state, society, or the party system that are not against the idea of EU membership in principle, but nevertheless, are against the implementation of key components of the Copenhagen criteria (such as education and broadcasting in Kurdish language) on the grounds that such reforms would undermine national sovereignty, leading to the break-up of the Turkish state.⁸ In retrospect, a series of unexpected shocks have helped this process to accelerate at a speed that would not otherwise have been the case. For example, the major economic crisis that Turkey experienced in November 2000 and in February 2001 had a major unintended consequence in terms of changing the balance of power quite drastically in favour of the pro-EU coalition.⁹ Given the magnitude of the crisis, which created a massive wave of unemployment and bankruptcies, hitting all sections of society, the potential material benefits of EU membership were rendered all the more attractive.¹⁰ Furthermore, following the economic crisis, key domestic economic actors as well as the international financial community, placed even greater

⁶ The parties concerned were left-nationalist, the Democratic Left Party (the DSP) and the ultra-nationalist, The Nationalist Action Party (the MHP).

⁷ A fair assessment has to point out the minor member of the coalition government, the Motherland Party (the ANAP) was quite vocal in its support for the reform process. This particular party could, therefore, be considered as the first major political party in Turkey during the recent era that actually established itself as an active member of the pro-EU coalition.

⁸ On the nature and depth of Euro-skepticism in Turkish society see Gamze Avcı "Turkish Political Parties and the EU discourse in the post-Helsinki period: a case of Europeanisation," in Mehmet Uğur and Nergis Canefe, *Turkey and European Integration: Accession Prospects and Issues*, London and New York, Routledge, 2004 and Hakan Yılmaz, "Euro-skepticism in Turkey" paper presented at the Johns Hopkins University Bologna Centre, Second Pan-European Conference 24-26 June 2004. The term "soft Euro-sceptics" is better characterisation of the dominant form of Euro-skepticism in the Turkish setting. These elements are quite receptive to the idea of Turkey's integration with Europe on the grounds of modernisation and Westernisation; yet, what they actually desire is a form of integration on their own terms which essentially means integration without reform.

⁹ On the origins and nature of the economic crises in 2000 and 2001, see the collection of essays in Ziya Öniş and Barry Rubin, *The Turkish Economy in Crisis*, London, Frank Cass Publishers, 2003.

¹⁰ Opinion polls indicate that 74 percent of the Turkish public are in favour of EU membership. The main motivation for this appears to be pragmatic considerations relating to higher living standards. For evidence, see Ali Çarkoğlu, "Who wants Full Membership? : Characteristics of Turkish Public Support for EU Membership," in Ali Çarkoğlu, Barry Rubin, *Turkey and European Union: Domestic Politics, Economic Integration and International Dynamics*, London, Frank Cass Publishers, 2003.

emphasis than before on the need for a permanent EU anchor, as opposed to simply relying on temporary IMF discipline, to establish durable economic growth and prevent future financial crises. Consequently, the behaviour of market participants increasingly depended on the country's ability to undertake EU-related reforms, on both the economic and political fronts. It was perhaps ironic, that the periodic reports of key international banks or financial institutions, focused on political developments and the implementation of the political component of the Copenhagen criteria, as a means of interpreting the current state of the Turkish economy and conveying information to potential investors. In this kind of environment, key elements of the anti-EU coalition found themselves in a highly defensive position.

The next key turning point in this dynamic process was the War in Iraq. Previously the military-security establishment in Turkey, a key segment of the anti-EU coalition, had often perceived the US-Israel-Turkey triangle as an alternative line of axis to the EU, being rather unreceptive to some key political reforms proposed by the EU.¹¹ However, the deterioration of relations with the United States, following the failure of the Turkish Parliament to endorse the decision to permit the passage of American troops across the Turkish border into Iraq, helped weaken significantly, if not to undermine completely, the long standing strategic alliance linking Turkey to the United States. Turkey's decision to abstain from the war effort and also not allow the passage of American troops across her border had the unintended repercussion of bringing Turkey closer to Europe and notably to the position held by the core Franco-German alliance.¹² With the United States firmly based in the Middle East, the military was no longer in a position to intervene in Northern Iraq, on the grounds that this represented a major security threat. This chain of events had the impact of changing the balance of power in Turkish politics in favour of civilian elements. This, in turn, paved the way for a number of important changes, centring on the status of the military in Turkish politics, involving limitations on the powers of the National Security Council and controls over defence expenditures.¹³ The military-security establishment has been undergoing a learning process during the recent era, like other key actors in Turkish

¹¹ "The Sevres Syndrome" is an appropriate way to characterise the behaviour of the state elites that formed a key component of the Euro-sceptic coalition. This was based on a fear, historically conditioned by the memories of the post World War environment that Turkey found itself in, some of the key political reforms imposed by the EU would necessarily undermine the essential unity, leading to the break-up of the Turkish state. For a detailed discussion of, this issue see Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey," in Stelios Starvidis, Theodore Coulombis, Thanos Veremis and Neville Waites, *The Foreign Policies of the European Union's Mediterranean States and Applicant Countries in the 1990s*, London, Macmillan Press, 1999.

¹² For a further elaboration of this argument, see Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz "Turkey-EU-US Triangle in Perspective: Transformation or Continuity?" . *Middle East Journal* (2005, forthcoming), available at: <http://home.ku.edu.tr/~zonis/publications.htm>

¹³ For the details of this process see Aydin and Keyman, "European Integration and the Transformation of Turkish Democracy."

politics. As a result of this, it has been progressively shedding its hard-liner posture and adopting a more favourable pro-European stance. This is clearly a novel phenomenon and has also been very much in evidence in the relatively passive or neutral approach that the military elites have adopted in regard to Cyprus, a position that is in sharp contrast to their heavily nationalistic attitude of the past. At this point, it might be too early to conclude that the military has undergone a complete transformation. Certainly, there is a strong line of continuity with the past, notably with respect to the single-minded commitment to the principle of secularism. Furthermore, developments concerning the Kurdish and Cyprus issues continue to be approached with considerable caution and reservation. In spite of these qualifications, it is fair to say, that the military in Turkey has been changing in such a way, that it no longer makes sense to place it firmly within the Euro-sceptic camp.

It is perhaps not that surprising, that these dramatic and unexpected developments on Turkey's domestic front, have helped to add another dimension to post-Helsinki dynamics. Opinions in Europe regarding Turkish membership started to alter. In the same way that the pro-EU coalition has been strengthening in Turkey, the pro-Turkey coalition in Europe has also been gathering momentum. Key elements of European society, which have historically viewed Turkish membership with concern, for quite different reasons, ranging from cultural arguments to its failure to conform to democratic norms, have gradually become more receptive to the idea of Turkish membership. Hence, one can detect the development of a virtuous circle whereby more powerful and credible signals from the EU have helped to accelerate the reform process in Turkey. The very pace and intensity of the reform effort in Turkey, has in turn helped to reshape elite opinion in Europe towards the desirability of Turkish membership.

The Turkish Alternative to Christian Democracy in Europe - The Importance of the AKP Experience

The emergence of the Justice and Development Party (the AKP) as the dominant force in Turkish politics in the elections of November 2002 represented yet another landmark in Turkey-EU relations.¹⁴ From a comparative perspective, what rendered the AKP experiment interesting was that it was a new party with strong Islamist roots, but nevertheless far more moderate and centrist in terms of outlook compared with its predecessors. Even more interesting, was the fact that the party presented itself as an active and vocal supporter of EU membership. Indeed,

¹⁴ On the elections of November 2002 and the rise of the AKP, see Ziya Öniş and Fuat Keyman "A New Path Emerges" *Journal of Democracy*, 14, 2, 2003, pp. 95-108; and Ali Carkoglu, "Turkey's November 2002 Elections: A New Beginning?" *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 64, December 2002.

the party in office pursued the EU related reform agenda with a far greater degree of consistency and commitment than the previous coalition government. It is fair to argue, therefore, that the AKP established itself as the dominant component of the pro-EU coalition after November 2002. The degree of commitment displayed by the party to the EU related reform agenda was also important in terms of contributing towards the development of a sizable pro-Turkey coalition within the European Union itself.

The AKP itself is a strange, hybrid political formation. The fact that key leaders of the party, as well as its core electoral support, have been associated with the Islamist parties of the past, resulted in considerable scepticism on the part of secular segments of the Turkish state and society as well as the broader international community in the immediate aftermath of the elections of November 2002. Nevertheless, it became quite clear after a while that the party was far more moderate in outlook when judged by the standards of its predecessors. From a social science perspective, it is hard to locate the party on the conventional left-right political axis. There is no doubt that a strong conservative streak exists in the party's make-up, with a major emphasis on religion, morals and the need to preserve traditional values. The conservatism of the party manifests itself rather vividly in issues relating to women's rights and gender equality. Indeed, the party's own self-description is that of "conservative democrats" identifying a close affinity in the process with their Christian democratic counterparts in western Europe.¹⁵ Furthermore, the electoral base of the party is made up of a cross-class coalition that includes small and medium sized enterprises as significant beneficiaries of the neo-liberal globalisation process. The fact that business is an important component of the party's electoral base is another attribute that naturally leads many commentators to interpret the party as a party of the centre-right.

At the same time, however, it is possible to identify certain parallels between the AKP and the third way style, European social democratic parties, given the party's apparent commitment to the principles and values of multi-culturalism, social justice and a properly regulated market economy.¹⁶ A benign view of the AKP is that it is a party committed to multi-culturalism, at least in the narrow sense, that one of its objectives is to extend the boundaries of religious freedom and encourage religious diversity as opposed to challenging the notion of secularism itself. At the same time, the party appears to pay more attention to social justice and

¹⁵ On the ideological make-up of the AKP and the concept of "conservative democracy" see Yalçın Akdoğan, "AK Parti ve Muhafazakar Demokrasi," available at <http://www.akparti.org.tr/muhazafakar.doc>

¹⁶ For a detailed elaboration of this point see Fuat Keyman and Ziya Öniş, "Globalization, Social Democracy and the Third Way: Paradoxes of the Turkish Experience," available at: <http://home.ku.edu.tr/~zonis/publications.htm>.

the plight of the poorest, compared with its rivals, although what it can actually accomplish in this sphere is severely limited by the financial disciplines imposed through the IMF programme that the country has been applying in recent years. It is also important to take into account that social democratic parties of recent vintage are typically based on a cross-class electoral alliance, of which small and medium-sized businesses constitute a key component.

What is striking in the present context is that the AKP has effectively captured the ground which was previously occupied by both the centre-right and the centre-left parties in Turkish politics. There is no doubt that the major economic crisis that Turkey experienced had a devastating impact on the electoral fortunes of the established political parties. Hence, the AKP as a novel hybrid formation with a cross-class electoral appeal, representing a unique synthesis of reformism and conservatism, was able to capitalise on the failures of the previous parties in office. In office, the party was able to consolidate its power and popularity, both in domestic and international circles, even further by displaying a mixture of pragmatism in implementing fiscal discipline and economic reforms and radicalism in implementing EU related political reforms. The result was a mixture of economic recovery and a further opening of the political arena for democratic participation in Turkey. Admittedly, the favourable pattern described had started earlier; but, the AKP by accelerating the momentum of this process, was able to capture much of the credit in a way that increasingly enhanced its electoral dominance, marginalising the opposition parties of the both the right and the left in the process.

In addition to important initiatives undertaken on the economic and the democratisation fronts, the AKP government displayed a significant shift of foreign policy behaviour away from a hard-line nationalistic stance towards a more balanced and pragmatic approach. This was clearly evident in the government approach to the Cyprus problem, which has constituted a long-standing obstacle to Turkey's aspirations for EU membership. The AKP government was effectively the first government that welcomed a compromise solution which would bring the dispute to a peaceful conclusion. Similar forms of balanced foreign policy behaviour were displayed with respect to the Iraq War and relations with the United States as well as relations with Israel and the Arab World. Relations with all neighbouring countries continued to improve. Clearly, Turkey during this period, in line with the process of democratisation at home, started to make a transition from a coercive to a benign regional power, effectively countering the criticisms that

Turkey would be more of a security liability than a security asset for Europe, in the process.¹⁷

Putting the AKP experiment in a broader context, what is striking is that Turkey's Islamic identity had been cited as a source of difference, providing an argument for exclusion from the European Union. The typical line of argument, based on a Huntington style, strong east versus west dichotomy, was that Turkey's true Islamic identity would be lost through the process of closer integration with Europe.¹⁸ The recent experience creates a sharp contrast with this line of reasoning in the sense that a party, with a moderate Islamist orientation, has been the key political force in bringing secular Turkey closer to the centre of the European project. Indeed, one is able to uncover an underlying paradox here: the moderate Islamists in Turkey have seen the importance of EU membership for Turkey as a means of consolidating and solidifying their own position against possible threats from the hyper-secularism of the established state elites as well as key sections of Turkish society, helping to expand the boundaries of religious freedom in the process. Hence, European integration, in a rather unexpected fashion, became a mechanism for preserving Turkey's Islamic identity and making it more compatible with a secular, democratic and pluralistic political order.

Having gone through a process of radical reforms and having experienced the paradoxical era of the early years of the AKP government, one is perhaps on more secure grounds to claim that the Turkish synthesis of secularism and democracy, in a predominantly Muslim setting, can offer a credible alternative to the rest of the Muslim world. An obvious qualification is called for in the sense that the secularism versus Islam divide, and the debate involving the boundaries of secularism, are far from being settled issues in Turkey. Moreover, in spite of the AKP's alleged moderate credentials, there still exists a major problem of trust in Turkish society, and significant elements both within the state and the society at large, continue to view the party's moderate image with considerable suspicion. Indeed, any attempts to advance identity claims, such as the wearing of head-scarves by women in public spaces generates major tensions and resistance, as a consequence of which, the government has by and large, sidelined these issues to the background in order to avoid serious conflict.¹⁹ Perhaps, it's fair to say that, in

¹⁷ For the argument suggesting that given Turkey's problematic relations with her neighbors, Turkey would be more of a security liability for the EU, see Dietrich Jung, "Securitisising European Integration: Turkey and the EU," in Stephano Guzzini and Dietrich Jung, *Contemporary Security Analysis and Copenhagen Peace Research*, London and New York, Routledge, 2004.

¹⁸ See Barry Buzan and Thomas Diez: "Turkey and the European Union," *Survival*, 41, 1, 1999, pp. 41-57 for this line of logic. What is rather ironic is that this kind of argument has also been advanced by those who would normally be placed on the centre-left of the political spectrum. To be fair, Thomas Diez has recently changed his views on this issue. See Thomas Diez and Bahar Rumelili, "Turkey and the EU: Open the Door," *The World Today*, 60, 8/9, August-September 2004, p.33-35.

¹⁹ The only exception to this has been the introduction of the higher education bill an important element of which was the extension of the opportunities offered to religious secondary schools during May 2004. However, this proposal was shelved following fierce resistance.

spite of certain initial reservations, the international community has been far more receptive to the AKP government, whereas serious divisions continue to exist within the domestic sphere.

What is also critical in this context is that while the European Union places a very high premium on secularism, it does not offer a single blueprint for concrete practice. Indeed, within the European Union there exists a variety of national models concerning the translation of the principle of secularism to actual implementation. Hence, the EU has helped to push Islamists in Turkey in a more moderate direction by restricting the space within which they could operate. However, this does not mean that EU membership alone will be able to resolve completely the secularism-Islam divide in the Turkish context. One would expect that this issue is likely to be an important and lively source of public debate and contestation both in Turkey and in Europe over the coming years.

Challenges Posed by Turkish Membership for "the New Europe" in the Post 9/11 Global Order

At the time when the critical decision concerning Turkey's candidacy was taken in the Helsinki Summit of December 1999, the actual membership of Turkey looked a rather distant prospect. The European leaders could safely ignore the thorny questions that potential Turkish membership would entail for the future of Europe, based on the assumption that it would take Turkey many years to accomplish the demanding set of political and economic reforms. The unexpectedly rapid pace of the reform process in Turkey meant, however, that the questions and challenges to the future of Europe itself, posed by Turkish membership, could no longer be postponed. Indeed, the EU's Copenhagen Summit of December 2002, marked an important turning point in this respect. From that point onwards, the issue of how Turkey would be accommodated as a potential member of the EU, became a concrete source of debate within European policy-making circles. What is interesting in this context is that Huntingtonian logic has been effectively turned upside down. The prospect of EU membership has helped to narrow down the existing divisions within Turkish society, whilst at the same time helping to accentuate the underlying divisions and tensions within Europe itself. It also became increasingly apparent that the key issue at stake was not the question of Turkish membership per se but the future shape of the European Union itself.

To be more precise, the question of Turkish membership has helped to bring to the forefront a number of overlapping divisions in Europe, divisions which have increasingly come to the surface as the reform process in Turkey has gathered momentum and Turkey's claims for membership could no longer be set aside on an

indefinite basis (Table 1). One of these divisions centred on the left-right axis and involved the conflict between the social democratic parties of the third way on the left, and the Christian democrats on the right, concerning the future shape of the European project. Turkish membership appeared to make much more sense for most, if not all social democrats, given their vision of a multi-cultural Europe, as long as an essential pre-condition was satisfied, the pre-condition that Turkey conformed to European norms of democracy and human rights. It was perhaps not a coincidence that Turkish governments in the past, encountered greater difficulties in their dealings with the European social democrats, for the simple reason that the state elites in Turkey were unwilling to undertake the kind of political reforms that would enlarge the boundaries of political participation, on the grounds that such reforms would undermine the very basis of national sovereignty. The Christian Democrats, with their differing vision of the European project as an essentially civilisation project based on a common history, religion and culture with rather definitive boundaries, naturally preferred to adopt an arms length approach to Turkey. From a Christian democratic perspective, Turkey was an important country with which economic and security links could be developed, but these links would lead to a loose set of relationships, falling considerably short of full membership. This kind of vision, with Europe considered as a Christian club with precise boundaries, clearly meant that Turkey would be an important outsider rather than a natural insider, in the European integration process. Fortunately, from the Turkish point of view, the balance of political forces in Europe, with a clear swing in favour of social democrats, was an important factor in itself in securing Turkish candidacy in 1999.

Yet another major line of division concerns the differences between the various nation states that constitute the EU. The key dividing element in this context is whether the EU will evolve in the direction of a comparatively loose collection of relatively autonomous states, or in the opposite direction of a highly coherent supranational entity, where the nation states have effectively delegated a major component of their autonomous powers to key Brussels institutions. It is a well-known fact that a number of countries in Europe led, by Britain and the Scandinavian countries favour the first path. The eastern European newcomers to the Union in May 2004 also subscribe to a similar vision of a comparatively loose, intergovernmental Europe. In contrast, another group of countries led by the core Franco-German alliance, which has historically played a critical role in the simultaneous strengthening and widening of the European integration process, prefers to see the development of even stronger ties, resulting in the creation of a genuinely supra-national entity. Again, it is no surprise to observe that potential Turkish membership conforms rather closely to the underlying vision of the first group. Indeed, Britain has emerged as a strong and vocal supporter of Turkish

membership in recent years. This support not only reflects basic economic interests but also the dominant vision in Britain concerning the future shape of Europe itself. What is also striking is that these sharply contrasting visions of the future shape of Europe have become even more pronounced following the tragic events of September 11, the subsequent American unilateralism and the war on Iraq. The divisions between the two camps have intensified as the group led by Britain, Spain and the new eastern European members favoured an independent line of foreign policy, with a strong emphasis on the continuation of the transatlantic alliance at all costs, whereas the core Franco-German alliance took an extremely critical position against the unilateral intervention by the US in Iraq, in a way that effectively by-passed the support of multilateral institutions and the international

Table 1: Divisions within Europe on the Question of Turkish Membership

Lines of Division	Nature of the Overlapping Division
Broad Competing Visions of Europe's Future	An important line of division concerns the view of those that regard Europe as a culturally bounded project and those that view Europe as a broader political project. The natural corollary of this distinction is that the first group sees Europe as a primarily inward oriented entity, whereas the latter has a vision of Europe as an outward-oriented global actor. These competing visions are related to the left axes of the political spectrum. The centre left, with their vision of Europe as a political project, is on the whole more receptive to Turkish membership. Nevertheless, these competing visions concerning the nature of the European project are more encompassing and extend well beyond the confines of the traditional left-right divide.
The Left and Right Axes of the Political Spectrum	Centre-left parties, with their multi-culturalist orientation, have a more positive view of Turkish membership, provided that Turkey was willing to undertake deep-seated reforms to conform to European norms of democracy and human rights. Christian Democrats, on the other hand, tend to conceive Turkey as an important outsider rather than a natural insider, favouring the granting of special status rather than full-membership. The rift between the left and the right has opened up further as Turkey has been able to conform to key elements of the Copenhagen criteria.

<p>Individual Member States</p>	<p>Countries that favour a looser European Union with considerable space for the exercise of national sovereignty tend to view Turkish membership in a more favourable light. Countries that fall into this category, such as Britain and the new eastern European members, also favour a closer link with the United States for historical reasons. Turkish membership is also attractive in this respect given the strong strategic and security links that tie Turkey to the United States. Countries that favour deeper integration as well as a more independent stance towards United States foreign policy, such as the core Franco-German alliance, tended to be more sceptical about Turkish membership. Nevertheless, the divisions between the two sides have been blurred with the Iraq War, with the position adopted by Turkey with respect to the US, bringing her closer to the position of the core Franco-German alliance.</p>
<p>Small versus Big States</p>	<p>No clear line of demarcation can be identified. However, both sets of countries have their own set of reservations concerning Turkish membership. Indeed, this emerged as a major issue in the European Parliamentary elections of June 2004. Big countries are concerned about the possibility of mass migration, over-representation in key community institutions and the disproportionate demands that Turkish membership will pose for the Community's redistributive funds. Some of the countries in this group, such as Germany, are key recipients of migrants and providers of resources for the community budget; others, like Poland, will find themselves in competition with Turkey for the Community's redistributive funds. Small countries have the additional reservation that Turkey's entry will tilt the balance of power and decision-making in the Community even further in the direction of the larger countries</p>
<p>Community Institutions versus the Individual Nation States</p>	<p>Turkish membership constitutes an important test of the strength of the supra-national institutions such as the European Commission and the overall inter-governmental versus supra-national balance within the Union itself. For example, if the European Council overrules a favourable decision by the Commission and fails to open up accession negotiations with Turkey, this will have implications for the relative power and effectiveness of supra-national institutions such as the Commission.</p>
<p>Elites versus Individual Citizens</p>	<p>In the current conjuncture, the key decision-making elites have a more favourable view of Turkish membership, whereas individual citizens tend to be more sceptical. This may embody significant repercussions during the course of accession negotiations and the question of Turkish membership may raise broader questions concerning the relative role of elites and individual citizens in defining the future trajectory of Europe.</p>

community. Turkey, with her strong security ties to the United States, was clearly an attractive potential member who would help to increase the weight of the first group of dissidents in the community against the core Franco-German alliance.

In retrospect, the post-September 11 global context has constituted a major turning point in Turkey-EU relations. Certainly, the changing global environment did not eliminate the different voices within Europe concerning the specific path that relations with Turkey ought to take, which, as argued earlier, reflected deeper concerns about the future trajectory of Europe itself. Nevertheless the post-9/11 context was important in gradually swinging the balance in favour of Turkey's inclusion in the Community, at least in the long-run. One of the important ramifications of the tragic events of 9/11 was that peace and security in the global community necessitated closer mutual understanding and dialogue between the west and the Muslim world. In this context, the incorporation of Turkey as a full member acquired a new meaning. There was a growing realisation within Europe that Turkey's inclusion would help to overcome the image of a narrowly based civilisation project - an inward-oriented club of Christian nations - an image which would constitute poor ground for developing not only close relations with the external world, but also in effectively incorporating the sizable Muslim minorities that exist within the European arena itself. Furthermore, Turkey's claims to be a model of secularism and economic development for the rest of the world appeared to rest on much stronger foundations in the current conjuncture, given her newly acquired democratic credentials as part of the rapid Europeanisation process that the country has been going through in recent years.

It is clear, therefore, that the decision taken by the EU in December 2004, over the issue of whether or not to start accession negotiations with Turkey for full-membership, will be an historic one in the sense that it will also be a decision concerning Europe's own future. Critical issues concerning the future of Europe are at stake. For example, does Europe genuinely want to play the role of a global actor pushing in the direction of multilateralism or is the choice about remaining a primarily inward-oriented entity and a secondary or peripheral power in the global context? Similarly, does the European Union want to move in the direction of establishing a genuinely multi-cultural community or not? Clearly, the attitude taken towards Turkey's full-membership in December 2004 will also mean a serious encounter with the deeper challenges that Europe faces regarding her own future trajectory.

Whilst the decision to be taken in December 2004 is critical, one should not necessarily assume that even if a favourable decision for Turkey emerges, the debate revolving around Turkish membership will simply disappear overnight.

Europe is a community of multiple voices. Considerable tensions exist within this community, involving different political movements across the political spectrum, as well as different visions of key nations concerning the future evolution of the union. On top of these considerations, additional lines of division exist concerning the balance of power of large and small countries as well as the relative powers and importance of supranational institutions and individual nation states (Table 1). Finally, there is a growing debate that the European integration project is an elitist construction and the decision-making involving highly sensitive issues such as the monetary union or the future membership of Turkey, an essentially top down process, a process that fails to involve the active participation of citizens.²⁰ These debates are likely to continue in full swing and the issue of Turkish membership is likely to prove to be a battle ground for such debates even if the accession negotiations are initiated in the early months of 2005.

Newcomers from the European Periphery, the Question of European Identity and the future of Europe: The Significance of the Turkish Case in the Light of Polish Membership

Broad, stylised comparisons between Turkey and Poland, a new member of the European Union from her eastern periphery, allows one to put the whole issue of Turkey's EU membership into proper perspective. The Polish experience is interesting in a number of different respects.²¹ The first major lesson to draw from the Polish experience concerns the dramatic impact that the firm prospect of EU membership can make in terms of transforming a society which is in a transitional stage in terms of establishing a market economy and a durable democratic order. Having emerged from a prolonged period of Communist rule, Poland during 1990s was able to make rapid progress on both political and economic fronts. The highly fragile democratic regime of the early 1990s was by and large consolidated by the beginning of the decade. On the economic front, in spite of early difficulties, market oriented reforms proceeded quite swiftly. By the second half of the 1990s, Poland was on the path to rapid economic growth, attracting significant amounts of long-term foreign investment and escaping from the type of costly financial crises that Turkey has experienced. Clearly, the success that Poland experienced on both fronts cannot be simply explained with reference to the role of the EU alone. Nevertheless, most observers agree that the EU, through its early and credible commitments to Poland, and the favourable incentives associated with the implementation of the Copenhagen criteria, was able to induce an extraordinary

²⁰ For a good example of this line of argument, see Loukas Tsoukalis *What kind of Europe?*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003.

²¹ For a systematic comparison see Ziya Öniş "Diverse but Converging Paths to European Union Membership: Poland and Turkey in Comparative Perspective," *East European Politics and Societies* 18, 3, Summer 2004, p.481-512.

process of change over a short period of time.

The Polish experience also raises the broader questions of fairness in the EU's treatment of different countries in her eastern periphery who have the potential to emerge as full-members. There is no doubt that Poland, and countries like Hungary and the Czech Republic for that matter, received better treatment from the EU. The EU was more receptive to accommodating the claims of a country like Poland for full-membership, in spite of the fact that this is also a large country, if not as large as Turkey. The possible negative ramifications of size, such as large scale migration, pressure on community resources and disproportionate impact on the community's representative institutions are also present in the Polish context. Nevertheless, for cultural and historical reasons, the EU was far more prepared to accommodate Poland. Issues such as those concerning Turkey's European identity have not been present in the Polish context. Geo-political considerations, such as creating a secure external border against potential Soviet expansionism, and economic considerations relating to relocation of investment and expansion of markets, also constituted important considerations for the EU. Whilst geopolitics and economics matter, geopolitics alone cannot explain Poland's relatively smooth trajectory to EU membership. Identity considerations were at work. A certain consensus emerged within the Union, that Europe has a certain responsibility to help these countries and facilitate their "return to Europe" process.²²

In contrast to Poland, however, the EU was considerably less receptive to Turkey's accession, in spite of the fact that the formal relationship had extended over a period of decades. Indeed, until very recently, the EU failed to provide credible commitments to Turkey. The signals sent were often ambiguous. The material incentives that accompanied EU conditions, again until recently, were non-existent, making a sharp contrast with the position that Poland found herself in, benefiting significantly from EU resources on the path to EU membership. Unlike Poland, Turkey had, for a long-time, found herself trapped in a vicious circle, where lack of credible commitments and unambiguous signals from the EU helped to strengthen the hand of the anti-reform coalition, blocking the path of economic and political reforms in the process. Only after a significant time-lag, was Turkey able to make a transition to a similar virtuous cycle of reform, democratisation and economic growth. Clearly, a brief illustration of the contrasting paths of Poland and Turkey, two countries at broadly similar stages of economic and political development, raise important questions concerning European identity and the very boundaries of the European integration project.

²² See Elena Jileva, "Do norms Matter?: The Principle of Solidarity and the EU's Eastern Enlargement," *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 7, 2004, p. 3-

Hitherto, the emphasis has been on the transformative impact of the EU on countries of the European periphery, highlighting the benefits that potential members can derive from a process of institutionalised "Europeanisation" on the path to full-membership. However, the line of causality does not simply run from the European core to her eastern periphery. A reverse process is also at work. Large and strategically situated countries like Poland and Turkey will not be influenced by the EU but will necessarily have impact on the future of the EU project itself. Indeed, this has been particularly evident in the case of Poland. Poland has been actively involved in the recent constitutional debates, although she was not allowed to take part in the actual decision making process prior to full-membership in May 2004.²³ Similarly, Poland has been pushing actively to promote a kind of loose European Union, which allows considerable room for national sovereignty on key policy issues. National sovereignty has been a particularly sensitive issue for Poland, given that historically relations with both the Soviet Union and Germany had developed in such a way as to seriously undermine Poland's domain of independent action. Poland has also been one of the promoters of the EU's New Neighbourhood Policy. Moreover, Poland, as well other newcomers from Eastern Europe, place special emphasis on maintaining strong relations with the United States, given the role that the US had in bringing down the communist system. Not surprisingly, therefore, the War on Iraq created a head-on clash between the eastern European newcomers - even before they actually became core members - and the core Franco-German alliance that wished to distance itself from Bush and American unilateralism.

Until now, Turkey, unlike Poland has not been actively involved in the broader European debates. Given her uncertain position with respect to Europe, the primary emphasis was on extending relations, with a view to accelerating the process of domestic reforms. The relationship was conceived mainly in instrumental terms, with the EU contributing to the process of overcoming resistance to politically difficult internal reforms. More recently, however, with Europeanisation in Turkey being well under way, a debate has also started on how Turkey herself could actually contribute to the future direction of Europe and notably to the role that the EU can play as a genuine global actor.²⁴ This debate has been taking place both within Turkey and also within the broader European arena.

²³ For Poland's role and contribution in the debates centreing on the new European Constitution, see Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, "The European Union's Future Shape: The Polish Point of View", available at: http://www.sprawymiedzynarodowe.pl/nawosci/wladyslaw_bartoszewski_the_eus_future_shape.html

²⁴ See in this context the special issue "European Foreign Policy: Is Turkey an Asset?" *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Winter, 2004; Kalypso Nicolaidis, "Turkey is European for Europe's Sake," *St. Anthony's College SEESP Newsletter* 1, June 2003, pp. 9-11

What is striking is that these discussions so far have centred almost exclusively on the foreign policy domain, highlighting the possible contributions which Turkey could make to the EU's new Neighbourhood Policy. The emergence of an EU Central Asian policy, the strengthening of the Policy towards the Caucasus and the revitalisation of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership are three of these scenarios. It will probably take some time before we see a parallel debate on the possible contributions of Turkey to the EU's domestic policies and institutional structures.

Finally, a useful line of comparison between Poland and Turkey involves the role of religion. Religion is an important variable in the modernisation process of both countries.²⁵ The Catholic Church has been an important actor in Polish politics and right from the beginning, has been a strong supporter of Poland's quest for EU membership. Yet, religion in Poland, in contrast to Turkey, has played more of a unifying than a divisive role.²⁶ The divisions that have characterised Turkish society over the public role of religion, and debates over the very boundaries of secularism, in practice have not been an issue in Poland. In this context, Poland has been able to present herself as a broadly homogenous and secular society with the Catholic Church constituting a unifying force. More recently, however, one can detect a certain convergence in the Polish and Turkish experience, in the sense that the prospect of EU membership has started to perform a unifying role in Turkish society, helping to pull different segments of that society together. Currently, Islamists in Turkey, in contrast to their previous position, have become much more moderate and EU-oriented in their approach. Indeed, recently they have become a major component of the evolving pro-reform, pro-EU coalition. One can also detect a transition in the Turkish context to a process where religion is starting to play more of a unifying, rather than divisive role, though as argued earlier, the process is far from complete and the tensions arising from the interpretation of how secularism ought to be translated into practice are very much alive. Looking to the future, countries like Poland and Turkey are likely to have an impact on how multi-culturalism is perceived in Europe. After all, multiculturalism is not simply an issue involving Christianity and Islam, but also an issue involving the co-existence of different forms of Christian practice, the co-existence of religious attitudes and atheist and non-confessional stances as well as issues relating to ethnic and linguistic diversity.

²⁵ Jose Casanova, "Religion, European secular identities, and European integration," available at: <http://www.eurozine.com/article/2004-07-29-casanova-en.html>

²⁶ Casanova, "Religion, European secular identities, and European integration"

Table 2: Contrasting Styles of Transition from the European Periphery: Poland and Turkey Compared

	Poland	Turkey
Paths to EU Membership	Relatively smooth; credible signals and significant material incentives given at an early stage.	Long and protracted process; weak EU signals helped to slow down the process until recently.
Debate Over European Identity	Poland's "return to Europe" was by and large regarded as a natural process. Polish membership could not be explained on the basis of unified material interests alone; considerable and fairly unified commitment within European circles for Polish membership. Explained on the basis of unified material interests alone; considerable and fairly unified commitment within European circles for Polish membership.	Considerable debate over Turkey's European Identity and the very boundaries of Europe, a debate still very much alive in spite of the unprecedented reform process that Turkey has been going through recently.
Elite Commitment To Reform	Strong right from the early stages helped by a credible EU anchor and feelings of insecurity against a new wave of Russian expansionism.	Considerable rift between business and state elites over the desirability of EU-related reforms; more recently the rift has been becoming less pronounced as the pace of the Europeanisation process has been shifting the pendulum in favour of the pro-reform forces.
Ownership of Membership	Strong German support from the early 1990s onwards: active support from a core EU country has been crucial for a smooth path to full membership. Germany, however, has also created problems for Poland such as limiting migration for a seven year period following the attainment of full membership.	Weak ownership of Turkish membership for a long time; more recently Greece has emerged as a vocal supporter of Turkish membership. It is interesting that the two countries, Germany and Greece, with whom Poland and Turkey experienced a problematic relationship historically, emerged as active supporters in the respective cases.

Impact of the EU	The EU has been a fundamental force helping Poland to consolidate its market economy and nascent democratic regime over a short period of time. The role of the United States and the IMF is also important; but arguably without the EU this process would have been much less successful.	For a long time, the EU has acted as a weak anchor in shaping Turkish economy and democracy; in the post-1999 era, however, the impact of the EU, notably in terms of helping to consolidate Turkish democracy as well as institutionalising market-oriented reforms has been quite profound.
Potential Impact On the Future of the EU	Poland has been an active and vocal participant in the recent constitutional debates, without actually enjoying decision-making powers. Poland has been active in the future shape of EU as well as over the future of EU foreign policy promoting a looser, intergovernmental vision of Europe coupled with a strong emphasis on the Trans-Atlantic Alliance.	The role that Turkey can play in shaping the future of Europe especially in relations with the Middle East and the Muslim world as well as dealing effectively with the problems of the large Muslim minorities in Europe itself, particularly in the post-September 11 global context, have started to be debated only very recently. The role of Turkey as an important security actor appeared to make more sense following the accomplishment of a series of significant political reforms.

Conclusion

The claim that Turkey, with its specific models of modernisation, based on the principles of secularism and democracy in a predominantly Muslim setting, could act as bridge between the east and the west and serve as a model for the Arab Middle East and the rest of the Muslim world, is not a new argument. However, for a long time this argument did not appear to possess much practical relevance given that Turkey, for a long time failed to acquire some of the key credentials to be able to play this role. In spite of the country's relentless push for Westernisation and modernisation over many decades, her European credentials were questioned on the grounds that her modernisation process failed to conform to key European norms relating to democracy and human rights. From the perspective of the rest of the Muslim world, the way that the secularism principle has been interpreted and translated into practice has left little public space for religion, hence, limiting its value as an alternative model. The dominance of authoritarian regimes in the Middle

East and the rest of the Islamic world naturally played a distancing role in this process.

More recently, however, the Europeanisation process that Turkey has been undergoing since 1999, under a more credible set of incentives from the EU, has been helping to transform the country's economy, the nature of the democratic regime and foreign policy behaviour. These transformations have, in the long-run, coupled with the forces that are gradually paving the way for a process of political liberalisation if not democratisation in much of the Islamic world, is likely to increase the relevance of the Turkish experiment. This is likely in a changed global environment, where the value of cross-cultural dialogue and co-operation is recognised as having particular value for global peace and security.

At the same time however, there are questions concerning the key issue of whether the New Europe itself will have the capacity to accommodate the more Europeanised Turkey into her orbit. Europe has been helping to transform Turkey in recent years. However, the transformation of Turkey and her stronger claims for membership on that basis, compared with her previous claims, will not necessarily generate a stable equilibrium in Turkey-EU relations. Indeed, the process whereby Turkey moves closer to the heart of Europe will contribute to the on-going debate about Europe's own future, involving her identity, her borders, the depth of integration and the degree of inward or outward-orientation.