

DEMARCATING POLITICAL FRONTIERS IN TURKEY: DISCOURSES  
AND 'EUROPE-AS-HEGEMONY' AFTER 1999

by

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**Abstract:**

In this study, departing from a more general concern with understanding how political frontiers are demarcated in Turkish politics, I aim to show how ‘Europe’ contributed to such a process of constructing political frontiers during the 1999-2008 period. Rather than looking at the debates on ‘Europe’ within the Turkish political landscape through a pro- vs. anti- Europe bifurcation, I attempt to see the discourses through the lens of ‘hegemony’. By using Laclau-Mouffean discourse analysis, starting from 1999, I argue that discourses on ‘Europe’ were able to hegemonise Turkish political debates and thereby demarcate the political frontiers that constituted that debate which started to change when discourses began to be substituted by different antagonisms, political frontiers and therefore modes of sustaining hegemony.

**Keywords:**

Discourse theory, hegemony, Europeanisation, Europe, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, Turkish politics

To people of Turkey,  
who deserve the best stories and laughters...

“Gölmek bir halk gülüyorsa gölmektir”

*Edip Cansever*

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### ROADS AND STORIES

The famous Turkish-German director Fatih Akın, in his movie *Im Juli* tells us the entertaining story of Daniel who follows the sun, the metaphorical representation of the girl he fell for, from Hamburg to Istanbul. *Im Juli* is a road film which plays on serendipitous encounters and road stories. Daniel never meets the girl he followed to Istanbul but instead, on the way to the ‘sun’, he falls into love with another girl and finds out that the ‘sun’ he has been searching for is actually the road stories and encounters ‘on the way’.

It would not be an overstatement to claim that ‘Europe’ within this context is both the journey and ‘the sun’ for Turkey starting from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Stretching from Selim the Third, the Ottoman Sultan who initiated the restructuring of the Ottoman army along European lines to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who clearly saw Europe as the embodiment of civilisation and constructed Turkish modernity on this premise, emergence of ‘Europe’ as a journey and a goal to acquire has characterised the Turkish political history from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. This intense preoccupation gained particular momentum with the official acceptance of Turkey as a membership candidate after the Helsinki European Council in 1999. This heralded a new stage in Turkey’s European journey, the most important repercussion of which has been the penetration of ‘Europe’ into the Turkish domestic debates (Ulusoy, 2006). Especially within this new stage, the notion of ‘Europe’ has, more often than not, been seen through the lens of the so-called ‘Europeanisation’ within the academic repertoire.

In this study, departing from a more general concern with understanding how political frontiers are demarcated in Turkish politics, I will seek to show how ‘Europe’ contributed to such a process of constructing political frontiers during the 1999-2008 period. As will be scrutinised later, political frontiers<sup>1</sup> in this respect refer to the symbolic fault line between various political identities. This attempt is in contrast to more typical approaches to the topic, which focus instead on the concept of ‘Europeanisation’. The main and general contribution of the thesis, therefore, is not only that it enables an understanding of this process whereby political frontiers are constructed through a reflexive and unfixed process, rather than seeing this as an automated and categorical relationship between the European and domestic level (as the Europeanisation literature tends towards), but also in terms of shedding light on how the debates and discourses on ‘Europe’ shaped politics during that period. Therefore, ‘Europe-as-hegemony’, the term I will be using very often throughout the project, is the name of the struggle itself for the hegemonic positions of political identities rather than a given concept with upper case, which would be the case in case of Europeanisation literature. Europeanisation literature, which will be the focus of Chapter 2, poses an automatic and uncontroversial top-down relationship between the European level and domestic level and this relationship is inherently asymmetrical by definition. However, from the perspective of this project, we need to look at the relationship between ‘Europe’ and Turkish domestic politics from the lens of ‘hegemony’ and how the former shapes and hegemonises politics. This is an on-going, unfixed and contested process based on political struggle.

In this way, it is possible to see the road stories ‘on the way’ under a different light. Why do we talk about ‘Europe’ all the time? What makes these road stories so significant and resonant

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the project, I will be using phrases such as ‘drawing political frontiers’ and ‘contributing to the political frontiers’ interchangeably to point out the contingent and ongoing nature of political frontier demarcation.

within the Turkish political landscape? How are we shaped by the road itself? And finally, when do we stop talking about the road stories although it is still going on? For me, these questions bring the ‘hegemony’ dimension to the project at hand. As will be elaborated later, the famous concept of ‘hegemony’ coined by Antonio Gramsci and elaborated by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe sets the limits of what is common sense and acceptable in social imaginary in cultural, political and social terms. Therefore, it is very helpful to look at the road stories ‘on offer’ through the lens of ‘hegemony’ to see how some particular stories materialised in a particular way so that they are more significant when compared to others.

All in all, in this project I will seek the ways in which these discourses on ‘Europe’ had an impact on the journey with/to ‘Europe’ and set the limits and itinerary of the stories. Although there are a number of studies dealing with the Turkish discourses on ‘Europe’, this has never been done through the lens of ‘hegemony’ (e.g. Tekin, 2005; Avcı, 2004; Öniş, 2007). These studies usually reflect on the discourses through pro- vs. anti-Europe bifurcation and make an automatic and stable association between political positions and stances vis-à-vis ‘Europe’. Not much effort has been directed towards the question of how ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ emerges through these discourses and how various political positions are formed. Moreover, there is often not that much difference between being anti-/pro-Europe in terms of reifying a particular conception of ‘Europe’. Therefore, within this project, rather than seeing different representations of ‘Europe’ as uncontested discourses of some political inclinations, I will scrutinise these discourses from a ‘hegemony’ lens.

No doubt, it is a very fruitful and necessary mapping exercise to trace the discourses on ‘Europe’ and to understand the ways in which the notion of ‘Europe’ is constructed. It is of

value to know that the discourses are there, which would to a great extent help to understand the road stories. But, the question is, where to go from here? What do all these have to do with hegemony? How do we recognise ‘hegemony’ within the political landscape when we see it?

I think the best way to look at the impact of ‘hegemony’ within the political terrain is to search for the ways in which it speaks to the political frontiers and how it shapes the political identities, focusing on the performative aspect of the discourses. What I mean by ‘political frontiers’ here, which will be elaborated in Chapter 3, is the symbolic dividing line between different political identities. Therefore, as a response to these fair questions, the next attempt of the project will be to understand the ways in which these discourses demarcate the political frontiers in Turkish politics. In order to reflect on the performative aspect of the discourses on ‘Europe’, I will look at how they speak to the political frontiers in the Turkish political landscape and how politics is precipitated with regard to ‘Europe-as-hegemony’.

### **The thesis: a summary of the project**

With these premises in mind, the overall thesis presented here is that starting from 1999, discourses on ‘Europe’ attempted to hegemonise Turkish political debates and thereby to demarcate the political frontiers that constituted that debate; this started to change when discourses began to be substituted by different antagonisms, political frontiers and therefore modes of hegemonic struggle. The thesis is, therefore, interested in understanding the emergence of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in the aftermath of 1999 in Turkish political debates, a key concept I will be using throughout the project. From 2005 and 2006, however, such

discourses on Europe have been silenced so that they are no longer able to contribute to the construction of political identities. In this respect, 'Europe' ceased to be a hegemonic project.

### **The contribution of the project**

The main contribution of this project to the political science repertoire is theoretical. The initial claim is that political scientists focusing on the 1999-2008 period in Turkish politics with regard to 'Europe' have typically adopted the Europeanisation literature as their starting point. This is inherently problematic in the sense that it sets an automatic and uncontested relationship between the European level and the domestic level, in this case the Turkish politics. Even if the asymmetry in this relationship is sometimes called 'hegemony', albeit rarely (see for instance Dimitrova, 2002), there have not been any studies dealing with how the hegemony of 'Europe' is sustained through discourses on 'Europe' and the political frontiers it demarcates rather than through mechanisms of Europeanisation *per se*. Secondly, although there are a number of studies dealing with the Turkish discourses on 'Europe', this is rarely done through the lens of 'hegemony'. These studies usually see discourses through a pro- vs. anti-Europe bifurcation and make an automatic and stable association between political camps and discourses on 'Europe'. Not much effort has been directed towards questioning how those political positions are constructed and how 'Europe-as-hegemony' is sustained through these discourses. Moreover, the thesis introduces the claim that there is often not that much difference between being anti-/pro-Europe in terms of reifying a particular conception of 'Europe', which will be referred to as 'bipolar hegemony' throughout the study, referring to two ends of the political spectrum.

Secondly, I also claim that there is a need to emphasise that the two hegemonic strategies, i.e. *the logics of equivalence and difference*, are *attempts*, but not pre-requisites for hegemonic politics. As I will scrutinise in Chapter 3 in case of the operationalisation of these logics and as Chapter 7 will show, which outlines the features of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in Turkish politics; these logics are very helpful in understanding antagonisms, demarcation of political frontiers and the hegemonic struggle. However, we also need to identify other factors (e.g. institutions, socio-economic factors etc.) at the political terrain to claim that hegemony is constructed at a political setting. In particular, the current analysis of newspapers and parliamentary debates to trace ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in Turkish politics after 1999 shows that we need more empirical evidence to claim that these particular discourses split *the social* (*logic of equivalence*) or subvert this split (*logic of difference*) in Turkish politics as straightforwardly as Laclau and Mouffe would argue. The questioning of the relevance of Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework to real political settings have been done before by different scholars (e.g. Townshend, 2004; Torfing, 1999; Critchley and Marchart, 2004). However, substantiating this claim with reference to the *logics of equivalence and difference* and to the distinction between notions of ‘hegemony’ and ‘hegemonic struggle’, which I aim to do in Chapter 3, is a novel attempt.

Last, but not least, I put forward the notions of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ as the privileged signifiers of Turkish politics, which is a new claim. As Chapter 4 will elaborate, for any signifier to sustain hegemony in Turkish politics, it has to relate itself to the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ which have materialised in different ways in different periods, yet always significant and ‘privileged’. This claim might constitute a contribution to future



discursive analytical strategies so that other researchers will use this method in tracing discourses and their performative role in sustaining hegemony.

### **Limitations of the project**

However, it is very difficult to deal with and operationalise the concept of ‘hegemony’, as has already been pointed out by many scholars talking about the concept in its Gramscian sense (Tünay, 1983; Morton, 2007) which is understood ‘as a contested, fragile and tenuous process, rather than simply a structure or edifice’ (Morton, 2007: 78). The picture becomes even more complicated when the concept is approached from a discourse theory point of view as discourse theory stresses the ultimate contingency of all social identity and partial fixity of meaning and hegemony (Howarth et. al., 2000), thereby adding an element of contingency to the concept. It is important to underline here that the notion I will be using throughout the thesis, ‘Europe-as-hegemony’, denotes an attempt, i.e. *a hegemonic struggle*, rather than the *hegemony* itself. Therefore, as I will elaborate on in Chapter 3, the question explored here is not how ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ is formed, but how it is maintained. As Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 will attempt to do in the Turkish context, what we can empirically show by using a Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework is that ‘Europe’ operates as a *hegemonic struggle* and a *tendency* to be a hegemonic practice, but not the *hegemony per se*, which is the main limitation of the project.

Moreover, as will be elaborated in the Methodology section here, there is not a prescribed and free-standing set of rules and techniques that can be taken ‘off-the-shelf’ and applied in discourse theory. Indeed, it has been often claimed that methodological deficit is one of the most important alleged deficits of the discourse theory (Howarth, 2008). The inherent

difficulties attached to the concepts I am dealing with and the methodological framework I am using are therefore evident in the modesty of the empirical findings. As will be elaborated upon below, I use three newspapers from different points of the political spectrum to identify particular discourses on 'Europe' and outline the way in which discourses on 'Europe' became hegemonic. I then move to tell the story of how the discourses on 'Europe' shape politics and political identities in the 1999-2008 period. In order to do this, I also use parliamentary debates to see the ways in which 'Europe-as-hegemony' operated as a hegemonic struggle. I claim that 'Europe' attempted to draw political frontiers in the immediate aftermath of 1999 and hegemonise *the social* whereas this started to change in 2005 and 2006. However, my *reality* in this respect is the newspaper statements and parliamentary debates. . One can always come up with a text which would challenge the arguments made here. Moreover, hegemony is a multi-faceted concept which would be reflected in various realms such as political economy and foreign policy. This project shows only an aspect of 'Europe-as-hegemony' and treats it as a struggle which is perhaps the main limitation of the present project. Nevertheless, the thesis traces the existing discourses on 'Europe' studied through the conceptual lens of 'hegemony' and thereby enables a reflection and application of a novel theoretical approach to the study of Turkish politics, making a significant and important contribution to existing understanding of the topic of investigation.

## **Scope of the project**

The time-span of the research will be the period from 1999 onwards. Although Turkey's journey with 'Europe' dates back to earlier times, the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 when Turkey was granted candidacy status to the EU is one of the most significant variants in this regard. After this date, the penetration of the notion of 'Europe' into domestic debates has been accelerated both in conceptual and political terms. The concept has been extensively used because the age-old depiction of 'Europe' as a civilisational albeit rather abstract signifier acquired a much more concrete and tangible reference. As the European debate in Turkish politics is an ongoing process, it is hard to sketch its temporal end point. However, for the purposes of the present project, the end point selected is that when the case to close down the ruling party AKP (Justice and Development Party) was brought before the Constitutional Court in March 2008, as this case is of utmost importance for the Turkish domestic politics in general and for the political discourses in particular. These methodological premises of the project are elaborated in Chapter 4.

The discourses referred to in the thesis are elite discourses identified through newspaper sources and parliamentary debates. The reason for this selection process is that elite discourses are primarily uttered in such media, thereby setting the limits on what could be said and what could not. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, in adopting a 'hegemony' perspective, it makes more sense to look at elite discourses as hegemony is generally speaking a top-down process<sup>2</sup>. 'The elite' within this context denotes the political elite composed of the

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<sup>2</sup> For Gramsci, who coined the term, there are two ways of sustaining hegemony: passive revolution, where the dominant class, though hegemony, neutralizes other classes' and groups' interests and ideological struggles,

Members of Parliament, high level party officials; the economic elite composed of public and private sectors' representatives at decision making levels, business community representatives at the local level; the administrative and bureaucratic elite composed of high level bureaucrats, municipalities and local opinion leaders, governors' office, and military elite.

### **Analytical toolkit**

In order to elaborate upon the above claims, it is better to start by substantiating what I mean by 'Europe'. Throughout the project, I am generally interested in how 'Europe' is constructed through the domestic political debates in Turkey in the aftermath of 1999. It is important to note at this point that due to the key developments of the period selected, 'Europe' more often than not means the EU. In this respect, 'Europe' within the framework of this project is treated as a signifier around which different meanings are articulated. As the research will show, 'Europe' sometimes takes the form of a construction that would help stop terrorism in Turkey while sometimes it is taken as a threat to Turkishness. Therefore, I am interested in 'Europe' both as *a contestation* and *an impact*. By the same token, 'discourse' in this project is the ways in which 'Europe' emerges as a political issue. It is a practice through which 'Europe' contributes to the construction of antagonisms within *the social*, thereby attempting to sustain hegemony.

Another important concept I am interested in is that of the 'political frontier', as the core aim of this project is to explore the extent to which 'Europe' demarcates political frontiers in Turkish politics after 1999. By 'political frontier', I mean the symbolic dividing line between

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whereas in inclusive hegemony, the dominant group creates a national-collective will entailing the interests and demands of the ruled (see Gramsci, 1973; Jessop, 1983; Tünay, 1993 for more details).

different political identities which is contingently constructed. The question I am trying to explore here is: ‘how are discourses on ‘Europe’ relevant in terms of constructing the dividing line between political identities?’ What is the criterion of demarcating a political frontier then? What shall we take from the idea that a particular concept or a discourse draws politically relevant boundaries? My main criterion at this point is that a concept, a signifier or a discourse is able to draw political frontiers to the extent that it creates an antagonism *and* that antagonism is a part of a hegemonic struggle. . Therefore, the demarcation of political frontiers by discourses on ‘Europe’ means that the political identities identify, locate, construct and differentiate themselves within the political field by employing different signifiers of these discourses (e.g. ‘free market, ‘social justice’ or ‘multiculturalism’). By this token, in this example, the antagonism is the difference between various depictions of ‘Europe’ (e.g. ‘free market’ or ‘multiculturalism’) and shows the limits of what political actors mean when they employ discourses on ‘Europe’. Therefore, ‘antagonism’ is a moment which temporarily and contingently fixes political and group identities and determines the limits of who/what is outside the political identity and who/what is not.

Last, but not least, what I understand by the term hegemony is the conviction on the part of political identities that a particular discourse is the *lingua franca* of politics so that each and every political identity has to talk that language in order to assert its location within politics. As I will elaborate on in Chapter 3, *lingua franca* in this context denotes a signifying grammar in terms of which a particular social practice can be instituted and maintained, whereas others rejected. Moreover, this *lingua franca* is not an ordinary one, but one which is able to create antagonisms by setting the language and limits of *the political* with regard to which people take sides and politically negotiate.

## **Theoretical Framework**

In order to trace the discourses and different representations of ‘Europe’, I will be using a Laclau-Mouffean discourse theoretical framework. With their emphasis on the extension of the scope of politics and on the role of discourses in constructing identities, Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau provide an inspiring perspective in terms of understanding social practices as discursive articulatory processes and the interplay of antagonisms. According to this conception, ‘there is only politics, when there are frontiers’ (Laclau, 1990: 159-174). If this project aims to find out how political frontiers are constructed through discourses on ‘Europe’, a Laclau- Mouffean theoretical framework is more helpful than the Europeanisation literature (which does not pay attention to *the political*), than a social constructivist framework (which assumes identities to be rather stable and uncontested) and finally than a Foucauldian framework (where practices of power in everyday life are more significant than political frontiers as such).

## **Methodology**

In order to present the discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish political debates from 1999 onwards, I will use two privileged signifiers of Turkish politics- ‘democracy’ and ‘security’. In this respect, my methodology is mainly constructed in line with the claim that for any discourse to be hegemonic, significant and resonant and able to construct political frontiers, it has to relate itself to these privileged signifiers. Therefore, by devising a list of questions in line with the historical relevance of the concepts of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’, I will seek how discourses on ‘Europe’ are constructed in relation to these privileged signifiers. In this

respect, I offer a third methodological approach between Ole Wæver, who takes discourses as moves within pre-existing national 'layers' making any discourse possible at the national setting and Thomas Diez, who initially singles out a set of sub-discourses as ideal types and moves on to trace them within any discourse, which are thoroughly scrutinised in Chapter 3. In the Methodology chapter, I also identify the historical discursive space within which the signifiers of 'security' and 'democracy' have been articulated which made possible the emergence of these signifiers as 'privileged'. By this way, I aim to highlight the standard narratives and discourses through which the signifiers of 'democracy' and 'security' emerged, and to show that my designation of these concepts as privileged signifiers does not take place in a vacuum but emerges within a discursive background.

### **Locating the thesis within the field: engagement with the relevant disciplinary literature**

Therefore, the overall thesis that discourses on 'Europe' were able to hegemonise Turkish political debates and thereby demarcate the political frontiers after 1999 whereas 'Europe-as-hegemony' started to cease after 2005 and 2006 takes the notion of 'Europe' as contested and negotiated. Along these lines, as this short introduction here illustrates and Chapter 3 will elaborate, I am particularly interested in political frontiers and *the political*.

In this respect, it is possible to locate the current attempt to understand the rise and cessation of 'Europe-as-hegemony' in Turkey within relevant academic realm by using the conception of *the political* as a litmus paper. This would facilitate a fruitful and interactive dialogue with the relevant disciplinary literature.

According to the above categorisation principle, the studies dealing with the notion of ‘Europe’ could be categorised into three groups: the studies which takes ‘Europe’ as a fixed concept (which I designate as ‘Europe-as-fixity’), those which subscribe to a notion of ‘Europe’ solely as a construct (‘Europe-as-construct’) and finally the studies which take ‘Europe’ as a contestation (‘Europe-as-contestation’), wherein this current project is juxtaposed with the third group of studies. The claim here is that there is both a historical and epistemological need to go beyond taking ‘Europe’ for granted and solely as a construct and to address the conflictual nature of the notion.

### **1- ‘Europe-as-fixity’ studies**

Since the 1950s, after the launch of the EU in particular, ‘Europe’ and the nature of the European polity in particular have been preoccupying the political scientists, sociologists, IR theorists and scholars alike. In this respect, the name ‘Europe’ has been associated different conceptions within the EU context, such as ‘confederation’ (Warleigh, 1998), ‘network governance’ (Kohler-Koch and Eising, 1999), ‘a political system but not a state’ (Hix, 1999), ‘a regulatory state’ (Majone, 1996). The general tendency in the academia in this respect especially in the early stages of European integration has been to take ‘Europe’ as a non-contested, categorical notion to be explained (I call this first group of studies as ‘Europe-as-fixity’). In this picture, notion of ‘interest’ is also depicted as the major independent variable for explaining the development of the Euro-polity although there is a controversy between the carriers of those interests (states, non-state actors, etc.) (Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung, 1998: 410). Within the literature, the association of the notion ‘Europe’ in general and European



integration in particular with the EU institutions (e.g. Risse-Kappen, 1996; Jachtenfuchs and Kohler-Koch, 1995), enlargement (e.g. Schimelfennig and Sedelmaier, 2002, Hughes et.al., 2004; Pridham, 2005; Preston, 1997), interest group activity (e.g. Grossman, 2004; Lehmkuhl, 2000) could be read along those lines. Moravcsik's conception of European integration explains this tendency very well. According to Moravcsik, broad lines of European integration since 1955 'reflect three factors: patterns of commercial advantage, the relative bargaining power of important governments and the incentives to enhance credibility of interstate commitments' (Moravcsik, 1998: 3). In this picture, 'Europe' 'exemplifies a distinctly modern form of power politics' (Moravcsik, 1998: 5). Politics in this respect has objectively specified rules and *the political* is consensual.

## **2- 'Europe-as-construct' studies**

Starting from 1990s, European studies started incorporating the social constructivist turn (for examples of the social constructivist turn see Kratochwil, 1989; Wendt, 1992). Studies on principled issue-networks (Sikkink, 1993) and on 'epistemic communities' (Haas, 1992) suggested that politics were determined not only by instrumentally defined self-interests, but also by collectively shared values and consensual knowledge. 'The legitimacy crisis of the EU which became apparent during the ratification debates of the Maastricht Treaty in many Member States, has opened intellectual space for examining the role of ideas and collective identities in European politics' (Risse-Kappen, 1996: 59). As Chapter 3 will elaborate, a social constructivist approach has usually been deemed appropriate in this case, because 'the EU aspires to be more than an international society: a supranational one. This means that the EU needs to create its own norms, values and practices to a greater extent than any

international society. A democratic-market oriented discourse has been identified from the start as the main base on which to build and sustain such a supranational political community' (Samur, 1997: 31). Moreover, when it comes to the enlargement of the EU, normative considerations and a value-based assessment of the process rather than objectively specified interests are at the forefront as the EU serves as a 'modernisation anchor' for those candidates which are less democratic (Inotai, 1997). For instance, in the case of the Eastern enlargement, conceptions such as 'reunification of the continent' and 'return to Europe' have been used 'to imply normative-emotional considerations rather than material calculations and interest-driven expansion' (Samur, 1997: 31-for examples of social constructivism in the European studies, see Checkel, 1999; Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener, 1999; Smith, 1999; Zehfuss, 2002). The notion of 'Europe' in this picture is of a constructed nature and is inspired by 'a theory of a society that stresses the open-ended process by which the social is shaped' (Rumford and Delanty, 2005: 12). As Chapter 3 will elaborate, within the framework of this second group of studies, politics is not an unchanged and teleological process but is open to reconstruction and change and *the political* is not completely consensual about which all involved actors and identities are fully informed. However, it is not totally conflictual either as the redefinition of *the political* in general and the political frontiers in particular are not the focus of the analysis.

### 3- 'Europe-as-contestation' studies

Especially after the demise of the Cold War, a new need to explain the drastic transformations of the social structure and new social and political identities emerged which has been the main issue within the analytical agendas of critical theory, post-Marxism, post-structuralism, postmodernism and alike. European studies also shifted its focus to this new academic 'demand' and a myriad of studies aiming to reconceptualise an identity-based politics flourished. Especially with the signing of the treaties of Maastricht (1991) and Amsterdam (1997), the EU reached a degree of integration where identification with 'Europe' went beyond hitherto known forms of intergovernmental cooperation. The newly emerging forms of identification with Europe now involved a new conception of 'identity' and novel and extended practices of politics. New studies trying to understand 'Europe' as an identity (e.g. Maier and Risse, 2003; Diez Medrano and Gutierrez, 2001; Hülse, 1999, Jimenez et.al, 2004), a public sphere (e.g. Barenreuter, 2005), a possibility for multicultural citizenship (e.g. Lavdas, 2001), a political geography (Agnew, 2001; Kuus, 2004; Moisio, 2002; Smith, 2002) and a metaphor (e.g. Drulak, 2006; Musolff, 2000) could be read along those lines. 'According to such a perspective, political practice in a democratic society does not consist in defending the rights of preconstituted identities, but rather in constituting those identities themselves in a precarious and always vulnerable field' (Mouffe, 2000: 148). Within those studies, 'Europe' is taken as a performative, mobile, hybrid, partial and fluid identity and *the political* is understood as a conflictual and unfinished field always open to contestation and negotiation. The current attempt here to understand how 'Europe-as-hegemony' demarcated

political frontiers falls within this third category of the European studies as it also understands *the political* as an unfixed and contested realm.

### **Reflexivity of the project: Dialogue with the Europeanisation literature**

As already mentioned above, Europeanisation literature, and early examples of the literature in particular, assumes an automatic and uncontested top-down relationship between the European level and domestic level. Therefore, the early Europeanisation literature, according to the above categorisation, could be located in the first group of studies ('Europe-as-fixity') with respect to the taken-for-grantedness of the notion of 'Europe' and the assumption that politics is a game the rules of which are consensual and uncontested. On the other hand, starting from 1990s, the Europeanisation literature, through its new preoccupation with ideas, collective identities, language and values increasingly extended as to include the second group of studies as well ('Europe-as-construct').

However, from the perspective of this project, we need to look at the relationship between 'Europe' and domestic politics from the lens of 'hegemony' and how the former shapes and hegemonises politics. In this respect, the current attempt offers a new analytical perspective to the Europeanisation literature where *the political* is not only given and constructed but is also open to contestation and negotiation. If the Europeanisation literature aims to explain change and the relationship between the European level and the domestic level, it should also offer ways to understand how hegemonic practices and articulations shape the flow of politics and political identities during this process. If the European integration is as political as the post-

Maastricht period and all the on-going debates on the European constitution, referenda and enlargement tell us it is, the Europeanisation literature has to address the conflictual and contested nature of 'Europe',

### **Thesis outline**

In Chapter 2, I will give a general outline of the Europeanisation literature focusing on the ways in which the notion of 'Europe' is conceptualised. The main argument in this respect will be that the Europeanisation literature is unable to sort out how the concept of 'Europe' is constructed as a discourse and a contributing element to political frontiers constructed at the domestic level. The Europeanisation literature is particularly focused here due its prevalence among those seeking to understand domestic-European relations. Although the recent variants of the Europeanisation literature makes numerous references to the domestic level and domestic actors, it fails to present an overall account of how the idea of 'Europe' is conceptualised, perceived and used at the domestic level. Moreover, even if this relationship is asymmetrical, 'hegemony' in this picture does not originate from this asymmetry but from the ability of the discourses on 'Europe' to draw political frontiers. For instance, the Europeanisation literature on Turkey more often than not explores in what ways Turkey meets the democratisation requirements laid down by the Copenhagen Criteria, rendering the relationship between the Copenhagen Criteria<sup>3</sup> (and the European level in general) and Turkish domestic politics unproblematic and automatic. Little interest is shown in the extent

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<sup>3</sup> In the Presidency Conclusions of Copenhagen European Council on 21-22 June 1993, it has been stated that, '[EU] membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union', which has emerged in the EU parlance as 'Copenhagen Criteria' after the Summit (the EU Presidency, 21-22 June 1993).

to which the discourses articulating the Copenhagen Criteria have an impact on the construction of domestic political frontiers and are hegemonic in this respect.

The thesis will then move to Chapter 3 where I explore the possible theoretical frameworks that might be helpful in overcoming the shortcomings identified in the previous chapter. In this respect, I will first refer to social constructivism. The general claim here will be that although social constructivism focuses on discourses and representations, its core focus is on understanding social reality by assuming identities to be constant and stable. In doing so, social constructivist approaches are unable to show how political identities could be shaped by the discourses on 'Europe'. Similarly, the Foucauldian framework, the second theoretical approach I will be scrutinising, is ground-breaking in designating discourses as reflexive structures, yet is not entirely interested in political identities and politics as such. It is gainsaying at this point that although the core focus of this project is not on identities *per se*, the shaping of political identities is implicitly included as I am interested in how political frontiers are drawn and redrawn by discourses on 'Europe'. Moreover, the shaping of political identities is also crucial in assessing to what extent two different Laclau-Mouffean ways of sustaining hegemony (the so-called *logics of equivalence and difference*) are successful in hegemonising the political space. I will return to this point in Chapter 3 and denote the relationship between 'Europe-as-hegemony' and political identities after 1999 in the Turkish context in Chapter 7.

In Chapter 3, I will also explore how discourse theory has been used in European studies. I will focus on the works of Ole Wæver (2005), Thomas Diez (1999, 2001), Henrik Larsen (1999), Lene Hansen (2006), and Ben Rosamond (1999), with particular reference to Wæver

and Diez. Finally, I will elaborate on the Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework main premises of which have been mentioned above.

After scrutinising Laclau-Mouffean discourse analysis and its relevance for the Turkish Euro-discourses and political frontiers in Chapter 3 and devising my methodology in Chapter 4, in Chapter 5, I will give a general outline of the historical context of the Turkish political debates within the specified period, not only in terms of the notion of ‘Europe’ but in terms of the privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ as well. By doing that, I aim to sketch the general contours of the discursive space historically which made possible the emergence of these signifiers as ‘privileged’. I do not claim any correlation or causal relationship between events and discourses, which would clash with the general theoretical premises of the project. Rather, I simply aim to provide a timeline of the events to see how discourses on ‘Europe’ speak to these events. For instance, rather than claiming that the discourse fixing ‘Europe’ as a keyword for minority rights and multiple identities emerged because of the Copenhagen Criteria, I aim to show how this discourse was resilient and has determined ‘the sides’ of the political debates at the time when the Copenhagen Criteria was discussed in Turkish politics.

In Chapter 6, I will scrutinise the four discourses on ‘Europe’ resulting from the empirical research with newspapers, which are  $D_{multiple\ identity}$  which sets ‘Europe’ as a keyword for minorities and multiple identities,  $D_{territorial\ integrity/anti-terrorism}$ , presenting ‘Europe’ as a guarantee of Turkish territorial integrity and the decrease in terrorism,  $D_{threat\ to\ sovereignty}$  fixing ‘Europe’ as a threat to sovereignty and  $D_{threat\ to\ Turkishness}$  which represents ‘Europe’ as a threat to Turkishness in a rather identity-based manner. After presenting the discourses, I will then

move to Chapter 7 which aims to temporalise them. Here, I will focus on the second general aim of the project, i.e. the impact of the discourses. For this aim, I will firstly diacronise the already-sketched discourses and present them within the flow of debates on 'Europe'. This will make it easier to see how 'Europe-as-hegemony' emerged as a political struggle and outlined 'the sides' of the debate within the Turkish politics in the 1999-2008 period. Secondly, after locating the discourses in a chronological perspective, I will set out the main features of 'Europe-as-hegemony'. The main argument of this chapter will be that contrary to the immediate aftermath of 1999 when the discourses on 'Europe' attempted to hegemonise the Turkish political landscape, starting from 2005 and 2006 what we see is that the discourses on 'Europe' are less and less able to draw the political frontiers. However, this does not mean that the discourses on 'Europe' were completely absent from the political landscape. Starting from 2005 and 2006, political debates were precipitated with less reference to 'Europe' and some components of the discourses on 'Europe' (such as 'minority') have been articulated around other antagonisms, such as Islamism vs. liberalism antagonism. 'Europe' does not disappear, but is no longer a hegemonic project, as the last chapter will show.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **EUROPEANISATION LITERATURE AND THE USE OF ‘EUROPE’ AT THE DOMESTIC LEVEL**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Bülent Somay, in the Epilogue of an anthology of Zizek’s works (Somay and Birkan, 2002), cites a joke mentioned by Zizek in his famous book *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989). A conscript who tries to evade military service pretends to be mad. His symptom is that he compulsively checks all the pieces of paper he can reach, constantly repeating: ‘that’s not it!’ He is sent to the military psychiatrist in whose office he also examines all the papers around, including those in the wastepaper basket, repeating all the time: ‘that’s not it!’. The psychiatrist finally convinced that he is really mad gives him a written warrant, releasing him from military service. The conscript casts a look at it and says cheerfully: ‘that’s it!’. This short story points to the obsessive search of the Left for a decent ideology after the 1980s. The ‘discharge paper’ for Turkey for a long time has been and probably still is ‘being of Europe’, i.e. ‘Europeanisation’. Starting from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the choice for Turkey’s European orientation path derived from a deep-rooted state tradition, referring to both a careful perception of the Turkish foreign policy options and a rather emotional attachment to the idea of being among the ‘European’. This ‘never-ending story’ acquired a new dimension and has been carried to a more substantive and institutional level with the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 when Turkey was granted formal candidacy status in its application to join the EU (Müftüler-Baç, 1998).

This new dimension of Turkey's journey towards Europe overlaps with what is called in the literature, 'Europeanisation', a relatively new trend in political analysis (for most outstanding examples of Europeanisation literature, see Cowles et. al., 2001; Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmaier, 2005). Like all trends, it has fans, supporters and admirers as well as sceptics, challengers and dissidents. The main aim of this section is to highlight what the term 'Europeanisation' means for different scholars and academic tendencies and to identify the main arguments of each group through an unfolding of the most significant concepts and arguments with regard to 'Europeanisation'.

Whilst the Europeanisation literature might at first glance appear only marginally or indirectly related to the present thesis, the rationale for the current engagement with and the critique of the Europeanisation literature is based on a number of reasons. Firstly, the Europeanisation literature would typically be the first approach any researcher focusing on the 1999-2008 period in Turkey with a particular reference to 'Europe' and domestic debates would resort to. In contrast, I seek here to show the shortcomings of the Europeanisation literature in terms of identifying the domestic discourses on 'Europe' and their impact on domestic political frontiers. Secondly, this contributes to the novel theoretical approach developed here about the hegemony of 'Europe' within the domestic political debates in Turkey. As the study will show, the hegemony of 'Europe' does not originate from the automaticity of the relationship between the European and domestic level as stipulated by the Europeanisation literature, but from the power of discourses on 'Europe' in terms of their ability to contribute to the construction of antagonisms and demarcating political frontiers in the 1999-2006 period. Thirdly, from a broader perspective, the current attempt here addresses the need by the Europeanisation literature to look at 'Europe' as a political and contested realm, as pointed

out above. If the Europeanisation literature aims to explain the European integration and ‘change’, it should go beyond explaining ‘change’ at the domestic level through ‘de-parliamentarisation, growing bureaucratisation and increase in policy-making’ (Goetz et.al., 2008) and present a more political and reflexive account of ‘Europe’ in general. This is also in accordance with recent critiques posed against the literature by the Europeanisation scholars themselves such as Radaelli, Graziano and Vink. As I will elaborate on in the forthcoming sections, the need on the part of the literature to redefine ‘the European impact’ (Graziano and Vink, 2007) and to pay attention to broader political science questions such as power and legitimacy (Radaelli and Exadaktylos, 2009) shifts the literature’s scope and shows that the literature and this thesis have a more interactive platform to share than the difference between the two in terms of scope and aim would point to.

However, this attempt to outline the Europeanisation literature is not exhaustive as this project’s core concern is not to find out what ‘Europeanisation’ is. The core aim here is to examine how ‘Europe’ is conceptualized in the Europeanisation literature, especially with regard to the domestic level. By investigating the main claims of the Europeanisation literature, the claim of the thesis that the Europeanisation literature is unable to adequately examine the concept of ‘Europe’ as a discourse that contributes to the construction of political frontiers at the domestic level is presented. Thus, on a very broad level, the following section attempts to scrutinize only the basic assumptions of the literature on Europeanisation to use as leverage in this project’s broader argument- Although the recent variants of Europeanisation literature makes numerous references to domestic level and domestic actors, it nevertheless fails to present an overall account of how the idea of ‘Europe’ is conceptualised, perceived and used at the domestic level and the effect that it has upon domestic political debates, political identities and antagonisms .

Similarly, in line with the pitfalls of the Europeanisation literature I will argue throughout the present chapter that the Europeanisation literature on Turkey is also confined to exploring how Turkey has met the democratisation requirements laid down by the Copenhagen Criteria. Whilst it is of course important to understand how Turkey adopts the Copenhagen criteria, the endemic problem with the Europeanisation literature emerges here as well: the relationship between the Copenhagen Criteria (European level in general) and change in Turkish domestic politics according to this framework is depicted as one of automaticity. In this regard, I will use the Europeanisation literature as a departure point from which to argue that a Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework is helpful in order to examine how the concept of ‘Europe’ contributes to the construction of discourses and political frontiers at the domestic level.

However, it is no easy task to make an analytical move from the Europeanisation literature to Laclau and Mouffe’s conception of ‘discourse’. First of all, the academic concerns of both approaches are starkly different. For the Europeanisation literature, Europeanisation is the creation/construction of distinct European institutions, policies, behaviour, discourses and social aggregations at the domestic level thanks to the impact of the ‘European level’ (Cowles et.al, 2001; Börzel and Risse, 2003). Although this initial ‘structural’ approach has been challenged by the so-called ‘bottom-up’ approaches, the question of how the notion of ‘Europe’ has an impact on the creation/emergence of discourses and political frontiers at the domestic level remains intact (for examples of the so-called ‘bottom-up’ approach, see Radaelli, 2003; Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004). The ‘bottom-up’ approach to Europeanisation claims that the Europeanisation process starts from the actors, problems, resources, style and discourses at the domestic level (Radaelli, 2003; 2004). In this regard, the actors, discourses

and social processes at the domestic level matters for Europeanisation. However, the core concern is not to sort out whether/how 'Europe' has an impact on domestic discourses and political frontiers. The highly 'institutionalist' colouring of the Europeanisation literature - even its more 'social-sensitive' variants such as those fed by sociological institutionalism - does not leave enough room for meanings, representations and discourses (for examples of sociological institutionalism in the Europeanisation literature see March and Olson, 1989; Vink, 2002; Börzel, 2003).

On the other hand, the conception of 'discourse' by Laclau and Mouffe stipulates that if we are to sort out the nature or essence of reality, i.e. Europe and -in particular- to understand the way in which the Europeanisation process operates, we have to understand the way in which that reality is constructed, perpetuated and reproduced at a discursive level, i.e. the discourse of 'Europe' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Thus, the meaning ascribed to a concept or an object is the result of a social process rather than something springing from the object in itself.

The meaning of Europe, for example, is not then a consequence of some immanent quality of the landmass itself, but rather defined by what everybody, in a certain situation, agrees that it means. As such its meaning may well change over time (from 'Christendom' to 'a continent'). However the meaning of a concept or an object is always derived basically from its relation to other objects or concepts (Kolvraa, 2003: 26).

Secondly, the two approaches' evaluation of 'change' is completely different. The Europeanisation literature presupposes that there will be a change at the domestic level due to the impact of Europe. This change might be in the form of an institutional, social, political, discursive or policy change, or an institutional resistance, convergence or divergence, unity or diversity. According to Harmsen and Wilson, Europeanisation is a concept beyond European

integration reflecting an essentially teleological view of the process (Harmsen and Wilson, 2000). It evokes, they argue, a much wider canvas, concerned with the myriad processes of change – both regarding the EU and beyond it. Even if there is resistance against the adaptational pressure at the domestic level, it does not harm the teleology and linearity of the process, as this kind of an institutional/social/discursive resistance is also a ‘change’. Thus, the reality, i.e. the process of Europeanisation and European institutions in particular, initiates progress and may even result in the formation of a certain discourse. This highly institutional conception of ‘change’ stands in contrast to the reality which results from the eternal and contingent articulation of discourse in its Laclau- Mouffean sense.

It might be argued that, the discursive unity is the teleological unity of a project, but this is not so. The objective world is structured in relational sequences which do not necessarily have a finalistic sense and which, in most cases, do not actually require any meaning at all: it is sufficient that certain regularities establish differential positions for us to be able to speak of a discursive formation (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 109).

Thus, discursive structures are never complete and discourse analysis is ‘the political analysis of the way contingent relations become fixed in one way, but could have been fixed in many others’ (Andersen, 2003: 52). There is neither a definite end point nor a teleological presupposition in terms of the unity of the project. The unstable and indeterminate nature of social reality is overcome by discourses determining and delimiting the range of meaningful behaviours and practices within particular historical contexts, albeit temporarily and precariously, through articulation. One of the central concepts in Laclau and Mouffe’s theory, ‘articulation’, ‘designates any practice through which a certain concept or object is ascribed a certain (new) meaning. Articulation is then a practice, which changes or creates the thing that is articulated’ (Kolvraa, 2003: 26), which is not teleological and linear.

Last, but not least, the Laclau- Mouffean conception of ‘discourse’ is an overarching and extensive effort which has repercussions in the broader definitions of hegemony, radical democracy and even politics. One of the main aims of Laclau and Mouffe’s seminal work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* is to overcome the so-called ‘theoretical crisis’ of the Left-wing and Marxism in particular, as mentioned in the ‘Introduction’ part of the book (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 2). So, it offers a wide range of new theoretical venues and by this token it might be argued that it is prescriptive (as the title itself implies). However, as Radaelli argues, Europeanisation is not a new theory, nor an ad-hoc approach, rather a way of organizing and orchestrating existing concepts; ‘Europeanisation should be seen as a problem, not as a solution’ (Radaelli, 2004:1). Thus, it is only a new way of asking questions and trying to answer them and, in this regard, is definitive.

My concern in this regard is not to make a comparison between the conception of domestic meanings and discourses by the Europeanisation literature and Laclau- Mouffean conception of ‘discourse’, which would be meaningless, fruitless and most important of all, analytically incorrect as the discourse theory used by Laclau and Mouffe is a *theory* whereas Europeanisation is rather a *process, content* and *situation* (Howell, 2004: 2).<sup>4</sup> However, I deem it useful to start with the Europeanisation literature to examine how the concept of ‘Europe’ constructs/challenges discourses at the domestic level as it to some extent has also a claim to do so. My subsequent attempt would be then to understand how the notion of

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<sup>4</sup> Although for the literature Europeanisation is generally not deemed as a theory, for Howell, it might be evaluated as a ‘meso-level theory’ (Howell, 2004). ‘A meso-level theory involves simultaneous study of at least two levels, where one level deals with individual or group processes or variables and one deals with organisational processes or variables, and bridging or linking prepositions are set forth to relate the two levels’ (Miner, 2006: 17).

‘Europe’ will have an impact on the way in which political frontiers are established in Turkish politics.

With these initial concerns in mind, in this section, I will thoroughly explore the term ‘Europeanisation’. After presenting a broad definition of the term, I will highlight how Europe was studied in the political science literature before the devising of the concept ‘Europeanisation’. Thus, we can understand the main concerns and concepts that drive political science to shed light on the concept of ‘Europe’. This, at the same time, helps one to see the evolution of the concept of ‘Europeanisation’ in line with the institutional and conceptual evolution of the EC/EU itself. For this aim, I will explore the basic assumptions of neo-functionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism. I will also refer to the relevant approaches such as multi-level governance, which has sown the embryonic intellectual seeds of what will later be called ‘Europeanisation’. This group of studies is usually referred to as ‘the first generation studies in Europeanisation’ in the literature even though most of them (especially those in the 1970s and 1980s) did not use the term ‘Europeanisation’ as such. For the first generation of European integration studies, Europeanisation was equivalent to European integration and the former ‘concentrated on the shift of problem-solving capability from the domestic to the regional level, from the individual member states to Brussels’ (Caporaso, 2005: 8).<sup>5</sup> Then I will move to exploring how the concept had new connotations

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<sup>5</sup> See Dyson and Goertz, 2003; Bache and Marshall, 2004; Quinn, 2008 for the periodisation and the main characteristics of ‘generations’. Usually, these studies put the early European integration studies and early versions of Europeanisation literature which adopt a ‘top-down’ approach within the very same group (first generation) whereas the ‘bottom-up’ approaches constitute the ‘second generation’ studies. This distinction in the literature is made according to whether the Europeanisation induces change at formal or informal institutions (Bache and Marshall, 2004: 4). I will stick to this periodisation throughout the section though I do not subsume the early European integration studies under the rubric of ‘first generation’ and hence not use the term ‘generation’ as such. As I will make it clear in the forthcoming parts, my general fault line in this section is whether the literature adopts a ‘top-down’ or ‘bottom-up’ approach.



within the framework of enlargements, starting from the Eastern Enlargement in the 1990s, which will also help me put the evolution of the literature into proper context.

Second, I will deal with the concept of Europeanisation in more depth with a particular focus on the concepts such as ‘goodness-of-fit’, ‘inconvenience’ and ‘misfit’. This group of studies dealing mainly with those concepts is usually called the ‘second generation studies in Europeanisation’, which studies the impact of the EU on domestic change in polities, policies and politics.

Subsequently, I will refer to some of the criticisms raised against various definitions and underlying assumptions of the concept of ‘Europeanisation’. In this way, it is easier to understand the core claims of various scholars’ conceptualization of the term presented before, as well as the strengths and weaknesses attached to them.

## **2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE EUROPEANISATION LITERATURE: FROM EUROPEAN INTEGRATION STUDIES TO ENLARGEMENT**

It is not a prophecy to say that one of the most common concepts that those working on ‘Europe’ would encounter at various points in different capacities would be ‘Europeanisation’. With the broadest aim of understanding European integration, starting from the 1990s on, there has been an eruption of the literature on Europeanisation (see Ladrech, 1994; Wessels and Rometsch, 1996; Börzel, 1999; Harmsen, 1999 for earlier examples of the literature). It is, broadly speaking, a term that is employed to label or describe a process of transformation, but many different scholars have used Europeanisation as a tool for analysis of different aspects of the social reality and the term as such has been exposed to

an important conceptual transformation. This concept and process will be explored in detail below, but for now, suffice it to say that the process of Europeanisation is the creation/construction of distinct European institutions, policies, behaviour, discourses and social aggregations at the domestic level thanks to the impact of the 'European level'.

After making clear what the concept 'Europeanisation' generally means, it is useful to trace the intellectual predecessors of the Europeanisation literature and the embryonic attempts that dealt with the idea of 'Europe'. In this way, it is easier to uncover the theoretical considerations underneath the Europeanisation literature. To question the conceptual rupture/continuity of the Europeanisation literature with these intellectual traditions provides the opportunity to understand how the use of the notion of 'Europe' has evolved and how it is/has been used.

After the institutional foundation of Europe in the 1950s, a great deal of studies, which interpreted the newly emerging structure, depended upon the debate on the nature of this construction. The theories of European integration provided a more general interpretation on its institutional structure, generating theoretical models for the process of integration. In the 1960s and 1970s, the focus of European integration studies had shifted to regional integration, which had attracted both international relations scholars and political scientists. One of the factors that made the cooperation between them productive was the dominant theory of the time, i.e. neo-functionalism. Neo-functionalism that was originally developed by Ernst Haas extended the existing theories in both fields by recognising interconnections between domestic and international politics (Smith and Ray, 1993). The idea that states were no longer regarded as unitary social actors went beyond the dominant state-centric approaches of

international relations; and the conception of the state for neo-functionalists focused on sub-national groups, political parties, competition and bargaining on the national policy (Schmitter, 2004; Sandholtz and Zysman, 1989; Tranholm-Mikkelsen, 1991). On the other hand, going beyond the domestic focus of the comparative politics, neo-functionalism emphasised how regional and international contexts influence state policy. National policy was not determined merely by national level factors but transnational coalitions and regional influence also entered the picture (Smith and Ray, 1993).

According to this theory, regional integration is an intrinsically sporadic and conflictual process, but one in which, under conditions of democracy and pluralistic representation, national governments will find themselves increasingly entangled in regional pressures and end up resolving their conflicts by conceding a wider scope and devolving more authority to the regional organisations they have created. Eventually, their citizens will begin shifting more and more of their expectations to the region and satisfying them will increase the likelihood that economic-social integration will ‘spill-over’ into political integration (Schmitter, 2004: 46).

According to Haas, regional integration was the process of ‘how and why states cease to be wholly sovereign, how and why they voluntarily mingle, merge and mix with their neighbours so as to lose the factual attributes of sovereignty while acquiring new techniques for resolving conflict themselves’ (Haas, 1968). Moreover, he attributed the primary role in facilitating regional cooperation to those more open-minded elites, supranational groups, politicians and lobbies in particular who have become involved in managing and directing affairs of an increasingly interdependent and transnational political economy.

Approximately at this point the new theoretical mainstream in international relations (regarding European integration in particular) which speaks for the new levels and actors but the state enters the picture and the concept of 'Europeanisation' finds its earlier traces. By the same token, supranational governance, as theorised by Stone Sweet and Sandholtz (1997, 1998, 2001), can be counted as the contemporary counterpart of Haas's work. Their theory of supranational governance is based on the assumption that the growth of supranational polity competence is explained by the growth of interaction amongst private economic agents (such as multinational corporations) (Stone Sweet and Sandsoltz, 1998). The growth of this transnational society is furthered through the applicability of the rule of law, transparency, and accountability and the institutions of the EU, mainly the Commission, are charged with establishing European-level competencies. Institutionalization emerges as an outcome but, at least partly, also as the means by which the European political space emerges and evolves (Stone Sweet et.al. 2001:225).

Starting from 1990s, thanks to the launch of the Eastern enlargement, the Balkan enlargement and the EU accession with Turkey, the concept of Europeanisation and the literature attached to it developed a particular variant. Within this perspective, Europeanisation increasingly meant anchoring of a country or a region within the EU stream and the literature started talking about more elaborate and specified rules, mechanisms and procedures of Europeanisation. Although the concept of Europeanisation was first used to explain the policy transformation within the EU member-states, it has been adopted to the study of non-member states as it more adequately captures the transformation of domestic structures. One of the key terms in this context is 'EU conditionality', particularly the Copenhagen criteria,

which act as a catalyst for domestic reforms in the fields of politics, finance, law, education, etc., as I will elaborate with regard to the Turkish context later. Therefore, starting from the second half of the 1990s, the Europeanisation literature had a vast amount of references to the concept of the EU conditionality. ‘The concept of Europeanisation implies a different approach when the issue of enlargement is concerned: the incorporation of Central and Eastern Europe into the EU integration process by means of principles of democratisation, the rule of law, market economy and to human rights’ (Kabaalioğlu et. al., 2005: 1). As Oğuzlu argues, democratization along the EU accession process requires both the establishment of democratic regimes in candidate states and the internalization of the EU’s identity (Oğuzlu, 2004). Within this perspective, Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier define Europeanisation in Central East Europe as a process in which states adopt EU rules (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005). ‘The rules in question cover a broad range of issues and structures and are both formal and informal (...), [which] comprise rule for regulation and distribution in specific policy areas, rules of political, administrative, and judicial processes, and rules for the set up and competences of state and sub-state organisations’ (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005: 7). In this respect, the dominant logic underpinning the EU’s conditionality, according to Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, is the bargaining strategy of *reinforcement by reward*: the EU provides external stimuli for a candidate country in order to comply with its conditions (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004: 662).

In a nutshell, as Risse et. al’s and Radaelli’s definitions show, the earlier examples of the Europeanisation literature focused on the construction, diffusion, and institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, *ways of doing things*, and shared beliefs and norms at the EU member states (Radaelli, 2003: 30). However, recent

contributions to the European integration literature have pointed out that the Europeanisation process could be influential even beyond the EU's geographic boundaries, principally with regard to candidate countries. In this respect, Moga makes a distinction between the *traditional Europeanisation*, which is mainly limited to the EU member states, and *enlargement-led Europeanisation*, which affects candidate countries and is conditionality-driven (Moga, 2010). Therefore, whereas in the earlier versions of the literature, the concepts such as 'goodness of fit' and 'inconvenience' were at the forefront, the concepts of 'conditionality' and 'Copenhagen Criteria' are rather significant terms for the recent examples of the literature regarding the candidate countries.

Exploring the conceptual transformation of the Europeanisation literature as such is helpful in many ways. It, first of all, helps to understand and devise the literature's main assumptions and theoretical framework. Secondly, it gives an initial opportunity to answer the thesis' broader question of whether the 'Europeanisation' literature contributes to the attempt to understand the domestic discursive construction of the notion of 'Europe' and domestic political frontiers. I will explore further this broader question in the following section by presenting an overall conceptual and theoretical account of the Europeanisation literature.

### **3. EUROPEANISATION: NEITHER A CAMEL NOR A BIRD<sup>6</sup>**

The main aim of this section is to explore what the term 'Europeanisation' means for different scholars and academic strands and to identify the main arguments of each group. This initial concern with exploring what the term 'Europeanisation' entails aims to highlight the significant concepts and arguments it develops. However, this attempt is not exhaustive as

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<sup>6</sup> Here, I basically refer to a very common Turkish literal joke. 'Ostrich' in Turkish could be translated into English as 'camel-bird'. As ostrich does not have any relation either to camel or bird, yet has both of the components in it, this expression is usually used to point to the strange or ambiguous nature of a concept or structure.

this project's core concern is not to find out what 'Europeanisation' is. The core aim here is to sort out how 'Europe' is conceptualised in the Europeanisation literature, especially within the framework of the relationship between the European and the domestic level. By highlighting the main concerns of the academic debates and discussions on Europeanisation, it is possible to get one step nearer to the main claim of the thesis that the Europeanisation literature is unable to examine how 'Europe' is articulated as a discourse at the domestic level and contributes to the formation of domestic political frontiers.

One of the most extensive conceptions of the notion of 'Europeanisation' is that provided by Olsen (Olsen, 2002). According to this framework, Europeanisation has five possible repercussions: changes in external boundaries, developing institutions at the European level, central penetration of national systems of governance, exporting forms of political organization and a political unification project (Olsen, 2002: 923-924). Out of these five conceptions of 'change', Olsen focuses on two key dimensions of institutional change. 'First are changes in political organization (...) [and] second are changes in structures of meaning and people's minds' (Olsen 2002: 926). However, this focus on codes of meaning and worldviews is helpful for his broader aim of redefining political ideas, 'that give direction and meaning to capabilities and capacities' (Olsen, 2002: 926).

Kohler-Koch and Eising (1999) argue that Europeanisation is a process by which understandings of governance in Europe are changed. They argue, for instance, that Europeanisation has changed shared notions of governance in the EU member states by establishing the principle of partnership between public and private actors and by inserting regions into a complex set of layers of governance. Thus, the Europeanisation process is

basically characterized by, first, rule transfer and, secondly, the governance mode in which the myriad of levels, actors and sectors at the domestic level transfer the given rules. In this respect, at the domestic level, Europeanisation means the dissemination of a network mode of governance characterized by complex interactions between different levels, sectors and actors. What Olsen (Olsen, 2002) calls ‘mutual adaptation among co-evolving institutions’ within the framework of Europeanisation process implied by Kohler-Koch and Eising (1999) points to multi-level and multi-centre politics, finding their resonance best in the definition of the concept ‘governance’. Therefore, Europeanisation here is a reflection of the broader understanding of ‘governance without government’ (Kohler-Koch and Eising, 1999; Rhodes, 1997; Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992), and ‘a generator of changing governance structures’ (Sidenius, 1999: 178).

Similarly, Cowles et. al. (2001) defines Europeanisation as:

The emergence and development at the European level of distinct structures of governance, that is, of political, legal, and social institutions associated with political problem solving that formalise interactions among the actors, and of policy networks specialising in the creation of authoritative European rules (Cowles et. al., 2001:3).

Although, this conceptualization of the notion, ‘Europeanisation’ draws resemblance to what had been put forward previously in terms of the change of the governance structures at the European level, Cowles et. al.’s study of Europeanisation is crucial in terms of creating a new research agenda focusing particularly on ‘European sources of domestic politics’ (Vink, 2002: 3).



For Kabaalioğlu, the process of Europeanisation also entails the adoption of European values and mentality:

It is no way confined to a mere adaptation of European institutions and *acquis communautaire*<sup>7</sup> but also necessitates the adoption of values that are commonly shared by Europeans. Hence, the candidate countries need to determinedly alter their mentality to the way of doing things at the European level (Kabaalioğlu, 2005: IV).

On the other hand, according to Radaelli, Europeanisation means ‘a process of construction, diffusion and institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, “ways of doing things”, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourses, identities, political structures and public policies’ (Radaelli, 2003:30). Whilst defining Europeanisation, Radaelli departs from a core concern of finding out whether there is something new with the very concept to be engaged with a totally different research design (Radaelli, 2004). As his general conclusion is that Europeanisation is not a new theory, nor an ad-hoc approach, rather a way of organizing and orchestrating existing concepts; ‘Europeanisation should be seen as a problem, not as a solution’ (Radaelli, 2004:1). By the same token, Europeanisation is not the *explanans* (the solution, the phenomenon that explains the dependent variables), but the *explanandum* (the problem that needs to be explained) (Radaelli, 2004-*emphasis original*). It now makes more sense to start the consideration of Europeanisation from the actors, problems, resources, style and discourses at the domestic level as ‘by using time and temporal causal sequences, a bottom-up approach checks if, when and how the EU provides a change in any of the main components of the system of interaction’ (Radaelli, 2004: 4). In this respect, Cowles et. al.’s and Börzel and Risse’s so-called ‘structural’ position is counterposed by embracing not only the correlation between

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<sup>7</sup> ‘*Acquis communautaire* is the term used to refer to all the real and potential rights and obligations of the EU system and its institutional framework; the accession *acquis* is the whole body of the EU law and practice’ (Grabbe, 2003: 304-footnote 2).

input (EU as an independent variable) and output (domestic impact), but also whatever goes inside the process of Europeanisation.

#### **4. 'EUROPEANISATION' AS A MISFIT BETWEEN THE DOMESTIC AND EUROPEAN LEVELS**

In the previous section, I delineated a general framework that constitutes the Europeanisation literature in terms of the key points they emphasise. Especially, after Cowles, Caporaso and Risse's significant book, *Transforming Europe: Europeanisation and Domestic Change* (Cowles et. al, 2001), the discussion on the impact of Europe at the domestic level has been elaborated upon further, with numerous scholars focusing on different aspects of the notion of 'change'. One of the key points noted within these discussions was the misfit or 'goodness-of-fit' between the domestic and European levels. In this section, by exploring different versions of the Europeanisation literature and their depiction of Europeanisation as a misfit between the European level and the domestic level, I will argue that although different variants of the literature depict 'change' in different ways, these different insights do not focus *per se* on the meanings, representations, discourses and finally political frontiers at the domestic level.

According to Cowles et. al, in order to produce domestic effects, EU policy must be difficult to absorb at the domestic level. 'Inconvenience' and 'misfit' between European and domestic policies, processes and institutions are presented as a pre-condition for the Europeanisation process to be realized (Cowles et. al, 2001). The so-called 'goodness-of-fit' between the European and the domestic level determines the degree of pressure for adaptation exerted by Europeanisation upon the member states (Cowles et. al, 2001: 6-7). 'The lower the compatibility [is] between European and domestic processes policies and institutions, the

higher [is] the adaptational pressure' (Börzel and Risse, 2003: 5). They argue that the impact of Europeanisation will be most pronounced in cases of moderate goodness of fit. For instance, Caporaso (2004) argues that if there is a good fit, there is little pressure as in the case of the 'institutional fit' of European Central Bank (ECB) to the German economic system and we can just expect little response, except a straightforward policy response. However, Caporaso continues, if the fit is poor like the 'misfit' between the EMU and ECB and some of the Latin countries such as Spain, Portugal, Italy, and France, a larger response would be required (Caporaso, 2004). However, the 'goodness-of-fit' explanation may be a special case rather than a general explanation, as argued by Treib (2003), Thatcher (2004a) and Mastenbroek and van Keulen (2004). On the basis of empirical evidence from the transposition of six employment rights Directives in Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland, and the United Kingdom, Treib (2004) shows that fit or misfit between the European level and existing domestic policies and structures is not always the ultimate determinant of Europeanisation. Instead, he underlines the significance of domestic party politics in determining transposition performance to the European level requirements. Concentrating on the telecommunications sector, Thatcher (2004a) argues that, from an actor perspective, EU requirements may not be a 'pressure', but rather an opportunity. He seeks to find out how actors use European requirements and activities within their domestic arenas and claim that Europeanisation is unlikely to be neutral. 'Instead, we can expect it to advantage some actors and disadvantage others' (Thatcher, 2004a: 286). Focusing on the 'implementation' component of the European policies, Mastenbroek and van Keulen argue that member states 'balk at complying' with decisions that do not 'fit' their national preferences, but smoothly implement much-desired negotiating outcomes (Mastenbroek and van Keulen, 2004: 3).

## **5. EUROPEANISATION LITERATURE AND ITS REFERENCES TO POLITICAL FRONTIERS AND DISCOURSES**

The general picture of Europeanisation literature I sketched above does not completely omit a consideration of ‘discourse’. In particular, some examples of the second generation of Europeanisation studies which talk more of the domestic level and domestic actors refer to the concept of ‘discourse’ extensively. However, in doing so, they link the use of ‘Europe’ to discourse in order to legitimate reforms: ‘Actors use European integration as part of strategies of ‘communicative discourse’ to obtain assent to reforms. Discourse is a weapon for certain actors; and offers public evidence for the use of European integration as a resource’ (Thatcher, 2004: 287). Moreover, the emergence of a particular discourse is seen as a result of broader institutional contexts. ‘Discourse is always situated in broader institutional contexts, with institutions and culture framing the discourse, defining the repertoire of acceptable and expectable actions’ (Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004:193). For instance, Lazarou focuses on how the Europeanisation of Greek-Turkish relations led to a discourse transformation in the Greek press (Lazarou, 2009). She argues that post-1999 rapprochement between Greece and Turkey in the aftermath of Helsinki Council where Turkey has become an EU member caused a change in the Greek media from depiction of Turkey as an ‘enemy’ to an ‘assistance discourse’ (Lazarou, 2009).

This is pretty much the same within the framework of the EU enlargement and discursive impacts of the accession process. In terms of the EU enlargement in the Balkans, Ralchev argues that the EU’s minority discourse is an integral part of the Europeanisation discourse, which is a ‘political, public and decision-making motivation tool’ (Ralchev, 2007: 3). For

him, national governments in South Eastern Europe had to justify their decisions in front of the general public which formed the backbone of the minority discourse of the Balkan accession (Ralchev, 2007).

To reiterate, even if Europeanisation literature does not disregard the concept of ‘discourse’ completely, discourses are either reduced to the actors’ way of legitimising Europeanisation reforms in front of the general public or taken as a part/result of a general institutional, political or cultural change. Discourse is not taken to mean the relationship to hegemony or political frontiers, but rather treated as means of legitimising the impact of Europeanisation.

There is only one study dealing with the concept of ‘Europeanisation’ as ‘hegemony’ (Dimitrova, 2002). Dimitrova argues that before 1997, the peculiar structure of Bulgaria’s political sphere prevented the discourse of Europeanisation from becoming prevalent in the early stages of the post-communist transition (Dimitrova, 2002:70). This picture completely changed in the aftermath of the political crisis of 1997, when the delegitimisation of previously dominant political ideologies and the strong reform-minded coalition of the United Democratic Forces (UtDF) allowed the Europeanisation discourse to assume a hegemonic position (Dimitrova, 2002:70). She argues that the developments in the economic sphere within the context of Europeanisation had a recurrent impact on the limits of the hegemony of the Europeanisation discourse (Dimitrova, 2002: 80-88). Although she does not talk about the hegemony of Europeanisation in terms of its significance in influencing political alignments and frontiers, this study still remains as an outstanding example of the literature.

## 6. EUROPEANISATION LITERATURE AND TURKEY

Especially in the aftermath of 1999, it is possible to claim that Turkish scholars increasingly got preoccupied with the Europeanisation literature and its possible application to the Turkish case. However, due to the novelty of the EU integration process in Turkish context at least in terms of legal and institutional adaptation, studies applying the key concepts of the Europeanisation literature such as ‘goodness-of-fit’ or ‘misfit’ and elaborating on particular aspects of Europeanisation are genuinely rare<sup>8</sup>. At a very general level, the Europeanisation literature within the Turkish context is very similar to the Eastern and Balkan enlargement. It is usually used synonymously with ‘democratisation’ (e.g. Aydın and Keyman 2004; Müftüler-Baç, 2005; Öniş, 2010; Kubicek, 2005; Kardaş, 28 April 2008; Ulusoy, 2008) and ‘democratic consolidation’ (Kalaycıoğlu, 2005; Kubicek, 2005). In this respect, the tendency to pose a causal relationship between the European level and the domestic level within the framework of an inherent asymmetry is endemic and generic in the literature on Turkey. There are also intense references to the policy responses to the *acquis* and changes within the state machinery and legal structure (Tocci, 2005a), showing it as an ultimately one-way and unproblematised process.

The same tendency to present the exigencies set by the European level and the developments ‘on the ground’ within causality also shows itself at the identification of the impact of Europeanisation on Turkish domestic politics. The EU demands and the responses at the domestic level are presented simultaneously and the Europeanisation within this context is

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<sup>8</sup> The articles by Centre for European Studies (CES) of Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara, Turkey are exceptional in this regard. CES-METU has a research team composed of post-doctoral researchers who are extensively focusing on different aspects of Europeanization (see CES-METU website).

generally presented as an ‘external trigger’ that would lead to a re-alignment of Turkish politics (Öniş, 2007, 2009; Tocci, 2005a). In this respect, in line with the emergence of discourses as means of legitimising Europeanisation as explored in the previous section, different segments of Turkish society have used Europeanisation as a means of expanding their domain of action or the space available in domestic politics (Öniş, 2009:3). For instance, Öniş focuses on how AKP pushed for Europeanisation and reform in post-2002 reform in order to secure the interests of religious conservatives against secular elites whereas the secular elites saw Europeanisation as a means of protecting and consolidating the secular, Western-oriented character of Turkey, hence, as a bulwark against further Islamisation of Turkish society (Öniş, 2009: 3). The same point is raised by Yılmaz who argues that Europeanisation was first a tactic and then a strategy for the AKP elites (Yılmaz, 2009). He argues that the AKP elite, especially after the defeat of political Islam in Turkey by the ‘post-modern’ military intervention of 28 February 1997, took Europeanisation as a strategy to accommodate public displays of Islamic identity and to prove the compatibility of Muslim identity and European modernity (Yılmaz, 2009: 62). Similarly, Yankaya shows how MÜSİAD (Müstakil İşadamları Derneği- Independent Industrialists and Businessmen Association) after 2003 starts favouring Turkey’s Europeanisation, labelling this support as ‘political opportunism’ (Yankaya, 2009).

Even if the impact of Europeanisation on particular policy areas has not been as thoroughly explored regarding the Turkish case as it had previously been done for other countries, there has been considerable focus on the impact of Europeanisation on particular policies and policy areas such as foreign policy (e.g. Ulusoy, 2008; Aydın and Tocci, 2009), military (Sarigil, 2007), minority policy (e.g. Gregoriadis, 2008; Duyulmuş, 2008, Onar and Ozgüneş,

2010, Atikcan, 2008), citizenship policy (e.g. Keyman and İçduygu, 2005), asylum policy (e.g. İçduygu, 2007; Kirişçi, 2007), regional policy (e.g. Loewendahl- Ertugal, 2005), civil society (e.g. Kubicek, 2005; Rumelili, 2005; Balkır and Soyaltın, 2007; Yılmaz, 2009) and economic policy (e.g. Öniş and Bakır, 2007). In almost all of these studies, Europeanisation is labelled either as a cause of -or a response to - the European level or both of them simultaneously.

Another interesting study dealing with the concept of Europeanisation is ‘Europeanisation and its Discontents’ by Hakan Yılmaz (Yılmaz, 2009). Yılmaz in this study looks at Europeanisation from a Eurosceptic point of view and equates Europeanisation to EU support in the Turkish public sphere. After examining the evolution of the major Eurosceptic themes and movements in Turkey from the early years of the EEC–Turkey relations in the late 1950s until the Turkish general elections in 2007, he argues that for Europeanisation and democratisation attached to it to take place, pro-EU policies of the elites should be endorsed by the public opinion (Yılmaz, 2009).

All in all, the problematic nature of the Europeanisation literature shows itself in a different way in the Turkish case. The relationship between the European level and the domestic level is still unproblematic and categorical. The taken-for-grantedness of the concepts like ‘goodness-of-fit’ and ‘misfit’ is replaced by the uncontested emergence of the European level as a panacea for democratisation and modernisation within the framework of the examples of Europeanisation literature in Turkish context. Even if there are studies talking about discourses on Europeanisation, they usually focus on how different actors within the Turkish setting have used Europeanisation as a means of expanding their domain of action. There is



no study dealing with the concept of ‘hegemony’, let alone with political frontiers in this respect.

## **7. EARLIER CRITICISMS OF THE EUROPEANISATION LITERATURE**

Cowles et. al.’s and Börzel and Risse’s frameworks of Europeanisation have been criticised on many grounds. It is important to include these arguments here as the criticisms will facilitate the understanding of their conceptualisation, as well as its strengths and weaknesses.

First of all, the earlier versions of the Europeanisation literature are criticised for limiting the domestic impact of Europe to changing policy practices, and thus neglecting the more indirect ways in which European integration affects domestic politics (Vink, 2002).

At face value, such a top-down approach would imply that we need to look at, let’s say, domestic policy A at time t1 and t2 (before and after European integration in a given policy area), see how much it has changed, and analyse whether and how ‘Europe’ can be used to explain this change. Approaching Europeanisation, however, exclusively from a ‘top-down rather than bottom-up perspective’ may in the end fail to recognise the more complex two-way causality of European integration (Vink, 2002: 7).

This top-down approach obscures the conception of Europeanisation as a two-way process, rather focusing on ‘downward causation’ from the EU level to domestic structures (Bache, 2003: 3). In a similar vein, they put the adaptational pressure to the core of domestic change, which is not necessarily the case under every circumstance (Radaelli, 2004). ‘Domestic actors can use “Europe” even in the absence of pressure. They can adapt domestic policy and produce change independently of pressures arising from institutional misfit’ (Radaelli, 2004:7).

Moreover, their model is said to be very structural, on the grounds that ‘there is not enough room for agency’ (Radaelli, 2004). Their exclusive emphasis on domestic policy does not entail a clear vision of effects of domestic actors and the ways in which domestic politics and policies are reflected by them. Radaelli tries to overcome this problem by making reference to cognitive processes and ‘frame of references’ and to the complexity of the Europeanisation process with regard to time (Radaelli, 2004). In this way, ‘Europe’ becomes the ‘grammar’ of domestic political action (Radaelli, 2004: 10).

By the same token and by departing from the same emphasis on ‘frames of reference’, Radaelli argues that the existence of fully-fledged European policies is not a pre-condition for Europeanisation (Radaelli, 2004). This reference to the socialisation process not necessarily stemming from a policy change at home creates a very simple definition of Europeanisation, which has been detailed above: Europeanisation is change, either in response to EU pressure or as usage of Europe (Radaelli, 2004). That is, whether convergence or divergence is created by the process of Europeanisation is a derivative of domestic political processes. ‘So, although the EU may provide an “activating stimulus” for convergence, the actual process is driven by domestic politics’ (Radaelli, 2004:15).

The recent ‘bottom-up’ approaches give more room to the social processes at the domestic level to Europeanisation, trying to overcome the neglect of the domestic actors as the sole bearers of the European level. Radaelli’s conception in particular is quite revolutionary both in terms of considering Europeanisation in terms of actors, problems, resources, style and discourses at the domestic level and with regard to clarifying the epistemological confusion

about it. However, it still lacks the adequate focus on the domestic discourses and political frontiers. It still provides Europeanisation with a teleological and uncontested content. The domestic actors can pose resistance against the European pressure according to this conception, but various representations and meanings attached to Europeanisation at the domestic level are not the core concern of the literature.

## **8. RECENT CRITICISMS OF THE EUROPEANISATION LITERATURE: A POSSIBLE DIALOGUE WITH DISCOURSE THEORY?**

Although the Europeanisation literature has been one of the most popular and widely referenced literatures of political science since its launch in the 1990s, its content and scope has not remained unquestioned. Especially starting from early 2000s, the Europeanisation scholars showed intensive effort to clarify the conceptual scope of the ‘all-meaning concept’ and to find new trajectories for the future research, which very much related to the issue of how to theorise the domestic adaptation to ‘Europe’ (Vink and Graziano, 2007). A lot of scholars asked whether the Europeanisation research is a ‘passing fad’ or rather a more permanent part of the study of European politics (e.g. Featherstone and Radaelli 2003; Vink and Graziano, 2007, Egan et. al., 2009).

It could be claimed that this critical trend started with Claudio Radaelli’s intervention claiming that Europeanisation as such is not a theory, but rather a phenomenon that needs to be explained (Radaelli, 2004). With a similar aim, volumes such as *Europeanisation: New Research Agendas* by Graziano and Vink (2007) and *Research Agendas in EU Studies: Stalking the Elephant* by Egan, Nugent and Paterson (2009) attempt to find a new research

agenda for the field. According to Radaelli and Exadaktylos, the field is ready to move towards the exploration of ‘more ambitious questions, such as: what does the Europeanisation tell us about the politics of integration, power and legitimacy?’ (Radaelli and Exadaktylos, 2009: 208). Similarly, Mair points out that the field of European studies is mature enough to relate specific European-focused research to more wide-ranging patterns of mass political and institutional development (Mair, 2007: 165).

As an example, Radaelli and Pasquier emphasise the significance of the concept of ‘temporality’ and the role of ‘Europe’ in politics and claim that the narrow understanding of ‘impact’ on the part of the Europeanisation literature should be broadened (Radaelli and Pasquier, 2007: 37). Another important direction shown by Radaelli and Pasquier is the need on the part of the literature to draw on the classical categories of political science. In understanding how domestic political systems are penetrated by the logic of the EU politics and policy, the Europeanisation literature, in this respect, should extend its scope to concepts such as ‘politicisation’ and ‘socialisation’ and long-term dynamics such as conflict, cleavages and the distribution of political resources (Radaelli and Pasquier, 2007: 43).

Similarly, Mair also argues that the literature relied too much on ‘standardised quantitative variables that can be used directly in highly abstract cross-national research’ (Mair, 2007: 162). Instead, what is needed here is a more systematic comparison of political discussion at the national level as revealed in parliamentary debates, or in contests surrounding referendums, or in the ebb and flow of the arguments used in national election campaigns. ‘We need to know more about how Europe actually plays in national political discourse, as well as about the way in which it is conceived’ (Mair, 2007: 162).

The need for dealing with broader questions of political science is also accompanied with paying attention to sociological questions. Although not posed as a direct critique, Delanty and Rumford's work could be read along these lines, where the latter is criticised on the grounds that it 'is primarily concerned with conceptualising the emerging shape of the European polity' (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 1). By situating Europe and the EU within a broader global context, they aim to evaluate Europeanisation as a cosmopolitan process strictly bound up with societal transformations, new social models and normative ideals, which would open up 'a field of social possibilities' instead of focusing on the change of the institutions and state (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 4-10). They argue:

Europe is being socially constructed out of disparate projects, discourses, models of societies, imaginaries and in conditions of contestation, resistances and diffused through processes of globalization. What is being claimed in this is that Europeanisation is a process of social construction, rather than one of state building and one in which globalization, in all its facets, plays a key role in creating its conditions. (Delanty and Rumford, 2005:6)

Although Delanty and Rumford do not focus on how Europeanisation influences political frontiers at the domestic level and stress this process as 'hegemony', the location of the concept within a broader context of globalisation in a more society-informed manner and the link sustained between Europeanisation and 'discursive and socio-cognitive transformation within the society' (Rumford and Delanty, 2005: 19) set a novel and unique alternative to the Europeanisation literature.

Another unique approach to Europeanisation with similar concerns comes from Kaliber (Kaliber, 2008). Kaliber argues that in order to comprehend better societal and political

transformations that the process of Europeanisation triggers one should associate it with the project of political modernity as a wider historical context, which is hardly done by the Europeanisation literature (Kaliber, 2008: 3). For him, by rendering Europeanisation a linear, natural, inevitable process, the literature ignores the historicities and specificities of distinct cases and hence overlooks possible deviancies, discontinuities and ruptures in absorbing Europeanisation, thereby getting closer to a neo-evolutionist approach (Kaliber, 2008: 7-8). Although his main focus is on the need to study the articulate civil society as an agent for democratic transformation in Turkey, Kaliber's work constitutes an important and astute critique of and intervention to the Europeanisation literature.

Similarly, in a special issue of *European Journal of Turkish Studies* devoted to providing the Europeanisation literature on Turkey with a more sociologically-informed perspective to understand Turkey-EU relations, Visier argues that the political actors are not as intentional and fully-informed as the Europeanisation literature claims in terms of using and interacting with 'Europe' and the issue of 'Europe' might lead to complex and ambiguous positions. According to Visier, socially engaged actors occupy different positions in their original socio-political spaces and are involved in struggles for positions, thus structuring configurations at the national, European, international and transnational levels. 'Studying socio-political configurations and their lasting quality or possible reconstruction provides an understanding of the wide-ranging effects of Europe's emergence as a new horizon of meaning' (Visier, 2009: 7).

Under the light of these concerns, new questions and a new agenda that would relate the literature to broader questions of political science and sociology also mean for the current study that there is more room to engage with the Europeanisation literature than the difference between the two in terms of scope and aim would point to. First of all, the need to redefine ‘the European impact’ claimed by the volume by Graziano and Vink in fact necessitates a redefinition of what the scholars of the literature should understand by ‘Europe’. The earlier intervention by Delanty and Rumford also points to a similar need to understand ‘Europe’ as a possibility for societal transformations, new social models and normative ideals (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 4-10).

The recent need on the part of the Europeanisation literature to pay attention to the debates and contests culminating around ‘Europe’ at the domestic level clearly shows that the new trajectory of the literature is tilting towards seeing ‘Europe’ as a contestation where the domestic actors define and redefine their positions and roles. This is the third group of studies I mentioned in Chapter 1, with which this study is aligned as well. In this respect, the notion of ‘hegemony’, which is the focus of this study, might constitute a novel platform for the Europeanisation literature on which the ‘European impact’ is redefined.

Secondly, if the Europeanisation literature would pay attention to the questions of power and legitimacy as Radaelli and Exadaktylos point out (2009), it is necessary to take a closer look at the political sphere. This is even more relevant in case of the candidate states where the ‘uncertainty and power asymmetry embedded in the notion of conditionality’ (Sunay, 2008: 1) go beyond the technicalities of the policy processes of the candidate states and is politicised by the political actors. In this respect, the notion of ‘intervening variable’ is widely used by

the Europeanisation literature which point out to the specific domestic conditions that explain the variable domestic impact of 'Europe' (e.g. Radaelli, 2004; Poguntke et.al., 2007; Grabbe, 2003). However, a closer look at the politicisation of the notion of 'conditionality' and the antagonisms that the conditionality articulates at the political landscape, that this thesis is interested in, open the door to a broader reconceptualisation of how domestic level interacts with discourses and thereby enrich the debate culminating around 'conditionality' constituting a new research horizon for the literature.

Thirdly, the performative aspect of the Europeanisation also has to be redefined. As the volume by Visier et.al. shows, there is a need on the part of the Europeanisation literature to define the political actors as undecisive and unintentional in order to understand how 'Europe' becomes an issue within the political arena. As the current research claims, the articulation of subject positions on 'Europe' is a gateway to understanding how these discourses and subject positions acquire performativity through the hegemonic struggle and transform the political identities of the engaged actors by demarcating political frontiers. It is exactly a noteworthy attempt on the part of more sociologically-informed variants of Europeanisation literature to take 'Europe' as 'a new horizon of meaning' (Visier, 2009: 7).

All in all, although the Europeanisation literature and this thesis have different aims and foci as I outlined above, the current endeavour contributes to the EU studies literature in the sense that it makes use of concepts such as 'discourse', 'hegemony' and 'antagonism' to identify how 'Europe' and Turkish politics interacted in the 1999-2008 period. This reading fits well with the literature's recent endeavour to redefine 'the European impact' and to engage with



broader questions of political science and sociology, which makes this thesis helpful and interesting to read by the Europeanisation scholars.

## **9. CONCLUSION: WHY EUROPEANISATION LITERATURE?**

Setting the Europeanisation literature as the departure point of this project might appear somewhat puzzling given its marginal status for the argument of the thesis as a whole. As such it might lead to the question of why to begin the thesis with a review of literature the usefulness of which is subsequently rejected. Nevertheless, the foregoing discussion of Europeanisation was undertaken for a number of reasons. Firstly, I want to iterate why it is problematic to reduce the emergence of the notion of ‘Europe’ in Turkish politics to a manifestation of Europeanisation. This is particularly important as the Europeanisation literature would typically be the first reference point for those seeking to research the 1999-2008 period in Turkey with a particular reference to ‘Europe’ and domestic debates. In this study, I am rather trying to show the shortcomings of the existing literature in terms that identify the domestic discourses on ‘Europe’ and their impact on domestic political frontiers. Secondly, this contributes to the novel theoretical approach developed here regarding ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. As the study will show, the hegemony of ‘Europe’ does not originate from the automaticity of the relationship between the European and domestic level as stipulated by the Europeanisation literature, but rather from the power of discourses on ‘Europe’ regarding the way in which they create antagonisms and demarcate political frontiers in the 1999-2006 period. In this respect, the current project offers a novel approach to the Europeanisation literature where *the political* is not only given and constructed but is also reflexive and open to contestation and negotiation.

Thirdly, as different in scope and content as the Europeanisation literature and the discourse theory are, the current attempt provides the former with a novel research agenda with respect to this thesis's interest in the notions of 'hegemony' and 'antagonisms', to say the least. As mentioned above, the Europeanisation scholars' recent attempt to search for new research trajectories and agendas and the claimed need on the part of the literature to tackle with broader questions of political science and sociology might mean the introduction of the notions of 'hegemony', 'political frontiers' and 'antagonism' to the research agenda of the literature.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **DIFFERENT THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON DISCOURSES ON ‘EUROPE’ AND POLITICAL FRONTIERS: PITFALLS AND INPUTS**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the previous section, I highlighted the main premises of the Europeanisation literature in order to show its shortcomings in terms of identifying the domestic discourses on ‘Europe’ and their impact on political frontiers. The Europeanisation literature, which is possibly the favourite literature within the academic repertoire focusing on Turkish politics during the late 1990s and 2000s, firstly, does not focus on the discourses and meanings at the domestic level and secondly, does not tell us a full story of how ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ constructs political frontiers and identities. By sustaining a relationship of automaticity and causality between the European level and domestic level and rendering it an ordinate vs. super ordinate one, the Europeanisation literature depicts a different picture of ‘hegemony’. Hegemony, according to the analytical framework of the Europeanisation literature, does not originate from the automaticity of this relationship between two levels, but from the significance of discourses on ‘Europe’ in terms of creating antagonisms and demarcating political frontiers in the 1999-2006 period.

In this section, I will explore possible theoretical approaches to understanding how discourses on ‘Europe’ hegemonise the political terrain and thereby construct political frontiers. As I have already mentioned in the Introduction chapter, the pitfalls I had pointed out above are best accommodated by the discourse theory, the theoretical framework I will be using in this project. However, before thoroughly exploring my theoretical framework, I will first refer to

the social constructivist approach for a number of reasons. First of all, this would answer the question of why it would not be enough to use the theoretical framework of social constructivism to understand the discourses on ‘Europe’ at the domestic level and their impact on political frontiers. If there is not enough room in the Europeanisation literature for understanding ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ and how it constructs political frontiers, why not resort to the social constructivist perspective which is more assertive in terms of discourses, meanings and representations? Is it not easier to go one step further from thereon and argue that discourses on Europe are socially constructed? What is the significance or added value of using a poststructuralist discourse theory, that of Laclau and Mouffe in particular in this respect? In this respect, the main argument of the section on social constructivism will be that it does not forge the link between the construction of discourses and political frontiers because it is mainly preoccupied with understanding how meaning is constructed and in doing so assumes that identities are stable and uncontested. More importantly, the depiction of *the political* in the social constructivist register is not sufficient at all to allow for a full grasp of political frontiers.

Secondly, I will move on to scrutinising different strands of discourse theory. Thanks to the ‘turn of language’<sup>9</sup>, iterating a renewed interest in language in political theory starting from 1960s, discourse increasingly constitutes a burning issue in the political science agenda (see Norval, 2000; Howarth, 2000). In this section, by making a reference to the historical venture of discourse theory stretching from de Saussure to Foucault, I will outline its main premises in order to locate Laclau- Mouffean discourse theory in its proper historical and conceptual

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<sup>9</sup> Norval (2000) argues that it was Richard Rorty’s 1967 volume *The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in Philosophical Method* that popularised the use of the term. However, I will not focus on this linguistic turn and the literature attached to it. It suffices to say that political science was immensely penetrated by the ordinary language analysis by the scholars such as Wittgenstein and Austin during the 1960s.

context. Subsequently, I will explore the use of discourse theory in European studies. . By making a special reference to the works of Wæver, Larsen, Hansen, Diez and Rosamond, I will show how these studies focus on different constructions of discourses on ‘Europe’, creating a particular reality and how the present thesis sits within a broader spectrum of European studies.

Last, but not least, I will present the main arguments of Laclau and Mouffe by giving a particular importance to the concepts of ‘hegemony’, ‘articulation’, ‘antagonism’ and ‘the social’ and ‘the political’, focusing particularly on how discourses are articulated vis-à-vis the antagonisms and the political frontiers within the ‘social’.

## **2. ‘IS DISCOURSE WHAT WE MAKE OF IT’?<sup>10</sup>: SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM AND THE DISCOURSES ON ‘EUROPE’**

### **2.1. Introduction**

As already mentioned in the second chapter, the point of departure for this project is, besides its strengths, the Europeanisation literature is problematic in terms of identifying the domestic discourses on ‘Europe’ and their impact on domestic political frontiers. The earlier examples of the literature sets a relationship of automaticity and causality between the European and the domestic level, which disregards discourses, meanings and presentations as they occur ‘on the ground’.

The solution that could be, and has already been, offered to this problem is social constructivism, the second group of studies mentioned in Chapter 1 (‘Europe-as-

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<sup>10</sup> Here, I basically refer to Alexander Wendt’s article ‘Anarchy is What States Make of it’, which appeared in 1992 and is referred as one of the milestones of the social constructivist literature

construct’)(for main examples of social constructivism see Risse, 2004; Onuf, 1989; Wendt, 1999; Checkel, 2006). With its reference to human consciousness and ideational factors, social constructivism ‘insists that human agents do not exist independently from their social environment and its collectively shared systems of meanings’ (Risse, 2004: 160). Thus, social structures and agents are mutually co-determined and constituted. By the same token, we cannot describe the properties of social agents without reference to the social structure in which they are embedded. A possible follow-up to this premise is that any social phenomenon affects the ways in which actors see/define themselves and constitute their discursive and behavioral practices accordingly. This focus on social practices takes ‘words, language and communicative utterances seriously’ as language is constitutive of the reality (Risse, 2004: 164). Thus, according to the constructivist approach, international reality is not merely the product of physical forces and material power, whether military and economic, but is a phenomenon socially constructed through discursive power (the power of knowledge, ideas, culture, ideology, and language) (Adler 1997; Hopf 1998).

Having said that, it is now more convenient to make a reference to social constructivist framework which takes words, language and communicative utterances seriously. It is easier, but is it really sufficient? This section on social constructivism will focus on that question.

## **2.2. Main premises of Social Constructivism**

In this section, I will present the main premises of social constructivism in congruence with the scope of the project and argue that in spite of the new and stronger position ascribed to meanings and representations, social constructivism is not really interested in understanding the political impact of discourses. I will depart from the premise that the genuine focus of social constructivism is less about the construction of political frontiers and more about understanding how meaning is constructed.

The theoretical roots of social constructivism dates back to the late 1980s, as the first signs of the demise of the Cold War became visible, which culminated in the so-called ‘constructivist turn’ (Checkel, 1998; Wæver, 1999) As Hacking contends, if social constructivism stipulates challenging the inevitability of the status-quo, then it is not surprising that the unexpected fall of the wall gave new legitimacy to such claims (Hacking, 1999: 6). Alexander Wendt (1987) introduced the agent-structure problem to IR scholarship and John Ruggie (1989) questioned the inability of traditional international relations theory to deal with historical transformations (Fierke and Jorgensen, 2001).

As already mentioned, one of the main problems that social constructivism focuses on is the agent-structure problem. For Wendt, agents and structures mutually constitute themselves and interact (1987). Inspired by Anthony Giddens’s ‘structuration theory’, which argues that the relationship between agents and structures are relational and mutually constitutive, Wendt tries to overcome the problems associated with structuralist ontology stipulating pre-given

categories determining agents' behaviours via a dialectical synthesis' between structure and agency that overcomes the subordination of one to the other (Wendt, 1987).<sup>11</sup> Thus, according to this conception of structure and agency, social structures are inseparable from spatial and temporal structures and the dialectical synthesis of structure and agent is necessary (Wendt, 1987). Nevertheless, actors can change these social structures and thus constitute them as well. This is also called an 'ontological middle way' (Adler, 1997; Christiansen et. al, 1999).

This problematisation of structure and agency and the main tenets of constructivism in international relations later culminated in Alexander Wendt's watershed article, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it' published in 1992 (Wendt, 1992a). In this regard, 'states may have made that system competitive, self-help one in the past, but by the same token they may 'unmake' those dynamics in the future' (Wendt, 1992b:183), as implied in another article. In this respect, what concerns him is the problematic of identity, in the sense that our ideas about ourselves and our environment shape our interactions and are shaped by our interactions; thereby creating the social reality. Identity seems to be the main concept in Wendt's constructivism as it sits at the nexus between reproducing and changing a situation (Zehfuss, 2001). In this respect, 'what states make of anarchy is related to their conception of identity' (Zehfuss, 2001: 58).

On the other hand, constructivists' preoccupation with language is most clearly seen in Nicholas Onuf's work. According to him, human beings construct reality through their deeds,

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<sup>11</sup> According to Doty, scientific realism is necessary for the ontology of structuration theory as well, which claims that unobservable structures are real and important, though it is not clear how this stance is set together with scientific realism's claim that structures operate according to a 'natural necessity' (see Doty, 1997; Bhaskar, 1975). For the elaboration of structure and agency relationship in structuration theory, see Giddens, 1976, 1979, 1981, 1994, 1998; Hay, 2002: 118-122, Bryant and Jary, 1991.



which may be speech acts<sup>12</sup>. Speech acts in turn may be institutionalised into rules and thereby provide the context and the basis of meaning for further human action (Zehfuss, 2001). In this respect, meaning in human social relationships depends on the existence of rules, which are essentially social. According to Onuf, rules construct agents out of individual human beings by enabling them to act upon the world in which they find themselves (Onuf, 1997: 8). That is, 'rules make agents and society what they are, and they make rule a necessary condition for agents in society' (Onuf, 1997: 15).

These acts have material and social effects; they make the world what it is materially and socially. Agents are never lacking in purpose, motives or intentions, even if they find it difficult to articulate the reasons for their actions (...) They use resources, made such through rules, to achieve their intentions. Whether agents articulate their reasons for acting by reference to the opportunities that available resources afford or observers do so for them, we recognise agents' interests in the results (Onuf, 1997: 8).

This at the same time gives clues to how constructivists handle one of the most crucial questions preoccupying the scholars of international relations: the formation of interests. According to social constructivists, state interests emerge from and are endogenous to interaction with structures (Checkel, 1998). Interests, just like identities, are therefore endogenous factors and can be changed (see Rosamond, 2000:172). This endogenous view on interests distinguishes social constructivists from rationalists, which see interests as mainly exogenous to interaction with structures (Checkel, 1998).

In a nutshell, Christensen, Jorgensen and Wiener (1999: 533) summarise 'the constructivist turn' (Checkel, 1998; Wæver 1999) as consisting of three moves- an epistemological turn

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<sup>12</sup> Theory of 'speech act' stipulates that 'in saying something, we do something' (Austin, 1975: 94). Hence, in line with the concept of 'illocutionary acts', the term used by John L. Austin in his *How to do Things with Words*, the acts can occur if the audience learns that the act has been performed. 'Language is performative in that it does not only take note of, say, the founding of the European Economic Community (EEC). Instead, it is *through* language that this founding is performed' (Diez, 1999:600-*emphasis original*). This point will be elaborated more in the section on the use of discourse analysis in European studies.

towards the role of intersubjectivity, an ontological move whereby structure was redefined from 'anarchy' as a given towards the effect of the social interaction among states, and the importance of shared norms in terms of institutions (quoted in Wæver, 1999:3). That is, the two priorities of social constructivism in IR theory, as Mendelski (2006) summarises, are the mutual constitution of structures and agents where social structures constitute actors by allowing them to act or by restricting their actions and by giving them their social identity and changeability of identities and interests where social norms and social interaction influence the behaviour of actors and define also their interests and identities (Checkel, 1998; Christiansen et al, 1999).

In the case of Europe, social constructivists seem to be predominantly interested in how national interests and identities can be altered and how a European identity is created. Above all the interest lies in the interaction process between the European and the national level as well as the constitution of a new European 'polity' (Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener, 1999). In his article on social construction and European integration, Checkel mainly focuses on the processes of learning and socialisation especially within the institutions of the EU (Checkel, 1999). According to Smith, his constructivist accounts offer alternative ways of conceptualising the relationship between norms, discourse, language and material capabilities, which is able to capture the range of institutional dynamics at work in contemporary Europe fully (Smith, 1999: 685). However much these priorities are avowed by neo-functionalism, the differences, according to Checkel, are significant. While neo-functionalism is not a substantive theory that predicts constant learning or a growing sense of collective identity, but rather a more modest one, constructivism is a middle-range theoretical approach seeking to understand identity formation conditions (Checkel, 1999).

On the other hand, more critical/radical variants of constructivism predominantly and exclusively deal with language. Discourse/theoretical methods are again emphasised but with a greater emphasis on the power and domination inherent in language. Key sources of theoretical inspiration lie in linguistic approaches. Moreover, besides their preoccupation with language, radical constructivists add an explicitly normative dimension by probing a researcher's own implication in the reproduction of the identities and world he/she is studying. In this respect, nothing scholars do, be they analytic or methodological, is academically innocent and thus this politicised view of the academy, which is far from being problem-driven, characterises the critical/radical version of constructivism (Checkel, 2006).

### **2.3. *The Political in the Social Constructivist account***

As mentioned above, social constructivism created an inspiring and convincing perspective to assert the substantive role of representations and construction of meanings. This approach is very helpful in most ways. First of all, '[social constructivism] allows us to be critical towards or at least innovative with regard to the mainstream' (Guzzini, 2000: 148). This is quite revolutionary for a discipline which was heavily being dominated by the mainstream rationalist assumptions during the 1980s. Secondly, it introduces the 'social' connotation to the ways in which we understand reality through its focus on meanings, representations, values and norms. By the same token, it introduces the concept of 'discourse' as a significant phenomenon to the realm of social inquiry. Now, thanks to social constructivism, the question, 'how are discourses on "Europe" created?' is a legitimate research question for political science scholars and students.

As inspiring and helpful in understanding social reality as social constructivism is, real focus is different from the aim of this project in many ways, as has already been mentioned in Chapter 1. First of all, in its attempt to understand social reality, social constructivism somewhat assumes that the concepts of identity and norms are uncontested and stable. Writing about the German military involvement abroad, Zehfuss argues that a constructivist would start from a given and unquestioned norm structure. In this way, ‘the use of military becomes the only feasible alternative in a world limited by material conditions such as the possibility of death. In other words, by attempting to start from reality, the status quo is privileged as independent and binding conditions that limit our possibilities are asserted’ (Zehfuss, 2002: 254-55).

Similarly, in the case of identities, the concept of identity is stable, commonsensical and unproblematic. ‘In the case of moderate constructivism, identity becomes central as the result of a basic ontological assumption: that identity, rather than instrumental rationality, constitutes interests and thus determines the behaviour of agents in the international system, and that interest cannot therefore be taken to be stable givens’ (Ortmann, 2007: 10). However, this does not necessarily point out how the political identities of agents could be shaped by the discourses on ‘Europe’. Although the core focus of this project is not identities per se, the shaping of the political identities implicitly slides in as I am interested in how political frontiers are drawn and redrawn by discourses on ‘Europe’.

Secondly, although it had attached an utmost importance to meanings and representations, the role of language has been largely ignored in the debate between rationalists and constructivists. According to Fierke, ‘the avoidance of language is in part a reflection of the

effort to create distance from poststructuralists, who are associated with interpretative relativism. It is also a reflection of the middle ground's focus on ontology' (Fierke, 2007: 175). This is the main reason why radical constructivists are radical in attributing a central role to language.

Last but not least, the role attributed to *the political* is somewhat epiphenomenal in social constructivism. The main aim is to understand how a certain phenomenon, concept or identity is constructed through a socially-enriched perspective. There is little within this inquiry about the political as the social constructivism somewhat sacrifices the political in favour of the social. As Walker rightly argues, political in this perspective is understood 'only within terms set by a specific rendition of what it means to be political, and of where the political is to be found' (Walker, 1995: 312). Radical constructivists, on the other hand, add an explicitly normative dimension to social enquiry by probing a researcher's own implication in the reproduction of the identities and world he/she is studying, therefore providing a political role to language and discourse (Checkel, 2006). Thus, how we are telling a story reifies a political perspective besides the fact that how the very act of telling that story changes the landscape of the political for radical constructivists, which will be explored in the forthcoming sections within the context of European studies.

### **3. STRUCTURALISM, POST STRUCTURALISM AND DISCOURSE THEORY: WHAT PURCHASE FOR UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL FRONTIERS?**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Especially starting from the 1960s with the 'turn of language', the concept of 'discourse' started being very pervasive and significant in the realm of political theory. Generally

speaking, the main fault line regarding the myriad of approaches to ‘discourse’ has been whether language/discourse is itself constitutive of the social reality, or whether it is a mere and neutral means of communication. Broadly speaking, we could distinguish between two main strands of theoretical approaches to discourse in this respect: the first category of discourse analysis is limited to conclusions about discourse or the language itself. This strand restricts language/discourse to texts and defines it external to the agents, drawing a sharp line between language and society. Structural linguistic analysis and logical positivism fall in this category (for examples see Barthes and Duisit, 1975; Harris, 1951; Burton, 1982). ‘As everyone knows, linguistics stops at the sentence; it is the last unit that falls within its scope; for if the sentence-being an order and not a sequence-is not reducible to the sum of its words, and constitutes therefore an original unit, an enunciation, on the other hand, is nothing but the succession of the sentences it contains’ (Barthes and Duisit, 1975: 239). By contrast, much discourse analysis in social psychology, sociology and political science has a broader focus, often rejecting any discursive/social distinction, on the grounds that all discourse is action and all action is discursive. The discourse is defined in terms of the projections and conclusions it establishes about social or political processes or structures. Discourse analysis in this respect stipulates that ‘language is not only a means of communication and a transparent medium through which already formed ideologies, identities and attitudes are expressed, but rather actively constructs socially shared representations of the world and constructs individuals as *subjects* but recreates and constructs the socially shared representations of the world’ (Philips, 1998: 849-*emphasis original*). Poststructural and critical discourse analysis fall in this category (for examples see Fairclough, 1992a; 1992b, Potter, 1996, Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Foucault, 1972). According to Ball, this second approach is indicative of not only a renewed interest in the nature and functions of language but also of the realisation ‘that our language

does not merely mirror the world, but is instead partially constitutive of it' (Ball, 1985; quoted in Norval, 2000: 314).<sup>13</sup>

In this section, in line with the general theoretical spirit of the project, I will focus on a poststructuralist reading of 'discourse' in order to show how poststructuralism provides discourse with a significant political connotation. After giving a general register of structuralist theory which provides a good starting point for understanding poststructuralist theory in general and Laclau- Mouffean discursive framework in particular, I will outline main underpinnings of Foucauldian discourse analysis. I will argue that although Foucault presents an inspiring account of concepts such as discourse and power and focus on the reflexive aspects of discourse, he does not problematise how discursive formations reflect upon a broader account of political frontiers.

The thesis will then move on to consider the use of discourse theory in European studies. As the notion of 'Europe' presents a highly fruitful resource for students, scholars and academics dealing with European politics, that it is a unit of analysis in the literature on discourse is no surprise. Be it in the form of a poststructuralist analysis presenting 'Europe' as a concept to be deconstructed within the 'European' discourse or in the form of the textual analysis of the speeches of political leaders in Europe, much has been said on the use of discourse theory regarding European politics.

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<sup>13</sup> At this point, it is important to note that I am following Philips's distinction of approaches to discourse where the dividing line is whether language is reflexive in the sense that 'it constructs socially shared representations of the world' (Philips, 1998: 849). By doing this, I do not claim that critical discourse analysis and post structuralist discourse analysis have an identical approach to discourse. As Shepherd rightly argues, critical discourse analysis discourses are constrained by a material reality whereas poststructuralist discourse analysis does not conceive of a distinction between discursive and non-discursive (Shepherd, 2008: 17-18).

As the main aim of this project is to understand how ‘Europe’ is constructed on a discursive basis at the domestic level, I will mainly refer to the first group of studies which entails that the concept of ‘Europe’ is fixed, articulated or dislocated through a certain use of discourse, creating a particular reality which would have been different if the notion would have been articulated differently. In this respect, I will refer to the works of Ole Wæver, Henrik Larsen, Lene Hansen, Thomas Diez and Ben Rosamond. Such a general register of discourse theory in European studies is important to locate different representations and meanings of ‘Europe’ in Turkish political debates, which this thesis aims to identify, into a broader scholarly context of European studies. It is also important to note that there are other studies using discourse analysis for understanding European politics, which either focus on how discourses impact upon particular European policies (for some examples see Hansen and Sorensen, 2005; Griggs, 2005; Mottier, 2005) or how discourses shape European identity from a psychoanalytic perspective (Stavrakakis, 2005), neither of which are included here due to space and their only limited relevance for the present study.

Finally, I will present the main arguments of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe with a particular emphasis on the concepts of ‘hegemony’, ‘articulation’, ‘antagonism’ and ‘the social’ and ‘the political’, and on the question how discourses are theorised in their articulation vis-à-vis the antagonisms and the political frontiers within the ‘social’ by Laclau and Mouffe.

### **3.2. Structuralism**

Structuralist theory provides a good starting point for understanding poststructuralist theory in general and Laclau-Mouffean discursive framework in particular because many theoretical



underpinnings of the latter have been developed both as a derivative of and as a reaction to the structuralist conception of discourse and language.

‘Structuralists emphasise that all human actions are best viewed as symbolic systems of practice, and researchers in the social sciences have deployed the methods and assumptions of structuralism to develop sophisticated conceptions of social formations, and to explain events such as the actions of states’ (Howarth, 2000). Kearney argues that structuralism, being a method rather than a theory, aims to analyse seemingly isolated events and meanings with the motive to find underlying structural laws. It seeks, he argues, to contemplate *the particular* by describing its relationship with the totality of general codes, *the general*. It looks for the deep and hidden structures beneath the surface manifestations of meaning (Kearney, 1994).

Keeping on the same track to find structural rules that determine the significance, meaning and function of the individual elements of a system, Ferdinand de Saussure distinguishes between *the signified* (concept) and *the signifier* (a sound image<sup>14</sup>) (Saussure, 1967: 66, quoted in Pülzl, 2001: 6). For Saussure, ‘the linguistic sign unites a concept and a sound image. The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression it makes’ (Saussure, 1967: 66). Thus, the sign *dog* consists of a signifier that sounds like d-o-g (and appears in the written form as *dog*) and the concept of a ‘dog’, which signifier designates (Scott, 2007: 140).

The signifier and the signified are connected to each other via the structural rules of the language. Pülzl (2001) compares this connection to a piece of paper with the signifier on one

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<sup>14</sup> ‘For a detailed definition of the ‘sound image’, please see Saussure, 1967

side and the signified on the other. 'If you try to tear the paper apart, you will interrupt the connection between them. The example of the piece of paper shows that the connection between the signifier and the signified is fixed, as it is difficult to tear the paper apart without tearing both' (Pülzl, 2001: 6). However, at the same time, there is no natural relationship between the signifier and the signified: the relationship between the word "Europe" and the continent, civilisation, culture etc. itself is not necessarily a natural association, but only a function and the derivative of the language we use. In this respect, the relationship between both is flexible; and Saussure links this flexibility to the 'arbitrary nature of the sign' (Saussure, 1974:68). This means that they are not necessarily linked to each other, but that the concept could be linked to another sound image. Thus, there is no existing property that fixes the signified. *The signifier* and *the signified* are fixed with regard to their relationships to other the signifiers and the signifieds in a particular language (Culler, 1976: 23). In the above example, there is no necessary reason why the sign *dog* is associated with the concept of a 'dog': it is simply a function and convention of the language we use (Scott, 2007: 140). The linguistic entity is determined not with reference to a fixed meaning, but within another kind of system, that Saussure compares to a chess game, in which the identity of a particular piece is only intelligible in terms of its function with the whole (Weber, 1976).

A similar relationship could be seen between *the langue*, i.e. "systemic totality of all possible linguistic usages" (Kearney, 1994: 241) and *the parole*. *The parole*, in contrast, refers to any particular act of language; it is the actual manner in which we realise the possibilities of the abstract language system in our everyday utterances' (Kearney, 1994: 241). In distinguishing language and speech, he gives more emphasis to the former, rendering the empirical manifestation of the language, i.e. speech, epiphenomenal.

Saussure's theoretical framework is significant in terms of showing that language is not a transparent means of communication which is used unproblematically to disseminate our ideas, i.e. a nomenclature, – that it creates meaning by reference to something external to it such as ideas or physical objects (Ives, 2005). According to Ives, Laclau and Mouffe apply Saussure's understanding of language to political analysis in order to get 'beyond Gramsci' and overcome the persistence of economic determinism (Ives, 2005). 'Just as Saussure argues about language, subject positions are defined purely in terms of their relations with other subject positions' (Ives, 2005:460).

Although structuralism provides a significant set of concepts and logics to understand the language and society, it is hard to argue that there is a feasible structuralist framework of discourse. Saussure's preoccupation with language, which at the same time showed his indifference to discursivity or extra-discursivity, precipitated a closed system of signs and meanings. According to Howarth (2000), poststructuralist writers such as Jacques Derrida seek to remedy these deficiencies by 'deconstructing Saussure's sharp distinction between speech and writing [*the langue* and *the parole*], signifiers and signifieds' (Howarth, 2000: 36). The 'post' prefix here signifies the differentiation of this school of thought from the structuralism of Saussure, Lacan, Althusser and Lévi-Strauss where 'truth' is taken to reside behind or within texts and structures (e.g. linguistic, psychic or socio-economic) that are seen as well-fitting, rounded and stable 'totalities' (Henriques *et al*, 1984). On the other hand, poststructuralism is often identified with 'deconstruction'-the displacement of the constructed naturalness of a text and the taken-for-grantedness of the truth attached to it (for further detail, see Derrida, 1976). Thus, knowledge and truth are not certain, stable and fixed categories, but

are considered to be socially and discursively constructed and are thus transient. In this respect, what we face is multiple 'realities', contingency, and uncertainty (Wetherell, 1998). In a similar vein, the poststructuralist 'turn to language' is characterised by its emphasis on the significance of language/discourse, both in terms of meaning and identity. *The signified* is downplayed and *the signifier* is made dominant (Henriques *et al*, 1984). In other words, language is not used to contemplate reality, but is constitutive of the reality itself.

### **3.3. Foucault's approach to discourse: relevance, critique and limitations**

Michel Foucault has always been one of the most inspiring and outstanding scholars as his theoretical framework was challenging in terms of many fields such as history, science, modernity, queer studies etc. His main preoccupation with power and its relationship to the *discursive formations* in society that make knowledge possible is the core reformulation of his theoretical framework. This relationship between power, knowledge and discourse, to some extent, puts the concepts and conceptual fixations under scrutiny because our knowledge of a certain concept stems not from the concept itself but from the power relationship that creates its knowledge. Foucault advocates that 'power and knowledge directly imply one another and there is no power relation without correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations' (quoted in Turner; 1994). Thus, everything we can see or conceive of is a product of power relations' (Shepherd, 2008: 22). The relationship sustained between discourse and power renders the former a practice, which is one of the most revolutionary aspects of Foucault.

To begin with, Foucault's method of 'archaeology' is mainly characterised by his hostility to the humanist concepts of subjectivity and truth. He is interested in concepts instead. . In this regard, discourse refers to an ensemble of discursive practices and concepts structured and conditioned inside socio-historical settings. These structural relations between concepts are called *episteme*, which:

[..] delimits in the totality of experience a field of knowledge, defines the mode of being of the objects that appear in that field of knowledge, defines the mode of being of the objects that appear in that field, provides man's everyday perception with theoretical powers, and defines the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about the things that is recognised to be true (Foucault, 1986: 22).

Foucault calls the product of a discourse a *statement*. Statements are the smallest units within a certain discourse. Various statements together of the same kind, made possible by the same 'discursive formation', define the discourse (Marshall, 1996: 125). In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), Foucault argues that discursive formations are historically produced, loosely structured combinations of concerns, concepts and themes, as well as types of statements that enable specific discourses. A discursive formation is not a figure that holds up time and freezes itself, but mobile. 'Rules of formation' create particular conditions which allow discursive formations to occur. Similarly, statements are produced by discursive practices 'that are governed by historically contingent rules of formation, which are not necessarily available to those practitioners enunciating them' (Howarth, 2000: 51). As a discourse is not only produced by a single statement, but by many statements, it is not only produced by one individual subject, but by many subjects that are embedded in different institutional settings.

However, the pronunciation of the concept 'subject' does not mean the centrality of the subject or the sanctity of the autonomous individual or agent in a Foucauldian sense. On the

contrary, 'the subject is not a rational agent thinking and acting under its self-imposed and self- created commands. Rather, the subject is a product of social structures, epistemes, discourses or something else of the sort' (Bevir, 1999a: 347). Thus, Foucault, in line with the poststructuralist deconstructive method, which somehow challenges the constitutive individualism of Western modernity, tries to decentre the rational subjectivity that establishes the subject's illusion of being master of his or her own fate. What Foucault wants to emphasize is that the subject cannot originate the foundation that would make rationality the inherent *telos* in human history (Yoon, 2001). 'On consequence the history of thought reveals, beneath continuities predicated upon the assumption of a sovereign subject, discontinuities, displacements, and transformations' (Smart 2002: 38). Thus, archaeology is presented as a methodology of investigation to trace back the origins of certain (social or cultural) ideas in a specific socio-economic context (Lawson and Garrod, 1999: 12). The archaeological approach of Foucault attempts to analyse the discontinuities in a specific discourse that is formed by a certain episteme, 'which provides a basic view of the world that unifies intellectual production during a given age' (Torfing 1999: 90). In this regard, Foucault is also not interested in the truth or falsity of discourses, but rather in the conditions and the context under the light of which the truth or the falsity could be decided. That is, what is significant for Foucault is the investigation of 'how effects of truth are produced within discourses which in themselves are neither true nor false' (Yoon, 2001: 65).

In a nutshell, the archaeological approach with its suspension of subjectivity is preoccupied with the historical analysis of discourse through the description of the 'archive', which refers to the system of formation and transformation of specific statements in a certain period within

a particular society. Discourse analysis, thus conceived, has immense potential for contributing to political philosophy as a normative project.

In the 1970s, the concept of discourse is still central to the Foucauldian framework, 'although discourses are no longer treated as autonomous systems of scientific statements but the product of power relations and forces that form them' (Howarth, 2000: 67). Moreover, the emphasis is now on the knowledge-power relationship: all knowledge arises out of the power and regimes of power define what counts as a meaningful proposition and the toolkit to be used. In this regard, power and knowledge always imply one another.

In this regard, Foucauldian genealogy signifies a move from 'regarding a set of concepts as intelligible in terms of the structural relationships within an episteme to regarding it as devoid of such logic and so wholly contingent' (Bevir, 1999a: 352). Moreover, it perpetuates his assault on the 'traditional' history that has been started by *The Archaeology of Knowledge* previously which had substituted the totalising, positivistic theories with an alternative reading of history and politics based on 'discursive formations' (Howarth, 2000). Now, genealogy entails an understanding of historicisation of discourses, institutions and practices. Moreover, the scope of power relations foreseen by the Foucauldian historical analysis challenges the Enlightenment credo, in the sense that it substitutes the analysis of 'modern' concepts such as legitimacy and sovereignty with the 'micro' power relations permeating every sphere of society. This approach is summed up in his vow to 'cut off the king's head' by replacing the concept of sovereign power with that of 'capillary power' (Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 136; quoted in Sutherland, 2005: 189). At the micro level, Foucault argues that ideas such as subjectivity, personality and the soul are just part of a discursive formation

produced by the operation of a specific power complex on the body. For instance, Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* attempts to analyse the way power works on the body through external control, while in *History of Sexuality*, he highlights the way it does so through internal controls (Bevir, 1999b). However, as state power is totalizing and individualizing, micro power relations culminate in macro level power relations. Foucault points out that the power operates both at the local level of continuous, productive interactions and at the larger, systemic level of institutions, regulations, and hegemonies (Foucault, 1990: 93). These two levels depend on each other: '[O]ne must conceive of the double conditioning of a strategy by the specificity of possible tactics, and of tactics by the strategic envelope that makes them work' (Foucault, 1990: 100). Foucault maintains that it is precisely through such multiple, local relations of power that larger effects of domination are produced, rather than through the top-down imposition of disciplinary controls (Foucault, 1990: 94).

Foucault presents a fascinating account of concepts such as discourse, power, knowledge and history and gained considerable authority in many fields of social science stretching from cultural studies to feminist studies. In particular, he highlights the specific ways in which the discursive formations are constituted in relation to the concept of 'power', which is almost revolutionary. However, he does not problematise how the ways in which specific discursive formations are constructed have implications for the construction of political frontiers. The concept of 'power' which penetrates to the smallest unit of society through prisons, police, church, medicine etc. does not have significance when it comes to different political demands for Foucault. 'Discourses, understood narrowly as systems of statements, bring into existence the very objects they purport to describe and explain, including their institutional and social conditions of possibility' (Howarth, 2002: 122). In short, 'while Foucault is surely correct to



stress the way in which objects of inquiry are constructed within specific discursive formations, he goes on to draw the illegitimate conclusion that all objects are the product of linguistic practices, and that their being is exhausted by a particular linguistic representation of them' (Howarth, 2002: 122).

This is not a claim that Foucault's work is apolitical. On the contrary, it has inspired many left-wing theoreticians. As quoted in Wilson, 'Antonio Hardt and Michael Negri's book *Empire*, one of most influential works of the anti-capitalism movement, argues that 'the work of Michel Foucault has prepared the terrain for...an investigation of the material functioning of imperial rule' (Wilson, 2008). Foucault also wrote extensively (fifteen articles three of which have been translated into English) on the Iranian Revolution in 1979 (Afary and Anderson, 2004). However, even in those articles, what he was mentioning was less about the political positions within society and more on the micro-practices and hazards of modernity such as mass martyrdom (Afary and Anderson, 2004). By this account, Foucault's ideas have no political utility nor a political claim, 'because it was never meant that they should have' (Wilson, 2008).

This links to the claim that 'Foucault never provides a satisfactory explanation of the relationship between what he calls discursive and non-discursive practices in a Laclau-Mouffean sense' (Howarth, 2002: 121). The Foucauldian concern regarding the distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices is not to substantiate that there is somewhere a realm outside discourse as all practices and institutions function through discourse. 'Rather, social discourses and practices are not reducible to discourses; they have their own conditions of possibility that are not provided for by discourse alone' (Purvis and Hunt, 1993: 490). This

brings me to the most inspiring aspect of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, which has been elaborated by Norval later on: the significance of discourses in constructing political frontiers within a society, which I will reflect on in the next sections.

### **3.4. Who says Europe is not where it is supposed to be<sup>15</sup>: the use of discourse theory in European studies**

In this section, I will give a brief account of the use of 'Europe' in European studies mainly through a poststructuralist lens. For this aim, I will focus on the works of Ole Wæver, Henrik Larsen, Lene Hansen, Thomas Diez and Ben Rosamond. Although Hansen's work is not about the discourses on 'Europe' but how two different discourses on Bosnia are constructed in Western political debates, it is nevertheless helpful to include her work as a good example of how discourse theory is used to understand particular representations in European politics.

Such a general register of discourse theory in European studies is important to locate different representations and meanings of 'Europe' in Turkish political debates, which this thesis aims to identify, into a broader scholarly context of European studies. As this section will show, 'Europe' emerges as a highly 'contested concept'. For instance, for the candidate states, the EU serves as a 'modernisation anchor' (Inotai, 1997) while, as Diez (1998) shows, it has been defined as a Liberal Economic Community in the British political debate during the accession

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<sup>15</sup> Here, I basically refer to R.B. J. Walker's article, 'Europe is not where it is supposed to be' that appeared in Kelstrup and Williams's book, *International Relations and the Politics of European Integration* (Kelstrup and Williams, 2000) where he explores the question of why we need a new scholarly focus with regard to 'Europe' which should now incorporate a more intense focus on *the political*.

process. Therefore, this section aims to explore how the discourse theory has been used in the European studies and how the present project might be located within this realm.

In her analysis of the Bosnian War and endeavour to understand the relationship between identity and foreign policy, Hansen (Hansen, 2006) points to two different discourses in the Western political debate over Bosnia, the interplay of which formed the main body of the representation of war. The discourse of ‘the Balkans’, which has been mainly mobilised during the 1990s, ‘reads the identity of the Bosnian War, its causes, participants and the role of the ‘West’, through an articulation of this as a ‘Balkan War’ driven by violence, barbarism and ancient intra-Balkan hatred stretching back to hundreds of years’ (Hansen, 2006: 106). On the other hand, at the other end of the spectrum, there is the opposing discourse of ‘Genocide discourse’, which represented the war as a genocide committed by Serbian military and political leaders that brought forth a long history and responsibility vis-à-vis Bosnia (Hansen, 2006: 111).

Where the Balkan discourse read temporality and ethicality through a spatial location, the Genocide discourse read identity through the absolute ethical responsibility invoked by the articulation of ‘responsibility’ invoked by the articulation of genocide and it rearticulated the Balkan discourse’s construction of a uniform ‘Balkan’ space of ‘three factions’ by separating a multicultural and democratic ‘Bosnian victim’ from a ‘Serbian aggressor’ (Hansen 2006: 96).

In his analysis of French and German discourses on state, nation and Europe, Wæver<sup>16</sup> argues that these major powers project a conception of Europe as a part of their national vision of where they are going and who they are (Wæver, 2005). This discourse has a layered structure,

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<sup>16</sup> In fact, Wæver’s and Larsen’s work are the parts of the same project titled, ‘Struggle for Europe: French and German Conceptions of State, Nation and European Union’. However, as the book of the project has never been published and I have read the arguments of two authors elsewhere, I find it appropriate to treat the two authors individually.

where, in terms of 'Europe', we find three such layers: the 'state-nation' core concept, the relational position of the state vis-à-vis Europe and the layer which shows what kind of Europe is promoted (Diez, 2001). All these structures are socially constructed and their dislocation is always possible (Wæver, 2005).

In line with poststructuralist decentring of the structure, the suggested hierarchy [of these layers] rests on the impossible closure and constant destabilisation. The tree-like structure corresponds to Laclau and Mouffe's emphasis on internal connections in politics. In contrast to classical Marxism, political opponents are not totally external and contrasted-they struggle to conquer shared nodal points, they integrate in hegemonic projects some integrative schemes that inevitably enter into their own conceptions, and thus rivals become partly divergent articulations of shared components (Wæver, 2005: 37).

In the case of Germany, the relationship between the state and nation is grounded on the fact that the German nation was an ethno-cultural phenomenon whereas the 'German state was something to be created, not just refined and reshaped with the new ideas of nation and modernity' (Wæver, 2005: 46). In this respect, the German state is a rather abstract and absolute one, which is defined by power. Especially after 1990, this power meant national unity and economic expansion in Central Europe for Germany. According to Wæver, however, the current perception of Germany vis-à-vis the EU in the national politics culminates in an anti-power state vision, although with different justifications throughout the political spectrum. Social Democrats are driven by an anti-power state argument in its moral form, where Germany emerges as a self-conscious civilian power whereas the Christian Democrats stipulate the anti-power state argument on a rationalistic basis.

In the French example, the general focus is on the state/nation layer and the relationship between the layers of state/nation and Europe is constructed in such a way that if Europe is to

become a political reality, it will have to take on the qualities of a nation/state. Wæver explains the dramatic shift of French European policy in 1983-84 with the argument that France pressed for a state-like EC during this period as the French concept of the 'state' was intended to be repeated at the level of 'Europe' (Wæver, 2005). As France had become too small and its mission must be taken over by 'Europe', 'the more Europe there will be, the more France' with Mitterrand's words, which signalled 'one level up' (Wæver, 2005: 44).

In this way, an inner link is forged between France and Europe. The Europe created must necessarily have a heart that beats in French. To be *political*, Europe must have a pulse that only France is capable of supplying. This ensures for France, when transferring its ambitions to Europe, that the European project is worthwhile; that it is sufficiently French. We are not talking of *control* by France, nor French influence as such, but about Europe being constituted and acting in *a way* that is French (Wæver 2005: 44-*emphasis original*).

This internal link between France and Europe points to the most crucial point regarding the formation of identities, i.e. we's, in Wæver's analysis: the relationship between the layers (nation/state and Europe) is internal. Stability and regional security in this regard depend crucially on the domestic articulation of a project of Europe with long-held concepts of state and nation on a domestic basis.

This national focus is helpful in order to see how the concept of 'Europe' is constructed at the domestic level discursively. However, it, at the same time, means that for 'Europe' as an idea, concept and vision to be inscribed and to continue as a political process, it needs to be compatible with national traditions (Wæver, 2005). This priority of the national setting lowers the degree of openness and the contextuality of the concept and allows for a degree of structuralism that takes some of the layers for granted such as the state/nation. 'In essence, Wæver's model is one of 'change within continuity', affecting the branches, i.e. policies,

more than the trunk. The basic concepts such as ‘state’ and ‘nation’ will remain stable in most cases because of their higher ‘degree of sedimentation’ (Diez, 2001: 14). This ‘Foucauldian structuralism’ (Diez, 2001) which determines what will enter the terrain of the discourse and what will not impede the eternal dislocation of the discourses in a Laclau-Mouffean sense. An anti-essentialist reading of Laclau and Mouffe which puts the continuous process of articulating concepts that unifies the discursive space at the centre of the analysis is replaced by the taken-for-grantedness of some core concepts like state and nation, forming the discursively available horizon for visions for politics.

In this respect, presenting state identities as the main source of the shaping of discourses, Wæver presents Europe as a concept embedded in these nation-states. ‘We have to operate in a perspectival mode, understanding the different ways that meaningful worlds are constructed which all include ‘Europe’ but in different forms’ (Wæver, 2005: 59). The constellation called ‘Europe’ is traced back to the domestic narratives and narrative struggles.

Larsen, focusing on the British and Danish European policies in the 1990s on a discursive basis departs from a similar premise (Larsen, 1999). According to Larsen, the understanding of ‘Europe’ shows important linguistic similarities on the level of dominant discourses in both cases as they both function on an instrumental basis. However, the real political conflict is realised on the level of sub-discourses of this instrumental discourse. One could distinguish between two sub-discourses in both countries in relation to the EC/EU and Europe. *The interstate cooperation sub-discourse* entails that Europe and EU in particular represents a terrain where strict interstate cooperation is essential. In this respect, ‘Europe’ is an external reality and the relationship between the two levels is a zero-sum game. On the other hand, *the*

*essential cooperation discourse* argues that cooperation with and at the level of Europe is essential and it is worth paying a price for a fruitful partnership (Larsen, 1999). In terms of British and Danish European policies in the 1990s, the struggle between these sub-discourses and which domestic group adheres for what discourse determines the nature of 'Europe' represented. The struggle between these sub-discourses is also determined to a great extent by the differences between the domestic political features attributed to the nation/state and the concept of sovereignty. Whereas the understanding of a Danish state is strongly intermingled with the understanding of a 'welfare state' traditionally, which finds its resonance in the depiction of 'Europe' with regard to its welfare state provisions, British non-interventionist state, where the priority is the individual, depicts 'Europe' as a free market project.

In this respect, Larsen's study can also be conceptualised within the framework of a Foucauldian structuralism, where the repertoire of the discourses is determined by the traditional domestic features of the state in question. The dislocation of the discourses is limited by the historically set tool kit of the domestic inherent features of states.

In his reading of the discursive construction of 'Europe', Diez employs a similar Laclau-Mouffean inspiration, although not designating such a national and domestic essence to the articulation of discourses (Diez, 1999, 2001). According to Diez, in terms of European integration, the main struggle is not between narrowly defined economic or national interests but between competing discourses of European governance. In this respect, we can best understand European integration as a part of a discursive formation on European governance that is linked to a set of metanarratives on basic questions regarding 'what the world is about' (Diez, 2001: 6). However, in understanding the discourse on Europe, we have to keep in mind

that 'Europe' is not an entity exogenous to that discourse, existing independently and externally. In contrast,

various attempts to capture the Union's nature are not mere descriptions of an unknown polity, but take part in the construction of the polity itself. To that extent, they are not politically innocent, and may themselves become the subject of analysis, along with articulations from other actors (Diez, 1999: 599).

In this picture, agents are granted a significant position. The actor engaging in discursive struggle is not independent of the already established discourse but must take his point of departure in the established web of notions surrounding the contested concept as he/she acts from a subject position (Jensen, 2005). This way the discourse can be said to have a life of its own. The discourse, however, is dependent on reproduction through articulation. Diez therefore suggests that this interdependence between discursive determinism and the reproduction of discourse through articulation could be called *linguistic structurationism*. He refers to Giddens (1984), who tried to move beyond structuralism and to reconceptualise the duality of structure and agency (Diez, 1999).

Against the relative structural analysis of the Copenhagen School and Governance School in terms of the unlikelihood of the dislocation of discursive visions on Europe, Diez suggests the analytical concept of *Discursive Nodal Points* (DNP) for the case of European politics. According to this argument, the open universe of discourses is stabilised through the filling of discursive nodal points with meaning, which is called *articulation* (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Diez, 2001). He refers to German sociologist Hejl's formulation of social theory where individuals are treated as nodes in a network of social systems. Their identity was produced by these systems which in turn were reproduced by the actions of individuals (Diez, 2001:



17). He links his conceptualization to Laclau and Mouffe's conception of nodal points as Hejl, like many system theorists, suffers from the risk of being too structural and hence reducing the agents as the sole bearers of the mandates of the system. In Diez's reading, Laclau and Mouffe, on the other hand, emphasize both the 'selective employment of comprehensive discursive systems' and that actors are not 'completely autonomous' but 'constrained not only by conventional understandings and agreed-upon rules of the game but also by mutual positioning, existing institutionalised routines and changing contexts' (Diez, 2001: 17). Within the discursive universe where the discourses reproduce each other and are reproduced by them simultaneously, Diez makes an analytical distinction between the discourses produced and those producing, and calls the latter 'metanarratives' (Diez, 1998).

Usually, they have two characteristics: First, their objects and rationalities are much more abstract than in the case of the more policy-oriented discourses. Second, in acting as general frames to which discourses have to conform, they are harder to change than actual policy-discourses, for which there are always numerous possibilities within similar frameworks (Wæver, 1997: 6-9).

In the case of European governance, Diez presents eight concepts produced in their respective policy discourses, which are the representation of Europe as Intergovernmental Cooperation of Nation States, Intergovernmental Cooperation of Socialist States, Free Trade Area, Federal State, Socialist Federal State, Liberal Economic Community, Social Democratic Economic Community and Network. To exemplify the different articulations of Europe in British politics, Diez tells us that Liberal Economic Community understanding became the dominant construction of European governance during the accession debates in the 1970s while Intergovernmental Cooperation of Socialist States was the motto of the Labour Party from the 1960s until the 1980s.

In this respect, Diez's work is distinguished from Wæver's and Larsen's in the sense that metanarratives are not defined on a national/domestic basis by Diez as in the cases of the latter. The articulation of metanarratives into a meaningful whole is itself a political process, which is not pre-determined by the national/domestic rules of the political debate.

In his study of the social construction of European identity vis-à-vis globalisation, Rosamond (1999) argues that globalisation is a 'zone of contestation' (Rosamond, 1999: 653), rather than an external phenomenon 'out there'. According to Rosamond, the externalisation of globalisation means the treatment of interests and identities as exogenous and prior to the process of interaction, which is a fallacy usually adopted by the rationalistic approaches and other mainstream accounts. Instead, the article develops a reading of globalisation as a discourse by taking into account the nature of intersubjectivities generated within EU policy communities by the globalisation debate. The aim here is to find a way out of this 'inside-outside' dichotomy. In this respect, Rosamond (1999) seems more concerned with the knowledge of globalisation and its dissemination rather than with globalisation as such. That is, he is interested in how the use of 'globalisation' as a discursive device renders the world manageable and constrains/determines the available strategic opportunities.

The question that quickly comes to mind is mentioned by Rosamond as well: do the actors use the discourse of globalisation instrumentally and deliberately or are they a part of the construction process themselves? The answer given by him is quite convincing: globalising elites may engage in strategic theorising about globalisation, but this does not mean that they are immune from the shaping capacities of the intersubjective structures that their discursive practice creates via a process of communicative action, where the nature of actor interaction is

conceptualised rather more than ‘the exchange of preferences in an institutionalised environment’ (Rosamond, 1999: 659). In this respect, as quoted in Rosamond, Risse-Kappen argues,

This does not mean that ideas cannot be used in an instrumental way to legitimise or delegitimise policies motivated by purely material interests. However, the ‘power’ of ideas in such instances is linked to their consensuality. Ideas become consensual when actors start believing in their value and become convinced of their validity (Risse-Kappen, 1996:69-70).

I think the novelty and significance of Rosamond’s article stems from his definition of globalisation as a ‘zone of contestation’, where the fixation of subject positions are defined within the framework of a political process. The iteration of *the political* is important as it rules out the definition of globalisation in simplistic terms as a homogenisation of practices and policies which induces ‘logic of no alternative’ (Hay and Watson, 1998). Certain conceptions of globalisation may be ‘hegemonic’, but this does not foreclose the possibility that alternative discourses may coexist and challenge the dominant strand (Rosamond, 1999: 658).

### **3.5. Laclau- Mouffean discourse theory**

Laclau and Mouffe, in their book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, point to the need to rethink the Marxist project and re-evaluate the *a priori* privilege granted to socio-economic structures in historical change. According to this account, the proliferation of new types of struggles which are more particularist in nature urged a rethink of the ‘evident truths’ of the past, thus leading to the devising of new concepts and new political projects (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 1). ‘Within the Marxist tradition the destabilization of traditional notions of

structure and structural determination, together with the crisis of its Leninist legacy, fostered a surge of interest in the open and undogmatic Marxism of Gramsci' (Torfing, 1999: 4). Therefore, post-structuralism's and post-Marxism's focus on political and social identities constituted a substantial source of inspiration for Laclau and Mouffe.

In particular, Laclau and Mouffe's conception of discourse theory has been mainly influenced by the Gramscian extension of the scope of politics. Gramsci argues that ideology sustains the unity of a social bloc in different manifestations of social/economic life, where the subject of the social reality is not a class, deriving its transcendental features from the forces of production. This is implicitly the most important reason behind the Gramscian inspiration in Laclau-Mouffe and points out the most significant argument of Gramsci: his theorisation of the hegemonic link between the political struggle and masses (not necessarily classes), which at the same time meant the expansion of the scope of hegemony and thus politics. '[It consists of] institutional and social analysis of various classes and organisations in society, from actions of the state, to the realm of "civil society" and institutions as schools, churches, newspapers book publishers and entertainment enterprises' (Ives, 2004:71).

For Gramsci, political subjects are not classes, but complex 'collective wills' articulated by a hegemonic class, which do not have a necessary class belonging. Thus, 'collective will is a result of politico-ideological articulation of dispersed and fragmented historical forces' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 67). However, although the collective will does not derive its *raison d'être* from a particular class, the unifying principle articulating the diverse elements can only be a fundamental class. Therefore, even if the class hegemony is not ontologically stipulated, there is an epistemological priority attached to it. A particular class *knows* how to

form the collective will. Gramsci's thought, in this regard, appears to be trapped in an ambiguity, according to Laclau and Mouffe:

On the one hand, the political centrality of the working class has a historical, contingent character: it requires the class come out of itself, to transform its own identity by articulating to it a plurality of struggles and democratic demands. On the other hand, it would seem that this articulatory role is assigned to it by the economic base-hence that the centrality has a necessary character (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 70).

To summarise, Laclau and Mouffe's analysis with its unease with 'the tendency to overlook the historical specificity of the phenomena under question' and the essentialist discourses (Laclau, 1990: 177) and veneration for the Gramscian extension of the scope of politics contributed to the formation of a post-Marxist theoretical trajectory.

Laclau-Mouffean discourse theory, developed within the context of a neo-Gramscian conception of discourse, 'grew out of debates within Marxism concerning categories such as 'ideology', 'subjectivity' and questions of class identity. '[They] combined Marxism's preoccupation with power and conflict as integral features of society with a post-structuralist rejection of an a priori privilege being granted to socio-economic structures in historical change' (Martin, 2002: 23). In this respect, it could be counted as a critique and reinterpretation of the Marxist tradition and Gramscian approach. Laclau and Mouffe try to go 'beyond Gramsci' and overcome the persistence of economic determinism (Ives, 2005) by the introduction of linguistic analysis. 'Laclau and Mouffe do not really address the actual need to study language, but they use linguistics to argue against the notion of "representation" and to elaborate their notion of "articulation"' (Ives, 2005: 462). In this respect, their discursive approach to political science aims not to find accurate meaning but rather to uncover the production of meaning, context and power relations. Laclau and Mouffe, in their book

*Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985), ‘build upon the anti-essentialist notion that there is never any absolute fixing of meaning; rather the task is to study how social practices and ideas come to acquire meaning’ (McAnulla, 1998: 6). It is through discourse that people understand their positions in life and shape society and political activity. Thus, the notion of discourse entails much more than merely language, linguistics or mental representation. In Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory, all objects and practices are seen as discursive; they only acquire meaning through their articulation in particular discourse. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) were concerned less with objective knowledge and more with the shaping and production of particular meanings and identities, including how people and positions are located by models, metaphors and discourses: ‘there is not *one* discourse and *one* system of categories through which the “real” might speak without mediations’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 3). It is reflected by their ontology as well, which involves the dissolution of the distinction between the realm of ideas and the world of real objects and practical activity (McAnulla, 1998: 6).

As mentioned above, Laclau and Mouffe’s departure point is the critique of Marxism in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. Their main critique stems from Marxism’s insistence on the ontological privilege granted to the working class by its position vis-à-vis the forces of production and the economic base. This provides the political struggle with a strict class character and fixes the identity of the political subjects which is determined by the economic base. However, due to the numerous historical developments such as the emergence of the limits of an insufficiently developed bourgeois civilisation in Russia<sup>17</sup> which forced the

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<sup>17</sup> Laclau and Mouffe make this reference to the Russian context in terms of the use of the term ‘hegemony’ within the debates at the First International between Socialists and Social Democrats by theoreticians such as Plekhanov, Axelrod, Trotsky, Bernstein and Luxembourg. Apparently, the time slot referred to is the pre-First World War period.

working class to come out of itself and to take the tasks that were not its own and the challenge to the conception of democratic rights and freedoms as ‘bourgeois’ by nature due to the experience of fascism in Europe, the link between the natural class agent of a historical task and the concrete agent which puts it into effect was somehow challenged (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:85-88). Therefore, according to them, the class nature of the tasks is not altered by the fact that they are assumed by one class or the other and the democratic tasks remain bourgeois even when their historical agent is the working class. In this respect, the relationship between the agents can only be of exteriority and it can only be constructed outside the relation. For instance, the capitalist relations of production are not *intrinsically* antagonistic because the capitalist extracts surplus from the worker, but very much so because the antagonism is established between the relations of production and something *external* to it (for instance when the worker becomes a consumer in the market) (Laclau, 1990: 8-11-*emphasis added*).

This focus on the ‘external’ nature of the relationship sustained between the agents goes hand in hand with a rather more theoretical premise derived from Jacques Derrida and a critique of Enlightenment that every social structure or identity has a ‘constitutive outside’ (Laclau, 1990: 9). According to this conception, any structure, in order to achieve a temporary closure and to fix the inherently unstable identities, goes through a process of exclusion which denies the internal identity of the structure. According to Mouffe, by affirming that an object has been inscribed by something other than itself and that everything is constructed as difference, we also brand ‘being’ as something that cannot be conceived as pure ‘presence’ or ‘objectivity’ (Mouffe, 2000: 147). ‘This is decisive, for if the “constitutive outside” is present within the inside as its always real possibility, then the inside itself becomes a purely contingent and

reversible arrangement' (Mouffe, 2000: 147). Therefore, any antagonism or antagonistic relationship is created by the 'constitutive outside' (as in the example of the worker in the market). Instead of Marxism's conviction that capitalist relations of production are intrinsically antagonistic, this framework states that they become antagonistic only if the worker resists that the extraction of surplus by the capitalist (Laclau, 1990:9). However, this 'outside' is not a regular one as we could see in nature, but a 'radical' one, which blocks the identity of the 'inside'. With antagonism, denial does not originate from the 'inside' of identity itself, but, in its most radical sense, from outside; 'it is thus pure facticity which cannot be referred back to any underlying rationality' (Laclau, 1990: 17). Antagonism originates from the limits of the objectivity and the social (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 125). 'The outside is simultaneously that which makes the emergence of an inside possible and which threatens it' (Laclau, 1990: 168).

By the same token, the conditions of existence of a given signifying system are contingent 'to the extent that they cannot be derived from the internal logic or rationality from the system itself-they are *external* in the sense of being *radically* separated from the internal logic' (Marchart, 2004: 60). 'If any identity is necessarily contaminated by otherness and as, Lacan shows, becomes what it is with only reference to its otherness, it means that any discursive formation, in order to signify itself as such, has to refer to something which is exteriorised in its formation' (Norval, 1990: 137). In this respect, the *constitutive outside* is subversive as what is exteriorised creates the possibility of constituting any identity.

The keyword within the whole framework is the 'conditions of existence' which are external to the socio-political configuration in question. According to this framework, in order to



understand ‘Europe’ as a political category in Turkish domestic debates at a given time, we need to search for the conditions of existence of the discourse on ‘Europe’ rather than searching for an internal, given and atemporal relationship between ‘Europe’ as such and Turkish politics.

### ***3.5.1. Laclau- Mouffean Conceptual Framework***

#### ***Hegemony***

The focus on the ‘external’ nature of the relationship sustained between the agents is where the concept of *hegemony* enters the picture within the Laclau-Mouffean analysis. Not surprisingly, they borrow this term from Gramsci. As will be detailed in the forthcoming sections, the main Gramscian inspiration on the part of the Laclau and Mouffean theoretical framework is his theorisation of the hegemonic link between the political struggle and masses, not necessarily classes, which at the same time meant the expansion of the scope of politics. According to Laclau and Mouffe, hegemony is a ‘space in which bursts a whole conception of the social based upon an intelligibility which reduces its distinct moment to the interiority of a closed paradigm’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 93). Instead of this burst conception of the social, we now have a new field where the relations between the elements are not absolutely fixed, but open to articulatory practices at the theoretical level and to political struggle at the practical level.

In order to iterate the difference between the so-called ‘traditional’ inquiry of the social reality and their analysis in terms of sorting out the relations between the elements, Laclau and Mouffe make a distinction between the categories of ‘mediation’ and ‘articulation’, which is one of the key concepts to their analysis (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 93-94). *Mediation*,

according to them, is an action which does not necessitate any action ‘on our part’ and the connection between the elements refers to an underlying totality (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 93-94). The categorical political centrality of the working class, according to this analysis, has nothing to do with the actions of that very class but is a priori *mediated*. On the other hand, *articulation* is a process by which a relationship is established between the elements in such a way that their identities are mutually modified. Organisation of the elements, which forms the core of ‘hegemony’, is contingent and gives the elements a new form of unity, external to the fragments themselves.

In case of ‘mediations’, we are dealing with a system of logical transitions in which relations between objects are conceived as following a relation between the concepts; in the second sense [in case of ‘articulations’], we are dealing with contingent relations whose nature we have to determine (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 96).

Thus, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) were concerned less with objective knowledge and more with the shaping and production of particular meanings and identities, including how people and positions are located by models, metaphors and discourses: “there is not *one* discourse and *one* system of categories through which the ‘real’ might speak without mediations” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 3).

As already mentioned, asserting the constitutive nature of antagonism entails asserting the contingent nature of all objectivity and this, in turn, means that any objectivity is a threatened objectivity. If, in spite of this, an objectivity manages to partially affirm itself, it is only by repressing that which threatens it. To study the conditions of existence of a given social identity, then, is to study the power mechanisms making it possible. According to Laclau, in

case of any hegemonic project, ‘social transformation means building a new power, not radically eliminating it’ (Laclau, 1990: 33).

### ***Discourse***

This is the point where Laclau and Mouffe operationalise the concept of *discourse*. The structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice is called *discourse* (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 105). In this respect, a discourse consists of a relatively stable pattern of linguistic rules, social actions and material prerequisites: ‘A discursive structure is (...) an articulatory practice which constitutes and organises social relations’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 96).

To reiterate, it is through discourse that people understand their positions in life and shape society and political activity. Thus, according to the Laclau- Mouffean conception, the notion of discourse entails much more than merely language, linguistics or mental representation. Discourse, as used by Laclau and Mouffe, denotes dissolution of the distinction between the realm of ideas and the world of real objects and practical activity (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; quoted in McAnulla, 1998: 6). All objects and practices are seen as discursive; they only acquire meaning through their articulation in particular discourse.

Another significant point on the part of Laclau- Mouffean conception of ‘discourse’ is that they attribute both linguistic and material features to the field of discursivity. Therefore, for them, the ordering and structuring that goes on through discursive articulation takes place not only through language but also through social practices (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987). ‘[B]y *discourse* we do not mean a combination of speech and writing, but rather that speech and

*writing are themselves but internal components of discursive totalities*' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 82-*emphasis original*). In this respect, the objects can only acquire meaning to the extent that they establish a system of relations with the other objects, where the relationship is socially constructed, rather than being pre-determined by the mere referentiality of the objects.

Let us suppose that I am building a wall with another bricklayer. At a certain moment I ask my workmate to pass me a brick and then I add it to the wall. The first act—asking for the brick—is linguistic; the second—adding the brick to the wall—is extralinguistic. Do I exhaust the *reality* of both acts by drawing the distinction between them in terms of the linguistic/extralinguistic opposition? Evidently not, because, despite their differentiation in those terms, the two actions share something that allows them to be compared, namely the fact that they are both part of a total operation which is the building of the wall (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 82).

However, this does not mean denying reality or existence. For them, discursive character of an object does not, by any means, imply putting its *existence* into question (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 82- *emphasis original*). 'A stone exists independently of any system of social relations, but it is, for instance, either a projectile or an object of aesthetic contemplation only within a specific discursive configuration' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 82). The stone exists before the action, but the social system it is entailed in provides it with meaning. The stone being a projectile does not follow necessarily from its mere existence. It is the action and the relations it is involved in which makes it a projectile. By doing so, Laclau and Mouffe reflect upon a broader material vs. ideational debate within the political analysis where they argue that there is no "extra-discursive" realm of *meaningful* objects and (...) this independent realm of objects *determines* the meaning of those objects', thereby siding with some versions of realism' according to Howarth (Howarth, 1995: 127-*emphasis original*). Laclau and Mouffe, in their answer to Norman Geras, iterate that the distinction here is not between

idealism and materialism but idealism and realism (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 106), thereby renouncing the criticisms of the idealist dimensions of their analysis.

Therefore, according to this framework, to question how 'Europe' is constructed at the domestic level does not interrogate whether 'Europe' as such exists independently of the domestic social relations, nor does it mean that the construction is solely a linguistic one. It means that this construction entails both the linguistic elements (political party statements, bureaucratic policy briefings, TV programmes etc.) and the extra-linguistic elements (a domestic actor's attendance at a European Council, use of European flag within a football match, etc.), where their constellation would end up with a different representation of 'Europe' if had been articulated otherwise.

### ***Empty signifiers***

From this, it follows for Laclau and Mouffe that the motive to sustain hegemony through a particular discourse is characterised by the articulation of 'empty' signifiers, another concept that is central to their analysis. Indeed, Laclau and Mouffe put the fixation of an empty signifier at the core of a formation of a hegemonic centre and ideology in *Hegemony and Socialist Struggle* (1985). This view has been elaborated and operationalised by Laclau in his later work (Laclau, 1996; Laclau, 1997). According to Laclau, an 'empty signifier', is a signifier without a signified (Laclau, 1997: 306). Therefore, an 'empty signifier' is a signifier which has been articulated in a way that it has no content or meaning.

In this respect, Laclau gives as an example the case of an extreme situation where social fabric is radically disorganised and people need 'an order' (Laclau, 1996: 44). In this case,

according to Laclau, the actual content of the ‘order’ becomes a secondary consideration. ‘Order’ as such has no content, because it exists only in the various forms in which it is actually realised (Norval, 2000: 330-1). However, in a situation of radical disorder ‘order’ is present as that which is absent; it becomes an empty signifier, the signifier of that absence (Laclau, 1996: 44).

Similarly, citing Walzer’s *Thick and Thin*, Laclau gives the example of Prague demonstrations in 1989<sup>18</sup> in his focus on the conception of ‘justice’ by the Prague demonstrators, Laclau (1996) argues that ‘justice’ as an empty signifier was not necessarily associated with any of these demands (Norval, 2000: 331).

Once a demand such as ‘the end of arbitrary arrests’ has become one of the names of ‘justice’, some other demands, such as ‘the prevalence of the will of the people over all legal restrictions’, cannot enter the fray, except with difficulty. Thus, the filling out of empty signifiers by particularistic demands will *limit* the operation of that empty signifier, in this case, ‘justice’ (Laclau, 1996: 39-*emphasis original*)

By this token, hegemony, or hegemonic struggle is the competition between different political forces to get maximum support for the articulation of ‘empty signifiers’, such as ‘order’ or even ‘democracy’, terms which can be invested with a variety of meanings because they have no inherent content and can serve to unite disparate movements (Townshend, 2004: 271). ‘To “hegemonise” content would therefore amount to *fixing* its meaning around a nodal point. The field of the social could thus be regarded as a trench war in which different political projects strive to articulate a great number of social signifiers around themselves’ (Laclau, 1990: 28).

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<sup>18</sup> On 17 November 1989, more than 15000 people demonstrated in Prague on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of student Jan Opletal, calling for the resignation of their country's communist government, led by Milos Jakes (BBC, 17 November 1989).

For the purposes of this study, it might be argued that the articulation of the concept ‘Europe’ does not have a fixed referential such as ‘Christendom’ or ‘democracy’, but is derived contingently from different and dispersed elements as it is an ‘empty signifier’. It is an ‘empty signifier’ in its articulation within the democracy discourse which might mean a tool for the iteration of the minority identities or a guarantee for the decrease in terrorism.

As a result, political forces may compete in their efforts to present their particular objectives as those which may carry out the task of filling the lack. Ideological struggles are, therefore, struggles over the filling out of such empty signifiers. This filling process operates through *a double inscription*. It is a process that simultaneously signifies the need and impossibility of closure; the need to constitute a unified representation of society, and the impossibility of ever doing so entirely (Norval, 2000: 330-1-*emphasis added*).

We can see then how this kind of emptying reflects upon a new kind of relation between ‘particularity’ and ‘universality’. According to Laclau, the ‘universal’ does not disappear but has lost the transparency of a positive and closed world (Laclau, 1990: 80). In this framework, ‘universality’ comes into the picture when particular demands can symbolize themselves as ‘universal’. The ability to establish equivalence between an increasingly wide range of demands ‘where any particularity would be finally reabsorbed into a universal and transparent order’ (Laclau, 1990: 80) is nothing but the core of the hegemony. For Laclau, this has a normative political dimension as well: ‘the construction of differential identities on the basis of total closure is not a viable or progressive political alternative’ (Laclau, 1992: 89). Therefore, instead of using the excuse of pure identities and refusing to participate in national

or European politics, the differential identities should be permeated by the democratic process so that the 'particular' should be articulated as the 'universal' (Laclau, 1992).

Therefore, this relationship between 'universal' and 'particular' shows the gist of the politics of difference and the extent to which differential identities can be articulated into a self-proclaimed 'universal' project which is the core of the hegemonic project. 'The universal is no more than a particular that has become dominant' (Laclau, 1992: 87). According to Wilmsen and McAllister, there are two ways of combating a system of oppression according to this framework: by the operation of an inversion, in the form of denying the Western liberal institutions or politics in general, or by deconstructing the liberal democratic theory institutions because they were devised for more homogenous societies than are presently common (Wilmsen and Mc Allister, 1996: 11-2). '[This] unresolved tension between universalism and particularism allows a movement away from Western Eurocentrism, through what we would call a systemic decentring of the West' (Laclau, 1992: 90).

### ***Identity***

As mentioned above, in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985), Laclau and Mouffe claim that an exterior relationship exists between subjects and the tasks to be carried out in the social and political realm, which establishes the gist of the concept 'hegemony'. The crucial role of hegemony rests on the 'unfixity' of social relations which means that there are no fixed subject positions or privileged foundations of hegemonic domination. On the contrary, for them, discourses rather than materiality (such as the means of production or historical necessity) constitute the subject of hegemony. Thus, social practice can only be understood as



a discursive articulatory process, where the signifiers are located and dislocated constantly and the closure of the meaning is impossible.

Central to this framework is the concept ‘identity’, since it is only possible to understand any social identity by evaluating its internal relations within a discourse. Thus, ‘identity is not the immanent quality of a monadic and isolated subject, but [is] a relational and social phenomenon’ (Jensen, 1997: 16-17). Within this framework, identity is constituted in a ‘subject position’ (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:109). As there is not a homogenous subject with an essential and unchanged identity, the subjects have to position themselves within the given discourse. According to this conception, as there is a plurality of positions with which human beings can identify, an individual actor can have a number of different positions (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 114-122). ‘If the concept of subject position accounts for the multiple forms by which individuals are “produced” as social actors, the concept of political subjectivity captures the way in which social actors can act’ (Howarth, 2000: 108). That is, ‘the actions of subjects emerge because of the contingency of the discourses that confer identity on them’ (Howarth, 2000:108).

According to the conception that an identity is relational and contingent, ‘the subject is in a non-blocked position and thus is always-already engaged in producing and reproducing itself as subject’ (Jensen, 1997: 17). This points to the incomplete, open and politically negotiable character of every identity (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 104).

In accordance with this thesis’s main attempt to highlight the extent to which discourses on ‘Europe’ demarcated the political boundaries and sustained hegemony in Turkish politics after

1999, it is theoretically necessary to underline the relationship between identities and the notion of 'hegemony' although I do not particularly aim to focus on the transformation of identities. As outlined above, 'essential for hegemonic operations is an ordering of the discursive space, which results in the drawing of boundaries between different subjects' (Herschinger, 2008: 5). In particular, these different subjects are grouped together under two diametrically opposed entities: an *Other* confronts a *Self*. This goes back to what I argued above: identity is relational and it is constituted against an *Other*; and discourses articulating an identity articulate a *Self* against a series of *Others*. For Herschinger, the identity of a *Self* is not only forged via the division of the discursive space and the relation to an *Other* but also through the creation of a vision of what the world would look like without being endangered by the respective *Other* (Herschinger, 2008). However, *the Other* can be interpreted in radically different ways which implies an acknowledgement of the fact that constructions of identities can produce varying degrees of Otherness. This in turn implies that their construction does not necessarily depend on the identification of a radically threatening Other (Rumelili, 2004: 36; Hansen, 2006: 38-41). However, as Herschinger rightly argues, in the context of hegemony, this conclusion is modified (Herschinger, 2008: 7). As I will outline in the forthcoming sections in more detail, the hegemonic strategies of the *logic of equivalence* where the discursive field is divided in two antagonistic camps, and the *logic of difference* where the differences between constituent parts are cancelled and the antagonistic frontier is weakened, *the Other* and the antagonism have to be very-well defined. Yet, while antagonism is the dominant mastery of the discursive space in hegemonic enterprises this does not imply that it is the only one. Antagonism is not a teleological aim of identity construction; rather one needs to lay open the discourse strategies constructing a particular antagonism (Torfing, 1999: 131). In this respect, even if this thesis is not particularly interested in the success conditions

of a hegemonic struggle and discourses, I claim, along with Herschinger, that hegemony relies essentially on the construction of an unequivocal and radically different *Other* although two logics of hegemony (logics of difference and equivalence) articulate *the Other* and the antagonisms in different ways with different degrees (Herschinger, 2008: 7). I will return to this point in Chapter 7 where I will highlight the features of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’.

### **The Subject and Subject Positions**

Within this framework, the notion of a subject is a relational concept characterised by a subject position within a discursive structure. ‘So the agent is both in a subject position, as an object for the structure, and a subject since the structure is incapable of reducing the agent to an object. This means that the subject is in a non-blocked position and is thus always-already engaged in producing and reproducing itself as a subject’ (Jensen, 1997: 17).

[...] Our position is clear. Whenever we use the category of ‘subject’ in this text, we will do so in the sense of ‘subject positions’ within a discursive structure. Subject cannot, therefore, be the origin of social relations – not even in the limited sense of being endowed with powers that render an experience possible – as all ‘experience’ depends on precise discursive conditions of possibility (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 115).

The subject positions, which designate the agents of New Social Movements, are so different from the class identity presumed *a priori* by Marxism that, as Rosenthal puts it, it is even marked grammatically:

We speak of the proletariat rather than the proletarians, because the category in question is not given by the summation or articulated totality of proleterianized subject (...) On the other hand, we speak of ‘women’ or ‘blacks’, rather than ‘the women’ or ‘the blacks’, because the categories in question are given as positions within types of

discourse which function precisely to determine *individuals* (Rosenthal, 1988: 30-*emphasis original*).

The interpretation of the subject as relational and decentred gives very important clues to understand how Laclau- Mouffean theoretical framework treats structure-agency debate. As McAnulla argues (McAnulla, 1998), in parallel with poststructuralism's rejection of binary oppositions such as mind-body, essence-appearance, presence-absence or conscious-unconscious, Laclau and Mouffe do not establish decidable categories as such, but embrace notions such as undecidability or indeterminacy in terms of structure-agency debate, thus transcending the traditional notions of structure and agency. According to McAnulla, 'structure' within this framework is the tendential product of relatively successful discursive articulation which renders meaning temporarily sedimented for a certain period whereas 'there is no "agency" as traditionally understood as identities are based on social antagonisms which are decentred' (McAnulla, 1998:7). The subjects exist because of the dislocations within the structure, which provides any subject a *mythical* quality where the effectiveness of the myth is essentially hegemonic (Laclau, 1990: 60-1). This gives important clues about the Laclau- Mouffean relationship between identity and a hegemonic project: subjects or subject positions occupy a place within the political realm as the hegemonic project through the discourses temporarily fixes them so.

This is in clear contradiction with the Subject of the Marxist tradition (with a capital S), which, 'through unificatory discourses', unify, homogenise and render subject to ideology (Smith, 1988: 155). This conception of subject 'cerns' the subject, i.e. abstracts the subject from the real conditions of its existence in perfect consonance with Western political heritage

(Smith, 1988: xxx). Smith offers, instead, to ‘discern’ the subject where the human agency is re-introduced as a possibility of political resistance.<sup>19</sup>

This, in a way, bears resemblance to what Laclau means by the Death of the ‘Death of the Subject’. For Laclau, ‘the multiplication of new identities in the collapse of the places from which universal subjects once spoke’ (Laclau, 1992: 84) ended up in the deconstruction of the link between social agents and classes. Different subject positions are inserted into the political struggle by the death of the ‘Death of the Subject’, where subjects are reiterated and reintroduced within the social and political realm in a radical way- the limitation and *the constitutive outside* of the subject are the very reasons for its reinsertion:

[It] showed the secret poison that inhabited it, the possibility of its second death; the death of the Death of the Subject, the re-emergence of the subject as a result of its own death; the proliferation of concrete finitudes whose limitations are the source of their strength; the realization that there can be subjects because the gap that the Subject was supposed to bridge is actually unbridgeable (Laclau, 1992: 84).

However, according to Torfing, poststructuralism has not succeeded in preventing the ‘death of the subject’ (Torfing, 1999: 54-77). He argues that, citing Best and Kellner, poststructuralism shares with structuralism the rejection of the autonomous subject. Hence, although poststructuralism stresses the importance of history, power and everyday life in its account of the subjectivation, it remains within the anti-humanist celebration of the ‘death of the subject’ which applies to Laclau’s conception of ‘subject’ as well (Best and Kellner, 1992 quoted in Torfing, 1999: 56). The empty space left by Marxism’s depiction of universality

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<sup>19</sup> Smith, by arguing that the human agent exceeds the contemporary intellectual abstractions attached to it, actually dismisses the understanding of the subject ‘as it is constructed in and by much poststructuralist theory as well as by those discourses against which poststructuralist theory claims to pose itself’ (Smith, 1988: xxx). However, in terms of the link sustained between subjects and political struggle, Smith and Laclau seem to have similar pretensions.

and universal class is now filled by a number of new Social Movements (Torfing, 1999: 56). However, although they did not develop a distinct and more elaborate account of 'the subject', Laclau and Mouffe's interpretation of the subject as relational and decentred gives very important clues about the significance of subject within the hegemonic struggle and formation of the antagonisms.

Therefore, the relationship between the agents and discourses is contingent and 'subject' is a position within the hegemonic struggle shaped by discourses, which is 'provisional and not necessarily infeasible, into which a person is called momentarily by the discourses he/she inhabits' (Smith, 1988: xxxv).

It is crucial to emphasise at this point that Laclau and Mouffe did not elaborate on the relationship between agents on the one hand and the two different models of sustaining hegemony differentiated by Gramsci ('passive revolution' and 'inclusive hegemony') on the other. Therefore, Laclau and Mouffe did not make a distinction between elite discourses and public discourses in terms of defining subject positions within the hegemonic struggle (Gramsci, 1973). For Gramsci, *hegemony* is not only the strategy of the proletariat but also involves the practices of the ruling class in general (Mouffe, 1979: 179). He makes a distinction between the *passive revolution* ('*transformism*') which is characterised with the gradual but continuous absorption of active elements produced by allied groups and *an expansive hegemony*, 'which had to consist in the creation of an active, direct consensus resulting from the genuine adoption of the interests of the popular classes by the hegemonic class' (Mouffe, 1979: 182). This consensus is called the *collective will* by Gramsci (Mouffe, 1979: 11). The 'collective will' results in the dominant group (read 'the elites') being

coordinated concretely with the general interests of the subordinate groups (read ‘the public’) (Gramsci, 1973: 181). On the other hand, Laclau and Mouffe do not use the concept of ‘collective will’ and only pay attention to the ‘new political subjects’ in order to differentiate them from workers’ struggles (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 149-193). For Laclau, there are no rules that would help us identify the antagonist, i.e. the subject of the antagonism and ‘the collective will’: ‘[There is a] limitation of all efforts to interpret social antagonisms in terms of game theory. The latter entails a system of rules which sets down the possible moves of the players and consequently establishes their identity. But with antagonism, rules and identities are *violated*: the antagonist is not a player, but a cheat’ (Laclau 1990: 11). As I will scrutinise in the final section of this chapter where I ask the question of ‘what to get from theory?’, I return back to this problem of identifying the subject of the hegemony and show how I link subjects and discourses through a Laclau-Mouffean theoretical lens in this thesis.

In a sense, then, Laclau and Mouffe can be claimed to have transcended traditional notions of structure and agency through the use of the category of ‘discourse’. As the society is impossible, and it can only exist in the sense of a partial totalisation achieved through hegemonic discourse, ‘every social identity is constituted through a difference from which it can never fully distance itself’ (McAnulla, 1998: 7).

On the other hand, Jensen sees a problem with the anti-essentialist character of discourse theory regarding the relationship between structure and agency (Jensen, 2005). He argues that Laclau and Mouffe’s use of Saussurean structural theory is a clue of the structuralist bias in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*:

On the one hand they again stress the anti-essentialism in that neither the totality of the social nor the aggregate is seen as essential. Neither structure nor agency can thus be accredited the power of change. However, while developing their theory, Laclau and Mouffe indeed use Saussurean structuralism and Althusserian post-structuralism as common reference points against which the discourse theory is developed. It is thus easy to get the impression of a structural bias in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (Jensen, 2005: 6-7)

Similarly, according to Wæver (2005), Laclau and Mouffe show structural characteristics with regard to their stance in terms of the structure and agency relationship. While he rejects that the ontological basis of discourse theory stipulates a bias towards structural focus, he associates Laclau and Mouffe's position to the 'French heir' (structuralism) inherent in their theorising (Wæver, 2005: 200-1).

In my reading, the assertion regarding the undecidability and contingency of subject positions and identities, both of which are viewed as a political struggle, can be used to inspire an understanding of how 'Europe' is used at the domestic level in general. All in all, the Laclau-Mouffean conception of hegemony which challenges the traditional link forged between consciousness and class background and the subject positions sustained solely by this narrow conception extends the scope of politics. This is quite different from the previously scrutinised conceptualisations of 'Europe'. The Europeanisation literature would assert top-down subject positions imposed by the European level whereas a social constructivist framework would take the identities for granted and fail to explore the link between the discourses and the construction of the antagonisms. Similarly, a Foucauldian framework would focus solely on subject positions, (which would possibly be seen as the result of the power relations constructed at the micro-level but not as a result of a process which is itself political). On the other hand, the iteration of subject positions as contingent and articulatory



by Laclau and Mouffe opens an excellent analytical avenue to understand ‘Europe’ as a struggle for hegemony, which the present thesis is aiming at.

### ***3.5.2. Hegemony as a Political Project in Laclau and Mouffe***

The Laclau- Mouffean approach is very useful in that it enables us to study political processes with a clear focus upon the logics of language, ideas, meanings and their transformations. Whereas the notion of ‘Europe’ is usually taken as a pre-given, automatic and categorical concept by the Europeanisation literature, discourse analysis emphasises undecidability and the role of contingency, thereby emerging as a useful tool in explaining political change.

Firstly, theoretically speaking, Laclau mentions the primacy of the political over the social. He substantiates this claim by referring to Husserl’s distinction between ‘sedimentation’ and ‘reactivation’. Husserl, *a la* Laclau, argues that the practice of any scientific discipline entails a routinisation where the results of previous scientific investigations are taken for granted the original intuition which gave rise to them being forgotten (Laclau, 1990: 34). Husserl called the routinisation and forgetting of origins as ‘sedimentation’, and the recovery of the ‘constitutive’ activity as ‘reactivation’ (quoted in Laclau, 1990: 34). According to Laclau, the sedimented forms of ‘objectivity’ make up the field of what we call *the social*. The moment of antagonism where the undecidable nature of the alternatives and their resolution through power relations becomes fully visible constitutes the field of *the political*. ‘Any political construction takes place against the background of a range of sedimented practices’ (Laclau, 1990: 35). As already mentioned, antagonism for Laclau and Mouffe shows the limits of the objectivity and the social (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 125). The antagonism occurs all the time, which points to the ontological primacy of *the political* (Marchart, 2007: 174). It is the

potential for collective identities to turn antagonistic, which grants *the political* an ontological primacy (Hansen, 2008a: 6).

The theoretical primacy of *the political* has its implications on the practice of hegemony as well. According to Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical framework, 'universality' comes into the picture when the particular demands can symbolise themselves as 'universal', as already mentioned before. The core of the hegemonic struggle is the ability to establish equivalence between an increasingly wide range of demands and the extent to which differential identities can be articulated into a self-proclaimed 'universal' project shows the core of the hegemonic project. Mobilizing a wide range of demands entails the emergence of a particular discourse as the key to the hegemonic struggle. 'To "hegemonise" a content would therefore amount to *fixing* its meaning around a nodal point. The field of the social could thus be regarded as a trench war in which different political projects strive to articulate a great number of social signifiers around themselves' (Laclau, 1990: 28).

### **3.5.3. Signification Chains**

In explaining how a particular discourse is articulated around a certain signifier, the main concept the Laclau and Mouffean theoretical framework employs is the 'signification chain'<sup>20</sup>. According to Philips and Jorgensen, a 'signification chain' refers to the investment of key signifiers with meaning (Philips and Jorgensen, 2002: 50). According to this framework, a discourse exists as chains of differentially connected signifiers such that the

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<sup>20</sup> Within the Laclau-Mouffean literature, the concepts of 'signification chain' (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000; Žižek, 1999), 'signifying chain' (e.g. Hansen, 2008b; Laclau, 2005) and 'chain of equivalence' (e.g. Critchley and Marchart, 2004; Philips and Jorgensen, 2002) are used interchangeably. To be consistent and not to conflate the concept with the logic of equivalence, I will be using the notion 'signification chain' throughout the text.

meaning of one is established by reference to another. These chains establish a logical connection in which signifiers form combinations which make sense only by reference to the remainder of the ideological chain. In this conception, the discursive system exists as overlapping chains that may or may not cross at certain points. According to MacMillan, these ‘crossing’ points are similar to what Laclau and Mouffe call ‘antagonisms’ (MacMillan, 2010). For instance, in case of the significations chains constructed for ‘Europe’, one chain may articulate ‘free market’ whereas another chain might include the signifier of ‘Christendom’, which poses an antagonism between the two.

As mentioned before, for Laclau and Mouffe, signifiers do not have fixed meanings of their own but are open to articulation, which is at the very core of the political and the hegemonic struggle itself. Similarly, according to Žižek, as cited in Butler, this process of fixing a signifier around a certain meaning is political (Butler, 1993). ‘He argues that a pure signifier, empty of all meaning, postures a site of radical semantic abundance’ (Žižek cited in Butler, 1993: 208). Following Laclau and Mouffe, Žižek views political signifiers as free-floating and discontinuous within the prepoliticised field of ideology. When these political signifiers become politicised, they provide contingent but efficacious points of unity for the otherwise disparate or free-floating elements of ideological life. A political signifier gains its political efficacy, its power to define the political field, through creating and sustaining its constituency. In this respect, ‘the power of the terms “women” or “democracy” is not derived from their ability to describe adequately or comprehensively a political reality that already exists; on the contrary, the political signifier becomes politically efficacious by instituting and sustaining a set of connections as a political reality’ (Butler, 1993: 209-210).

However, these signification chains do not exist in a vacuum but are identifiable within a signifying grammar. In line with Laclau and Mouffe's argument that we are always internal to a world of signifying practices and objects, a signification chain also exist within this world (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 1-24). Laclau labels this world of signifying practices 'a social logic' (Laclau in Butler et.al., 2000: 44-89). In his exchange with Butler and Žižek, Laclau characterises a social logic as 'a rarefied system of objects, as a "grammar" or cluster of rules which make some combinations and substitutions possible and exclude others, making it synonymous with his category of "discourse"' (quoted in Glynos and Howarth, 2007: 135). I called this signifying system in Chapter 1 *the lingua franca* and argued that what I understand by the term 'hegemony' is the conviction on the part of political identities that a particular discourse is the *lingua franca* of politics so that each and every political identity has to talk that language in order to assert its location within politics. Within the framework of this 'grammar', in investing signifiers with meaning, the signification chains articulate different signifiers and draw the limits of *the social* in different ways which is called 'antagonism' by Laclau and Mouffe, as the next section will elaborate on.

All in all, in the Laclau-Mouffean framework, a signification chain is a conceptual tool used to construct a set of connections between signifiers and is a political act in itself in constructing discourses and constructing hegemony, which I will thoroughly use in Chapter 6 to construct the discourses on 'Europe' in Turkish politics.

### 3. 5.4. *Antagonisms, Logics of Equivalence and Difference and Political Frontiers*

As already mentioned, every hegemonic struggle aims to present a political project through which particular demands can construct themselves as ‘universal’. The ability to establish equivalence between an increasingly wide range of demands ‘where any particularity would be finally reabsorbed into a universal and transparent order’ (Laclau, 1990: 80) is nothing but the core of the hegemonic struggle. This is strictly linked to the delineation of political frontiers because ‘there is only politics when there are frontiers’ (Laclau, 1990: 159-174). Similarly, Mouffe argues that, ‘there is no consensus without exclusion, there is no “we” without a “they”, and no politics is possible without the drawing of a frontier’ (Mouffe, 2005: 73). Political frontiers are crucial for the Laclau-Mouffean analysis, albeit under-explored, as any political identity cannot be determined through a principle of *a priori* societal logic and another way of delimiting identity should be formed (Norval, 2000). ‘[I]t is through consolidation or dissolution of frontiers that a historical bloc is constructed or fragmented’ (Laclau, 1990: 160). As will be elaborated in the next sections, Aletta Norval takes this emphasis on political frontiers further and shows how the Apartheid regime in South Africa had been perpetuated through the construction and deconstruction of political frontiers (Norval, 1990; 1994; 1996).

In terms of hegemonising *the social*, antagonisms play a pivotal role. As mentioned before, antagonism originates from the limits of the objectivity and the social (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 125). That is, antagonisms make up *the political* in the sense that it shows the frontiers between different demands and identities within *the social*. Whereas it is an inherent objective

relation between classes for Marxism, for Laclau and Mouffe, antagonism is an experience for constituting the limits of the society, due to the latter's impossibility of fully constituting itself (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 125). In my reading, antagonism temporarily draws the boundaries of the political struggle and sets the rules for the language, thereby constituting the core of the hegemony. Therefore, politics is a practice of creation, reproduction and transformation of social relations which cannot be located at a determinate level and of making sense of a field of the social which is criss-crossed with antagonisms (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 153).

In doing this, i.e. sustaining the symbolic universality of particular demands and in projecting this as a political project, there is an infinite interplay between the so-called 'logic of equivalence' and 'logic of difference', two key terms central to the Laclau-Mouffeian analysis of the formation of political identities and antagonisms. Laclau and Mouffe, following a Saussurean ontology of signification, define two fundamental relations in language- the associative (or substitutive) and the syntagmatic (or combinatory) - and transform them into two dynamic and politically inflected logics, namely the logics of 'equivalence' and 'difference' (Glynos and Howarth, 2007: 106). With Laclau's words, 'we have here the basis for a comparison between this duality politics/administration and the two axes of signification – that of combinations and that of substitutions' (Laclau, 2008: 18).

When these different significations within language are translated to the realm of political practices, we have two different strategies of hegemony. The more social order is stable and unchallenged, the more institutional forms will prevail and will organise themselves in a syntagmatic system of differential positions, within *the logic of difference*. The more the

confrontations between groups define the social scene, the more society will be divided into two camps: at the limit, there will be a total dichotomisation of the social space around only two syntagmatic positions: ‘us’ and ‘them’ as it is the case with *the logic of equivalence* (Laclau, 2008: 18).

In terms of the identities, logic of equivalence stipulates all subjects within the discursive space as universal, with regard to what Herschinger labels ‘something underlying them all’, sharpening the antagonistic frontier (Herschinger, 2008: 9). On the other hand, logic of difference operates via the absorption of differential identities, weakening the antagonistic frontier (not completely eliminating it) and shifting it to the margins of politics (Herschinger, 2008: 10). That is, on the part of the political identities, logic of equivalence renders all subject positions equivalent against a particular threat (‘if you do not support Europe, you will not be modern’ or ‘if we join the EU, they will rule our judiciary, we have to reject the EU’) whereas logic of difference particularises the subject positions and retains the differences (‘workers, teachers and intelligentsia alike should promote the EU ideal’ or ‘against the EU, everyone from different sections of the society should unite’).

To reiterate, discourses or political identities can be articulated through the operation of *logic of difference* where the differences are marginalised between the constitutive components of the discourses through signifying non-adversarial and positive differences of different demands or camps. The political frontiers in this respect are inclusive and refer to differential group identities. There is an attempt to fix the relations among social agents as a set of differential positions (Norval, 1990: 137). Difference is the logic behind political movements

which seeks to heal the social space, giving room to all social demands, treating them ‘differently’, next to each other, without collapsing them into an equivalential chain (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 129). Norval argues that during the Vorster regime in South Africa (1966-1978), the previous racist language of the Apartheid regime was no longer heard and a new discourse constructing white unity was introduced (Norval, 1990: 142-143). This later culminated in the discourse of the National Party in the 1980s, which coopted coloured and Indian sections of the society into a tricameral parliamentary system (Norval, 1990; 1994). By using the notions of ‘free enterprise’ and ‘economic growth’, groups hitherto excluded from the political system (such as urban blacks) were included in the political realm. ‘The realignment of business interests and government policy around the discourse of free enterprise had to create the conditions under which urban blacks could be coopted, could be given “a stake in the system”, in lieu of their continued exclusion from political decision-making processes’ (Norval, 1996: 228). Along these lines, to exemplify the differential inclusion of Urban Africans, Norval quotes Anton Rupert’s statement that: ‘we cannot survive without a free market economy, without a stable black middle class that enjoys full property rights (...) and without a feeling of hope for progress in the hearts of all our people’, coopting black middle class under the rubric of ‘free market’ and ‘stability’ (cited in Norval, 1996: 226-7). For Norval, another noteworthy aspect of the *logic of difference* is the marginalisation of the differences between the constitutive components of the discourses through signifying non-adversarial and positive differences, is to depoliticise areas of potential conflict by constructing differential, non-antagonistic identities (Norval, 1990: 146). An important facet in the National Party discourse in the late 1970s in South Africa was to concentrate power in the executive branch and to establish of four permanent cabinet committees which drew members from ranks of business leaders (Norval, 1990: 146).



However, group identities are not always a question of difference; there is always the possibility of adopting the *logic of equivalence*, hence depicting *the Other* as a ‘threat’ (Norval, 1994: 115-137). What we see here is the subversion of the positive identity into a negative identity. ‘Antagonism becomes the impossibility of constituting purely differential identities’, which is called the *dichotomisation of social space* through fostering a discursive unity against *the Other* made responsible for the failure of attaining a full-fledged identity of *the Self* (Norval, 1994: 121; Howarth, 2000: 107). Therefore, equivalence means that the singular demand ceases to be ‘what it is’, a specific demand, and comes to represent something more, typically the demand of overthrowing a repressive regime (Hansen, 2008b). Populism is the ‘ideal type’ of equivalential politics, and the attempt of separating the social space into two antagonistic camps – into two chains of equivalences – is its ‘ideal type’.

When Norval refers to the hegemonic decline of the Apartheid regime, she talks about the overall demarcation of political frontiers which was mainly antagonised around two camps (Norval, 1994: 115-137). The policies of the New Right in general and Thatcher’s strategy of dividing the British society into two poles in the 1980s in particular were realised through the operation of ‘logic of equivalence’ (Tünay, 1993). In Tünay’s reading, Thatcherism carried out a two-nation hegemonic project, which entailed a process of neutralising and containing popular groups under massive political agenda. The New Right divided the nation into two parts, one of which -unions, the unemployed, the disabled, pensioners and so on- is deprived of the benefits of the Keynesian welfare state and subjected to wage cuts, political repression and so forth’ (Tünay, 1993: 16). The signification chain, in this respect, consisted of old

elements such as ‘anti-statism’, ‘productivism’, ‘family’ and ‘moral regeneration’ and themes such as ‘future benefits will follow from present suffering’ (Tünay, 1993: 16; Jessop et.al., 1984: 51). In her analysis of the political movement against Eurogold<sup>21</sup> by a group of activists in Bergama, Turkey in 1989, Özen tells a similar story in terms of depiction of a ‘threat’ (Özen, 2009). According to Özen, shortly after Eurogold started its initial operations in the mining site in Bergama, a group of people from Bergama, including some local left-wing politicians, union leaders, activists from local NGOs, and a number of peasants from the villages constructed the mining project as an attempt by a foreign company, an imperialist power to exploit the resources of a developing country without regard to the natural environment and public health and articulated a discourse in which the operation of the goldmine was constructed as a direct threat to the environment (Özen, 2009: 413). In this respect, the signification chain included themes such as ‘environmental degradation’ and ‘anti-imperialism’ and the Eurogold has been depicted as the ‘threat’.

Therefore, according to Glynos and Howarth, insofar as political practices entail the construction of new frontiers to challenge old social structures in the name of an ideal or principle (thus implying a set of inclusions and exlusions), one can say that the political logic of equivalence predominates. But insofar as there is a breaking down of those frontiers so as to maintain existing social structures (thus retaining the old distribution of inclusions and exlusions), we say that the political logic of difference predominates (Glynos and Howarth, 2007: 106).

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<sup>21</sup> Eurogold Limited is an Australian owned gold exploration and mining company with active projects based in different parts of the world, including Turkey. ‘The gold-mining project concerning the gold reserves in the Bergama area was proposed by Eurogold in 1989. The proposed mining site was in the vicinity of the three villages of Bergama town, which is located near the west coast of Turkey. While tourism and trade are important sources of income for Bergama proper, which is the site of the ruins of the ancient city Pergammon, agriculture is the principal economic activity in the villages. The region in which Eurogold planned to construct a mining complex is known as one of the most fertile agricultural regions in Turkey’ (Özen, 2009: 412).

Although the logic of equivalence and the logic of difference are two opposite logics and they articulate political space in quite different ways, they usually prevail together in a social formation and one can become more dominant than the other. However, according to Sumic, ‘the logic of equivalence’ has an ontological primacy over ‘the logic of difference’:

Hegemonic operation, to take place at all, thus demands a certain degree of de-particularisation. This making indifferent of differences between particular contents, however, can only be achieved through the primacy of what Laclau calls the ‘logic of equivalence’ over the ‘logic of difference’ (Sumic, 2004: 190).

All in all, if the logic of equivalence becomes dominant in the structuration of the political space, there will emerge only two differential positions which will be strictly in opposition to each other. This is to say, when the logic of equivalence becomes dominant, the political space will largely be structured around a particular antagonism and will be divided into two antagonistic camps. For Laclau and Mouffe, the struggles through the *logic of equivalence* where a certain section of society is mobilised against a common enemy are ‘populist struggles’, e.g. colonised/coloniser, fascist/anti-fascist etc. whereas the struggles through the logic of difference are ‘democratic struggles’, (e.g. feminist, gay, anti-nuclear or anti-racist) (Contu, 2002: 166). On the other hand, if the *logic of difference* becomes dominant, differential positions will proliferate. Within the framework of this logic, Laclau and Mouffe attribute a novel role to the democratic struggles, i.e. New Social Movements ‘in articulating the rapid diffusion of social conflictuality to more and more numerous relations which is characteristic today of advanced industrial societies’ (Laclau and Mouffe: 1985: 159-160). A democratic struggle emerges ‘within a relatively sutured political space formed by a multiplicity of practices that do not exhaust the referential and empirical reality of the agents

forming part of them' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 132). Here, there is no correspondence between a 'political space' and 'society' as an empirical referent and these spaces are autonomous and relatively closed. In popular struggles, however, 'the gap between political space and society as an empirical referent' is bridged by a political logic (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 133). Thus, *the logic of equivalence* simplifies the political space by dividing it into two camps, whereas *the logic of difference* creates antagonisms through multiple forms of democratic struggles. 'Whereas a project employing *the logic of equivalence* seeks to divide social space by condensing meanings around two antagonistic poles, a project employing a *logic of difference* attempts to weaken and displace a sharp antagonistic polarity, endeavouring to relegate that division to the margins of the society' (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 11). In Laclau and Mouffe's terms:

We, thus, see that the logic of equivalence is a logic of the simplification of political space, while the logic of difference is a logic of its expansion and increasing complexity. Taking a comparative example from linguistics, we could say that the logic of difference tends to expand the syntagmatic pole of language, the number of positions that can enter into a relation of combination and hence of continuity with one another; while the logic of equivalence expands the paradigmatic pole- that is, the elements that can be substituted for one another- thereby reducing the number of positions which can possibly be combined (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 130).

### **3.6. The recent uses of 'logic of equivalence' and 'logic of difference': Hegemony and the Essex School**

Although in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985), Laclau and Mouffe have given a comprehensive theory of hegemony and focused on the relationship between radical democracy and hegemonic struggle, they did not operationalise the logics of equivalence and difference and show how these logics work in terms of political identities in real political settings. This has been later done by the so-called 'Essex School', a new generation of

scholars of political science based at the University of Essex. I deem it important to include some of the studies of the Essex School scholars here to see how they theorised the operation of *logics of equivalence and difference* through case studies and to understand how some of these case studies reflect on, interact and even counterpose the logics' operation in Turkish politics after 1999 within the context of 'Europe-as-hegemony' that I will outline in Chapter 7.

According to Laclau, dissatisfied with the dominant theoretical models of social explanation that existed at the time in the field of the social sciences (behaviouralism, structural functionalism, rational choice), the School elaborated an alternative approach to the understanding of the structuration of socio-political spaces by articulating an alternative conception of *discourse* (Laclau in Howarth et.al, 2000: x). In Townshend's words, 'Laclau and Mouffe's unhappiness with orthodox Marxism led them to embrace—albeit not uncritically—the ideas of poststructuralist Continental thinkers, especially Derrida, Foucault and Lacan, as well as the later Wittgenstein, who were concerned with language and psychoanalysis' (Townshend, 2003: 131). These theoretical inspirations were also coupled with an immense effort to develop a fully-fledged methodology of the discourse theory.

The main conceptual focus of the project at hand, i.e. political frontiers, antagonisms and logics of equivalence and difference, is also central to the anti-objectivist trend of the School's research agenda. For the Essex School, 'in the modern era the world of politics is the world of contingent "hegemonisations", an arena of incommensurable choices, of "undecidability" and acts of power, which are the products of the interplaying logics of "equivalence" and "difference"' (Townshend, 2003: 132).

The book of *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis* by David Howarth, Aletta J. Norval and Yannis Stavrakakis endeavours to show a streamlined register of the above theoretical and conceptual attempts (Howarth et.al, 2000). Although the book is mainly instrumental in showing the future research trajectories in discourse theory (Norval, 2000), it makes a very strong attempt to operationalise the above-mentioned concepts in different aspects of politics. In this section, I will mention some examples of the recent uses of the logics of equivalence and difference in different contexts and historical settings not only in this seminal book but also elsewhere. In this way, it is easier to see how the originally abstract notions have in the course of time been operationalised by different scholars, constituting a useful starting point from which to operationalise them within the Turkish context, the task that Chapters 6 and 7 aim to accomplish.

In her account of the Mexican revolutionary mystique Rosa Buenfil argues that ‘the Mexican revolution can be understood as an overdetermination of different social movements organised around a mystical discourse’ (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 11). According to Buenfil, the movements were organised around antagonistic poles, in which various agents were polarised in terms of the *oppressor* and the *oppressed* (Buenfil, 2000: 93). The intellectual and political composition that emerged from this unity of diversity which later turned into the new ruling bloc was characterised by hybridity and eclecticism, which mobilised the Mexican armed movement, teachers, worker and peasant leaders under the rubric of the *oppressed* against a common threat, i.e. ‘the government’ (Buenfil, 2000).

Focusing on the construction of Romanian social democracy between 1989 and 1996, Kevin Adamson shows how revisionist socialism has incorporated signifiers associated with neoliberal transition discourse such as ‘market’ and ‘privatisation’ under the rubric of the discourse of ‘transition’ (Adamson, 2000). He also acknowledges that, Romania’s revolution, by dissolving differences of demands into an expanding order through logic of differences, and, in particular, through the discursive production of a political frontier between ‘the People’ and ‘the Ceausescu’, radically reorganised the political identities of millions of Romanians (Adamson, 2007).

In another project, Barros and Castagnola question the political frontiers in Argentina between 1955 and 1973, the so-called ‘interregnum’ of the Peronist populism (Barros and Castagnola, 2000). By rejecting the ‘objectively’ antagonistic interests of various economic groups in Argentina, they show how Peronism incorporated the hitherto excluded popular sectors and enlarged the scope of political identities (Barros and Castagnola, 2000: 24-29). In this picture, ‘the political alignments had mainly to do with the attitude towards Peronism: the central problem was whether to be in favour or against Peronism’ (Barros and Castagnola, 2000: 30). According to them, this strict split of the political realm into two fields by Peronism precluded the demands of these newly integrated groups to be articulated into a wider hegemonic operation after 1955 (Barros and Castagnola, 2000).

David Howarth’s various studies aim to explain the decline of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and the rise of the Charterist movement and its political party, UDF, in South Africa between 1976 and 1986 with reference to the inherent strengths and weaknesses of their respective discourses. According to Howarth, the constitution of Black Consciousness

ideology involved the production and fixation of 'blackness' as an empty signifier which instituted and organised a new racial political frontier in South African society (Howarth, 1997: 54-5). 'In this sense, the signifier "black" makes possible the creation of black solidarity and unity, and engenders political struggle, based on a common identity actively denied by white domination. It thus functions as a nodal point unifying different subjectivities and interests against the various manifestations of white oppression' (Howarth, 1997: 67). This conception calls the African workers, Indians and Coloureds for unification against the common enemy of Grand Apartheid, rendering an exclusionary equivalence between those groups. On the other hand, the Chartist success in the 1980s mainly stemmed from its ability to subsume race, class gender and youth within it (Howarth, 2000: 180–181). 'Labelling the government's proposals as "divisive", "undemocratic" and "racist", the UDF endeavoured to mobilise and organise mass popular support in favour of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa' (Howarth, 2000: 182). Firstly, common citizenship rights and the necessity for an unfragmented South Africa free from racial, ethnic and sexual divisions were at the centre of the UDF discourse and, secondly, the political boundaries this time were drawn through the logic of difference and by the notion of 'non-racialism'.

Aletta Norval's research on the South African politics identifying the proliferation and dislocation of political identities in the Apartheid era also focus on the construction of logics of equivalences and differences and political frontiers (Norval, 1990; 1994; 1996; 1998). According to Norval, the notion of 'volkseie' (that which is the 'own' of the 'people') led to a recasting of the European/Native frontier by the Apartheid regime until the 1980s whereas a transformist project by the National Party (NP) introduced a limited and differential inclusion of coloured, Indian South Africans and urban South Africans around the notion of 'seperate



freedoms’ (Norval, 1996: 174-218). Within this framework, Apartheid emerges as a failed hegemonic project in the 1980s as the former discourse fostered alliances between moderates across the racial divide and subverted the logic of the Apartheid (Norval, 1996: 270-274).

In this section, I showed how the logics of difference and equivalence have been operationalised by the Essex School scholars in different political settings. This attempt is helpful in order to understand how these logics speak to the construction of political identities and political frontiers. Nevertheless, I argue that however helpful the logics of difference and equivalence are in understanding antagonisms, demarcation of political frontiers and the hegemonic struggle, it is an overestimation that they are the pre-requisites for hegemonic politics. We also need to identify other factors (e.g. institutions, socio-economic factors etc.) at the political terrain to claim that the ‘hegemony’ is successfully constructed. Therefore, firstly, I argue that these logics are helpful to understand *the hegemonic struggle*, not the *hegemony per se*, which refers back to my theorisation of ‘hegemony’ in this section. Secondly, I argue that, following Herschinger, for hegemony to exist, the ‘Other’ and antagonism have to be very-well defined in order to split *the social* or to subvert this split. However, as Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 will show, in case of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ after 1999 in Turkish politics, the four discourses on ‘Europe’ had different ‘Others’ and did not split *the social* in the way Laclau and Mouffe intend.

#### 4. CONCLUSION: WHAT TO GET FROM THEORY?

The most inspiring aspect of the Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework is their emphasis on how the notion of hegemony entails the extension of the scope of politics and how the political frontiers are drawn via the construction of antagonisms and a hegemonic struggle. The approach is equally ground breaking in that it enables one to see how *the social* is symbolically criss-crossed by antagonisms and absorbed by *the political*. However, Laclau and Mouffe's work is highly abstract and theoretical, as noted by many scholars (e.g. Contu, 2002; Carpentier and Spinoy, 2007). Similarly, they do not tell us in what ways antagonisms and political frontiers are relevant to the hegemonic struggles of today. The question remains, therefore, where does one adopting a Laclau- Mouffean approach go from here?

The present study will be using the concepts of 'hegemony', 'logic of equivalence', 'logic of difference', 'antagonisms' and 'political frontiers' throughout the project. However, instead of the notion of 'hegemony', I will be using the term 'bipolar hegemony', borrowing from Emilia Palonen as I argue that we need both poles of a discourse regardless of whether that pole of the discourse supports or rejects a particular political practice in order to identify the hegemonic struggle (Palonen, 2009). Palonen uses the term 'bipolar hegemony' in order to understand the cleavages within the Hungarian society, which aims to 'gather differences along a single frontier that functions as the source of common identification' (Palonen, 2009: 319). Within this context, I will investigate how 'Europe' emerges as a bipolar hegemonic discourse in the specified period and irreducible openness of *the social* is stabilised in articulations around 'Europe'. Studies on the notion of 'Europe' in Turkish political landscape usually tend to outline two main inclinations about 'Europe', namely a pro-Europe vs. anti-

Europe approach. The second step in this regard is to make an automatic association between some particular camps and these two main positions. As the main aim of this thesis is to understand how the hegemony of 'Europe' is sustained, I am rather interested in seeing how 'Europe' hegemonises *the social* cross-cutting both inclinations. Therefore, I confine myself to calling both poles of this discourse as 'dominant discourse' or parts of the same hegemonic discourse instead of referring to them as two mutually exclusive and opposing discourses. This is due to the view that, as Wæver argues:

the 'dominant' political line and the opposition usually share a lot (except the question on the agenda). This follows from the fact that political opponents relate to each other, and therefore almost always deal with some of the same issues and use related concepts and images while struggling to reformulate and conquer other key terms (Wæver, 2005: 36).

My understanding of Ole Wæver here is that the question is a part of the agreement between opponents. It is rather the answers that differ. However, the limits of objectivity and the terms in which it is asked are the same so that particular constructions of the world are reified rather than contested. 'Both sides of the antagonistic relation are necessary in order to create a single space of representation' (Laclau, 318). Therefore, I will be using the notion of 'hegemony' with a focus on its bipolarity and on the argument that chains of equivalences and chains of differences are part and parcel of the same hegemonic strategy. These logics form the poles of the bipolar hegemony, not the pro-/anti- stance against 'Europe'. For this reason, I do not agree with Laclau and Mouffe's association between types of struggles and logics articulated mentioned above. A new social movement can be populist and employ logic of equivalence in the sense of dichotomising the social space against capitalism. Logics of equivalence and difference are two sides of the same coin, so-called 'hegemony'. Norval, in this respect, gives

the example of Apartheid which did not operate either through logics of exclusion ('logic of equivalence'), nor simply through differential forms of inclusion ('logic of difference'), but through the simultaneous retention of those logics (Norval, 1996: 10). According to her, 'attempts to reduce Apartheid to either of those dimensions will, thus, fail to grasp what constituted one of the strongest mechanisms of its hegemonisation' (Norval, 1996: 10).

Similarly, I find the notions 'antagonism' and 'political frontiers' very helpful in terms of seeing the operationalisation of the discourses. What really matters here for the very aims of this study is that antagonisms set the rules of politics and frontiers between opposing groups. How do discourses do that in Turkish politics? How are the political frontiers drawn within *the social* and turned into *the political* by discourses on 'Europe'? These are the questions that will be explored in the forthcoming sections.

Last, but not least, throughout the thesis, in order to overcome the ambiguity of the Laclau-Mouffeian theoretical framework in terms of the subjects and the so-called 'antagonists' of a particular discourse, I will argue that an actor assumes a subject position within a discourse by articulating the elements of a signification chain. As I will substantiate in Chapter 6, I will claim that political actors are the subjects of the discourses and therefore the hegemonic struggle as long as they appear in the political terrain as a part of those discourses and as long as they aim to render the discourses of the opponents' subject position meaningless.

## CHAPTER 4

### A POSSIBLE METHODOLOGY FOR UNDERSTANDING DISCOURSES ON 'EUROPE' AND POLITICAL FRONTIERS IN TURKISH POLITICS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous section, I argued that with its particular focus on the significance of discourses in delineating political frontiers, Laclau-Mouffean discourse analysis is helpful for understanding the domestic discourses and representations of 'Europe'. Generally speaking, by exploring the main insights of the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe in Chapter 3, I argued that it is important to understand the meanings, representations and discourses and how these speak to the construction of political frontiers within *the social*.

In this section, I will outline the methodology for my endeavour to map out possible readings and representations of the notion of 'Europe' in Turkish political debates in the aftermath of 1999. In this respect, firstly, I will briefly outline possible methodological options that could be used to understand the discourses on 'Europe' in Turkish political debates. Surely, this list is not exhaustive as my main aim is not to map out the possible examples of poststructuralist methodology. I will present some possible methodological choices that exist within the literature that might be applied to this project. Secondly, I will move on to devising my own methodology. As discourse theory is a version of 'a problem-driven' rather than a 'method-' or 'theory-driven' research (Howarth, 2005), the methodology outlined here is particularly designed to address the problem at hand: to identify discourses regarding the concept of 'Europe' as they exist within Turkish political debates and their impact on political frontiers as hegemony. However, it also has the broader aim of reflecting upon possible discursive analytical strategies in the future so that other researchers might operationalise this method in

tracing discourses and their performative role in sustaining hegemony and demarcating political frontiers. Finally, I will address the problems that emerged within the project from the use of the methodology outlined here. This exercise is helpful to see the concrete and immediate ramifications of the problems associated with the post-structuralist methodology on the current project and to offer alternative future methodological research trajectories, which will also be mentioned in Chapter 8.

The departure point of my methodology will be the claim that for any discourse to be hegemonic in the Turkish political setting, it has to relate itself to the privileged signifiers of Turkish politics, namely the signifiers of ‘democracy’ and ‘security’.

## **2. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY: CHALLENGES AND FACTS**

When it comes to devising the methodology for a project which has a close affinity with the post-structuralist reading of the discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish political debates, the main methodological premise and perhaps the strength of the discourse theory might turn into a weakness: there is not a prescribed and free-standing set of rules and techniques that could be taken ‘off-the-shelf’ and applied. It has been often claimed that methodological deficit is one of the most important deficits for discourse theory (Howarth, 2008). The best a discourse analyst can do, in this respect, is to acknowledge the spectrum of methodological options available to him/her and then to reflect upon and theorise the ways he/she conducts research and asks questions. These questions ‘are always understood within a wider set of ontological and epistemological postulates and particular problems’ (Howarth, 2005: 317).

A second difficulty arises due to the ‘constructed nature of the data’ in discourse analysis (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005: 98). Contrary to traditional methods of social scientific inquiry which stipulate that scientific findings should not be affected by the researcher, discourse theorists posit the constructed nature of the scientific data and argue that, ‘the steps taken are not neutral vis-à-vis the theoretical point of departure; but always include an element of construction’ (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005: 98). This epistemological stance, which claims that ‘there are no extra-discursive facts, rules and method or criteria for establishing that can guarantee the production of true knowledge’, in a way, leaves the whole methodological burden of proof solely to the researcher conducting the research (Torfing, 2005: 27). Moreover, dealing with one’s own country’s political debates is even harder as the researcher is then a part of those identified (or not-identified) discourses himself/herself. This might affect the researcher’s selectivity in terms of the resources or the way he/she operationalises them. Indeed, this is a very well-known problematique of social sciences in general since Durkheim (1982 [1894]), where he tried to solve the problem of the social scientist bringing his/her social baggage to the social field, or to the field of discourses for this matter. There is not an omnipotent solution to this problem, nor is it a problem as such, especially for discourse analysis which does not have the slightest claim for ‘scientific objectivity’. What the discourse analyst offers to this problematique as a solution is to do a second-order observation- he/ she observes the observers. It is an observation ‘of the observing system itself-not in any way but precisely as an observer’ (Andersen, 2003: 66). According to Luhmann, ‘to observe is to indicate something within the boundaries of a distinction’ (quoted in Spencer-Brown, 1969: 1). In this respect, as long as you stick with the boundaries of your distinction and the straightjacket of your methodology, your observation is your *reality*, the discursive universe of the political debates that you are coming from in this case. ‘The sense

that we make becomes “real”, and, (...) these systems of meaning-production are intimately related to practices of power – the power to define and defend “reality” (Shepherd, 2006: 20).

### **3. HOW TO MAP OUT THE EURO-DISCOURSES IN TURKISH POLITICAL DEBATES: SOME OPTIONS**

In this section, I will present some of the methodological choices that are available for the project at hand. As mentioned above, the list of the methodologies mentioned here is not exhaustive, and one can always identify alternative methodologies within the literature on ‘Europe’. However, in line with the aims of this project, I singled out these methodologies as possible options and as a proper departure point for devising my own methodology.

Ole Wæver’s methodological approach, consisting of the presentation of discourses as composed of layers is significant in this regard. As summarised in the previous section, he understands the discourse as a *layered structure*, where different layers of the discourse is formed by the different forms that ‘we’ takes (Wæver, 2005). He, then, explains the change and continuity in terms of discourse on European integration by the move along the layers (Wæver, 2005) (see Chapter 3 for a detailed review of the model). This methodology is very helpful in enabling an understanding of the national context and conducting a comparative research as the aforementioned model stipulates both a synchronic (fitting material from different contexts, actors and years into a structure) and a diachronic component (moving through time and focusing on how the structure shapes action through time) (Wæver, 1998: 115; 2005: 40). Indeed, a synchronic analysis ‘freezes the object of analysis in time, thereby focusing on attention on the structure of social and political relations at a specific instant (Hay, 2002: 144) while the diachronic analysis ‘emphasises change over time’ (Hay, 2002:



148). Therefore, Wæver's analysis includes both approaches as he tries to construct a structure and see how this structure is shaped by the actors over time. This methodology is groundbreaking in that it enables an understanding of the evolution of European integration discourse in three settings and explains change via the move along layers through a relatively structuralist reading. According to Wæver, the internal link between identities attached to Europe and the nation-state depend crucially on the domestic articulation of a project of Europe with long-held concepts of state and nation on a domestic basis (Wæver, 1997; 2005). Therefore, if we translate this framework to the project at hand, the correlation between 'Europe' and domestic discourses depends on pre-existing concepts at the Turkish domestic level. Although this project requires a more thorough diachronic analysis than this model can offer as the period on focus is 1999-2008 and it is not interested in how actors would shape the structure as it would be an overly actor-based approach to 'discourse', the emergence of some certain concepts as components of a pre-existing framework is inspiring in terms of contemplating about the discourses on 'Europe' in Turkish political debates.

On the other hand, departing from the idea that discursive spaces are governed by the *rationalities* that make the appearance of a particular action/ object possible (Diez, 1997:5) (see Chapter 3 for a detailed analysis), Diez presents another method for understanding the conditions of legitimacy of European governance. As mentioned before, by breaking down the concept of *legitimacy* into three terms (*participation*, *output* and *identity*), Diez mentions four images of the European governance in Western European politics: 'Federal State', 'Intergovernmental Cooperation', 'Economic Community' and 'Network' (Diez, 1997; 1998). He presents these as ideal types and from the level of abstraction this poses; he reflects his own position as an 'observer' (Diez, 1997; 1998). This is a very helpful method to map out

the possible discourses on Europe, or on European governance in that case, and sustains a link between the discourses and the limitations of those discourses within the discursive space in a succinct way, which the existing project aims at. In this respect, the project at hand can pre-define, let's say, 4 possible discourses that establish the boundaries of the discursive space available in Turkish political debate on 'Europe', such as D1 (development), D2 (modernisation), D3 (Westernisation), D4 (stability) and test the legitimacy of these discourses within the Turkish political debates.

This exercise is very fruitful in that it enables one to map out the particular discourses attached to Europe and as such it might be analytically easier to find out why these discourses are successful as legitimacy of the discourses would implicitly point to their success. Moreover, it is more than fair to present these ideal-types as the most common discourses attached to the notion of 'Europe' in Turkish political context after a careful investigation of the existing literature. However, this method of using ideal-types has the risk of tailoring the empirical findings retrospectively in accordance with the pre-defined ideal-types. When coupled with the previously mentioned concern of dealing with one's own political baggage (with Turkish case in this respect), this exacerbates the risk of observing what your ideal types allows you to observe. It is very hard to evade this, and whatever one stresses depends on one's own approach towards the object anyway (Diez, 1997: 8). A researcher needs to hold certain concepts constant in order to evade tautology. However, presenting certain main signifiers that would help contouring the axes of the discourses instead of ideal types might be a better solution. I will come to this point later.

In another project, focusing on the role of normative orders in sustaining the legitimacy of a polity (the EU in this respect), Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung this time offer the aforementioned ideal types to understand development of polity-ideas in France, Germany and the UK (Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung, 1998). By the use of the existing literature and an analytical scheme consisting of a hierarchy of four levels, they present a list of 180 categories/ entries on a legitimate political order inferred from the investigation of the existing literature. The crux of the project is ‘to look for these elements of legitimacy in the documents included in the analysis’ (Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung, 1998: 418). Therefore, another methodological choice would be to use a vaster list of categories to understand the general contours of the Euro-discourse in Turkish political debates. Through the use of an extensive list of categories, questions or possible concepts that might be in use with regard to ‘Europe’, the main aim of the project at hand would be to find to what extent the existing discourse on ‘Europe’ fits the pre-defined group of questions or categories. This has similar strengths and weaknesses that the previous project undertaken by Diez has as the range of possible entries has the potential to limit the findings that can be made, although to a less extent. Moreover, the increased number of the concepts now extends beyond the discursive area covered and as such it gives a clear idea of a particular discourse (rights, democracy, values, history etc.) (see the table at Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung, 1998: 417). The idea of having a list of categories/entries to trace the conditions of legitimacy made by Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung (1998) is inspiring in the sense that a researcher now has a legitimate framework to limit the discursive space. The use of list of questions derived from the existing literature by Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung (1998) is inspiring for the research design of the present thesis although the focus here is not on normative ideas, as is the case in the mentioned study.

#### 4. THEN HOW?: SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON METHOD

As mentioned above, in the empirical chapters of the thesis, I will argue that, rather than solely identifying the historical evolution of how the concept of ‘Europe’ has been used in Turkish political scene, we should try to understand, first of all, how the various discourses on and representations of ‘Europe’ emerge and, secondly, how these discourses attempted to hegemonise *the social* and speak to the construction of political frontiers in Turkish politics.

As I have already outlined in the preceding section, the methodologies I have explored offer two broad alternative ways through which to do this: one can either single out certain pre-determined discourses as ideal types in Turkish politics through the use of the existing literature or alternatively trace some already-existing concepts within the discourses that make any discourse on ‘Europe’ possible in the Turkish domestic setting.

Bearing these options in mind, through the use of existing literature, rather than pre-defining ideal types and discourse, I present two privileged concepts that I deem substantive for not only Turkish conceptions of ‘Europe’, but also for Turkish politics: security and democracy. This analytical move is also in accordance with the aim of tracing ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ and political frontiers in the sense that it is these ‘privileged’ concepts that define whether a discourse attempts to be hegemonic or not. Therefore, my main claim in this chapter is that for any discourse to articulate a hegemonic struggle in the Turkish political setting, it has to relate itself to these signifiers. One should note that I do not present these concepts as discourses; rather these two are the ‘privileged signifiers’ in one way or the other in the Turkish political debates that have been pivotal throughout the Turkish political history, as the

forthcoming section will show. As already mentioned in Chapter 3, inspired by Lacanian ‘points de capiton’, Howarth and Stavrakakis speak of the ‘nodal points’ as *privileged signifiers* in a discourse that bind together a particular meaning or “chain of signification” (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:8-*emphasis added*). As the next section will argue, use of the already existing literature on Turkish politics shows that meaning or representation requires the intervention of those two signifiers to create a signification chain within the Turkish political terrain.

Secondly, as the next section will show, these two signifiers within Turkish politics iterate a mutual antagonism although they are not necessarily *inherently* antithetical. Therefore, even if this project does not claim that these two concepts are mutually exclusive, it departs from the claim that in Turkish politics, the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ are articulated in such a way that they have always emerged as two ends of a spectrum. This point is very crucial for my empirical findings as in Chapter 6 where I will outline the four main discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish politics I will not, for instance, focus on discourses which depict ‘Europe’ as a positive direction for Turkish security. This does not mean that there are not any discourses in Turkish political setting that subscribe to this representation. Rather, this line of discourse is out of scope of this project as this is not the way ‘security’ is represented as a privileged signifier in Turkish politics, as the next section will show.

## **5. LOCATING ‘DEMOCRACY’ AND ‘SECURITY’ IN TURKISH POLITICS AND ASSESSING THE LEGACIES : AN OVERVIEW**

### **5. 1. Introduction**

*‘I am dedicating this award to my lonely and beautiful country’*

*Nuri Bilge Ceylan, who received the Best Director Award in the 61st Cannes Film Festival with his film ‘Three Monkeys’ (25 May 2008)*

When this sentence was heard by ordinary Turkish citizens during the Cannes Film Festival, the reaction by that time was to shiver and to be touched, probably not by the word ‘beautiful’, but by the word ‘lonely’. Yes, the Turks feel themselves lonely and resented most of the time. This might be the loneliness of the country, of a particular identity, of a belief or of a certain political tendency. More interestingly, a sociologically/politically informed eye in Turkish politics can read this as a security tendency to assert the geopolitical specificity of the country so that ‘nobody likes us’, or as a statement showing the fragility and state-centeredness of the Turkish politics so that ‘the Establishment does not like us’.

In Turkish politics, as mentioned above, it is usually easy to oscillate between the concepts, hence concepts are more ‘essentially contested’ (Connolly, 1993). In this section, the general argument will be that the concepts of ‘democracy’ and ‘security’ are/ have been championed within Turkish politics. This is predominantly because Turkish politics is predominantly characterised by an oscillation between a ‘democracy’ representation culminating around the concepts of human rights, rule of law and multiculturalism and a ‘security’ representation more vigilant and attentive to outside interference to domestic matters. However many

different forms this oscillation may take, be it in the realm of economics, culture or education, these two signifiers have always been privileged within the flow of Turkish politics. As already mentioned in Chapter 3, inspired by Lacanian ‘points de capiton’, Howarth and Stavrakakis speak of the ‘nodal points’ as ‘*privileged signifiers* in a discourse that bind together a particular meaning or “chain of signification”’ (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:8-*emphasis added*). In this respect, I will call the concepts of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ the privileged signifiers of Turkish politics. This is mainly because, as the research in this section will show, use of the already existing literature on Turkish politics that will be exemplified below iterates that any meaning or representation requires the intervention of those two signifiers to create a signification chain within the Turkish political terrain.

By this way, it is easier to make sense of these signifiers’ salience today and to see how such standard narratives became woven into the discourses on ‘Europe’. Therefore, instead of offering an ‘objective’ history of these concepts or claiming that the Turkish political history is characterised by the ‘given’ meanings of these signifiers, I suggest that the discursive moves outlined here have made these signifiers privileged and have identified the discursive space within which ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ is constructed. In doing this, I will first sketch the discursive terrain on which the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ are represented in the Turkish history with regard to cultural and political aspects. After identifying the general traits of this discursive space, I will show how this space has been challenged and changed in the 1990s.

In this section, I will outline the historical features of the discursive space within which the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ have been articulated in Turkish politics<sup>22</sup>. This attempt is not exhaustive as my core aim is not to identify how these concepts evolved historically. Rather, I aim to highlight the standard narratives and discourses through which the signifiers of ‘democracy’ and ‘security’ emerged, and thus show that my designation of these concepts as privileged signifiers does not take place in a vacuum but take place within a discursive space. By investigating the main features of the discursive space of Turkish politics with regard to these key signifiers, I aim to make a general introduction to Chapter 6 where I will map out the discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish political debates from 1999 onwards. According to Sonnichen, discourses within a hegemonic struggle do not exist in a vacuum but are parasitical on a bunch of previous discourses and a discursive space (Sonnichen, 2008). By this token, it is important to identify the pre-existing discursive space with regard to the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ in order to understand the discourses on ‘Europe’ and how the privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ intervened within the signification chain of these discourses.

## **5. 2. The democracy-security nexus in Turkish politics**

Democracy and security are two concepts not only instigating endless discussions around the globe, but also two sine-qua-non notions of political science. Sometimes, a functioning democracy is seen as the prerequisite of security, as argued by well-known Democratic Peace Theory. Democratic peace theorists argue that democratic domestic institutions are conducive

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<sup>22</sup> It is important to note at this point that throughout the thesis, I will be using ‘Turkish politics’, ‘Turkish political terrain’ and ‘Turkish political debates’ interchangeably referring both to the political debates and the discursive space that those debates take place within.



to producing and sustaining peace at the international level, which goes back to Immanuel Kant who explicated the foundations of liberal thinking (Panke and Risse, 2007: 89-108). 'There is a virtual absence of war among dyads of democratic polities', which would render the world a more secure place (Starr, 1997: 153). According to International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance:

Democracy is in crisis worldwide at the very time when there needs to be a renewed emphasis on democratic practice as the key to the attainment of 21st century human security aims. Democracy matters for human security because well-designed and inclusive political institutions and processes are the key to both preventing violence and managing conflict constructively, and because respect for human rights and public participation are essential for meeting human development objectives (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2006:5).

Similarly, security and democracy are two sides of the same coin when it is democracy promotion and democratisation in question. When Gow talks about the European integration in Central Europe, he argues that, 'the EU has played a role and will continue to play a role in the development of security and democracy in Central and Eastern Europe', defining the last two as *simultaneous* impacts of the EU (Gow, 1999: 23-*emphasis added*).

Alternatively, democracy and security might sometimes be two mutually exclusive, if not incompatible concepts. Schmitter warns us against the danger of national 'insecurity' that a newly established democratic regime might bring in his article where he points to a potential tension between democracy and security:

The advent of democracy does not guarantee national security. Depending on a country's size, resources, strategic location, and neighbours, it may even make the problem worse. Fledgling democracies can present an attractive 'target of opportunity' to aggressors--as the case of Bosnia tragically testifies. They may also, however, be able to count upon greater regional and global solidarity--consider Macedonia, where

1,100 foreign troops are now stationed to guard its territorial integrity (Schmitter, 1994: 70).

Along those lines, notions of security and democracy invoke an inherently problematic relationship also at a very abstract level. Avner Yaniv, elaborating on the historical uneasy co-existence of these two concepts in the Israeli context, argues that ‘democracy puts the individual human being at the centre of everything’, signalling human dignity, privacy and pluralism whereas ‘security, by contrast, is a state-centred concept’ (Yaniv, 1993: 1). Similarly, especially in the aftermath of 9/11, as Huysmans argues, ‘security risks liberal democracy through the very means by which it intends to save it’ (Huysmans, 2004: 321).

The interplay between two ‘essentially contested concepts’ (Connolly, 1993; Diez, 1997; 1998) becomes even more complicated in the case of Turkish politics which has numerous eccentricities and particular tendencies, one of which has already been exemplified in the introduction to this section. First of all, Turkey is a ‘second-wave’ democracy which underwent a transition to democracy in the late 1940s. Thus, it has a long history of democracy. ‘Yet, Turkish democracy has been interrupted three times by military interventions; it has experienced three breakdowns and three restorations of democracy’ (Özbudun, 2000: 1). Secondly, although the republic of Turkey was established in 1923 after the War of Independence and proclaimed a radical rupture with its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire, as a fully-fledged republic, it has experienced much continuity with the Empire in many realms<sup>23</sup>. Turkey also poses a striking test bed as one of the few democracies with a

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<sup>23</sup> Whether the Republic of Turkey poses a rupture or continuity with the Ottoman Empire has been one of the most controversial debates of Turkish politics. The scholars of ‘rupture’ argue that the Turkish republic as a newly established state was a complete and radical rupture from the Ottoman legacy (see Ahmad, 1993; Lewis, 1961; Tuncay, 1981) while the scholars of ‘continuity’ argue that most of the features of the current Turkish state system, such as the prevalence of strong state tradition or lack of a civil society, stem from the Ottoman legacy (see; Zürcher, 1993; Heper, 2000; Mardin, 1973).

strictly laicist regime, which led to many repercussions and debates especially after the coming to power of Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002, a party which has/had ideological and institutional ties with the previously banned Islamic political parties in terms of whether the assertion of particular tendencies, or for that matter an Islamic identity, is compatible with democracy.

### **5.3. The privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ in Turkish historical narrative: mapping the discursive space**

As mentioned before, the main claim of Chapter 4 is that for a discourse to be hegemonic in Turkish political terrain, the privileged signifiers of Turkish politics, ‘security’ and ‘democracy’, have to intervene with the signification chain they create. However, first, it is necessary to identify historically the discursive space which made possible the emergence of these signifiers as ‘privileged’. As Laclau and Mouffe claim,

if a relation of hegemonic representation is to be possible, its ontological status has to be defined. This is the point at which, for our analysis, a notion of the social conceived as a *discursive* space – that is, making possible relations of representation strictly unthinkable within a physicalist or naturalistic paradigm – becomes of paramount importance (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: x).

Therefore, it is necessary to sketch the general contours of the discursive space within which the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ have been articulated in Turkish politics, which I will outline in the following section. It is important to note here that this attempt is not exhaustive as my core aim is mainly to highlight the standard narratives and discourses through which the signifiers of ‘democracy’ and ‘security’ emerged, and thus show that my

designation of these concepts as privileged signifiers does not take place in a vacuum but stem from a historically constituted discursive background. This will help us to have a better sense of these signifiers' salience today, and see how such standard narratives became woven into 'Europe-as-hegemony'. Therefore, instead of offering an 'objective' history of these concepts or claiming that the Turkish political history is characterised by the 'given' meanings of these signifiers, I suggest that discursive moves I outline here made these signifiers privileged and identified the discursive space within which 'Europe-as-hegemony' operates. In doing this, I will first sketch the discursive terrain on which the signifiers of 'democracy' and 'security' are represented in the history of at cultural and political levels. Having identified the general traits of this discursive space, I will show how this space has been challenged and changed in the 1990s.

### **5.3.1. The Cultural Level: the Militaristic Discourse in Turkish Society**

In this section, I will examine the militaristic discourse in Turkish society with reference to societal representations of 'security' and 'democracy' in Turkish politics, particularly during the nation-building process of the 1920s. The main axis of the discursive space in this respect is characterised by the so-called 'Sèvres syndrome'<sup>24</sup>. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire following the First World War signalled the end of Turkish imperial history. Being a member of the Axis, the Ottoman Empire was forced to sign the Treaty of Sèvres, which had been drawn up to divide Western Anatolia and Thrace among the victors (Zürcher, 1993). 'To that effect, the Treaty proposed to allocate large chunks of Ottoman territory to various European powers, create independent Armenian and Kurdish states, and put Istanbul and the Turkish

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<sup>24</sup> Although it has been first coined in Jung (2001) in its academic sense, the term 'Sevres syndrome' is often used in Turkish domestic debates on Europe.

Straits under international control. The remaining territory for the Turks would be reduced to a small area around Ankara in central Anatolia' (Drorian, 2005: 257)

This treaty was overruled by the Republic of Turkey after the War of Independence (1919-1922) under the leadership of Atatürk. However, the 'resurrection' of this treaty has always remained a danger, a source of fear, in the subconscious of Turkish society and constituted a defining element of national politics, which has a tendency to rise at a slightest incidence of perceived external threat, predominantly from 'Europe'. This, coupled with 'the ensuing rise of nationalism among Christian peoples and later Muslim Arabs (..) left a negative imprint on the psyche of many in Turkey' (Bilgin, 2005: 183). Thus, the basic assumption underlying the Sèvres syndrome' is that the Europeans perceive the Turks as the illegitimate invaders and occupiers of the European-Christian lands and as the oppressors of the European-Christian peoples. Therefore, the logic of this fear suggests that 'the Europeans have always tried to sweep the Turks away from the ancestral European- Christian territories and to restore those lands back to their rightful owners, the Armenians and the Greeks in the past and now the Kurds' (Yılmaz, 2006: 38). The syndrome plays on Turks' fear of losing their territorial integrity and reactivates what they call in Turkey the Sèvres Treaty syndrome, still valid and powerful after 80 years. The Europe that 'carved up' the Ottoman Empire remains a malicious power that, in the name of the West, will continue to pursue its (undeclared) historic plan to weaken Turkey, once again (İnsel, 2003). Flashbacks of the dramatic collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century and the aborted Sèvres Treaty (1920) allowing the Allies to invade the Ottoman territories became dominant images of the national political debates and agenda (Ulusoy, 2004). According to Cizre, bad memories of what the Ottoman Empire had gone through and the resulting vigilance to potential attempts to disintegrate the Turkish

Republic delineated the contours of the fear of abandonment and loss of territory within Turkish politics (Cizre, 2006: 9).

According to Kazaz, the 'Sèvres syndrome' can be explained as a form of cultural trauma (Kazaz, 2008: 41). Alexander suggests that, 'cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways' (Alexander, 2004:1). The main manifestation of this trauma has been the articulation of the notion of 'minority' almost as an allergy in Turkish cultural terrain. During the demise of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish intelligentsia came to see the concept 'minority' as a weapon employed by the enemies to interfere with the already-weakened Empire's internal affairs, to ultimately disintegrate it. The roots of this perception goes as far back to the Küçük Kaynarca Agreement, signed in 1774, when Russia became the official guarantor of the Orthodox population living in the Ottoman Empire (Belge, 6 November 2004).

But this sense of caution and the associated rise of Turkish nationalism, gained the characteristic of a state-led nationalism, especially following the independence in 1923. The state aimed to suppress all differences within its territory and tried to assimilate these differences under the rubric of 'Turkishness', fitting into Charles Tilly's categorisations of state-led and state-seeking nationalisms (Tilly, 1992). Therefore, official Turkish nationalism of the Republic emerged as a territorial identity and the Turkish people were those who lived within that territory (Karal, 1981). 'This was, in principle, different from both the Islamist and the ethnic/racial models of nationalism, and was much closer to the original Ottoman

nationalism' (Gülalp, 2002: 27). Within this context, the Turkish state has tended to refer to all of its citizens as 'Turkish', which rendered the notion of a 'minority' controversial throughout the Republican history.

Against this background, the notion of 'security', not surprisingly, had almost a *naturalised* connotation in the Turkish cultural terrain, which is not antithetical to 'democracy'. According to Roland Barthes, 'in passing from history to nature, a myth acts economically; it abolishes the complexity of human acts, it gives them the simplicity of essences (...), it establishes a blissful clarity: things appear to mean something by themselves' (Barthes, 1972: 143). Allison and Altınay suggest that this *naturalisation* in Barthes refers to the conceptualisation of something as *cultural* in order to make it seem as *natural* (Allison, 1994: 81; Altınay, 2004: 25-*emphasis original*). Within this context, the notion of 'security', and the military as its carrier, always had a naturalised location in the eyes of the Turkish society. As Demirel claims, Turkish Armed Forces is perceived as the most reliable and the most effective institution of Turkish politics (Demirel, 2002). Another interesting claim about the cultural representation of the military is that trust in civilians and support for democracy do not necessarily reduce military's popularity (Sarıgil, 2009). Altınay claims that the only widely used term that connotes a negative display of military power and antithetical to 'democracy' is *darbe* ('coup d'état'). This negative connotation was prevalent especially during the post-coup periods, especially after 27 May 1960, 12 March 1971 and 12 September 1980 (Altınay, 2004: 2).

### **5.3.2. The Political Level: Strong State Discourse in a Historical Perspective**

In order to understand how the notions of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ have been articulated at the political level in Turkish politics, it is necessary to identify main manifestations of the strong state discourse, and the general conceptualisation of the ‘state’ in retrospect. Mahçupyan indicates that peculiarity of the Turkish state comes from the mitigation of an imperial social heritage with Western political and administrative mechanisms (Mahçupyan, 1996: 133). This social heritage consists of patriarchal and religious themes which are shared by the state and the society (Mahçupyan, 1996: 29). However, the state is always seen at the top of all hierarchies, out of reach for the society, almost reminiscent of the Platonic ideal of the state (for a discussion on the resemblance between the Ottoman state structure and the Platonic state see Mardin, 1985; Köker, 1992). Plato claims that real knowledge lies in the world of ideas and only the chosen ones, possessing natural skills and wisdom, can achieve such knowledge. Therefore, Plato’s projection of the ideal state proposes a social stratification based on meritocracy: Philosopher King and Guardians, Military/Auxiliary Class and Producer/Worker Class. This categorisation applies to the Ottoman case, the Sultan corresponding to the philosopher king, who relies on a strong military class. The Sultan, his entourage, and the military class were always segregated from the rest of the society (Saybaşı, 1992: 122).

This focus on the segregation of the state from the rest of the society has been designated as the ‘centre-periphery cleavage’ by Şerif Mardin as the main antagonism shaping the state-society relations starting from the Ottoman times, which is mainly defined along cultural lines (Mardin, 1973) ‘Those who belonged to the ruling institutions - a collective term denoting



the Palace, the civilian bureaucracy and the military - differed from the rest of the population in their cultural orientation' (Heper, 2000: 66). The centre-periphery antagonism has retained its significance during the Republican era. According to Keyder, 'the state [in the Republican era] is a concept with an unequivocal referent in the Turkish context. In its eyes, the nation is an organic totality whose true interest can be known and fostered only by the Kemalist elite' (Keyder, 2004: 65). Similarly, according to Çarkoğlu, the centre, which is organised around secular principles of Kemalism, adopting a centralist, nationalist and state protectionist attitude, was confronted by a heterogeneous, sometimes hostile periphery, composed mainly of the peasantry, small farmers and artisans with parochial orientations (Çarkoğlu, 1998: 555). However, 'the centre' is not a monolithic entity in this picture. There is a crude distinction between the state elite and the political elite in Turkish politics, where, 'the state elite still does not trust the political elite' and therefore the latter should be kept under surveillance by the army<sup>25</sup> (Heper, 2000: 77). Similarly, for Yıldız, the state power in Turkey renders the military bureaucracy the genuine protector of the Republic, by giving it an autonomous and unaccountable place within state and thereby rendering the army 'an auditing and executive body' (Yıldız, 2006: 12).

Therefore, the strong state discourse materialised in the Turkish context refers to a state which has assumed the capacity of acting almost completely independent from civil society. In that regard the state, rather than the government, has constituted 'the primary context of politics' (Keyman and Koyuncu, 2005; Heper, 1985; Kramer, 2000).

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<sup>25</sup> State elite in this respect is the appointed high-rank civil servants and bureaucrats whereas political elite are the elected representatives of the political parties. For Heper, added to it was also the 'clash between "state logic" and "political logic" that is the confrontation between those who emphasized Republican values and those who stressed "national will"' (Heper, 2000: 71).

#### **5.4. Recent changes and challenges of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ in Turkey: re-ordering of the discursive space**

As mentioned in the previous section, starting from the 1990s, Turkish politics faced numerous challenges, not least in terms of the re-articulation of the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’. The processes of globalisation, EU integration and relative normalisation of the Turkish democracy in the aftermath of the coup of 1980 created a pressure for the relocation of those signifiers in the Turkish politics. The confinement of democratisation to the economic realm, especially in the 1980s, has increasingly been replaced with the emergence of democratisation attempts within the political sphere in the 1990s. The proliferation of multiple identities, the empowerment of extra-state actors and the burgeoning of a civil society in the late 1980s and 1990s has been the earliest, and most noticeable, implications of this re-articulation. Rumford explains this transformation with reference to the broader context of cosmopolitan democratisation which brings the anchoring of citizenship, rights and freedoms beyond the nation-state, and makes it easy for individuals and groups to move onto an international terrain and to connect with rights, freedoms and institutional remedies which are denied them at home (Rumford, 2003: 388).

All in all, these transformatory processes mentioned above meant the re-ordering of the discursive space in Turkish politics. One important variant of this re-ordering has been the so-called ‘politics of resentment’ in the political realm, which is characterised by the tension between secularism and Islamism (Atasoy, 2007). According to Arat-Koç, the articulation of a ‘cosmopolitan’ discourse by the Islamists on the compatibility of Islam and neoliberal capitalism, especially from the 1990s onwards, has been effective in providing the material, social and ideological basis for a cross-class alliance between the newly emerging Muslim

bourgeoisie and the urban poor (Arat-Koç, 2009: 209). The emergence of an Islamist RP (Refah Partisi-Welfare Party) in the 1995 parliamentary elections as a coalition partner with DYP (Doğruiyol Partisi-True Path Party) coincided with this 'new alliance'. Unexpectedly, this new alliance and the normalisation on the part of the Islamists created tension at the state level. National Security Council meeting on 28 February 1997, which forced RP to withdraw from power due to its anti-secular activities - also known as a 'postmodern coup' in Turkish public opinion - and the closure of the FP (Fazilet Partisi- Virtue Party) - the ideological successor of the RP - by the Constitutional Court in 2001 on the same grounds could be read as a result of this tension (Aydın and Çakır, 2007; Gülalp, 2003).

The landmark electoral victory of the AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi- Justice and Development Party), recruiting its ruling cadre mainly from the previous Islamist parties, in the 3 November 2002 elections has been interpreted by many commentators as the Islamists' move to reconcile with 'the regime' (Aydın and Çakır, 2007; Somer, 2004; Güneş-Ayata, 2003). This accommodation was translated into the AKP's mainstream and pro-Western discourse, which made it a 'conservative democratic' political party in the party leader, Tayyip Erdoğan's words (Akdoğan, 2004). The second electoral victory of the AKP in the 22 July 2007 elections, with 47% of the votes, pointed to the pinnacle of the aforementioned challenges to historical structure of the Turkish state and society, which had started in the 1990s (Sarıbay, 30 July 2007).

This also meant re-definition of, and turning point in, the famous 'centre-periphery cleavage' in Turkish politics as the AKP emerged as the representative of 'periphery'. Urban and secular elites, a product of a Republican Westernisation understanding, have increasingly

been replaced by more conservative elite with a less strict conception of ‘secularism’. In this respect, new concepts and subject positions have been included within the security and democracy agendas. Starting from 2002, the so-called, ‘cultural war between secularism and Islam’, which started in the 1990s, has become even more visible and substantial due to the new owners of power (Aydın, 2007).

The proliferation of also introduced the so-called ‘the Kurdish issue’ to the political agenda as one of the key components of the debates around the notions of security and democracy, especially from the 1980s onwards. The notion of the ‘Kurdish issue’, which is extensively used in Turkish politics, has a set of connotations most of which are about the identity demands of the Kurdish citizens. The representation of Kurdishness as a particular identity, and the disputes on whether or not its assertion would further democracy in Turkey, and the fears that it would be detrimental in that it would encourage and aggravate PKK terrorism, thereby rendering Turkey more susceptible to disintegration, have delineated the contours of the relevant debates. We will take up those issues in detail in the forthcoming chapters. Yet, here, I will elaborate a little further on this point, to provide a background to our further discussion on the recent debates on democracy and security.

Although the pro-Kurdish activists managed to have official access to the parliament in the past, mainly as the MPs from different parties, it was not until 1990 when the first political party with a pro-Kurdish agenda, the HEP (Halkın Emek Partisi-People’s Labour Party), was established. In the 1991 elections, the HEP joined forces with SHP and was able to secure a few parliamentary seats. Yet, the HEP was soon banned from politics on grounds of

‘separatism’, ie, threatening the unity of the nation-state. This resulted in the establishment of yet another political party with a pro-Kurdish agenda on 19 October 1992, the ÖZDEP (Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi-Freedom and Democracy Party) (Koğacıoğlu, 2003: 259). Within 3 months, the public prosecutor began procedures to close this new party, the pretext being ‘it called for a federalist solution to the Kurdish problem and it was formally banned from politics on 14 July 1993 by the Constitutional Court’ (Yavuz, 2003: 76). As with their predecessors, the subsequent pro-Kurdish political parties, the DEP (Demokrasi Partisi-Democracy Party) and the HADEP (Halkın Demokrasi Partisi-People's Democracy Party) sought a political solution to the Kurdish issue. The HADEP was followed by the DEHAP (Demokratik Halk Partisi-Democratic People's Party) established in 1997, and the DTP (Demokratik Toplum Partisi- Democratic Society Party) established in November 2005, all closed down by the Constitutional Court on the grounds of their alleged separatist activities.

Another important variant of the Kurdish issue in general and its representation within the political scene has been the PKK. As will be scrutinised thoroughly in the forthcoming chapters, the PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan-Kurdistan Labour Party) was involved in terrorist activities in the Southeastern Turkey, from August 1984 until 2001, when intense armed struggle lost its momentum, at least for a while. These activities led to the death of 30,000 people. The PKK has always been at the centre of the debates on the Kurdish issue, as all political parties and figures with a pro-Kurdish agenda, by default, were charged with sympathising the PKK (which was sometimes the case). As a result, the general expectation from pro-Kurdish parties was to openly declare that they did not support or approve the activities of the PKK.

All in all, as Houston argues, in the recent period, which has been mainly characterised by the proliferation of new identities, we can identify at least three competing narratives which would point to the re-ordering of the discursive space within which 'Europe-as-hegemony' would be articulated: 'Turkish Republican, Kurdish and Islamist' (Houston, 1999: 88). Debates about these three narratives have been the most significant political issues regarding the privileged signifiers of 'democracy' and 'security' starting from the 1990s. Nevertheless, the question for the present thesis is how these new conceptions and signifiers relate themselves to the notion of 'Europe'. The next section will seek answers to these questions.

## **6. OPERATIONALISING 'DEMOCRACY', 'SECURITY' AND 'EUROPE': HOW DO THE PRIVILEGED SIGNIFIERS TRANSLATE INTO REAL DISCOURSES?**

Having made clear that I will use the two privileged concepts of Turkish politics to trace the discourses on 'Europe' within Turkish politics, in this section, I will elaborate my methodology on the operationalisation of the two ends of the above mentioned spectrum. How can we trace the process whereby the discourses on 'Europe' get constellated around the security vs. democracy spectrum? In order to do this, through the use of existing literature, I will devise a set of questions to understand how different representations of 'Europe' speak to these two privileged signifiers and how they come to be salient and resonant within the Turkish political terrain. In this section, my general argument is that Turkish politics is highly characterised by an infinite articulation and interplay of these signifiers. If we want to understand how a hegemonic struggle operates and political frontiers are drawn by particular discourses, we need to see how these discourses are constructed in relation to those signifiers. That is, for any discourse to be hegemonic and able to draw the political frontiers, it has to relate itself to the privileged signifiers of 'security' and 'democracy', one way or other. In

this section, in order to trace the discourses on ‘Europe’, I will devise a list of questions referring to the significance and historical discursive space of the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’.

With regard to the historical significance of the concept of ‘security’ in Turkish political setting, the following questions are of primary importance:

- Is ‘Europe’ itself put forward as a threat to the state and its role in domestic security?
- Are there any constitutional and legal arrangements considered to be controversial to the security of the state during the EU accession process?
- Is ‘Europe’ considered controversial to the red lines of the Turkish foreign policy?
- Is ‘Europe’ put forward as a ‘threat’ to the Turkish society?

On the other hand, with regard to the historical background of the concept of ‘democracy’ in the Turkish political setting, the following questions are of importance:

- Does ‘Europe’ create any changes in terms of the Turkish state’s role in democratisation?
- Are there any constitutional and legal arrangements considered to contribute to the democratisation of the state during the EU accession process?
- Does ‘Europe’ create any changes in terms of the Turkish state’s role in democracy?
- Is ‘Europe’ deemed to be fostering certain particular identities?

By using the questions listed above, I will trace the discourses on ‘Europe’ at the newspapers of *Radikal*, *Zaman* and *Cumhuriyet* in the 1999-2008 period. As I mentioned in Chapter 3, in order to overcome the unclarity of Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework in terms of relating subjects to discourses, I will argue that an actor assumes a subject position within a discourse by articulating the elements of a signification chain. Therefore, I will identify discourses by constructing the signification chains they articulate. The questions listed in the above section will help me do that. But, what makes those newspapers and dates so significant that they contour the content of this project? The following sections will answer to these questions. But, before that, in the following section, I will show my methodology to locate these discourses within ‘Europe-as-hegemony’.



## 7. HOW TO IDENTIFY ‘EUROPE-AS-HEGEMONY’? OPERATIONALISING THE LOGICS OF EQUIVALENCE AND DIFFERENCE

In the above section, I showed how I will trace the discourses on ‘Europe’ by using the list of questions. However, it is equally important to locate these discourses within ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ and to identify how these discourses became a part of the hegemonic struggle. As Chapter 7 will show, I claim that ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ operated through the logics of equivalence and difference and attempted to hegemonise *the social* in different ways from 1999 to 2005. But, how is it possible to show these attempts within the sources? For this aim, I will use the keywords associated with the logics in Chapter 3. As I argued in Chapter 3, the Laclau-Mouffeian theoretical framework entails that there are two different strategies of hegemony, namely the logics of equivalence and difference (e.g. Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Norval, 1990; 1994; 1996; Howarth, 2000). In *logic of difference*, the differences are marginalised between the constitutive components of the discourses through signifying non-adversarial and positive differences of different demands or camps. Difference is the logic behind political movements which seeks to heal the social space, giving room to all social demands, treating them ‘differently’, next to each other, without collapsing them into an equivalential chain (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 129). This logic also depoliticises areas of potential conflict by constructing differential, non-antagonistic identities and there are cases where this depoliticisation is realised through technocratism (e.g. the strategy of NP in the late 1970s). Therefore, key to understanding a *logic of difference* is the particularisation of the subjects, emphasis on the concept of ‘identity’ and the weakening of the antagonistic frontier between identities (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 11). In this respect, the key concepts for understanding a logic of difference are ‘identity’, ‘harmony’ and ‘commonness’. On the other

hand, the *logic of equivalence* is characterised by the depiction of *the Other* as a ‘threat’ and the *dichotomisation of social space* (Norval, 1994: 121; Howarth, 2000: 107). What we see here is the universalisation of subjects (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 11). In this respect, the key concepts for logic of equivalence are ‘unity’, ‘solidarity’ and ‘threat’.

In the below table, I bring together the theoretical definitions of the notions I will operationalise in Chapters 6 and 7 and the methods I will use to trace them within the newspapers and parliamentary debates:

Concept	Definition	Identification Criteria
<b>Signifying chain</b>	A group of signifiers linked in some culturally determined manner, where the meaning of one signifier is established by reference to another. These chains establish a logical connection in which signifiers form combinations which make sense only by reference to the remainder of the ideological chain.	Identification through regular and recurrent themes that appeared in the newspaper staments. All articles have been read and on a year-to-year basis, main keywords (limited to 3 for each discourse) repeatedly and recurrently attached to ‘Europe’ have been chosen as the elements of the chain
<b>Privileged signifier</b>	A particular signifier that has primacy in the organisation of a signification chain	Identification through the use of the already existing literature on Turkish politics, which showed that for any signifier to be hegemonic within the Turkish political terrain, requires the intervention of the signifiers of ‘democracy’ and ‘security’.
<b>Logic of equivalence</b>	A hegemonic strategy which is characterised by the depiction of <i>the Other</i> as a ‘threat’ and the <i>dichotomisation of social space</i> . Universalisation of identities is essential.	Selecting statements both from newspapers and parliamentary debates, which treat ‘Europe’ as an umbrella concept and which would cancel the differences against a ‘threat’ or an ‘enemy’. The keywords to be sought are ‘unity’, ‘solidarity’ and

		<b>‘threat’.</b>
<b>Logic of difference</b>	A hegemonic strategy in which the differences are marginalised between the constitutive components of the discourses through signifying non-adversarial and positive differences of different demands or camps. Particularisation of identities is essential.	Selecting statements both from newspapers and parliamentary debates, which would expand the limits of politics and render the differences between identities intact. The keywords to be sought are <b>‘identity’</b> , <b>‘harmony’</b> and <b>‘commonness’</b> (not with reference to an ‘enemy’)

Table 1: The analytical framework for identifying discourses on ‘Europe’ and ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in Turkish politics after 1999

## 8. THE EXTENT OF THE STUDY

The time-span of the research is the period from 1999 onwards. Although Turkey has a very long history interwoven with the concept of ‘Europe’, the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 signifies the official acceptance of Turkey as a membership candidate and is therefore outstanding in this regard. After this date, the penetration of the notion of ‘Europe’ into domestic debates accelerated both in conceptual and political terms. The concept became extensively used as the age-old depiction of ‘Europe’ as a civilizational (albeit rather abstract) signifier acquired a much more concrete and tangible reference. Secondly, the fact that the EU candidacy required distinct political arrangements and relatively concrete political adjustments, such as the obligation to resolve the border problems with its neighbouring countries in accordance with the United Nations Charter, or to bring the disputes to the International Court of Justice (Uğur, 2003: 166) had a substantial impact on the Turkish

political fabric and how and with what references the debates are conducted. As the Euro-debate in Turkish politics is an ongoing process, however, it is hard to sketch the end point within the time continuum. Nevertheless, at this point, I will end the project's time continuum with the case to close down the ruling party AKP (Justice and Development Party) brought before Constitutional Court in March 2008, as this case of outmost significance for security-democracy debates and domestic discourses.

## **9. SELECTION OF RESOURCES**

Like any kind of analysis, discourse analysis needs to start from somewhere and also like any kind of academic endeavour; one has to be selective in terms of this starting point. “Covering” a national discursive space is in principle impossible: one cannot read everything which has been written -or stated- within a debate as broad as the national debates on Europe’ (Hansen and Wæver, 2002: 42). In this project, therefore, in order to investigate the political space of Turkey regarding the domestic debates which occurred (and are occurring) and to trace the debates on ‘Europe’ and to see how these sustain hegemony, I will mainly be looking at daily newspapers. I will focus predominantly on daily newspapers through the method of ‘extensive reading’ (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005). I will also refer to some particular parliamentary debates to support the research on ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. Newspaper articles are very helpful in identifying discourses on ‘Europe’ and in understanding the hegemonic strategies of logics of equivalence and difference within ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. They also ‘represent many of the discourses found in other media such as radio and television’ (van Bommel and Spicer, 2008: 11). However, as it is empirically very hard to show ‘hegemony’, I deem it important to support with further research the identification of these logics. For this aim, I will pick up exemplary parliamentary debates within the 1999-2008 timeline in order to understand the

operationalisation of these logics. As Chapter 5 will elaborate on, the debates on the notion of ‘reform’ were one of the most significant variants of the discourses culminating around ‘Europe’. Therefore, I will refer to the parliamentary debates on ‘reform’ between 1999 and 2008, which are available at the ‘Library, Documentation and Translation Directorate of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey’, a centre within the Turkish Parliament, which ‘provides the MPs with information they require whilst performing their legislation duty and collects and documents the debates taking place within the Parliament’ (the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Website, 2010). However, it is important to note that the current research primarily rests on the newspapers.

Although the post-structuralist approach makes a substantial association between discourse and texts, which not only refer to a written utterance of discourse but also to other discursive practices such as movies, videos, maps and architecture (Wæver, 1996, Neumann, 1998), I limit my research mainly to newspapers as I deem them to be an important source determining the pace of the debates within the political realm. In this respect, I will prioritise texts, utterances and articles about/by well-known public figures, such as prominent academics and journalists, as well as high-level state officials such as members of the Parliament (MP) and government ministers rather than pursuing ‘what ordinary people think about Europe’ (Hansen and Wæver, 2002). This does not necessarily mean that I will not refer to public opinion whatsoever. However, the main focus of the research will be on ‘dominant elite representational practices that establish the rules from which policies are derived’ (Kuus, 2002: 400). In this respect, I suppose a hierarchical relationship to exist within the political debates, whereby elites and top political figures determine the ‘rules of the game’ that are received by the public. This is also in accord with my substantive interest in how the

discourses sustain ‘hegemony’ and demarcate political frontiers. As Chapter 3 has shown, the success of a hegemonic project depends on the ability of a discourse or particular project to present itself as universal and to assert antagonisms within *the political*, which points to the power dimension of hegemony. Along these lines, it would not be unfair to claim when a particular discourse is hegemonic; its direction is from top to down, from elites to ‘the people’.

What if an utterance is made which has been mentioned in a T.V. programme or in a newspaper beyond the scope of my research? What if it is significant enough to challenge my previous findings or the patterns I had devised? In this case, I can happily take shelter in the political theory’s ‘innocent unless proven’ principle and share the same provision with Hansen and Wæver (2002) which they refer to as ‘the opposite burden of evidence’ which goes as follows: ‘I claim that on the basis of my reading of the debate in country X, the discursive structure looks like this. If you show me a text I have not included, it should be possible for me to read this text through the structure I have constructed. If not, my reading of the debate needs to be revised’ (Hansen and Wæver, 2002: 42).

In line with the general attempt to reflect upon the political debates on ‘Europe’ within the Turkish political scene, I will trace the discourses on ‘Europe’ at three Turkish daily newspapers: *Radikal*, *Cumhuriyet* and *Zaman*. These particular newspapers are chosen in an attempt to select various examples from different extents of the political spectrum. *Radikal* (‘Radical’) is generally considered as a left-wing (social democratic and libertarian) newspaper. However, when compared to *Cumhuriyet* (‘Republic’), which is one of the oldest Turkish daily newspapers and usually known for its left-leaning patriotic tendency, *Radikal* is

considered by many to be much moderate, open-minded, and tolerant. *Cumhuriyet* in this regard is less mainstream and less circulated, but noteworthy enough to reflect an implicit Euro-sceptic and stable tone within the political debates. *Zaman* ('time' or 'era') is a major Turkish daily newspaper which used to be known for its conservative stance and religious affiliation. Having been established under the auspices of Fetullah Gülen<sup>26</sup> in 1986, *Zaman* has experienced a huge editorial change in the early 2000s and became a liberal tabloid where many prominent Turkish intellectuals and academicians currently write contributions.

## **10. POST-RESEARCH REMARKS: LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODOLOGY**

In this research, by using the research design I outlined above, I collected 218 newspaper statements (see Annex 1 for the whole list of statements) and 54 documents entailing parliamentary debates on 'reform' (see Annex 2 for the whole list of debates). It is an important finding that while the newspaper articles were very helpful in terms of identifying discourses on 'Europe' and 'Europe-as-hegemony', the parliamentary debates drew on the technical aspects of the EU reforms and hence did not display any hint of the hegemonic logics I outlined in Chapter 3. I also encountered problems due to the use of the post-structuralist methodology, which I will outline below. This attempt is helpful to see the immediate effects of the problems associated with the post-structuralist methodology on the current project and to reflect on possible future research venues that would aim to resolve these problems. Chapter 8 will also focus on these possible future research trajectories.

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<sup>26</sup> The leader of a particular religious sect, who is charged by Turkish secularist circles to aim to destroy the integrity of secular Turkish Republic and to bring the Sheria rule to Turkey.

### **10.1. Discourse-agency problem**

As I have already elaborated in Chapter 3, the post-structuralist theoretical framework I am employing here is highly inspired by the work of Laclau and Mouffe, which rejects the intentionality of the political actors and the agency of the discourses. That is, theoretically speaking, there is not a causal, deterministic and one-way relationship between discourses and actors and thus actors do not intentionally and strategically employ discourses. On the contrary, ‘discursive practices themselves construct the subjects and relations among them’ (Seng, 2001: 10).

However, the discourses also have a performative aspect, which this thesis is primarily interested in, and, apart from producing a terrain where political actors locate themselves, they produce and lead to practices (such as hegemony and political frontiers that this project attempts to address). Although Laclau and Mouffe’s work is theoretically seminal in going beyond traditional notions of structure and agency, the latter has been pointed out as one of the most significant methodological shortcomings of their framework, as Chapter 8 will claim in detail (see Jensen, 2005; Howarth, 2000; Wæver, 2005 for a critique of Laclau- Mouffean structure-agency conception). Indeed, when it comes to devising a methodology, a researcher eventually has to deal with tangible, real actors in order to do this. ‘The discourses do not present themselves as such; what we observe are people and their productions’ (Sang, 2001: 11). That is, however much you as a researcher refrain from sustaining a deterministic relationship between agents and discourses, when it comes to analysing discourses, you



cannot escape from identifying the actors who are in part perpetuating those discourses. But this is not the same as attributing intentionality to their actions. In order to overcome the ambiguity of the Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework in linking actors to discourses, I argued in Chapter 3 that an actor assumes a subject position within a discourse by articulating the elements of a signification chain and that the political actors are the subjects of the discourses and therefore of the hegemonic struggle as long as they appear in the political terrain as a part of those discourses and as long as they aim to render the discourses of the opponents' subject position meaningless. However, the Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework's tendency to avoid real actors and the problem of identifying the link between subjects and discourses without providing the former with intentionality are the most significant methodological deficits of the discourse theory, which I also had to venture within the project.

## **10.2. The impact of the sources used**

As mentioned above, the current attempt aims to trace the elite discourses in three daily newspapers. No doubt, the elite discourses sourced from elsewhere (e.g. party programmes, election manifestos etc.) would give a different depiction of the discourses and 'Europe-as-hegemony'. However, the methodological framework suggested here does not take into account whether the elite discourses or 'Europe-as-hegemony' would be different if extracted from somewhere else. Because, this is the *reality* I am dealing with. As mentioned before, the post-structuralist methodology does not question whether the actors (the elites for this matter) are deliberately and strategically manipulating the discourses which would pose a causal and one-way relationship between the agents and discourses. On the contrary, as the post-

structuralist methodological framework suggests, which the current attempt also resorts to, the elites as actors do not have a substantive role on constructing the discourses but vice versa: the discourses construct the subject positions of the actors.

This stands in stark contrast with the methodological insights of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). As mentioned above, CDA subscribes to the idea that the media are a biased tool which construct/reconstruct and legitimise the discourses of the elites. That is, according to this framework, the elite strategically use media to further their privileges, providing a direct link between the sources of the discourses and their construction. According to Van Dijk:

The news media do not passively describe or record news events in the world, but actively (re-)construct them, mostly on the basis of many types of source discourses. Corporate interests, news values, institutional routines, professional ideologies and news schema formats play an important role in this transformation (...) These properties of news processing tend to lead to a reproduction and legitimation of the ideology of the political, socio-economic and cultural elites (Hall *et al.* 1980; Mueller 1973) (van Dijk, 1989: 203).

In this respect, for CDA, the sources within which the elite discourses are represented are substantial for the identification of the discourses. . On the other hand, this does not have a substantial role for designing the methodology of this project.

### **10.3. Analytical limits of the discourses**

As mentioned before, this project aims to trace ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ by tracing the discourses on the notion of ‘Europe’ in the 1999-2008 period as, the claim goes, the discourses have a performative role in demarcating the political frontiers. Discourses draw the limits of the politics. But, what about the limits of the discourses themselves? How are we

going to limit the discourses? The methodology scrutinised above gives a clear picture or what to include within the boundaries of the discourses, but where to stop? Do I need to include each and every statement that fits to the above methodological chart?

In this respect, I designated the end point of the research when discourses started repeating themselves. As Chapter 6 will show, I focused on the signification chains that the four discourses tended to construct and I included only some of the elements articulated within the discourses. The frequency, repetition and resonance of the elements articulated within the chains of equivalences has been the litmus paper to set the limits of the current research.

#### **10.4. Lost in translation? Working with two languages**

As I traced the discourse in three Turkish daily newspapers, all of the source material I used was not surprisingly in Turkish, which brings the language and bilinguality issues to the forefront. I analysed the discourses in Turkish and later translated the statements I picked up to include here into English. But, does this pose a problem for the research?

For Derrida, translation involves a degree of transformation a regulated transformation of one language by another, of one text by another. ‘We will never have, and in fact have never had, to do with some “transport” of pure signifieds from one language to another, or within one and the same language, that the signifying instrument would leave virgin and untouched’ (Derrida, 1981: 4, quoted and translated by Bolanos Cuellar, 2008: 331). Therefore, according to this perspective, the translation is not a scientifically-approached, holistic and

comprehensive subject matter, but involves the slipperiness and contingency of the meaning in different languages.

However, translation from Turkish to English did not have a direct impact on my analysis (as I already did my analysis in Turkish) and was only an inter-lingual issue. However, the problem of bilinguality is clearly a crucial point to keep in mind for discourse theory researchers who work with discourses.

### **10.5. Background information problem**

The current thesis interested in how the discourses on ‘Europe’ hegemonise *the political* in Turkish politics in the 1999-2008 period obviously has the Turkish discourses on ‘Europe’ in the specified period as a case study. As Hansen argues, working with a case study that stretches over a longer period of time walks hand-in-hand with identifying a timeline of the events (Hansen, 2006: 115-6). Moreover, it is compulsory to familiarise the readers to the Turkish political context to put the analysis into its proper context, which is the main aim behind the design of the background section in Chapter 5. However, then, the analysis here which claims to map out a clear rejection of the so-called conventional approaches and of a causality between events and discourses is potentially undermined by the need to give the clear picture of ‘the ground’ as it is. As Norval rightly argues, even such a radical and unconventional construction of political frontiers takes place within a context and an already instituted horizon of meaning from which it must distance itself or in relation to which it must situate itself (Norval, 1996: 54).

## 11. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, departing from the general claim that in order to sustain hegemony in the Turkish landscape, any discourse has to relate itself to the privileged signifiers of ‘democracy’ and ‘security’, I devised a methodology for my endeavour to trace the discourses on ‘Europe’ and to understand how they hegemonise *the social* and demarcate political frontiers.

For this aim, I firstly explored possible methodological options that could be used to understand the discourses on ‘Europe’. By doing this, I aimed to see how the so-called ‘methodological deficit’ of poststructuralist discourse theory has been overcome by various studies on ‘Europe’ (Howarth, 2008). I particularly focused on the methodologies used by Wæver, Diez and finally Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung (Wæver, 1997, 2005; Diez, 1997, 1998; Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung, 1998). I was mainly inspired by the designation of the discourse a layered structure by Wæver, where different layers of the discourse are formed by different identity forms and the discourse on European integration by the move along the layers (Wæver, 2005). On the other hand, by coining four images of the European governance in Western European politics as ideal types, Diez sustains a link between the discourses and their limitations by using these ideal types, which was helpful for my research design (Diez, 1997; 1998). This has later been elaborated by another study by Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung who present a list of 180 categories/ entries on a legitimate political order inferred from the investigation of the existing literature by using the above ideal types (Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung, 1998). Although Wæver’s main aim of constructing a structure and seeing how this structure is shaped by the actors over time is too actor-centred for the very aims of this project

and Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung's ideal types would limit the findings, both endeavours were very helpful in designing my analytical framework.

Subsequently, I sketched the general features of the discursive space within which the signifiers of 'security' and 'democracy' have been articulated in Turkish politics. By doing this, I aimed to identify the standard narratives and discourses through which the signifiers of 'democracy' and 'security' emerged, and thus to show that my designation of these concepts as privileged signifiers does not take place in a vacuum. This is also helpful to see within what discursive space the discourses on 'Europe' and 'Europe-as-hegemony' in Turkish politics emerge.

I then presented my own research design. By focusing on the 1999-2008 period, I devised a list of questions mainly framed by the existing literature and I used this list to trace the discourses on 'Europe' and 'Europe-as-hegemony' within the newspapers of *Radikal*, *Zaman* and *Cumhuriyet* and particular parliamentary debates on the EU reforms. and I claimed that the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 which signifies the official acceptance of Turkey as an EU candidate is utterly outstanding for the further penetration of 'Europe' into domestic debates. Although it was hard to sketch the end point within the time continuum as this penetration is still an ongoing, I ended the project's time continuum by the case to close down the ruling party AKP (Justice and Development Party) brought before Constitutional Court in March 2008.

Finally, I presented some concluding remarks on the methodology of the research. In this respect, I addressed some of the problems faced during the project that stemmed from the

application of the post-structuralist methodology. This attempt is helpful not only to see the immediate effects of the problems associated with the post-structuralist methodology on the current project, but also to reflect on possible future research venues that would aim to address these problems, which will also be mentioned by Chapter 8.

In the following chapter, I will give a general account of the historical context of the focus period, not only in terms of the notion of ‘Europe’ but in terms of the privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’. This exercise, rather than pushing a correlation between events and discourses, aims to provide the historical background regarding the discourses, secondly, to highlight how the discourses on ‘Europe’ speak to this background and finally to sustain a smooth passage to the empirical chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND OF THE DISCOURSES ON ‘EUROPE’: POSITIONS AND MILESTONES**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, I outlined the methodology employed in the present project, highlighting the two privileged signifiers of Turkish politics: *security* and *democracy*. I departed from the claim that any discourse in Turkish politics has to relate itself to these signifiers in order to be significant and salient and able to contribute to the construction of political frontiers. These have materialised in different ways in different periods of Turkish politics, yet have always remained significant and ‘privileged’. I also demonstrated the discursive space within which the privileged signifiers of ‘democracy’ and ‘security’ have emerged as two ends of the spectrum in contrast to the Western experience where a functioning democracy has predominantly been seen as the prerequisite of the security (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2006:5). Subsequently, I attempted to operationalise two ends of the spectrum with relation to ‘Europe’ through a set of questions I devised with regard to the discursive space within which these signifiers emerged historically in order to link them to particular and concrete discourses in domestic political debates in Turkey. I also underlined the key concepts to identify ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ within the newspapers and parliamentary debates.

In this chapter, before illustrating discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish political debates from 1999 onwards using the list of questions and keywords devised in the methodology chapter, I



will give a general account of the historical context of the focus period, not only in terms of the notion of ‘Europe’ but also in terms of the privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’. As Hansen argues, ‘working with a case study that stretches over a longer period of time, a timeline identifies periods of heightened activity, where the density of events is greater’ (Hansen, 2006: 115-6). Therefore, rather than aiming at positing a causal relationship between political developments and discourses, this exercise aims; firstly, to provide the historical context regarding the discourses; secondly, to illustrate how the discourses on ‘Europe’ speak to this background and thirdly, to set the discursive space within which discourses on ‘Europe’ emerged after 1999. This will also sustain a smooth passage to the empirical chapters. However, this attempt leads to a methodological problem already pointed out in Chapter 4. That is, in order to familiarise the readers to the Turkish political setting, the current analysis also has to contain some conventional and ‘analysis-free’ background information which does not contribute to the analysis and which, in a way, harms the ‘unconventionality’ of the project. Then, it is crucial to state here that the background information presented in this chapter aims to give the historical context of the discourses on ‘Europe’ in the 1999-2008 period and is not directly a part of the current research.

In a nutshell, this chapter will elaborate upon the argument that in order to understand and make sense of discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish politics and of how these discourses attempted to be hegemonic, one has to focus on how and at what instances the privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ were articulated within the signification chains of the concept. In order to do this, I will first elaborate how the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ have materialised and highlight the key events around which the general debates

have culminated in the 1999-2008 period. Later, I will move on to elaborate the context of the debates on the notion of 'Europe'. This will mainly mean giving a brief account of the key events regarding the EU Accession, as 'Europe' mainly meant 'the EU' after Helsinki European Council, as has already been claimed in the Introduction chapter. This exercise, besides giving a detailed account of the Turkey-EU relations, aims to highlight the debates attached to the key events of the period, to put them in their proper context and to elaborate how the discourses on 'Europe' that will be scrutinised in the following chapter speak to this context and make those events significant and highlighted.

## **2. MATERIALISATION OF 'SECURITY' AND 'DEMOCRACY' IN THE 1999-2008 PERIOD: 'PKK', 'THE KURDISH ISSUE' AND 'TURKISHNESS'**

### **2.1. Introduction**

To reiterate, generally speaking, this project aims at arguing that 'Europe-as-hegemony' was able to draw the political frontiers in Turkish politics in the aftermath of 1999. One of the sub-arguments in this respect has been that for any signifier to be hegemonic in the Turkish political landscape it has to relate itself to the signifiers of 'security' and 'democracy' which have materialised in different ways in different periods of Turkish politics, albeit always remaining resonant and 'privileged'. In this section, I will give a brief background to the signifiers of 'security' and 'democracy' in the specified period. This will outline the security-democracy debates of the period and will help locate the discourses on 'Europe' in their proper context and the discursive space. In this way, it would be easier to elaborate in the following chapters on the question of through which landmark events those privileged

signifiers have been articulated within the signification chains of ‘Europe’ during the period and will help answer question such as, ‘why was the PKK so significant in terms of constructions of ‘Europe’ during the period?’. In this respect, the argument in this section will be that the debates on PKK terrorism, the Kurdish question and Turkishness were the landmark incidents defining the discursive space within which discourses on ‘Europe’ emerged with regard to the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’.

## **2.2. Security’ and ‘democracy’ in the 1999-2008 period: debates and events**

It is not an overstatement to say that the most significant instance regarding both signifiers of security and democracy within the period has been the relaunch of PKK terrorism in June 2004 which had previously stopped in 1999. As mentioned above, in Turkish politics, terrorism has usually been associated with PKK. Especially during this period, PKK incidents overlapped with the question of whether cultural and collective rights of the Kurds granted by the Copenhagen Criteria would damage the integrity of the Turkish state and legitimise PKK terrorism, which more often than not played on ethnic Kurdish identity.

All in all, the lifting of the State of Emergency in South-Eastern Turkey where PKK terrorism was predominantly active, after the capture of Abdullah Ocalan (the PKK leader) in Kenya and the minority rights stipulated by the Copenhagen Criteria in the 1999-2004 period pointed to a state of normalization. It has been pointed out by many commentators that ‘Europe’ was a substantial part of this normalisation (e.g. Dahlman, 2004; Kalaycioglu, 2003; Tocci, 2005b).

Another manifestation of this normalization has been the penetration of the Copenhagen Criteria into the domestic politics and recognition of the Kurdish issue by the state. In this respect, Erdoğan's first visit to Diyarbakır right after his inauguration on 12 August 2005 was crucial as he mentioned the existence of a 'Kurdish issue' for the first time since the 'Kurdish reality' was first mentioned by the then prime minister Suleyman Demirel in 1991.<sup>27</sup> Erdoğan confessed that 'the State has made some mistakes in the past' (*Radikal*, 13 August 2005). This was coupled with Retired General Aytaç Yalman's statement that during the 1970s, the state officials of that time wrongly evaluated the DDKO<sup>28</sup> (Dogu Devrimci Kultur Ocaklari-East Revolutionary Cultural Hearths) as a simple Marxist-Leninist organisation (Yalman, 16 August 2005). All in all, these two incidents were groundbreaking as the Turkish official stance had always been to explain the PKK problem as the 'South-Eastern issue', linking it with the region's underdevelopment, or a 'terrorism problem'.

Within this context, the re-launch of the terrorist activities of PKK in 2005<sup>29</sup> led many commentators to raise eyebrows, leading to comments such as: 'PKK has returned to its old independence struggle and its demands and the democratisation attempts stipulated by the EU are completely delinked' (Aktan, 16 August 2005). Starting from January 2006, PKK has launched repeated attacks on Turkish territory from sanctuaries in the Kandil Mountains,

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<sup>27</sup> In January 2007, 15 months after this statement, Erdoğan answered a question on Kurdish problem that it was actually a 'terrorism problem' (quoted in Erdem, 8 January 2007).

<sup>28</sup> The organizational and ideological precedent of PKK in the 1970s

<sup>29</sup> As highlighted by many commentators, the re-launch of PKK terrorism overlapped with a divide in the ruling cadres of PKK along an 'EU-American' axis. A group deemed the civic liberties granted through the EU accession in Turkey enough to stop armed struggle whereas the majority wanted to continue armed struggle, which led to the aforementioned terror wave (Berkan, 16 November 2007, Aytac and Uslu, 20 July 2007). It has also frequently been noted that 'PKK got panicked as there happened to exist different civil society options in the region other than itself during the EU process' (Aytac and Uslu, 20 July 2007). The so-called 'different civil society options' in this statement by Aytaç and Uslu refer to the burgeoning and strengthening of numerous civil society initiatives funded by the EU during the EU integration process by various associations, SMEs and local governments in the region.

northern Iraq, killing several hundred Turkish security forces (Larrabee, 2007: 105). This was especially the case with the Newroz celebrations in March 2006 which later turned into street riots in Diyarbakır organised by the PKK, and which resulted in 15 casualties. This, coupled with the PKK assault in Şırnak that caused the death of 13 soldiers on 7-8 October 2007, caused deep sorrow and rage within the society.

In line with the re-launch of terrorist activities by the PKK, starting from 2005, Turkey has been experiencing a significant rise in violence committed in the name of 'nationalism'. The name of Trabzon, a city in the north of Turkey, has been pronounced a lot within those debates. On 6 April 2005, 5 members of TAYAD (Tutuklu Aileleleriyle Dayanisma Vakfi-Association for Solidarity with Prisoners' Families) were set upon in Trabzon when they distributed a leaflet about the isolation and hunger strikes in prisons based on the rumours that the group had burned the Turkish flag and was carrying the picture of Öcalan (*Cumhuriyet*, 7 April 2005). A subsequent attack occurred on 11 April 2005 when TAYAD members from different cities tried to make a press statement in the town centre protesting the previous incident. It has been claimed that Trabzon has been tainted by this whole development as it is historically associated with multiculturalism and multiethnicism and it is easy to disseminate the fear of the rejuvenation of the Pontiac Greek State and thereby raise the extent of ultra-nationalism expressed within Turkish society (Mert, 9 February 2006; Laçiner, 29 January 2007). On 30 August 2006, on the Turkish Victory Day, four university students in Istanbul, who protested the Turkish involvement in the Israeli-Lebanese conflict, holding banners proclaiming, 'İsrail askeri olmayacağız' ('we will not be Israeli soldiers'), were almost

lynched by a mob of 300 ultra-nationalists (*Radikal*, 1 September 2006). These lynch attempts were repeated many times in different parts of Turkey.<sup>30</sup> All of these incidents came about as a result of the rumours that the victims were ‘burning flags’ or ‘chanting pro-PKK slogans’.

The ‘nationalist’ reaction was also articulated along the religious lines. On 6 February 2006, the priest of the Santa Maria Catholic Church in Trabzon, Andrea Sentore was gunned down by a sixteen-year-old (*Cumhuriyet*, 6 February 2006). On 18 April 2007, in Malatya, 3 Christians working at a publishing house publishing books on Christianity were tied, tortured and killed by five young men in response to their alleged missionary activities (*Radikal*, 19 April 2007).

Within this period, signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ also revolved around the question of whether DTP is the political wing of PKK or just a political party with a pro-Kurdish agenda, trying to promote an ethnic-sensitive approach to the Kurdish issue. In this respect, DTP was claimed to be reluctant in distancing itself from PKK in the eyes of the public, a claim any Turkish political party with a Kurdish agenda has faced, as mentioned in the preceding section. One of the main incidents in this respect was experienced in March 2007, when DTP leader, Ahmet Turk was sentenced to 6 months by a court in Diyarbakır on the

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<sup>30</sup> On 25 February 2006, a man almost been lynched by a group of 1000 ultra-nationalists on the grounds that he allegedly kicked the flag. On 30 March 2006, In Sakarya, two students who tried to hang a poster of dead left-wing terrorist Mahir Cayan, one of the founding fathers of THKP-C, were set upon by 2,000 people and the party building of the DTP was destroyed. On 12 May 2006, members of TAYAD distributing flyers in Mersin were attacked by the crowd leaving a mosque after Friday prayers. On 29 August 2006, a group of Kurdish workers have almost been lynched by approximately 1000 people in Konya. On 20 July 2006, police arrested 61 people from the Basic Rights group and Freedom Support Organization who had refused to hand over two members at a makeshift camp they had set up in Kırklareli. When they were being transported to Vize, rumours spread that they were PKK terrorists who had been caught and a local crowd tried to lynch them. In Akyazi, Sakarya, 4 Kurdish workers were almost lynched on the ground that they were ‘pro-PKK’ (for further details see *Radikal*, 1 September 2006, *Radikal*, 9 September 2006).

grounds that he addressed to Abdullah Ocalan, leader of PKK, as ‘Sayin’ (dear, esteemed) in a speech he made in January 2006 (*BBC News Online*, 6 March 2007) according to Article 215 of Turkish Penal Code, which penalises those ‘who praise either an offence or an offender’.<sup>31</sup> The hesitance to exclude the PKK from the party organisation has also been echoed by the DTP ruling cadre. In the first Kurdish conference in Diyarbakır named ‘Kurds in Turkey: the main requirements for peace’, DTP co-Chair Selahattin Demirtas stated, ‘we cannot call terror what you call it. If we do, we become what you are’ (*Radikal*, 1 October 2007). At another conference on 4 December 2007 organised by the European Parliament titled, ‘The EU, Turkey and the Kurds’, Nurettin Demirtas, DTP Chair, said: ‘we believe that the insistence to name PKK as a terrorist organisation must be given up. Unfortunately, after 9/11, the approach of “you are either with us or against us” has been imposed by the US, which has also been endorsed by the EU. It should be the political party itself to decide what to say and what not to say’ (*Radikal*, 5 December 2007).

Another important variant of the security-democracy debates within this period was the cross-border operation to Northern Iraq. In Turkish domestic debates, reference to PKK terrorism has been almost synonymous with the region of Northern Iraq. ‘The power vacuum left in northern Iraq by the first Gulf War has enabled the PKK to use this territory as a staging ground for raids into Turkey and a sanctuary where it could enjoy relative freedom from Turkish counterattacks’ (Görener, 2008: 1). Especially after the legalisation of the confederal structure in Iraq in the aftermath of 15 December 2005 elections and the emergence of

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<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile, Erdoğan also faced a judicial allegation on the grounds that he addressed in the very same way to Ocalan in a speech he made in August 2000 at a radio programme in Austria, which did not result in a conviction due to the prescription of the act (*Radikal*, 27 March 2007).

Kurdistan region as one of the constitutionally defined regions, the foreign policy dimension of the Kurdish issue has started to play a role in the debates as ever.

Against this backdrop, and especially in the aftermath of Şırnak assault, one of the most hotly debated issues has subsequently been the motion that gave mandate to the government to organise a cross-border operation to Northern Iraq, which was ratified by a vote of 507-19 (*Zaman*, 18 October 2007). Before the motion, Erdoğan's statement that, 'the price of the motion will be paid whatever it takes. We do not have to ask for permission from anyone' showed the changing tone of the debates (*Radikal*, 13 October 2007).

During the same period, the PKK organised another attack on 21 October 2007 to Dağlica Infantry Battalion, Hakkari, killing 12 soldiers and kidnapping 8. This was immediately followed by the news that a wedding convoy had tripped a landmine in the very same region, an event which was strongly believed to have been the work of PKK terrorists. The kidnapped soldiers have been released after the direct initiatives of the DTP. After their release, the Minister of Justice Mehmet Ali Şahin's stated that, 'no member of Turkish Armed Forces should have been in this situation. I could not be utterly happy of their release'<sup>32</sup> which led to the whole incidence being perceived as more than an ordinary kidnapping (*Zaman*, 6 November 2007). After the Dağlica ambush, 13 civil society associations with the greatest number of members<sup>33</sup> issued a declaration constituting a 'common stance against terror' and

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<sup>32</sup> The soldiers have been released after a protocol among the US, Northern Iraq Administration and DTP MPs in front of Ocalan's poster created a deep disappointment within the society and politicians. Yet, the statement of Şahin has been condemned by many. The soldiers were arrested upon their return and charged with disobedience to the command and illegally leaving the country.

<sup>33</sup> Among those civil society associations were TOBB, TISK, TZOB, TESK, TURK-IS, HAK-IS, KAMU-SEN, MEMUR-SEN, TUSIAD, MUSIAD, ASKON, TUSKON and TBB.



stating that whatever needed to be done to stop terror and its supporters should be done immediately (*Radikal*, 23 October 2007).

The debates on security and democracy have been all the more intense following the furore caused by articles 312 and 301 of the Turkish Penal Code in Turkish political landscape. Article 312 charged those who ‘provoke people to hatred and hostility by inciting religious and ethnical differences’, among whom were Tayyip Erdoğan in 1997 and Akin Birdal, the then Chairman of Human Rights Association, in 2000. On 6 February 2002, a ‘mini-democracy package’ was voted in by the Parliament, altering the wording of Article 312. Under the revised text, incitement can only be punished if it presents ‘a possible threat to public order’ (*Radikal*, 5 February 2002). Article 301 was another highly debated article at both the national and international levels, which came into force on 1 June 2005 as a part of the new Penal Code. It stipulated that a person ‘who explicitly insults Turkishness, the Republic or Turkish Grand National Assembly, shall be given a penalty of imprisonment for a term of six months to three years’ (Turkish Penal Code, 2005). Indeed, the New Penal Code was designed in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria and ‘created positive expectations both in domestic public opinion and EU circles’, albeit creating an environment within which many authors and artists are imprisoned due to the authoritarian perception and application of article 301 (Hekimoğlu, 11 February 2006). Not surprisingly, the issue of ‘Europe’ largely dovetailed with the debates on ‘Turkishness’ within this context.

The article caused much ado both in Turkey and in Europe after the prosecutions of well-known novelists and journalists such as Orhan Pamuk, Hrant Dink, Perihan Mağden, Elif

Şafak, and even Joost Lagendijk, chairman of the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee. The fact that the article has been using ambiguous words such as ‘insult’ and ‘Turkishness’ was identified by many commentators (see Belge, 24 March 2007; Belge, 21 October 2007; Hekimoglu, 11 February 2006 for a detailed analysis).

One of the most high profile cases regarding the infringement of the Article 301 was the case of Orhan Pamuk. Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk stated in an interview to a Swiss newspaper in February 2005 that: ‘30000 Kurds and one million Armenians have been killed in these lands and nobody but me dares to talk about it’. This caused a big disappointment and uproar within Turkish public opinion, with ‘leading commentators denouncing him as a traitor’ (Freely, 31 August 2005). There followed a case brought by a group of lawyers led by Kemal Keriñsiz, a Turkish lawyer from *Büyük Hukukçular Birlięi* (Great Union of Jurists), that Pamuk be convicted as an infringement of Article 301. The Orhan Pamuk case which started on 16 December 2005 and attracted the widespread attention of both domestic and international public opinion rendered the case ‘a litmus paper for Turkey’s commitment to the EU’s membership criteria’, in Olli Rehn’s words (*Radikal*, 16 December 2005). The European Parliament commissioned a delegation led by Camiel Eurlings to observe the case (*EPP Group*, 30 November 2005). The first hearing of the trial was suspended due to the furore and turmoil inside and outside of the courtroom, where ‘domestic and European supporters of Pamuk has been subject to violence by the protesters’ (*Radikal*, 17 December 2005). According to Denis MacShane, Labour MP and British minister for Europe from 2002 to 2005 who ‘was punched in the face by a nationalist lawyer’, ‘in the court room where Pamuk’s case was heard, the hate word was “European”’ (MacShane, 18 December

2005). That the act had been committed before the launch of the new Penal Code on 1 June 2005 caused confusion in terms of the technicalities of the case and from the beginning it was not clear within what jurisdiction the case fell. On the defence of the judiciary, Cicek said, 'the Turkish judiciary got confused due to the EU's contradictory decisions about Turkey (...) Hotly-debated 301 has at the first instance been approved by the EU (...) Orhan Pamuk caused this whole 301 trouble' (*Radikal*, 25 September 2005). Finally, Pamuk case was dropped due to the Ministry of Justice's statement that the case is not within the Ministry's jurisdiction and the court's subsequent ruling that there is not an adequate ground for the realization of the case (*Zaman*, 23 January 2006).

Hrant Dink, the editor of bilingual (Turkish-Armenian) newspaper *Agos* ('*Furrow*') was also brought to court for 'denigrating Turkishness' on 7 October 2005 and received a six month suspended sentence (*Radikal*, 10 October 2005). The charge imposed on him due to a commentary where he mentioned 'genocide against the Armenians' and that the Armenians, instead of tackling with Turkey all the time should turn to Armenia itself, thus 'replacing of the dirty blood associated with the "Turk" with clean blood'<sup>34</sup> (Dink, 13 February 2004). He was charged once again due to a speech he made to the Reuters News Agency where he stated 'of course, I'm saying it's a genocide because its consequences show it to be true and labels itself as such. We see that the people who had lived on these lands for 4 thousand years perished after those events' (*Radikal*, 26 September 2006). While the case was still pending, Dink was assassinated on 19 January 2007 by a 17-year-old, Ogun Samast.

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<sup>34</sup> Within the aforementioned trial, the Expertise Committee appointed by the Court stated in their report that the article in question does not constitute an offense as 'the author points out to the need on the part of Armenians to get rid of the attempt and determination to articulate what had been experienced in 1915 as a vital part of the Armenian identity' (*Radikal*, 10 October 2005). Depending on the Report, Chief Public Prosecutor asked for the acquittal of Dink, which was overruled by the Supreme Court of Appeals on 6 June 2006.

The highly securitised Armenian issue also brought the author Elif Şafak to court in July 2006, who was accused of the violation of the article 301 by Kemal Kerinçsiz on the grounds that she insulted ‘Turkishness’ in her book, ‘Bastards of Istanbul’ (*Radikal*, 29 July 2006). In this book, Şafak she told the story of Turkish-Muslim Kazancı family and American-Armenian Çakmakçıyan family, where the fictitious character, Armanoush Çakmakçıyan comes to Turkey to meet with her Turkish relatives. When Armanoush tells her Turkish relatives about the fate of her family, what she says is as much about ‘genocide’ as about ‘Turkish butchers’ (Şafak, 2006). Though not as intensified as the Orhan Pamuk case, the Elif Şafak case was subject to protests and demonstrations. A group including Pakize Akbaba, Chair of *Şehit Aileleri Derneği* (Martyrs’ Families Association) and Sevgi Erenerol, the spokesperson of Turkish Orthodox Patriarchy, protested against Şafak in front of the court building with the EU flags, altered to include swastikas at the centre (*Radikal*, 22 September 2006). The protests were mainly directed to the European members of the audience such as Joost Lagendijk, representatives of PEN and Amnesty International. Şafak was acquitted in this first hearing of the case on 21 September 2006.

In November 2005, Baskın Oran and İbrahim Kaboğlu, who drafted a report on behalf of the Minority Rights and Cultural Rights Working Group under the Prime Ministry Human Rights Advisory Council on 22 October 2004, were also charged under Article 301/II (‘humiliation of the court’s authority’) and Article 216/I (‘inciting hatred and enmity’) of the Turkish Penal Code’. In the ‘Minority Rights and Cultural Rights Report’, the Council decided that ‘sub-identities should not be denied. The right of people from different identities and cultures to

protect and develop their identities should be guaranteed’, which clearly meant the re-evaluation of Lausanne (*Zaman*, 16 October 2004).<sup>35</sup> According to Lausanne Treaty, the main international document regarding the definition of ‘minority’, only Greeks, Armenians, Jewish and Bulgarians are deemed to be minorities (‘non-Muslims’ by the 143rd Article of Lausanne) (Oran, 25 October 2004).

After the publication of the Report, the government on different occasions criticised the Report. For instance, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Gül said that ‘they have never asked for such a report’ (*Radikal*, 23 October 2004). According to Oran, the government tried to stay out of the issue because of the frenzy caused by rightwing protesters and also because it did not want trouble before 17 December 2004, the launch of accession negotiations with the EU (Oran, 2007: 6). The then Minister of Justice, Cemil Çiçek, qualified the Report as an ‘intel mischief-maker’<sup>36</sup> (*Radikal*, 19 November 2004). In the trial indictment, Oran and Kaboğlu were charged with suggesting provisions reminiscent of the Sevres Treaty within the Report (*Radikal*, 16 November 2005). Therefore, from the beginning, the Report and the charges against Oran and Kaboğlu were highly securitized. On the first hearing on 15 February 2006, the court cancelled the Article 301 charge while the other was left standing. Oran and Kaboğlu’s case was dropped after the Chief Prosecutor at the Supreme Court of Appeals called for the acquittal of the academics as the ideas in the

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<sup>35</sup> The Board has been established in 12 April 2001, when DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition was in power and it consisted of 78 members from the state cadres and civil society organizations, including TESK, Human Rights Organization, the Sovereignty of Law Organization, Social Thought Organization etc. (Oran, 25 October 2004). The duty of the Council is to ‘comment, suggest and report on the development and protection of human rights’ (Ünal, 22 October 2004).

<sup>36</sup> Intel’ is the pejorative form of the ‘intellectual’ in Turkish

Report did not constitute a crime according to the new Penal Code (*Radikal*, 3 November 2007).

All in all, Article 301 trials figured prominently from 2005 on until the article's amendment in April 2008. Besides the harsh criticisms it received in European public opinion, the EU official documents during this period also made intense references to the trials and demanded amendments be made to the article, as the next section will show. Thus, the Turkey 2006 Progress Report stated that, 'Article 301 needs to be brought into line with the relevant European standards'. It went on to state that this also 'applies to other provisions of the Penal code which have been used to prosecute the non-violent expression of opinions and may limit freedom of expression' (the European Commission, 8 November 2006). On 30 April 2008, the Turkish Parliament adopted the AKP bill with 250 votes for and 65 against, which entailed the replacement of the offense of 'insulting Turkishness' with that of 'insulting the Turkish nation', brought leniency to first time offenders and granted the right to give permission for Article 301 trials to the Ministry of Justice (*Radikal*, 1 May 2008). Within this framework, 'Turkishness' was the keyword around which the security-democracy debates were articulated.

Another substantial component of the security-democracy debates were the Republican rallies during this period. The end of the tenure of Turkey's 11<sup>th</sup> President Ahmet Necdet Sezer in May 2007 also meant the emergence of the presidency debate as an issue of antagonism in Turkish politics. The main axis of the debate was the fact that the party in power, Justice and Development Party had a parliamentary majority to vote for a candidate in accordance with

its 'own goals', thereby posing a threat to the secular regime and Republican values. In this debate, the presidency of Tayyip Erdoğan was particularly to the forefront as his daughter and wife wore headscarves, he had an imam-preacher certificate and he appointed Islamist hard-liners to key bureaucratic positions. The tension was further exacerbated when Abdullah Gül as the AKP nominee for presidency was not declared to the public until the very last minute.<sup>37</sup> The high possibility of having a president from AKP and the aforementioned growing tension led to a number of demonstrations and marches just before the start of the presidential election process. The first protest was organised in Ankara by Atatürkcu Düşünce Derneği (Atatürkist Thought Association-ADD) and supported by almost 300 civil society organisations. At the rally titled, 'Claim your Republic', around five hundred thousand demonstrators rallied to chant slogans such as, 'we do not want imams at Çankaya<sup>38</sup>', 'neither US nor EU, ultimately independent Turkey', 'Çankaya is secular and secular it will remain' and 'this is Tandoğan, have you seen it, Erdoğan?' (*Radikal*, 15 April 2007). The main emphasis of the rally was the masses who felt that the laicist Republic and Republican values were under threat by the election of an AKP-nominated president. The wide spectrum of demonstrators ranged from hard-liner nationalists to socialists, from Republicans to liberals.

The second rally has been organised in Istanbul on 29 April 2007, a quite significant anti-government tone has been added to the demonstrations (*Radikal*, 30 April 2007). Another added phenomenon was the anti- coup d'état tone due to the declaration issued by the Chief General of Staff on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April: one of the most frequently used slogans was 'neither

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<sup>37</sup> His name was declared 30 hours before the deadline.

<sup>38</sup> Çankaya is the name of a district in Ankara where the President and the Presidency reside. References to Çankaya were particularly significant during the republican rallies as the dissidents were interested in whether the next occupant of Çankaya would be accordant with Republican values.

coup d'état not sharia' and the people claimed that that was a civilian coup d'état (*Cumhuriyet*, 30 April 2007; Belge, 1 May 2007). The third, fourth, fifth and sixth rallies took place consecutively in Manisa, Çanakkale on 5 May, in İzmir on 13 May with more than 1 million demonstrators and in Samsun with 100000 people respectively (*Radikal*, 14 May 2007; *Radikal*, 21 May 2007).

### **2.3. Conclusion**

In this section, departing from the argument that any discourse in Turkish politics has to relate itself to the privileged signifiers of 'security' and 'democracy' in order to be significant and salient and able to construct political frontiers, I gave a brief account of security-democracy debates. This helps to illustrate see how these signifiers materialised in the specified period and to show in the next chapter how they came to be articulated around the notion of 'Europe'. To reiterate, the Kurdish question, PKK terrorism and Turkishness debates each set the benchmark of the period with regard to the signifiers of 'security' and 'democracy' and set the discursive space within which discourses on 'Europe' emerged. The adoption of the Copenhagen Criteria by Turkey and its manifestations on the political landscape and the re-launch of PKK terrorism in June 2004 (which had until then ceased since 1999) were all intertwined within these debates and led to a discussion of whether the cultural and collective rights of the Kurds would damage the integrity of the Turkish state and legitimise PKK terrorism (which more often than not played on ethnic Kurdish identity). Similarly, the debates on Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code loomed large both at the domestic and the European level from 2005 until the article's amendment in April 2008. Whether the harsh criticisms the article received in the European public opinion and the EU are an 'intervention'



to Turkey's internal problems or facilitated the promotion of rights and liberties in Turkey has formed the backbone of the debates. The signifiers 'security' and 'democracy' materialised within this period which had the effect of introducing PKK terrorism, the Kurdish question and Turkishness as the landmark debates in relation to 'Europe'.

The question, however remains, how did these debates set the ground for the emerging discourses on 'Europe' and how were the signifiers of 'security' and 'democracy' related to 'Europe'? The next chapter will seek an answer to this question. But, before that, I will give a brief background of debates on 'Europe' in Turkish politics in the focused period to further elaborate the context of the discourses on 'Europe' that I will scrutinise in the next chapter and will constitute a passage to the empirical chapter.

### **3. THE EVOLUTION AND MILESTONES OF THE TURKISH DEBATE ON 'EUROPE' AFTER 1999: 'REFORM' AND ITS DISCONTENTS**

In the Turkish political system, the notion of 'Europe' has always been at the forefront. Moreover, there has been almost no political tendency that has not possessed an idea of 'Europe' in its discourses or party programme. This preoccupation gained particular momentum especially following the official acceptance of Turkey as a membership candidate after the Helsinki European Council in 1999. According to Ulusoy, this decision is important for the penetration of the notion of 'Europe' into the domestic debates as with this decision the EU agreed to share the burden of convergence through an accession partnership, and Turkey was enabled to participate in certain EU programs (Ulusoy, 2006). The Helsinki decision calls on Turkey to resolve the border problems with its neighbouring countries in

accordance with the United Nations Charter, or to bring the disputes to the International Court of Justice (Uğur, 2003: 166). Most important of all, EU conditionality, particularly the Copenhagen political criteria, has acted as a catalyst for domestic reforms in the fields of politics, law and education, as mentioned above. Helsinki European Council and penetration of the EU to the domestic debates has also meant a sheer equivalence sustained between 'Europe' and 'the EU' in public parlance from now on.

Therefore, the Helsinki European Council of December 1999 stands as a milestone regarding 'Europe' within the specified period. The Council at this meeting made a number of decisions marking a new stage in relations. While the Luxembourg European Council of December 1997 excluded Turkey from the accession process, the Helsinki Council granted Turkey candidacy status 'on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate States' (the European Council, 1999). Apart from the fact that the decision constituted a turning point for Turkey's long-standing desire for EU membership, the main impact of Helsinki has been the constitution of a pre-accession strategy for Turkey. Within the framework of the Copenhagen criteria, Turkey's membership was conditional on the fulfilment of the pre-accession strategy. The Council stated that 'compliance with the political criteria laid down at the Copenhagen European Council is a prerequisite for the opening of accession negotiations' (the EU Presidency, 10-11 December 1999). Turkey was required to undertake a substantial degree of democratization and human rights reforms. Therefore, starting from Helsinki European Council, the concept of 'Europe' was synonymous with the concept of 'reform', pointing to the new arrangements on the part of Turkey to be made in many realms such as human rights, democratization, education, judiciary and politics.

In line with the Copenhagen Criteria and the Accession Partnership of 2001, the Turkish Parliament has been engaged in the most pervasive constitutional change in the Republican era and 51 Articles of the 12 September 1980 Constitution<sup>39</sup> were to be amended (*Radikal*, 11 September 2001). The amendments (usually known as Harmonisation Packages) stretched from basic rights and liberties, the limitation of sovereignty and the secrecy of the private life to individual immunity and capital punishment, which were realised both by the DSP-ANAP-MHP coalition government and by the AKP government after coming to power in November 2002. These reforms culminated in a New Penal Code, which came into force on 1 June 2005.

These amendments, which testified to a broad-based political will for EU membership in Turkey, introduced new provisions in line with the priorities of the 2001 National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA), such as the freedom of thought and expression, the prevention of torture, strengthening of democracy and civilian authority, the freedom and security of the individual, the right to privacy, the inviolability of the domicile, the freedom of communication, the freedom of residence and movement, the freedom of association and gender equality (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007: 4).

Volkan Vural, the then chair of ABGS (Avrupa Birliği Genel Sekreterliği-General Secretariat of the European Union), the board responsible for the management and regulation of all the issues about the EU, depicted EU integration as a period for the ‘renewal of Turkey through reforms’, by giving the example of Bulgarian and Romanian accessions:

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<sup>39</sup> ‘The current Constitution of Turkey was drawn up by a constituent assembly appointed and supervised by the leaders of the 12 September 1980 military intervention and adopted by a nation-wide referendum held under extra-ordinary conditions of the military regime at the time’ (Göneng, 2004: 90). Although it has been amended many times after returning to multi-party politics in 1983, especially during the EU accession process, it is still called the 1982 Constitution (the year it has been ratified), generally to point out the non-democratic elements still entailed.

The time is ticking for the EU. The democratisation package should be ratified immediately. The Turkish Republic has always been a Western project. The aim is to renew Turkey through reforms. Turkey is proof of European multiculturalism (...) The EU does not want to disintegrate us. We should pay attention to the examples of Bulgarian and Romanian democracies. The day we start the negotiations, I will go to a primary school and tell the children what kind of a future is waiting for them (Vural, 3 September 2001).

The keyword of 'reform' has also created its adversaries within the political landscape especially by the actors who securitised<sup>40</sup> the concept. The main variant of the anti-reform discussion has unexpectedly been Cyprus. The Accession Partnership of 8 November 2000 and the debates which culminated around it were predominantly read through the lens of Cyprus. Accession Partnership suggested that 'the accession partnership is the centrepiece of the pre-accession strategy', and 'it contains short term and medium term priorities and intermediate objectives identified for Turkey' (the European Commission, 8 November 2000). Among the short-term priorities of the Accession Partnership, the need for political dialogue with the UN to find a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem was mentioned, which, by that time, created a great shock and resentment in the Turkish debates on 'Europe'.

The Cyprus conflict continued to be the main point of reference in EU documents in 2002, 2003 and 2004. Although it has been stated in the Copenhagen European Council Presidency Conclusions in December 2002 that, 'if the December 2004 European Council [in Brussels] decides that Turkey has fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria, the negotiations will be

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<sup>40</sup> The concept of 'securitisation' is widely used in the political science and IR theory and points to this tendency, where an issue becomes a security issue- 'not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because it is presented as such by the political actors (Buzan et.al, 1998: 24-6). Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan, the core scholars of the so-called Copenhagen School, define securitization as a successful speech act 'through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat' (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 491).

opened without delay’, the resolution of the Cyprus conflict was implicitly put forward as a condition for launching the accession negotiations (European Council, 13 December 2002). This tendency is ‘evident in the 2003 regular report of the Commission on Turkey as well as the Strategy Paper, stating “the absence of a settlement could become a serious obstacle to Turkey’s EU aspirations”’ (Ulusoy, 2008: 316).

Another anti-reform penchant emanated from the arrangements on abolition of capital punishment in line with the Copenhagen Criteria. The death penalty, not *de facto* carried out in Turkey since 1984, ‘was abolished with the amendments to the relevant national legislation enacted by the third [harmonisation] package in line with Protocol 6 to the ECHR<sup>41</sup> and the former constitutional amendments’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007: 8). This created anti-reform repercussions mainly due to the fact that it would have a direct impact on Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK leader. The so-called ‘baby killer’, as frequently referred to in Turkish public opinion, was held responsible for the death of 30000 people over the course of a decade of armed conflict between the PKK and the Turkish Armed Forces and had been sentenced to death by an Ankara State Security Court after having been captured in Kenya on 15 February 1999 by the Turkish intelligence service. After the third harmonization package entered into force on 9 August 2002, therefore his death sentence was converted to life imprisonment and he was put into a prison in a small town called Imralı.

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<sup>41</sup> In the 1990s, Turkey did not become a party to Protocol 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights which prohibits the capital punishment except at times of war although it did not enact the penalty. Protocol 6 was ratified in 2003.

Another important issue during this period was the restructuring of National Security Council<sup>42</sup> (MGK). Starting with the 2001 Progress Report which outlined short-term and medium-term objectives to fulfil Copenhagen Criteria, the EU pointed to the need to sustain and monitor *de facto* civilian control over the military, which meant the restructuring of MGK (the European Commission, 13 November 2001). Incremental constitutional amendments were made after 2001 regarding the increase of civilian members within the MGK. However, the real restructuring of the Council came about with the Seventh Harmonisation Package, which entered into force in August 2003. Within this framework, ‘the Law on the National Security Council’ was amended to revise the duties and authority of the Council in order to prevent the misinterpretation of its role’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007: 17). In this respect, the new duties and authority of the Council have been revised and its role was reduced to a level of advisory organ to the Cabinet. Further, a civilian was appointed as MGK secretary-general for the first time.

At the EU Summit in Brussels on 16-17 December 2004, the European Council decided that Turkey ‘sufficiently’ fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria to open accession negotiations on 3 October 2005 (the EU Presidency, 16-17 December 2004). The negotiations between Turkey and the EU started on 3 October 2005. The Negotiating Framework which was unanimously accepted by the EU Council of Ministers stated that, ‘the shared objective of negotiations is accession’ (the European Council, 3 October 2005).

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<sup>42</sup> The National Security Council, established in 1961, was touted as an essential institution which strengthened the role of military in politics. This institution, used by the military as the main tool for shaping domestic and foreign policies, is a constitutional tool through which the military expresses its own views in the public arena.

Unsurprisingly, the Negotiating Framework included specific references to the Cyprus problem. According to this document, Turkey's progress in terms of negotiations will be measured against 'Turkey's continued support for efforts to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework and in line with the principles on which the Union is founded, including steps to contribute to a favourable climate for a comprehensive settlement, and progress in the normalisation of bilateral relations between Turkey and all EU Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus' (the European Council, 3 October 2005).

Cyprus was also a burning issue in the 2006 Progress Report where according to the negotiating framework and the Accession Partnership, Turkey was expected to ensure continued support for efforts to find a comprehensive settlement to Cyprus problem, and implement fully the Protocol<sup>43</sup> adapting the Ankara Agreement to the accession of the 10 new EU Member States including Cyprus (the European Commission, 8 November 2006). This meant the need on the part of Turkey to remove all obstacles to the free movement of goods, including restrictions on means of transport, which has been frequently been referred as, 'to open up the harbours' in the public opinion (e.g. *Zaman*, 8 November 2006; *Radikal*, 5 September 2006; *Bila*, 29 September 2006). There was also a particular emphasis within the Progress Report on the infamous Article 301 in terms of the need on the part of Turkey to remove all legal barriers against freedom of expression (the European Commission, 8 November 2006). In the European Council meeting in Brussels on 14–15 December 2006, the

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<sup>43</sup> The so-called 'EU-Turkey Customs Union Adaptation Protocol' was signed on 29 July 2005 by Turkey which meant the extension of the Customs Union to the new ten members. However, Turkey made a declaration on 29 July 2005 that the extension of customs union as to include Cyprus does not amount to any form of recognition of the Republic of Cyprus (Hoffmeister, 2006: 225).

EU decided to suspend eight chapters<sup>44</sup> from the accession negotiations with Turkey on the grounds that she did not ratify the Additional Protocol to the Customs Union between EU and Turkey, including the Republic of Cyprus within the Customs Union. However, the chapters on the Customs Union were not the only ones blocked by the EU. After Nicolas Sarkozy's election as French President in spring 2007, France started blocking the opening of 5 negotiation chapters<sup>45</sup> that would have 'direct bearing on membership' (Arısan Eralp, 2009). This decision was first applied on 25 June 2007, when the EU agreed to extend membership talks with Turkey to two new policy areas but stopped short of opening discussions on the key area of economic and monetary policy (again due to French opposition)<sup>46</sup> (*Radikal*, 26 June 2007).

Against this background, and especially starting from 2006, what we see is a decrease in the intensity of the reform waves; what has been referred to as a 'reform fatigue' by some commentators (Patton, 2007; Güven, 14 April 2006). It has even been claimed that the AKP has deliberately halted the reforms and intends to push its hidden Islamic agenda by the Western media (*Wall Street Journal*, 22 May 2006; *the Economist*, 4 May 2006). It was after the Turkish-EU Joint Parliamentary Commission meeting of 3-4 May 2006 that the EU authorities started using terms like 'slowing down' 'delay' and 'halt' (Kaygusuz, 2009: 416). The European Parliament report by Camille Eurlings of September 2006 expressed a wide range of views (mainly critical) of the slowdown of the reform process in Turkey, referring to

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<sup>44</sup> The chapters suspended were the Free Movement of Goods, Right of Establishment and Freedom to Provide Services, Financial Services, Agriculture and Rural Development, Fisheries, Transport Policy, Customs Union and External Relations, which were considered to be related to the Customs Union.

<sup>45</sup> Agriculture and Rural Development, Economic and Monetary Policy, Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments, Financial and Budgetary Provisions and Institutions.

<sup>46</sup> The chapter on Economic and Monetary Policy has been opened on 19 December 2008



the court cases on Article 301 which had been introduced by the new Turkish Penal Code and the need on the part of Turkey to normalize its relationships with Cyprus, and to come to terms with its past regarding the ‘Armenian genocide’ (although recognition of the ‘genocide’ is not a condition for EU accession) (the European Parliament, 27 September 2006). Even if the Ninth Reform Package has been announced on 12 April 2006 by the government which entailed amendments on Law on Foundations, Law on Settlement, Law on Private Education Institutions and Law on Ombudsman, the then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said that they do not contemplate any changes regarding the Article 301 (Kaygusuz, 2009: 422).

These changes within Turkish legislation also entailed amendments regarding the Law on the Fight against Terrorism (anti-Terror Law from now on). This law was devised in 1991 when the struggle with the PKK was at its pinnacle. Even if numerous changes were made during the previous Harmonisation Packages, the real amendments regarding the law came about with a government draft in April 2006 which was accepted in June 2006 as a reaction to the rising tension in the South-East (Aytar, 2008: 4-5). The new law, which extended the definition of ‘terror’ and punishments attached to ‘terrorist propaganda’<sup>47</sup>, has been widely criticised by public opinion, especially in terms of the article which grants extended rights to state authorities in their struggle against terrorism (*Zaman*, 29 June 2006).

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<sup>47</sup> The new law pressed aggravated sentence in case ‘terrorist propoganda’ was made by the means of Press and the media. This article has been vetoed by Sezer and sent back to the Parliament for reconsideration while it has also been criticised by the EU’s 2006 Progress Report on the grounds that, ‘freedom of the press and media could be undermined by provisions allowing the suspension of periodicals and introducing the liability of chief editors and of press and media owners for publishing terrorist propaganda or praise in press or media organs’ (the European Commission, 8 November 2006: 6).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

So far, in line with the general interest of the project in understanding the emergence of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in the aftermath of 1999 in Turkish political debates, I set forth the theoretical framework, methodology and background information for focusing on what discourses on ‘Europe’ were constructed within the period and how these discourses delineate political frontiers in the empirical chapter. By using a Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework, I firstly argued in Chapter 3 that for any discourse to be hegemonic within *the political* it has to delineate the political frontiers between different political identities. In this respect, within the hegemonic struggle of a political project on ‘Europe’, the antagonisms between different political identities could be constructed either via co-opting different sections of society under the rubric of ‘Europe’ or through a common stance against ‘Europe’ (‘logic of difference’) or by polarising ‘Europe’, either through the demonising of other options than ‘Europe’ or othering ‘Europe’ itself (‘logic of equivalence’). Secondly, in order to highlight the discourses on ‘Europe’ which would do the aforementioned demarcation, I devised a methodology in Chapter 4. Departing from the claim that for any discourse to be hegemonic in the Turkish political setting it has to relate itself to the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’, I compiled a list of questions to trace the discourses on ‘Europe’ and ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. In this chapter, before investigating discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish political debates from 1999 onwards, I provided a general register of the historical context of the focus period, not only in terms of the notion of ‘Europe’ but also in terms of the privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’. I argued that within this period, the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ in relation to ‘Europe’ materialised to highlight the landmark

issues of PKK terrorism, the Kurdish question and debates on ‘Turkishness’ whereas the issue of ‘reform’ was the landmark concept highlighted regarding the signifier of ‘Europe’. I do not claim that there is a causal relationship between those events and the discourses I will outline in the next chapter. Rather, this exercise aims to situate the discourses that will be outlined in the forthcoming section within a dynamic and political context and to introduce the discursive space of the period within which these discourses emerged to the readers who are not familiar with the Turkish political landscape.

No doubt, it is vital to know which events marked ‘the ground’ within the focused period in order to make sense of the discourses and political frontiers, a task which this chapter has sought to achieve. However, it is more important to see how, and in what ways, these key events are articulated within the chains of equivalences and speak to the discourses. For instance, how is the abolition of the death penalty articulated with respect to ‘Europe’? How are the privileged of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ signifiers included within the chains of equivalence of the discourses on ‘Europe’? All in all, how are the discourses on ‘Europe’ constructed? The following chapter will answer this question. In chapter 6, by referring to the questions list compiled in Chapter 4 and by using the newspapers *Cumhuriyet*, *Zaman* and *Radikal*, I will highlight the discourses on ‘Europe’ in the Turkish political debates in the 1999 and 2008 period to be able to understand how ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ emerged and how political frontiers were demarcated by these discourses in Chapter 7.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCOURSES ON ‘EUROPE’ WITHIN TURKISH DOMESTIC POLITICAL DEBATES IN THE AFTERMATH OF HELSINKI COUNCIL

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I laid the background for the empirical discussion of the project by providing a general register of the historical context, not only in terms of ‘Europe’ but also in terms of the privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ in order to introduce the reader to the general climate of the period. However, it is equally crucial to see how, and in what ways these key events are articulated within the signification chains through discourses on ‘Europe’, as this chapter will investigate.

In this section, by referring to the question list compiled in the Methodology chapter and by using the newspapers *Cumhuriyet*, *Zaman* and *Radikal*, I will illustrate the discourses on ‘Europe’ in the Turkish political debates during the 1999 to 2008 period. By singling out the main contours of the debates, I will show how and with what references ‘Europe’ has been used in the political debates and how the signification chains have been articulated by these discourses. It is important to say at this point that the statements included in this chapter are not the exhaustive result of my newspaper research. The myriad statements (218 statements) have been narrowed down to 30 statements (see Annex 1 for the whole list of statements). In order to exemplify the statements I used, I included 2 statements for each signifier articulated within the signification chain of ‘Europe’ for each discourse, which I deem to be representative, repetitive and resonant within the research. The discourses outlined here will help me to see how the bipolar hegemony of the notion of ‘Europe’ has been sustained, so that

it created a common language both for the opponents and proponents of the European project, and how it demarcated the political frontiers, which will be explored in Chapter 7.

## **2. DISCOURSES ON ‘EUROPE’ IN RELATION TO THE PRIVILEGED SIGNIFIERS OF ‘DEMOCRACY’ AND ‘SECURITY’**

### **2.1. Discourse 1: ‘Europe’ as a keyword for minority rights and multiple identities (D<sub>multiple identity</sub>)**

One of the most important aspects of the Copenhagen political criteria was related to the amelioration of the rights and conditions of particular groups and identities, especially during this period. As such, ‘Europe’ was directly associated with the assertion of cultural rights to the Kurds and whether the Kurds are legally and politically deemed as a ‘minority’. In particular, the designation of the Kurds and the Alevis<sup>48</sup> in the 2004 Progress Report as ‘minorities’ emerged as an important landmark in this respect, as has already been mentioned (*Radikal*, 7 October 2004). All in all, therefore, the notion of ‘minority’ has increasingly been articulated with respect to ‘Europe’, especially in the first half of the 2000s. This articulation of ‘Europe’ had two distinct yet related dimensions. First of all, ‘Europe’ has been rendered equivalent to the notion of ‘minority’ on a rights-based manner. Regarding the rights granted by the state within the EU process, various demands stretching from the granting of cultural (collective rights) to the transformation of Turkey from a unitary state to a federation have

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<sup>48</sup> Although it is still a widely-debated historical, political and even religious issue, *Alevilik* (‘Alevism’) is generally depicted as a heterodox sect within Islam, Christianity and Shamanism’ (Poyraz, 2006: 8). Although Alevis ‘has never seen themselves as a minority throughout the Republican history’, homogenizing and unifying tendency of the Turkish nation-state dovetailed with the under-representation of Alevis as a religious community in Turkey (Genç, 10 October 2005). The most significant manifestation of this under-representation is the emergence of Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (Directorate of Religious Affairs) on as a Sunni-led institution and the compulsory courses at the primary and secondary school level on religion which predominantly teach the Sunni doctrine.

been aired. Within this context, the debates have been carried out with respect to a two-fold reference to the notions of ‘sub-identity’ and ‘upper identity’ where ‘a sub-identity is the identity that a person has by birth, such as the identity of one who is born from a Kurdish mother and father while an upper identity is an identity affiliated by the state; it coincides with the citizenship’<sup>49</sup> (Oran, 28 May 2004).

Secondly, the iteration of ‘Europe’ in this respect referred to a broader identitarian context, whereby the proliferation of multiple identities has been rendered equivalent to ‘Europe’. As mentioned in Chapter 4, in Turkish political debates, the concept of identity in general and the multiplication of identities in particular have gained momentum in the 1990s and 2000s due to the processes of globalisation and the EU accession. The singular ‘citizenship’ identity created solely by the Turkish state has since been challenged by the ramification of different identities (Mahçupyan, 2008). I use the term ‘identitarian’ here to denote the tendency to see the identities as negotiated rather than natural, contingent, constructed and imagined rather than categorical and pre-given. Here, the identitarian aspects of the notion, ‘minority’ is more at the forefront. Although it is virtually impossible to disassociate identitarian aspect of the notion, ‘minority’ from an emphasis on rights, the discussion articulating the concepts of ‘sub-identity’ and ‘upper identity’ refers to a broader identitarian context.

As already mentioned above, the concept of ‘minority’ has always been very controversial in Turkish politics as the Turkish state has tended to call all its citizens ‘Turkish’. As explored in

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<sup>49</sup> Within the literature, the identity acquired by birth is coined as ‘ethnic identity’ whereas the one granted by the state is called as ‘civil identity’. However, I deem it important to translate them literally from Turkish and name them as ‘sub-identity’ and ‘upper-identity’ in order to reflect better the pace and gist of the discourse within the Turkish context.

Chapter 4, according to Lausanne Treaty, only Greeks, Armenians, Jewish and Bulgarians are deemed as minorities (Oran, 25 October 2004). Although the Kurds are excluded from this designation, Article 66 of the Turkish constitution proclaiming, ‘every individual linked to the Republic of Turkey with citizenship is Turkish’ has increasingly been claimed to ignore other identities, such as the Kurdish identity, by different strands starting from 1990s onwards. Within this perspective, ‘Europe’ has increasingly been articulated in relation to the notion of ‘minority’.

In the following statement, Baskin Oran, prominent Turkish scholar and one of the lead architects of ‘Minority Rights and Cultural Rights Report’<sup>50</sup>, focuses on how the EU accession emerges as a top-down challenge to the traditional Turkish ‘minority’ conception and brings the understanding of equality. Here, ‘Europe’ is articulated as a second phase of Mustafa Kemal’s modernisation revolution in the sense that it would accelerate the assertion of minority rights.

Turkey’s perception of ‘minority’ is completely different from the EU perspective. By ‘minority’, the EU wants those who are not in majority and power to be subject to the very same treatment as those in power and majority (...) The EU says, ‘If the majority is able to learn Turkish, the Kurdish minority should be able to learn Kurdish as well’. Because, according to the EU’s definition of ‘minority’, all citizens are absolutely equal. Whatever the EU calls a ‘minority right’ is actually the right to equality. (...) The EU has accelerated the whole process. If it were not for Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk] and his top-down reforms, Turkey would come to that point in 150 years; but Mustafa Kemal made it in 10 years. Now, with the EU Harmonisation Packages, the second phase of Mustafa Kemal’s top-down revolution is being realised (Oran, 25 October 2004).

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<sup>50</sup> For further details about the significance of the Report, see Chapter 5

Here, Oran fixes ‘Europe’ as a top-down process similar to Mustafa Kemal’s reforms in the 1920s and 1930s, which would bring minorities the same rights as majorities. The proliferation of multiple identities is achieved by granting rights to minorities. All in all, ‘Europe’ is articulated in a rights-based manner (for further examples see Mahcupyan, 1 December 2006; Oran, 25 October 2004, Nezan, 2 June 2004; Elçi, 14 June 2004, Reisoğlu, 11 November 2004).

In the following interview, Hasip Kaplan, a very famous lawyer who is well-known for his defence of the Kurdish issue in the International Court of Human Rights at various instances, and who became a member of the Parliament from the DTP in the aftermath of July 2007 general elections, states that the resolution of the Kurdish issue is closely related to the EU accession in general and Copenhagen Criteria in particular:

Minority rights form the root of the Copenhagen Criteria. All these criteria should be fulfilled. It would be fruitful to understand the motto: ‘the way to the EU passes through Diyarbakır<sup>51</sup>’, in terms of the close link between EU accession and the resolution of Kurdish question. Does not Turkey have to pay attention to almost 20 million Kurdish citizens living in Turkey as it had to some hundred thousand people [in Cyprus]? (Kaplan, 27 May 2004).

Both in Baskin Oran’s statement and Hasip Kaplan’s interview, particular events of the Copenhagen Criteria and 2004 Progress Report are constructed as the variants of the multiple identities debate on a rights-based manner and ‘Europe’ is constructed as a gateway to the proliferation of Kurdish identity and the granting of rights to the Kurds.

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<sup>51</sup> Diyarbakır is a city in South-East Turkey in which the largest Kurdish population inhabits. This statement, ‘the way to the EU passes through Diyarbakır’ was first made by the then vice-prime minister Mesut Yilmaz, right after the Helsinki Council.



Another ramification of this right-based discourse is the proliferation of ‘of-Turkey-ness’<sup>52</sup> as an upper-identity (e.g. Uyanık, 4 September 2003; Ünal, 22 October 2004; Ekinici, 2 April 2006). In the following statement, Baskın Oran points to this change in terms of Turkish identity and links it to the EU process, which is the second biggest top-down revolution in Turkey after Kemalism in the 1920s<sup>53</sup>:

The transition and globalisation that Turkey is going through is called the EU process. During the EU process, our identity is changing. That’s what we are reacting to. The identity of Turkish Muslim is changing into ‘of-Turkey-ness’. Armenians and Suryanis will be a part of this society. If the state is subsidising the mosques, it will have to do the same for the cemevis and churches (...) In Turkey, two top-down revolutions have been experienced. The first one is the Kemalism during the 1920s. The second one is the EU accession process in the 2000s. The EU process is the continuation of the first revolution (Oran, 2 October 2006).

In this statement, Oran claims that the challenge that the EU accession creates with regard to identities creates a cementing impact within the society which renders Armenians and Süryanis a part this society. Therefore, in this picture, besides its function of unleashing the sub-identities, Europe emerges as an overall ideal that links these sub-identities to each other (e.g. Kırıkkanat, 3 December 2004; Ulusoy, 29 October 2003). In this quotation, Ahmet Insel makes an association between the European integration process and the emergence of ‘Europe’ as an overarching identity that links the sub-identities under the same rubric:

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<sup>52</sup> Although it is not an accurate translation grammar-wise, I deem it important to use the literal translation as it had been coined within the debates in the Turkish context. The notion, ‘of-Turkey-ness’ in this context has been offered as opposed to ‘Turkishness’ where the former embraces all sub-identities and emerges as an upper-identity.

<sup>53</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the main tenets of Kemalism, see Chapter 5

What is experienced in Turkey today is a religious and ethnic communitarianisation. Alevis and Kurds increasingly define themselves in terms of significant and powerful Alevi and Kurdish identities. We have to create an upper social ideal. The EU is the bearer of such an ideal. If we aim at another alternative, everybody will be withdrawn to his/her own identity and increase the effort to save him-/herself through his/her identity (İnsel, 25 March 2002).

Therefore, during the ongoing EU accession, it has been denoted by various actors to claim that 'Europe' is significant both for unleashing sub-identities and uniting them under the rubric of an 'upper identity', i.e. 'of-Turkey-ness' and as an upper identity itself which would unite people as an overarching identity.

During this period, an identitarian reading of 'Europe' has also been articulated within the framework of this discourse in a way in which it facilitates and promotes the emergence and assertion of particular identities (e.g. Keyman, 24 April 2005). When put in a broader perspective, this tendency to associate 'Europe' with cultural rights and multiplication of identities in general overlaps with what is known in Turkish public space as the 'second republicanism'. The so-called 'second republic', defended by numerous intellectuals, including famous journalists and scholars such as Mehmet Altan, Cengiz Çandar and Hikmet Özdemir, sought to articulate a liberal democratic politics. This trend is usually associated with Özal's neo-liberal economic policies, who was the architect of replacement of Import Substitution Industrialisation with Export-Led Growth as far as the growth strategy usurped by the Turkish economy is concerned. This process has co-existed with the concept of 'structural adjustment', which meant the adjustment of Turkish economy to the exigencies of neo-liberalism and the transformation of Turkish economy into a more market-based economy (for a more detailed outline of Özal's economic policies, see Öniş, 2004; Kalaycıoğlu, 2002; Ergüder, 1988).

‘The second republicanism envisages a liberal state and society based on free market, internationally competitive economy, minimal state, individualization, pluralism and human rights’ (Erdoğan and Üstüner, 2004: 511).

Mehmet Altan, one of the vanguards of this strand and a prominent figure in *Movement for Europe 2002*, in the following interview, points to this relation sustained between the EU accession process and the realisation of the second republican ideals in Turkey:

When the overall *acquis communautaire* of the EU will be implemented, society will get better. Therefore, an apology is needed for the second republicanists. Because, when you had said in the past what the EU says now, you used to be labelled a traitor. As this country does not derive its origins from democracy, a democrat is seen as being against the regime. The EU does not have such a mentality. The things we say are known by a child at elementary school level in the EU. But here, you are spending your life arguing this, being sworn at. Therefore, in terms of its content and spirit, Europe is second republicanist. With the Copenhagen Criteria, a period for a second republic starts in Turkey. If you demand a liberal democratic state and society, democracy, human rights and market economy, this is exactly what the Copenhagen Criteria are (Altan, 24 January 2000).

All in all, ‘Europe’, with its transformative impact on minority rights, the proliferation of sub-identities and the unification of these identities under the rubric of an ‘upper identity’ refers to the broader context of ‘democracy’ within the context of this discourse. In the following statement, Selahattin Kaya, a prominent political figure in the Kurdish movement who worked as an attaché in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 20 years and as a mayor in Bingöl (a city predominantly inhabited by the Kurds) in 1989-1994 period, points to the fact that democracy brought about by Europe will loom large in terms of ending the problems of Kurds. However, it should initiate a broader effort on part of Turkey in terms of democracy:

Kurds are the ones who support Turkish EU membership most. Because, the arrival of a European-standard democracy at Turkey means the end of their pain (...) Moreover, the democracy demand of the region is not a demand only in terms of the individual rights. European Union only intervenes to a country within the framework of Copenhagen Criteria. That is, it does not intervene in terms of other freedoms than the individual rights. It says, 'resolve it in accordance with your own conditions. (...) The Kurdish issue will not terminate even if Turkey joins the EU and all the rights within the framework of the Copenhagen Criteria are granted. This will not answer to the society's needs and the unrest will persist. It is impossible to resolve the Kurdish issue around constitutional citizenship. You can deal with the problems of a Kurd from Istanbul with individual rights but you cannot do it in Diyarbakır (...) [However], the Kurdish issue at Diyarbakır could only be resolved with collective rights. The issue will be resolved when you grant self-determination to all the Kurds of Turkey at the regions where they are a majority. This has many shapes stretching from autonomy to confederation (Kaya, 22 August 2005).

Similarly, in the following interview, Ahmet Türk, the then co-chair of DTP, states that 'Europe' sparks off a broader process in terms of democratization in Turkey:

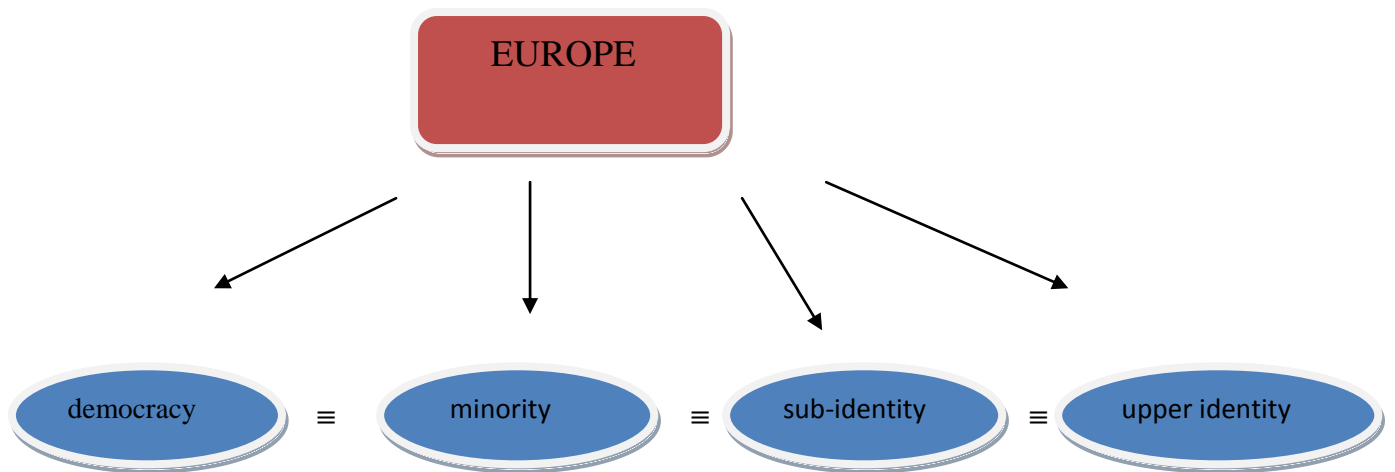
EU membership would bring democratisation to Turkey. This would make Kurds more comfortable. There are so many problems to be solved and debated. One should not think 'Turkey is joining the EU, all the issue is over'. At least 15 years is needed for Turkish EU membership. It is not right to tell the Kurds, 'be silent for 15 years' (...) The EU membership is a big step for the democratisation of Turkey in general, and for the democratic solution of the Kurdish issue and guaranteeing some rights of the Kurds in particular (Türk, 17 April 2006).

## 2.2. Recap 1: Signification chain forged by D<sub>multiple identity</sub>

To reiterate, within the framework of this discourse, ‘Europe’ is associated with cultural and minority rights. In this respect, ‘minority’ is a significant articulated signifier. Within the framework of a rights-based perspective, the notions of ‘sub-identity’ and ‘upper identity’ are also included within the signification chain. ‘Europe’ in this respect is articulated as a notion which would not only unleash sub-identities and assert minority rights and cultural diversity, but also unify different identities under the umbrella of an upper identity. This overlaps with an identitarian reading of ‘Europe’ within the period which generally sets identities as contested, negotiated and problematic. When this is translated to the context of ‘Europe’, we are introduced a representation of ‘Europe’ as an articulation of particular identities, cultural rights, a liberal state with a pluralist society and market economy. Therefore, within the signification chain, the signifiers of ‘minority’, ‘sub-identity’, ‘upper identity’ and ‘democracy’ as the privileged signifier are associated and rendered equivalent to the notion of ‘Europe’. In other words, the discourse on ‘Europe’ contingently articulates the above elements into a more or less stable whole. It is important to note that these elements are only some of the components of the above discourse on ‘Europe’ and are not exhaustive. Within a signification chain there are an infinite number of elements, as there are within this one (such as ‘second republicanism’, ‘cultural diversity’ etc.).

In terms of political identities, another important point to remember is that D<sub>multiple identity</sub> draws upon the particularisation of identities (e.g. the Kurdish identity, the Alevi identity, etc.), hence operating within *the logic of difference*. As I have already mentioned in Chapter

3, the antagonistic frontier in *the logic of difference* is weakened and *the Other* is less significant (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 11). However, it is still possible to identify *the Other* within this discourse: the singular identity of ‘Turkishness’.



*Figure 1: The signification chain constructed for Dmultiple identity*

### 2.3. Discourse 2: ‘Europe’ as a guarantee of territorial integrity and the decrease in terrorism (D territorial integrity/anti-terrorism)

*You cannot have PKK in an EU-member country. There will be no raison d’être of PKK where basic rights and liberties are under the guarantee of law.*

*Ümit Fırat*<sup>54</sup> (10 April 2006)

Another significant discourse attached to the notion of ‘Europe’ in the aforementioned period is based on the conviction that if Turkey becomes a part of the EU and harmonises with European-type rights and liberties, the terrorist activities and separatist movements within the country will not be able to attract any supporters, thus leading to territorial integrity and perpetual peace.

During the EU accession period, it has been claimed that if Turkey becomes an EU member, the terrorist aims of the PKK will be doomed to failure as the Kurdish citizens of Turkey will prefer to live in ‘peace and prosperity’, rather than under a pan-Kurdist rule. ‘Pan-Kurdist’ within this context means the establishment of a Kurdish state as to entail all the Kurds. According to Odabaşı, the Kurdish political tradition has always revolved around a 40-50-year organisation model ‘aiming to emancipate the Kurds of Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey’ (Odabaşı, 19 December 2004). As a follow-up of the previous discourse, although there was an ongoing debate in the mentioned period whether individual rights and liberties stipulated by the Copenhagen Criteria will satisfy the Kurds who also opt for collective rights and some

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<sup>54</sup> Ümit Fırat is a prominent Kurdish intellectual and one of the organizers of the Kurdish conference at Bilgi University on 12 March 2006.

commentators point out that the European citizenship is not enough for the Kurds of Turkey (see Kaya, 22 August 2005; Turk, 17 April 2006; Elçi, 14 February 2005), there was a near consensus within the debates that the EU integration would mean the waning of the idea of a separation on the part of the Kurds. In this respect, ‘territorial integrity’ emerged as the keyword which would be assured by ‘Europe’.

In the following statement, Kendal Nezan, head of Paris Kurdish Institute points to a similar link between the EU integration and end of terrorism:

Why would the Kurds who acquired their basic rights and liberties crave for a separate state, why would they seek a pan-Kurdism dream? Is not it better to live all together in welfare, freely and equally under the EU flag? (Nezan, 2 June 2004).

Şerafettin Elçi, one of the most prominent Kurdish intellectuals known for his stance against violence, and an ex-minister in Ecevit government in 1978 in the following statement highlights the fact that the EU process will render the motive for self-determination meaningless especially in the case of the Kurds in Turkey:

A happy citizen would never separate from his/her own state. This is linked to Turkey’s performance. If Turkey is able to make her citizens happy, Northern Iraq will never be a centre of attraction for the Kurdish. Turkey on the way to the EU is a more viable centre of attraction for the Kurdish. It’s easier for the Kurds to proclaim their rights politically in a Turkey on the way to the EU (...) Until the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, self-determination was desired. However, after the developments in the EU, this has proved to be meaningless. Different peoples can claim their rights easier within wider political alliances (Elçi, 14 June 2004).

The message given in Ankara to the mayor of Diyarbakır and the members of DEHAP (the precedent party of DTP) by the ambassadors of the EU member countries on 21 Nisan 2005



was quite significant in terms of fortifying this link between the EU integration and the futility of PKK terrorism:

Walking on the way paved by Abdullah Öcalan is a cul-de-sac. Similarly, violence is not a solution. Violence will bring no benefit to the Kurds. The EU is an integration project. We do take the whole Turks into account, not the people at the mountains (quoted in *Radikal*, 22 April 2005).

This point has been emphasised extensively in the debates on the impact of the EU on diminishing the public support given to PKK and on distancing the Kurdish movement from the so-called ‘Ocalan cult’ (e.g. Akyol, 28 April 2006, Sezgin, and 1 October 2004). One of the headings used in the daily newspaper *Yeni Şafak* in October 2004 could be read in line with this claim: ‘Does the EU process distance the Kurds from Ocalan?’ (quoted in Akyol, 28 April 2006).

Thus, the emergence of the EU as a peace project, besides its role of functioning as unitive rather than separative in Turkey, will lead to ‘decrease in terrorism’ within the region. In the following statement, Mine Kırıkkanat points out to the tribal and feudal social structure of the South-East region where Kurds predominantly inhabit and by giving examples from Europe, refers to the EU process as a catalyst for the perpetuation of equality, freedom and welfare which would ameliorate those problems of the region and make the autonomy and separation plans of Kurds unnecessary:

European Union is the biggest peace project of the human history of 5000 years that have been full of bloody wars. European Union is an answer to and an alternative to the US which increasingly constructs its universal hegemony on the clash of civilisations, even on a perspective of religious wars. Not all of the EU members are

federations like Spain. None forces the others to be federations. For instance, France is a unitary state. And, when Spain gives autonomy to Basque, Catalonia, Andalucia, Galicia etc., French basquans, Catalans did not rebel saying 'we also want autonomy'. Why? Because they have already acquired equality, freedom and welfare. At this point, the Kurdish citizens of Turkey have to show maturity and struggle with the customs which would render them a tribe rather than citizens, instead of separatist demands. As long as the clan order in the region continues, they cannot acquire democracy, welfare, freedom or European civilization (Kırıkkanat, 15 December 2004).

All in all, the decrease in terrorism and the territorial integrity brought about by 'Europe' means 'democracy'. Therefore, 'Europe' brings a broader democracy perspective, which the Kurdish movement has to pay attention to. Enver Sezgin, another significant Kurdish intellectual, an ex-TKP (Türkiye Komünist Partisi-Turkish Communist Party) member and one of the founders of New Democracy Initiative at the 1990s, mentions that the fact that the Kurdish movement should not confine itself to the release of Abdullah Ocalan, but should rather have a broader democracy perspective:

[as an answer to a question on whether PKK likes the democracy brought by the EU]. The latest PKK attacks [July 2005] curbs, intentionally or non-intentionally, Turkey's catch-up with the EU's democracy standards. They need democracy if they want general amnesty. To get involved in a legal struggle, they need democracy as well. The solution to the Kurdish question and the EU process are closely intertwined. Copenhagen Criteria entails all the individual and collective rights they desire. However, not only PKK but also some Kurdish intellectuals are not aware of the significance of the EU process. Instead of dealing with the issue from a wider democracy perspective, they narrow it down to Öcalan's isolation or freedom (Sezgin, 11 July 2005).

Hasan Cemal, in the following quote, points to this urge on the part of the Kurdish movement to distance itself with the PKK. Moreover, if Turkey does not join the EU process, Northern Iraq will be a better centre of attraction for Kurds. The significance of Northern Iraq within

the discussions on 'Europe' has been explored thoroughly in the previous chapter but to reiterate, in the Turkish domestic debates, the PKK terrorism has been used almost synonymously with the region of Northern Iraq and after its recognition as one of the constitutionally defined federal regions of Iraq made the region a locus of reference for the Kurdish identity. According to Cemal, in the region, Kurds have their own universities, newspapers, radio stations, police force and head of the state, which is likely to make it attractive for the Kurds (Cemal, 25 April 2005).

If the Kurdish political movement wants to be taken seriously and to be realistic, it has to determine its relation to Imrali. If the Kurds care about the EU, democracy, rule of law, they have to get rid of Apo's shadow and reveal that they genuinely refuse violence (...) New obstacles will be encountered on the way to the EU and democratisation. You will, on the one hand, be at the mountains with a gun in your hand. On the other hand, you will do politics in the city. Nobody would buy this. (...) [However], within the premises of democracy, you render Turkey a reasonable place to co-exist (Cemal, 25 April 2005).

#### **2.4. Recap 2: Signification chain forged by D<sub>territorial integrity/anti-terrorism</sub>**

In a nutshell, within the framework of this discourse, 'Europe' is articulated as a catalyst which would introduce other collective action options than the PKK in Turkey and thus render separation demands and PKK terrorism redundant. This would lead to the decrease in terrorism and territorial integrity of Turkey. Putting democracy into a broader perspective as such rather than trapping the Kurdish movement into Abdullah Ocalan cult will sustain the territorial integrity of Turkey with its happy and affluent citizens from all ethnic origins. Therefore, within the signification chain, the elements of 'territorial integrity', 'decrease in terrorism' and 'democracy' as the privileged signifier are associated and rendered equivalent

to the notion of ‘Europe’. In other words, the discourse on ‘Europe’ contingently articulates the above elements into a more or less stable whole. It is important to note that these elements are only some of the components of the above discourse on ‘Europe’ and are not exhaustive. Within a signification chain there are an infinite number of elements, as there are within this one (such as ‘freedom’, ‘peace’, ‘autonomy’ etc.).

Last, but not least,  $D_{\text{territorial integrity/anti-terrorism}}$ , makes possible the emergence of differential identities (e.g. ‘Different peoples can claim their rights easier within wider political alliances (...) such as the EU’, Elçi, 14 June 2004), thereby operating within *the logic of difference*. As I have already mentioned in Chapter 3, the antagonistic frontier in *the logic of difference* is weakened and *the Other* is less significant (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 11). However, it is still possible to identify *the Other* within this discourse: ‘disintegration’ and ‘terrorism’.

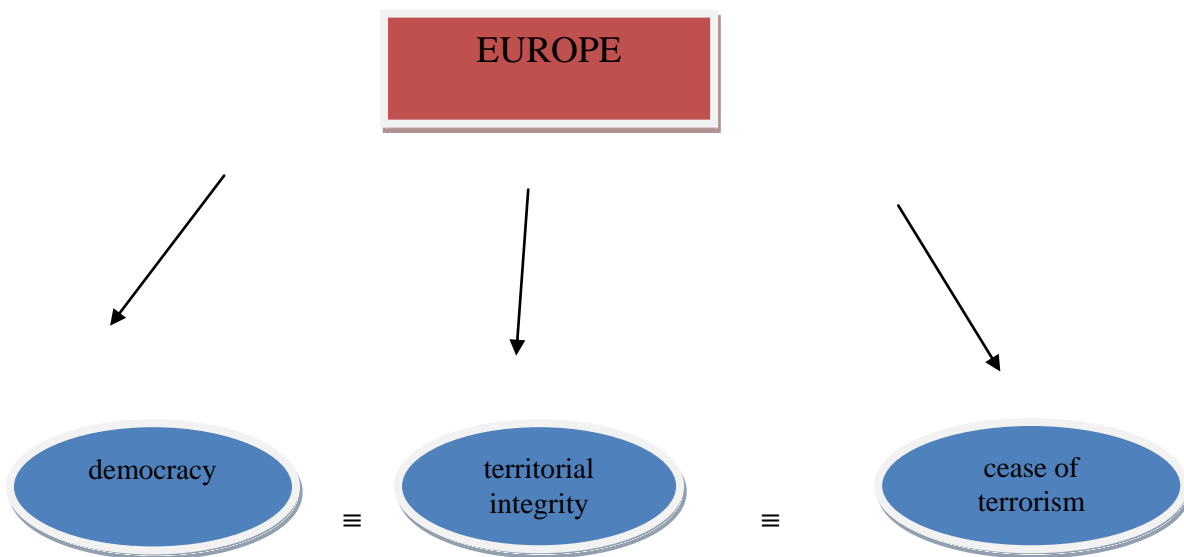


Figure 2: The signification chain constructed for  $D_{\text{territorial integrity/anti-terrorism}}$

## 2. 5. Discourse 3: ‘Europe’ as a threat to sovereignty (D<sub>threat to sovereignty</sub>)

*There is no difference between today’s pro-EU circles and those who wanted to be a British and German-led mandated territory in the early 1920s (...) We will not let anybody run down our country which we had inherited.*

*Youth Federation (11 January 2005)*

This line of the discourse culminates in the depiction of ‘Europe’ as a front that is seeking an opportunity to invade the Republic of Turkey culturally and politically. Thus, according to this discourse, during the EU process, *sine qua nons* and the policy priorities of the Turkish state such as being a unitary and secular state following the doctrines of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk are violated by the conditions put forward by the EU. As already mentioned in Chapter 4, this depiction of ‘Europe’ as a threat to sovereignty and secularism of Turkey is referenced as the ‘Sevres syndrome’, which argues that the Europeans have always tried to sweep the Turks away from the ancestral European- Christian territories and to restore those lands back to their rightful owners, the Armenians and the Greeks in the past and now the Kurds (Yılmaz, 2006: 38).

Moreover, according to this conceptualisation, ‘Europe’, mainly meaning the EU, instrumentalises Turkey’s membership bid. Europe tries to obtain ‘unilateral concessions’ on human rights, using the Copenhagen Criteria obligations and Customs Union (Manisalı, 12 January 2007; Aygün, 17 October 2005). But in reality, ‘Europe’ shows it is not ready to

welcome Turkey at every occasion. The idea that although completing all the requirements, Turkey is still not accepted as a member and faces new requirements for membership just because it is never considered as part of Europe, is prevalent in Turkey (Güneş-Ayata, 2003; Müftüler-Baç, 1999; Avcı, 2003).

The debate on ‘unilateral concessions’ has mainly culminated around the Customs Union. The gist of this debate was that EU integration will render Turkey dependent on the EU even more which than had been already the case as a result of the Customs Union. The EU and Turkey are linked by a Customs Union agreement, which came in force on 31 December 1995, pursuant to the 1963 EU-Turkey Association Agreement, which aims at promoting trade and economic relations. The Customs Union is ambitious but does not cover essential economic areas, such as agriculture, to which bilateral trade concessions apply, services or public procurement (the European Commission, 2009). Based on the idea of minimising trade barriers and tariffs, the Customs Union is usually depicted by this discourse under the focus of a tool used by the EU to benefit from Turkish economy and to render it dependent on European rule. Sinan Aygün, the Chair of ATO (Ankara Ticaret Odası-Ankara Commerce Chamber), in the following quotation, points to the Custom Union’s interference with Turkey’s economic relations with the third countries, which is another way of keeping Turkey under control:

Why would I not collaborate with Japan? Iran wants to have a mutual trade agreement. We cannot make it because of the Customs Union. I do not have independence. I cannot make business. We can develop our trade with Iran just like France had. The Customs Union does not allow selling more to Iran. The EU tells us, ‘you need to obey the trade agreements you had realised with the third countries’. Turkey’s economy is not independent. The Customs Union Agreement has to be torn down. There are 185 countries in the world. 25 of them have signed a Customs

Union Agreement. Is Canada, Japan, South Korea destroyed? (Aygün, 17 October 2005).

In the following quotation, Yiğit Bulut likens the Customs Union to Baltalimanı Agreement, the agreement signed by the Ottoman Empire and Britain in 1838, which granted various economic concessions to Britain and which is seen as the collapse of economic independence of the Empire:

The essence of the Customs Union we apply today is the same as the Baltalimanı Trade Agreement that had been signed by the Ottomans during the period of collapse. You cannot contribute to the administration, you're only left with weak industries, banking system and SMEs surrendered to crude trade. You cannot even do free trade with the third countries. You have to surrender your customs rights in accordance with the agreements by the members. While the rights of the member states shaping the decision-making mechanisms regarding third countries are still valid, you cannot benefit even from those rights (...) [What we see are] a country tied to bed and rendered disabled and a policy which does not even bother to change the logic of 'we will not be able to get out of the Customs Union anyway' (Bulut, 15 March 2004).

In above quotations, both Yiğit Bulut and Sinan Aygün articulate 'Europe' as a force which is keen on acquiring 'unilateral concessions' from Turkey via means of a Customs Union, Copenhagen Criteria and like. This is mainly due to the fact that 'Europe', since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, had a uniform agenda to turn Turkey and the then Ottoman Empire into a colony (e.g. Bilget, 15 December 2006; Baykal, 26 September 2006; Sirmen, 9 December 2006; Kılınç, 15 April 2003).

Therefore, another important component of this discourse is the conviction that the continuity between the demands of the Europeans of the 19<sup>th</sup> century from the Ottoman Empire and the EU's principles is represented by the 'hidden agenda' of the latter. In the following quotation, Bülent Yahnici, the then vice president of Nationalist Action Party (MHP) when it was the junior partner of the 1999-2002 DSP-ANAP-MHP coalition, links the failure of the EU to list PKK and DHKP-C<sup>55</sup> as terrorist organizations to the 'secondary' / 'hidden' agenda it has.

Are we still going to continue our relationships with the EU if they do not deem PKK or DHKP-C as terrorist organisations? (...) The unrealistic attitude perpetuated against a terrorist organisation which has caused the death of far more people than any other terrorist organisation in the world should be explained to Turkey if it's true and if it does not have any other explanation, reason, 'a hidden agenda' or a 'secondary list'. If they just don't see it as a terrorist organisation without any righteous reason, are we going to continue our relationship with the EU by disregarding this issue? (quoted in *Radikal*, 2 January 2002).

In the following statement, Erol Manisalı evaluates the 'Yes to Turkey' posters in the European Parliament as a manifestation of this 'hidden agenda' of the EU. In a European Parliament meeting on 15 December 2004, 2 days before Copenhagen Summit where the EU would decide on whether to start negotiations with Turkey or not, some parliamentarians supported the report on Turkey prepared by the Christian Democrat Camiel Eurlings and held posters saying 'yes' in Turkish to Turkish EU membership (*Radikal*, 15 December 2004). In the following quotation, the well-known Euro-sceptic Erol Manisalı presents 'Yes' of the parliament as a part of the 'hidden agenda' of Europe:

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<sup>55</sup> DHKP-C (Devrimci Halk Kurtuluş Partisi Cephesi-Revolutionary People's Salvation Party Front) is a terrorist organization established in 1994 aiming to replace the existing order in Turkey by armed struggle and to bring socialism. It is not as significant as PKK in Turkish political debates and although it caused death of civilians as well from time to time, it is never depicted as a substantial threat to the Turkish state:



The ‘Yes’ of the European Parliament is presented as, ‘the EU said yes to Turkey’ by deceiving 70 million people. The EP says, ‘we can only negotiate under the conditions which are going to pave the way to Sevres’. Some media circles are trying to present a Yes to Sevres as a yes to a normal membership. I think this should be renamed as a covert fascism (Manisalı, 7 January 2005).

Moreover, this depiction of ‘Europe’ as a front with a ‘hidden agenda’ which is after ‘unilateral concessions’ from Turkey and which will lead to the latter’s territorial disintegration is also coupled with a fear that European demands will foster Islamic fundamentalism in Turkey. As already mentioned in Chapter 4, Turkish state tradition has always referred to Islamic fundamentalism as an enemy of the secular structure of the state. This sensitivity has been even more prevalent after AKP coming to power, which is a party which recruited its executive cadres from former political parties with Islamic agenda. All in all, within this framework, Turkish people should be aware of the ‘dangers’ of ethnic separatism and Islamic fundamentalism incited by ‘Europe’. Nahit Şenoğul, the then Chief Commander of the Military Academy, makes a reference to the ‘eternal enemies of Turkey’ in the following quotation and draws attention to the disintegration aspect of the ‘danger’:

When Turkish membership was announced, everybody in the Turkish society became very happy. However, more than us, Greeks and Greek Cypriots became happy. The separatists and those trying to destroy the Republic became happy. Perhaps, more than everybody else, Claudia Roth<sup>56</sup>, who went to Diyarbakır to appoint an ambassador became happy. Do all these tell you a story? (Şenoğul, 11 January 2001).

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<sup>56</sup> German politician and co-Chair of German Green Party. She was heavily criticized by the Eurosceptic circles due to the numerous visits she had paid to Diyarbakır and her speeches on the Kurdish issue and the right of the Kurds for self-determination. Within this perspective, Şenoğul, by using the word ‘ambassador’, is probably making a reference to her ‘demand’ for a free Kurdistan.

Similarly, Erol Manisalı in the following quotation draws attention to the compatibility between European demands from Turkey which would culminate in mild Islam and AKP's existence in power:

The EU has an integrative, democratic and social identity internally speaking. [However], [i]t is separatist, imperialist, oppressive, Islamist and illegal against countries like Turkey (...) There is a Turkey model within the EU accession: an Islamist and comprador political party in power, i.e. mild Islam [and] a political party of capital in opposition. The latter would function as a safety net for the Islamist structure so that it would not follow a fundamentalist and anti-Americanist path. No doubt, it is indispensable to add to this picture a Kurdist, separatist and Western political party (Manisalı, 21 April 2008).

All in all, Europe which poses a 'danger' to Turkey with its hidden agenda and 'unilateral concession' demands from Turkey is a 'security' issue. Tuncer Kılınç in the following statement makes a good summary of the depiction of all aforementioned points as a 'threat' in a speech he made in Brussels on 15 April 2003:

I support EU membership but I don't have any hope for that. They would never open this door to us. Since the conquest of Istanbul, Europe has always taken us as an enemy. The EU is never as warm as to hug you. They would never include the Turks who are the continuation of a people who came up to the Viennese gates. The EU has never supported Turkey. This is due to cultural or religious factors. Europe has mentioned Armenian issue in the 1850s. After the First World War, it paved the way to many incidents by rendering us and the Armenians enemies. PKK has been functionalized by the EU. The EU is responsible for the death of 33000 people. The EU has supported the terrorist organizations in Turkey overtly or covertly. The EU is scared that Turkey will burgeon again and be the next Ottoman Empire (quoted in *Radikal*, 26 April 2003).

Similarly, when the Public Prosecutor pressed a charge against AKP for its closure and when various European figures condemned this at various instances, Cumhuriyet published a

commentary in the name of the newspaper posing a link between Europe's 'intervention' to the Turkish judiciary's independence and War of Independence, rendering Europe a 'security' issue:

We have a constitution and a constitutional court; our basic law is not very different from those of the member states, although it has aspects to criticize (...) We are a state established via the struggle against Europe's plan on the partition of Anatolia. This is one of our qualities (*Cumhuriyet*, 2 April 2008).

## **2.6. Recap 3: Signification chain forged by D<sub>threat to sovereignty</sub>**

To summarise, within the framework of this discourse, 'Europe' is articulated as a front that has a uniform agenda against the then Ottoman Empire and now Turkey. For this aim, it pushes its 'hidden agenda' under the guise of Copenhagen criteria or Customs Union to obtain 'unilateral concessions' from Turkey. These all culminate in the 'danger' of ethnic separatism and Islamic fundamentalism' which render 'Europe' a 'danger' and a 'security' issue. All in all, D<sub>threat to sovereignty</sub> contingently articulates the above elements into a more or less stable whole. It is important to note that these elements are only some of the components of the above discourse on 'Europe' and are not exhaustive. Within a signification chain there is an infinite number of elements, as there are within this one (such as 'limited authority of the army', 'ethnic separatism', 'rejuvenation of Sevres' etc.). Here, in contrast to the previous discourses and in line with *the logic of equivalence*, the depiction of *the Other* is more straightforward (e.g. '[the EU] is separatist, imperialist, oppressive, Islamist and illegal against countries like Turkey', Manisalı, 21 April 2008) and the antagonistic frontier is sharper between *the Self* ('the Turkish state') and *the Other* ('Europe').

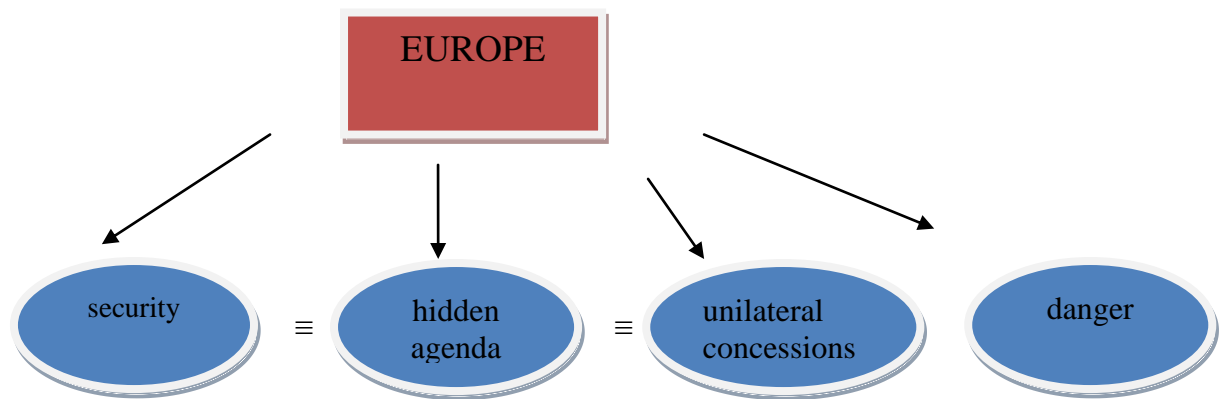


Figure 3: The signification chain constructed for  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$

## 2.7. Discourse 4: ‘Europe’ as a threat to Turkishness

*‘Turkey is not an impotent country which is submissive to Europe. We would not give up our national pride for the EU membership’*

*In the annual opening ceremony of the Parliament by Bülent Arınç, the then Chair (quoted in Zaman, 2 October 2005).*

This discourse draws upon similar security concerns to the issues articulated within the framework of  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  from a more identitarian point of view. The ‘lingering’ twin threats of political Islam and Kurdish separatism are again the centre of the debate, this time

securitised in a rather identity-based manner. The usual references are the Turkish national pride, which had been rendered submissive to the EU and the insult of the Turkishness by the legal and political changes stipulated by the EU. Even if 'Europe' is not a threat to different aspects of Turkish sovereignty, whatever demand is put forward by the former aims to undermine what describes 'Turkishness', 'Turkish nation' or 'Turkish society'. This is mainly achieved through the insincerity shown to Turkey via double standards and the insensitivity on the part of Europe to Turkish priorities and values stemming from history and state tradition. This discourse which depicts 'Europe' as a threat to Turkishness dovetails with D threat to sovereignty to a considerable extent although the former reads Europe from a more identitarian point of view.

In the following speech he made in the opening ceremony of the 2006-2007 academic year, Tuzla Navy War School, Yener Karahanoglu, Chief of Navy Forces, points to this insensitivity on the part of Europe shown to Turkey and 'Turkish pride' through the EU accession process:

Contemporary Turkey is the Turkey of Atatürk. Contemporary Turkey is sensitive in terms of national interests, constitutional untouchables and the welfare and security of the forthcoming generations at least as much as the EU countries. In terms of shaping her own future, Turkey does not need the impositions and suggestions of anyone else. It should be noted that Turkish Armed Forces cannot sacrifice and tolerate the erosion of constitutionally defined basic values of the Republic of Turkey for the sake of EU ideals and the EU accession process. I am leaving to our beloved people's discretion how much these should be taken seriously especially if those demands are ignoring our national pride, constitutional structure, our country's land, sea and air security, foreign policy interests, our Republic's establishment philosophy and our historical facts and destroying our national unity (quoted in *Radikal*, 30 September 2006).

This line of thought has also been used to criticize the AKP government in power on the grounds that they are not sensitive about the Turkish domestic issues, but are just trying to further their Islamic agenda (for further details about depiction of AKP and its ‘hidden agenda’ along these lines see previous chapter). In the following quotation, Hikmet Bila, a prominent journalist from *Cumhuriyet*, mentions this reluctance on the part of AKP about nationally sensitive issues and argues that ‘Europe’ constantly introduces new criteria adverse to Turkish ‘national pride’. This commentary has just been written after a European Parliament document in September 2006 which mentioned the need on the part of Turkey to recognise the killing of Greeks and Suryanis during War of Independence as ‘genocide’ (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 16 November 2006):

This time, they attempt to add three annexes to the Turkish history: Pontiac and Suryani genocide, designation of Alevis and Yezidis as minorities and liberalization of turban in the universities. Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared that, ‘we are concerned about the attempts to introduce criteria far from objectivity’. Similar reactions had been shown against the previous impositions. It seems that these attempts did not make any impact and were not taken seriously. Those who do not care humiliation of our national pride on the way to the EU are stalking. Perhaps they have no idea what ‘national pride’ is (Bila, 29 September 2006).

Not surprisingly, coupling of reaction to AKP and depiction of ‘Europe’ as a front underestimating Turkish pride found its most noteworthy resonance within the framework of Article 301 debates. General spirit of the era of the debates on Article 301 and Orhan Pamuk case revolved around the link between humiliation of Turkishness and Europe as described by İlhan Selçuk, prolific *Cumhuriyet* journalist, ‘who wants to be a Turk when we, assassinator of 1 million Armenians and 30000 Kurds, are torn by genocide allegations and constantly humiliated by the EU officials?’ (Selçuk, 3 January 2006). Especially when the proposal on the amendment of the article 301 was debated in the EU Harmonization Commission within

the Parliament, CHP and MHP staunchly opposed the amendment of the article, which has been summarized by Onur Öymen, CHP deputy Chair, as: ‘the EU asks us the liberty to humiliate Turkishness’ (quoted in *Zaman*, 17 April 2008). In the following quotation, Osman Durmuş, MHP MP, iterates this link between threat to Turkishness and ‘Europe’ in a speech in the same Commission:

If you substitute the notion of ‘Turkishness’ with that of ‘Turkish nation’, noone will be able to react if Turks living in Western Thrace, Caucasasia or Kirkuk are humiliated. They will swear at the Turks at the European Parliament and the Turks will remain inactive. Do you think that it is possible? (quoted in *Zaman*, 17 April 2008).

All in all, with its blind eye to national peculiarities and sensitivities, ‘Europe’ is clearly a security issue which one should be aware of. In the following quotation, ‘Europe’ is charged by Devlet Bahçeli with creating social cleavages in the society which had not existed before with its provisions on minorities in the Copenhagen Criteria and Progress Reports:

Legitimising separatism and provocation based on class, community and ethnical roots has nothing to do with the burgeoning of a democratic order or with the EU membership. The will to relate taking precautions against separatism and provokism with EU membership-just as it has been done in terms of the Cyprus issue- does not change the fact that the sensitivities in terms of national unity are curbed and democracy is weakened. Moreover, this understanding causes the emergence of an impression that the EU is indifferent to and even negative about Turkey’s national sensitivities and that our EU target is diluted. That our EU perspective is rendered a matter of exploitation does not do anything more than to deepen the hesitancies within Turkish public opinion (quoted in *Radikal*, 6 February 2002).

Similarly, in the following quotation, Erol Ertuğrul, a lawyer who writes regularly at *Cumhuriyet*, mentions a similar concern in terms of European demands on minorities, amounting to a breach of Lausanne Treaty, which clearly has to do with our ‘security’:

The EU does not demand any member or candidate state what it demands us. It wants things from us which hurt our national pride and lead to disintegration. It wants the recognition of 'Kurdistan' and Greek Cypriot Administration. (...) The cadre running our country does not genuinely aim to be a part of Europe, but to realize their own agendas under the guise of EU demands. Now we should contemplate once again: is the agreement signed on 17 December 2004 a success or a real surrender? Are we giving back what we achieved by Lausanne? We should say 'no' to this all together. No one can take our independence, national pride and unity from us!!! (Ertugrul, 7 January 2005).

## **2.8. Recap 4: Signification chain forged by $D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$ :**

In a nutshell, this discourse draws upon similar security concerns to the issues articulated within the framework of  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  from a more identitarian point of view. 'Europe' within this framework is pictured as a threat posed against 'national pride' and as an insult of Turkishness. At a general level, this insult is realised through legal and political changes stipulated by the EU which are insensitive to Turkish priorities and values. This discourse has also dovetailed with a staunch criticism of the AKP on the grounds that the former is not sensitive about the Turkish domestic issues, but is just trying to further their Islamic agenda. All in all,  $D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$  contingently articulates the above elements into a more or less stable whole. It is important to note that these elements are only some of the components of the above discourse on 'Europe' and are not exhaustive. Within a signification chain there are an infinite number of elements, as there are within this one (such as 'double standards', 'assault of dignity' etc.).

It is also important to note that in  $D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$ , similar to  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  and in line with *the logic of equivalence*, the depiction of *the Other* is more straightforward (e.g. 'This time,



**they** attempt to add three annexes to the Turkish history: Pontiac and Suryani genocide, designation of Alevis and Yezidis as minorities and liberalization of turban in the universities (...) Those who do not care humiliation of **our** national pride on the way to the EU are stalking', Bila, 29 September 2006) and the antagonistic frontier is sharper between *the Self* ('the Turkish state') and *the Other* ('Europe').

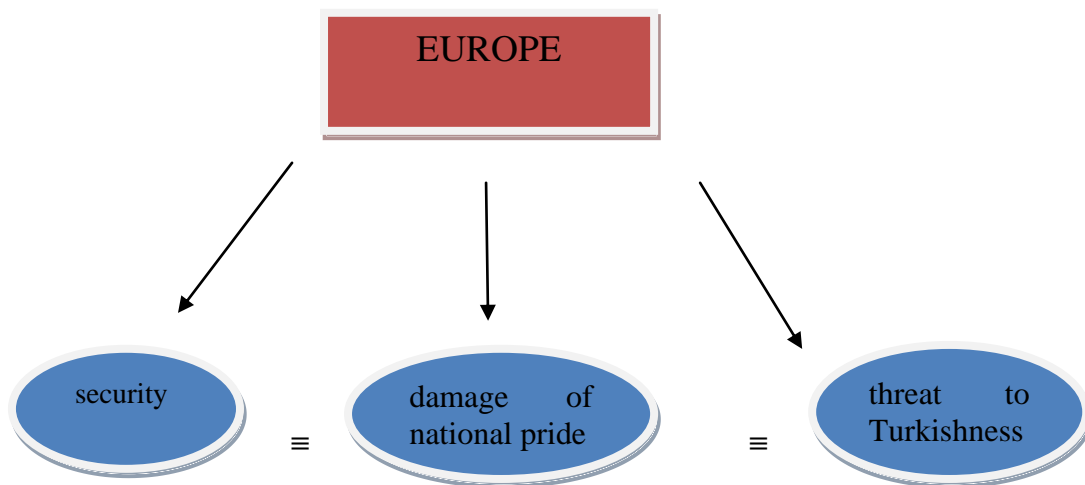


Figure 4: The signification chain constructed for  $D_{threat\ to\ Turkishness}$

### 3. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, by using the question list compiled in the Methodology chapter, I highlighted the discourses on ‘Europe’ in the Turkish political debates within the 1999-2008 period as they were represented in the newspapers of *Cumhuriyet*, *Zaman* and *Radikal*. I showed how the discourses on ‘Europe’ articulated signification chains through different elements. Although there is an infinite number of elements articulated by those discourses, the privileged signifiers of ‘democracy’ and ‘security’ were always already included within the chains one way or another. It is important to say at this point that the statements included in this chapter are not the exhaustive result of my newspaper research. The myriad statements (218 statements) have been narrowed down to 30 statements. In order to exemplify the statements I used, I included 2 statements for each signifier articulated within the signification chain of ‘Europe’ for each discourse, which I deem to be representative and significant within the research (see Annex 1 for the whole list of statements).

The four discourses I illustrated in this chapter are “‘Europe’ as a keyword for minority rights and multiple identities, “‘Europe’ as a guarantee of territorial integrity and the decrease in terrorism’, “‘Europe’ as a threat to sovereignty’ and “‘Europe’ as a threat to Turkishness’. However, this is rather a static approach, focusing on the nature and structure of discourses in the 1999-2008 period. I also mentioned how these four discourses relate to political identities and what hegemonic strategies they refer to. I argued that whereas  $D_{\text{multiple identity}}$  and  $D_{\text{territorial integrity/anti-terrorism}}$  draw upon differential identities such as Kurdish identity and operate within *the logic of difference* where the antagonistic frontier is weakened and *the Other* is less

significant, within the framework of  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  and  $D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$ , the designation of *the Other* is more straightforward and the antagonistic frontier is sharper in line with *the logic of equivalence*. The below table brings together the four discourses, *the Others* they identify and the hegemonic strategies they operate within:

Discourses	<i>The Other</i>	Hegemonic Strategy
$D_{\text{multiple identity}}$	Singular identity of Turkishness	Logic of difference
$D_{\text{territorial integrity/anti-terrorism}}$	Territorial disintegration	Logic of difference
$D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$	‘Europe’ as a polity	Logic of equivalence
$D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$	‘Europe’ as an identity	Logic of equivalence

*Table 2: The four discourses on ‘Europe’ and the hegemonic strategies they operate within.*

Now, it is crucial to locate these discourses within the flow of events in the aforementioned period by temporalising the debates with regard to ‘Europe’ to understand how ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ emerged, which Chapter 7 will try to make.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCOURSES ON ‘EUROPE’ IN ARTICULATING ANTAGONISMS AND DEMARCATING POLITICAL FRONTIERS AFTER 1999

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Starting from May 2009, Turkey, as with many other countries, was alarmed by an increasing number of swine flu cases. During this period, Minister of Health, Recep Akdağ advocated the benefits of swine flu vaccination, whereas Erdoğan, at a speech he made at the Parliament on 3 November 2009, declared that he does not agree with the Minister of Health (*Radikal*, 4 November 2009). Interestingly enough, even this slight disagreement on the swine flu vaccination was enough to create an antagonism within Turkish public opinion where people tended to associate themselves with one of the ‘camps’ via long discussions and accusations aimed at the ‘other’ camp. Besides its randomness, this small anecdote highlights the volatility and fuzziness of struggles to hegemonise certain concepts and political space.

In this dissertation I have aimed to understand the emergence of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in the aftermath of 1999 in Turkish political debates. Rather than making a pre-given association between particular political tendencies and positions vis-à-vis Europe, which is usually done in the Turkish context, I attempted to look at the political debates through the hegemony lens. For this aim, I called the struggle for the hegemonic positions of political identities ‘bipolar hegemony’ where both poles of the discourses (pro- vs. anti-Europe) are parts of the same hegemonic discourse and reify a particular construction of the world. Recognising this, I

developed a novel theoretical approach that it is the operation of logics of equivalence or difference that depict ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. In the previous chapter, in order to see how logics of equivalence and difference operated in terms of the hegemonic struggle on ‘Europe’, I singled out the discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish political debates in the 1999-2008 period by using the questions listed in Chapter 4. The resulting discourses have been denoted as:

**D<sub>multiple identity</sub>-‘Europe’ as a keyword for minority rights and multiple identities:** Within the framework of this discourse, ‘Europe’ is articulated as a reference point for both the unleashing of multiple identities and unification of different identities under the umbrella of an upper identity. This has either been done in a rights-based manner which materialized in the form of notions such as ‘minority’, ‘sub-identity’ and ‘upper identity’ or through a broader identitarian reading of ‘Europe’ where the notion is fixed in a way in which it promotes the assertion of particular identities and emergence of ‘of-Turkey-ness’ as an upper identity in Turkish political debates. ‘Europe’ in this respect also emerges as an overall ideal and an overarching identity that links these sub-identities to each other.

**D<sub>territorial integrity/anti-terrorism</sub>-‘Europe’ as a guarantee of territorial integrity and the decrease in terrorism:** This discourse is based on the conviction that if Turkey becomes a part of the EU and harmonises with rights and liberties perceived as ‘European-type’, the terrorist activities and separatist movements within the country will not be able to attract any supporters, thereby leading to territorial integrity and perpetual peace. ‘Europe’ will function

as unitive rather than separative in Turkey and it will render terrorism redundant as there will be no need for terrorism where ‘democracy’ brought about by ‘Europe’ prevails.

**D<sub>threat to sovereignty</sub>-‘Europe’ as a threat to sovereignty:** This discourse culminates around the depiction of ‘Europe’ as an imperialist front that is seeking for an opportunity to invade the Republic of Turkey culturally, politically and economically. In this respect, ‘Europe’ is articulated as a force which is keen on acquiring ‘unilateral concessions’ from Turkey via means of Customs Union, Copenhagen Criteria and like. This is mainly due to the fact that ‘Europe’ since the 19<sup>th</sup> century had a uniform agenda to turn Turkey and the then Ottoman Empire into a colony currently through the ‘hidden agenda’ of the EU. All in all, ‘Europe’ is detrimental for the ‘security’ of Turkey.

**D<sub>threat to Turkishness</sub>-‘Europe’ as a threat to Turkishness:** According to the discourse D<sub>threat to Turkishness</sub>, what is urged by the EU is contrary to the Turkishness. The ‘lingering’ twin threats of political Islam and Kurdish separatism are again the centre of the debate; however, the focus is more on the identitarian aspect of the ‘security’. The usual references of this discourse are Turkish national pride, which had been rendered submissive to the EU and the insult of the Turkishness by the legal and political changes and Turkish ‘security’ which is challenged by ‘Europe’.

However, this is rather a synchronic approach, focusing on the nature and structure of discourses in the 1999-2008 period, removing it from ‘the temporal sequence of events,

relocating it in an abstract theoretical realm outside of the temporal domain' (Hay, 2002: 144). However much this approach is helpful to understand the nature of the discourses, it renders the denoted discourses static. As such, it is crucial to locate these discourses within the flow of events in the aforementioned period by temporalising the debates and employing a rather diachronic approach.

In order to achieve this aim, in this section I will first diachronise the already-sketched discourses on 'Europe' by locating them within the timeline of key events scrutinised in Chapter 5. This will make it easier to see the possible (dis)continuity and recurrence of the discourses. Rather than claiming a causal relationship between the political developments and discourses and aiming an actor-based approach, this exercise aims to show what role 'Europe' played within the debates during the focused period and what antagonisms it allowed to be articulated.

Secondly, after locating the discourses in a chronological perspective, I will state the general features of 'Europe-as-hegemony' in this period. In this respect, I will focus on the way in which discourses on 'Europe' in the mentioned period delineated political frontiers and how different political demands and identities within the society were articulated through logics of equivalence and difference. After showing how these logics operated, I will argue that, although 'Europe-as-hegemony' attempted either to split *the social (logic of equivalence)* or to emphasise the non-adversarial differences between political identities (*logic of difference*), it is not easy to claim that these attempts were successful as a hegemonic practice as Laclau and Mouffe would intend. First of all, although the analysis of the newspapers and

parliamentary debates are helpful in identifying how the logics of equivalence and difference attempted to hegemonise the Turkish politics, there is not enough empirical evidence to point to the split of *the social (logic of equivalence)* or to the expansion of the limits of *the political* to the margins of the society (*logic of difference*). Secondly, *the Other* in ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ is not a singular and a well-defined designation, whereas for a hegemonic struggle to turn into hegemony, the ‘Other’ and the antagonism have to be very-well defined (Herschinger, 2008:7). For instance, in case of the Mexican politics, Buenfil argues how the Mexican armed movement, teachers, worker and peasant leaders were articulated under the discourse of ‘the *oppressed*’ against a common threat, i.e. ‘the government’ (Buenfil, 2000). On the other hand, in her analysis of the logic of the Apartheid regime, Norval shows how the signifier of ‘race’ is used as a social division between Afrikaans and English-speakers (Norval, 1996: 101-173). Similarly, within the framework of Thatcher’s New Right policies, the British society was split into two well-defined poles, ‘one of which -unions, the unemployed, the disabled, pensioners and so on- is deprived of the benefits of the Keynesian welfare state and subjected to wage cuts, political repression and so forth’ (Tünay, 1993:16). In all these cases, the antagonism and *the Other* of the discourse is very-well defined (i.e. the government, Afrikaans, the middle class). However, as I showed in Chapter 6, and I will elaborate on in the forthcoming section, *the Others* designated by different discourses on ‘Europe’ are various. Even in the case of *the logic of equivalence* where the antagonistic frontier is sharp, *the Other*, ‘Europe’ designates different features (*the Other* in  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  points to different features than *the Other* in  $D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$  would have).



It is important to remember one of the main claims of the thesis here: whether a discourse is pro-European or not does not play role in the demarcation of political frontiers as 'Europe-as-hegemony' is bipolar entailing both ends of the political spectrum. Because, as Wæver argues, the "dominant" political line and the opposition usually share a lot (except the question on the agenda). Political opponents relate to each other, and therefore almost always deal with some of the same issues and use related concepts and images while struggling to reformulate and conquer other key terms' (Wæver, 2005: 36). Therefore, the question is a part of the agreement between opponents and it is rather the answers that differ. However, the limits of objectivity and the terms according to which it is asked are the same so that particular constructions of the world are reified rather than contested. Ümit Fırat says, 'you cannot have PKK in an EU-member country. There will be no *raison d'être* of PKK where basic rights and liberties are under the guarantee of law' (Fırat, 10 April 2006) whereas Tuncer Kılınç says, 'PKK has been functionalised by the EU. The EU is responsible for the death of 33000 people. The EU has supported the terrorist organizations in Turkey overtly or covertly. The EU is scared that Turkey will rejuvenate again and will be the next Ottoman Empire' (Kılınç, 26 April 2003). However, they both fix those differences as moments of the same stable articulatory structure. In this regard, I argue that the attempt of the discourses on 'Europe' to create antagonisms and chains of equivalence and difference emerge through the operation of 'bipolar hegemony'. It is this bipolar hegemony of 'Europe' and its claim for a stable, natural and uncontested structure rather than actors or political camps that affect the flow of politics.

In this project, the analysis of the newspapers and parliamentary debates showed that in terms of the operation of logics of equivalence and difference, 'Europe-as-hegemony' materialised

either in a very apolitical and technocratic way where ‘Europe’ has been presented as ‘everybody’s project’ whereas everybody would retain their different identities (‘logic of difference’) or by equalising all political identities, polarising the society and demonising *the Other* (logic of equivalence). Through the operation of logic of difference, ‘Europe’ sometimes emerged as an apolitical, natural ‘Eden’ neutralising all political differences and emerging ‘as everybody’s project’ or a malady that could be beaten by a non-political involvement of ‘people’. In both cases, the internal differences between people were neutralised under the rubric of ‘Europe’ or being ‘against Europe’. Another remarkable finding here is that the technocratism stipulated by the logic of difference was accompanied by despise of the elite and technocratism in the Turkish context. Alternatively, ‘Europe’ was presented as an ‘either-or’ situation and ‘meaning was condensed around two poles’ (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:11). It either emerged within the impossibility of thinking another alternative as a political choice but ‘Europe’ or in the form of articulation of ‘Europe’ as a front that is seeking for an opportunity to invade the Republic of Turkey, dichotomising the social space and meaning: you are either with us or a traitor.

All in all, the main argument of this chapter will be that discourses on ‘Europe’ has been unable to create antagonisms and delineate political frontiers as from 2005 to 2006, leading ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ to cease. I will argue that the wane of the hegemony of ‘Europe’ within the Turkish context did not necessarily mean that discourses on ‘Europe’ disappeared all together from the political landscape. Rather, elements previously articulated by the discourses on ‘Europe’ started to materialise in different contexts and articulations. For example, while the notion of ‘sub-identity’ was previously explained with reference to

‘Europe’, starting from 2005 it started being contextualised within a nationalism-liberalism debate. Similarly, while the notion of ‘minority’ was a keyword for the discourse which set ‘Europe’ as a keyword for multiple identities and minorities, it emerged as a part of secularism-Islamism debate in the second half of the 2000s, as this chapter will show. Therefore, antagonisms created by ‘Europe’ have been substituted by different antagonisms—namely the antagonisms of nationalism vs. liberalism and secularism vs. Islamism in hegemonising the ‘social’, where ‘substitution’ means the emergence of the elements of discourse within different antagonisms. Along the same lines, ‘Turkishness’ which was the keyword of the article 301 debates and a significant element in the discourse which articulated ‘Europe’ as a threat to Turkishness, has emerged as a connotation used within the debates of nationalism that flourished after the rising ultra-nationalist violence incidents and Hrant Dink’s assassination.

Certainly, I do not claim that these ‘new’ antagonisms are completely novel to Turkish politics. All four of the concepts and both dichotomies have predominantly influenced the Turkish politics and they are already sedimented within the ‘social’. Moreover, I vulgarise the dichotomies calling them ‘secularism vs. Islamism’ and ‘nationalism vs. liberalism’ in the sense that these designations are actually coined by the proponents of the other end of the dichotomy. For instance, when the events that I will be referring to below unfolded, ‘nationalism’ was almost an allegation posed by the so-called ‘liberals’ whereas Islamism was the biggest threat for those who were ‘secular’.

Therefore, rather than making an unproblematised association between particular political camps and ‘pro-’/‘anti-’ Europe positions, I will argue that in the first period from 1999 to 2005, the discourses on ‘Europe’ were able to demarcate the political frontiers hegemonising *the social* via *the logic of difference* and *the logic of equivalence* whereas starting from 2005 and 2006 what we see is that the discourses on ‘Europe’ are less and less significant to draw the political frontiers.

## **2. TEMPORALISING POST-1999 DOMINANT TURKISH DISCOURSES ON ‘EUROPE’: RUPTURES AND CONTINUITIES**

### **2.1. Background discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish politics**

As mentioned above, the concept of ‘Europe’ has always been significant, although to different degrees at different times, within Turkish politics, especially after the 1960s, when the EU integration project has increasingly marked the political landscape in Turkey. At a very broad level, in Turkish politics, ‘Europe’ has usually been denoted at three levels: as a foreign policy discourse focusing on foreign policy, a civilizational discourse focusing on the birthright of Turkey to be a part of ‘Europe’ and a more policy-based discourse focusing on free market and individual rights and liberties guaranteed by the EU *acquis communautaire*. The latter aspect until the 1990s has usually had an economic connotation and has been opposed both by the Left and Right during the 1960s and 1970s. The Left’s motto, ‘they are the partner, we are their market’<sup>57</sup>, pointed to the economic asymmetry between Turkey and the then European Economic Community (EEC). The Far Right’s objection to Europe was both on civilizational and economic grounds; the rising pro-Islamic party of the time,

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<sup>57</sup> In Turkish, the words ‘partner’ and ‘common’ are synonymous. Therefore, with this slogan, the detrimental and colonizing effects of the Common Market for Turkey and Turkish economic independence are emphasized.

MSP (Milli Selamet Partisi-National Salvation Party) characterized the EC as a ‘Christian Club’ (Güneş-Ayata, 2003: 216). ‘Economically, the EU was claimed would weaken the indigenous industries and make Turkey pray to Western imperialism’ (Güneş-Ayata, 2003: 216). The 1980s has witnessed a similar economic discourse on ‘Europe’, also in line with the content of the then EEC and the policy priorities of the then prime minister Özal, advocating market liberalisation and neo-liberalism (for a more detailed discussion on Özal’s policies and their articulation within the discourses on ‘Europe’ in 1980s and today, see Chapter 6). This highly economic connotation attached to the European project has been reinforced by the Customs Union Agreement on 31 December 1995, pursuant to the 1963 EU-Turkey Association Agreement, which aims at promoting trade and economic relations and minimising trade barriers and tariffs. Tansu Ciller, the then prime minister designated the Customs Union as the ‘kick-off of the Europeanisation struggle’ (Ciller, 11 March 1995). On the other hand, recent developments in EU-Turkish relations in the late 1990s and prioritisation of democracy for entry into the EU made ‘Europe’ synonymous with ‘democracy’ and ‘democratic consolidation’ especially in the aftermath of Helsinki European Council (Aydın and Keyman, 2004).

## **2.2. Contextualising the discourses: politics as usual**

This section aims to put the outlined discourses in their proper historical context. This exercise does not have the aim of sustaining a causal relationship between political developments and discourses, which would clash with the general theoretical spirit of the

project at hand. Rather, the aim here is to show what role ‘Europe’ played within the debates during the focused period and what antagonisms it created within the flow of events.

After the Helsinki European Council of December 1999 where Turkey became an EU candidate (which signalled, in the then Prime Minister Ecevit’s words, that, ‘Europe cannot exist without Turkey and Turkey cannot exist without Europe’ (*Cumhuriyet*, 12 December 1999), ‘Europe’ was a significant notion in creating antagonisms and political frontiers. The first noticeable antagonisation came with the Accession Partnership, which put forward the need for a dialogue with the UN in terms of the settlement of the Cyprus problem as a short-term priority created a great shock and resentment within the Turkish debates.

At a general level, the Accession Partnership was greeted by the ‘pro-harmonisation front’ (Tarhanlı, 9 November 2000). The general parlance used was the need on the part of Turkey to ‘do her homework’ and work hard to be a full member by the end of 2004 (e.g. Berkan, 9 November 2000; Aktar, 13 November 2000). Although there were numerous references to the amelioration of minority rights in the earlier versions of the document, which were deemed as problematic by the Turkish side, ‘the Turkish side was able to change the unnecessary use of concept of “minority”’, with Ismail Cem’s words, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the DSP-ANAP-MHP coalition government between 1999-2002, who is known for his mild and consensual stance vis-à-vis ‘Europe’ (quoted in *Radikal*, 5 March 2002). According to him,

[I]n the first drafts of Accession Partnership, there was an idea of creating minorities and constructing new categories as ‘minority rights’. We fought hard against this. We said, ‘do not export European diseases to Turkey, and do not look at Turkey through the lens you look at Europe. Because they do not exist here. We are not contaminated’. We could explain that. Thus, none of those ridiculous issues were in the Accession Partnership (quoted in *Radikal*, 5 March 2002).

On the other hand, in the aftermath of the publication of the document, the then Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit sent a letter to the leaders of the EU members pointing to the impossibility to set the Cyprus issue as an additional political criterion (Ecevit, 8 November 2000). He stated that the EU authorities made it clear at the Helsinki Summit that a new criterion has not been added to the Copenhagen Criteria and 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> paragraphs of the Document about Cyprus issue ‘have got nothing to do with the accession criteria, but are related to the political dialogue’ (Ecevit, 8 November 2000). Similarly, at a speech he made before External Economic Relations Board General Assembly, President Ahmet Necdet Sezer argued that, European Parliament’s decision<sup>58</sup>, which mentions the allegations on Armenians and Kurdish question and demand the retreat of Turkish soldiers from Cyprus, is ‘unacceptable and ridiculous’ (Sezer, 15 November 2000). Within the same speech, he offered some alternative ‘strategic’ options other than Europe that Turkey needs to pay attention to, such as Middle East, Gulf Region, the African Continent, Latin America and Russian Federation (Sezer, 15 November 2000). ‘Europe’ which has been depicted as a sine-qua-non

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<sup>58</sup> European Parliament decision mentioned here is the ‘Report on the 1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s progress towards accession’ dated 19 October 2000. Within the report, European Parliament calls on the Turkish Government ‘to withdraw its occupation forces from northern Cyprus’ and ‘to give fresh support to the Armenian minority, as an important part of Turkish society, because of the tragedy that befell them before the establishment of the modern state of Turkey’ (the European Parliament, 19 October 2000: 8-9)

for Turkey at Helsinki was now one of the strategic options among many, which lost its charm due to demands on the Kurdish and Cyprus issues.

The sides of the Cyprus debate became even clearer in the course of time. On 13 December 2001, a group of intellectuals including prominent names from the Left such as Kurthan Fişek and Mümtaz Soysal issued a declaration in *Cumhuriyet*, stating that they were ‘uncomfortable with the fact that a very narrow yet powerful circle in Turkey initiate attempts on Cyprus issue which are not in line with the Turkish national interests. What the EU and Greece demand will result in nothing but the annexation of the island by Greece. We hereby declare that we condemn the internal circles which help illegal and inhumane attempts imposed on Cyprus issue’ (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 13 December 2001). MHP, the junior partner of the 1999-2002 coalition, was also critical of the conditions set out to resolve the Cyprus issue.

With Devlet Bahçeli’s words:

Cyprus, besides being a national issue for Turkey is a burning issue in terms of the relations with the EU. Greek Cyprus [Administration] is favoured within the EU’s reports. The distortion and arbitrariness of some circles’ approach to the Cyprus issue are reinforcing this kind of one-sided expectations and demands. We wish that the sovereignty and security of both communities be linked to concrete guarantees. The EU should have an attitude favouring a just and permanent solution (quoted in *Radikal*, 23 January 2002).

This first rapprochement between the Left and MHP, according to Firat, signalled a later collaboration in terms of ‘Europe’ in general and Cyprus issue in particular (Firat, 2004: 64).

The aforementioned grievance also constituted an early reference to  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  as ‘Europe’ has been articulated with respect to Turkey’s sovereignty rights on Cyprus.



However, Cyprus was not the only point of contention between the parties to the European debate. The Copenhagen Criteria's emphasis on the need to abolish capital punishment, to amend infamous Article 312 and to allow education and broadcasting in mother language was heavily opposed mainly by MHP, the junior partner of the 1999-2002 coalition, as Öcalan's execution was among the priorities of the party during its election campaign before the 1999 elections. Especially in the aftermath of the 2001 Progress Report where the EU posed numerous criticisms in terms of human rights, capital punishment and Cyprus, the exigencies of Copenhagen Criteria were increasingly criticised by MHP on the grounds that the EU is indirect, dishonest and insincere to Turkey' (quoted in *Radikal*, 15 November 2001). In this context, Bülent Yahnici, the then MHP vice-Chair, declared that the problems that Turkey has with the EU is not only Cyprus, but the issues of capital punishment, the human rights and freedom of thought and the education of minorities and the overall change of Article 312 of Turkish Penal Code which pressed charge against those who 'provoke people to hatred and hostility by inciting religious and ethnical differences'(for a more detailed discussion on Article 312 of Turkish Penal Code, see Chapter 5):

We are members of a parliament which made the amendments for Turkey to enjoy more human rights. In Turkey, everybody is able to speak his/her own language. But for the EU this is not enough. It wants the right to education and broadcasting. Turkey, at this point, cannot give those rights (...) They say, 'you need to abolish Article 312, and join the EU'. We will abolish 312, and the streets will be full of people who agitate class, racial and religious differences. People would walk as they want, they would wear green cubbe, they would say, 'we want Sharia', right? (quoted in *Radikal*, 26 November 2001).

During this period, Devlet Bahçeli, MHP leader, made numerous remarks on the necessity of the capital punishment:

Many EU officials do not find it sufficient that the capital punishment had already been abolished [in Turkey] except for wartime and terror crimes. Those who insistently want capital punishment to be outside the scope of terror crimes have to give an explanation why the terrorist organisations posing a threat to Turkish people's right to exist are not taken within the scope of struggle against terror (quoted in *Radikal*, 23 January 2002).

Especially in the aftermath of National Security Council meeting of 29 May 2002 where army showed its determination to make the necessary arrangements to fulfil Copenhagen Criteria, focusing predominantly on Cyprus issue and not thoroughly referring to the issues of death penalty and education in mother tongue, MHP was almost the only opponent of the abolishment of death penalty (quoted in *Radikal*, 31 May 2002).

The hesitance about the abolishment of the death penalty on the part of the Army mainly stemmed from the fact that, 'army is a biased party to this discussion', as mentioned various times by Hüseyin Kıvrıkoğlu, who was the Chief of General Staff between 1998 and 2002. Within this context, 'Europe' was always conceptualized as a natural extension of Atatürk's goal to modernization and Turkey's strategic necessity, albeit within the framework of the latter's unitary and secular structure. A good summary of this position was provided by the then Deputy Chief of Staff Yaşar Büyükanıt: 'Becoming a member of the EU is a requirement for the realization of Atatürk's goal of modernization. However, it is Turkey's most natural right to enact necessary measures to protect her unitary and secular structure while pursuing

this goal' (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 10 October 2000). During the pursuit of this goal, especially in terms of Turkey's struggle with terrorism, the ignorance of Turkey's real problems by Europe was another widely used reference by different military figures (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 8 March 2002, 29 May 2002). Moreover, there was a near consensus within the army that harmonization reforms would considerably weaken Turkey's hand in its struggle against the 'lingering' twin threats of political Islam and Kurdish separatism (Heper, 2005-for a detailed discussion of conception of these 'threats' within the Turkish context see Chapter 4).

A real earthquake within the public opinion came in March 2002 with the statement by General Tuncer Kilinç, who was the then Secretary General of National Security Council, that as Europe does not help Turkey in solving her problems, the latter should be involved in new arrangements entailing Russia and Iran, 'without excluding the US' (quoted in *Radikal*, 8 March 2002). These concerns have also embodied later in the suggestions on sustaining a 'privileged partnership' rather than a full membership with the EU, which has usually been pronounced by the Christian Democrats in the EU regarding Turkish accession, which will not limit Turkey's prospective geo-political alliances within the regions of Middle East, Middle Asia and Caspian basin and which does not necessitate linking to the EU structures, concessions and the delegation of authority (e.g. Eslen, 18 May 2005; Bir, quoted in *Radikal*, 26 March 2002).

On the other hand, although the candidacy status granted at the Helsinki Council did not provide any rights of membership, the decision has provided considerable impetus for the

civil society especially in terms of the reforms necessitated by the EU accession process. Important segments within the Turkish state bureaucracy, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the secretariat for EU affairs and the State Planning Organization, have adopted liberal approaches to EU-related reforms (Keyman and Öniş, 2003: 15-17). Non-governmental organizations in particular have served as an important source for pressure for reforms. The Turkish Chambers Stock Exchange Union (Türkiye Odalar Borsalar Birliği-TOBB), The Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (Türkiye Sanayici İşadamları Derneği- TÜSİAD), the Economic Development Foundation (İktisadi Kalkıma Vakfı-İKV) and the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (Türkiye Ekonomik Sosyal Etüdleri Vakfı-TESEV) are some of the active organizations in this regard. For instance, before the Copenhagen Summit of December of December 2002, İKV headed a broad-based movement of 175 civil society organizations called 'Movement for Europe 2002' to provide collective support for Turkey's EU accession and reforms. The digital clock located opposite the Turkish parliament counted the days, hours and minutes revealing the time left to undertake reforms before the summit, pointing out to the urgency of the reforms and little time left for it (Eylemer and Taş, 2007: 564).

The following text of the signature campaign for Europe by Movement for Europe 2002, circulated on 9 May 2002 (European Day) explains how very well mainstream civil society looked at 'Europe'. Movement for Europe 2002 is an ad-hoc movement established in January 2002 to pressurise the government to ratify the legal changes necessary to 'get a date' from

the EU for negotiations at Copenhagen European Council, 12-13 December 2002<sup>59</sup>. Among the founding fathers were prominent scholars such as Cengiz Aktar, Cengiz Çandar, Mehmet Altan and Erol Katırcıoğlu, who managed to collect approximately 1000 signatures for the acceleration of reform process from prominent figures from different sectors of the Turkish elite before the issue of the below declaration (for further details on European Movement see Aktar, 2002).

If Turkey is looking for freedom instead of pressure, for affluence instead of poverty, and for trust instead of fear, its road passes through the EU. Europe is the direction Turkey has moved towards for centuries. 'Europe' is the 'contemporary civilisation'- it is the investment; it is the employment. It is the profit. It is the interdependence. It is the science and technology. It is social security. The EU is not the minimisation of Turkey but the latter's enlargement as to include Europe. It is Turkish citizens' ownership of equal opportunities with Europeans in terms of education, work, health and retirement. However, unfortunately, Turkey's EU membership seems to have been left to the mercy of anti-membership forces. The years are passing and the constitutional and legal amendments necessary for full membership are being implemented reluctantly with much dragging of feet (...) We are calling you, irrespective of your political stance, that Turkish people's future lies with the EU. Let's come together and claim this process. Let's create the movement for Europe, for you, for your children, for all of us together. Turkey's place is in the EU. Yes. I agree!!! (*Movement for Europe 2002, 2002*).

This euphoria within the civil society was accelerated with the AKP coming to power on 3 November 2002 as it has anchored its political future to the goal of EU accession, especially in the specified period. Winning 34.4 per cent of votes and 365 seats in the parliament provided the AKP an opportunity to form a majority government for the first time in Turkish

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<sup>59</sup> The 'Copenhagen' mentioned here denotes the Copenhagen European Council, 12-13 December 2002. This European Council set a milestone in terms of the Turkish domestic political debates on 'Europe' as at this summit, the Council would give an exact date to Turkey for the start of membership negotiations. At the end of the summit, the presidency conclusions stated: 'If the European Council in December 2004, on the basis of a report and a recommendation from the Commission, decides that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria, the European Union will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay' (the EU Presidency, 12-13 December 2002). This decision was evaluated as 'a date for a date' by the Turkish public opinion (see *Radikal*, 13 December 2002).

political history since the 1987 parliamentary elections (Keyman and Öniş, 2003). The Republican's People Party (CHP-Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi), with 19.4 of votes and 177 seats, became the only opposition party in the Turkish Grand National Assembly while all parties in the previous three-party coalition failed to pass the ten per cent national threshold (Higher Election Board Official Website, 2002). Right after the elections, AKP leader Tayyip Erdoğan made it clear that the AKP's substantial goals were to realise and smoothen the EU accession period and to apply an intense economic programme:

Our first priority is to watch the EU accession period closely (...) We will leave Copenhagen with the best result possible (...) We are a party which is determined to accelerate the EU integration process and to execute an economic programme which would strengthen integration with the rest of the world (*Radikal*, 4 November 2002).

This initial determination has also been materialized by the intense round of visits paid to the European capitals right after the elections. He visited Rome (13 November), Athens (18 November) and Madrid (19 November) respectively (*Radikal*, 9 November 2002). During Erdoğan's visit to Rome, which was his stop after the elections, he was escorted by an army of civil society associations including TOBB, TÜSİAD, İKV, TESEV, TÜRK-İŞ (Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu- The Confederation of Turkish Workers Trade Unions), TESK (Türkiye Esnaf ve Sanatkarları Konfederasyonu- Confederation of Tradesmen and Artisans of Turkey), TİSK (Türkiye İşveren Sendikaları Konfederasyonu-Confederation of Employer Unions of Turkey), HAK-İŞ (Hak İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu- Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions), TÜRSAB (Türkiye Seyahat Acentaları Birliği-Turkish Travel Agencies Association), DEİK (Dış Ekonomik İşler Kurulu-External Economic Affairs Board),

UND (Uluslararası Nakliyeciler Derneği- International Hauliers Association), TİM (Türkiye İhracatçılar Meclisi- Turkish Exporters Assembly) (*Radikal*, 14 November 2002).

Those associations continued to scrutinise the acts of the government and the parliament during the ratification of the Harmonisation Packages. The members of TOBB, İKV, UND, TÜSİAD, Hak-İş ve TÜRİSAB warned the government in an advertisement at the newspapers ‘not to act politically and delay’ the adoption of the Sixth Harmonisation Package, aiming at the normalisation of the DGMs, the right to give a Kurdish name to the new-borns, the right to broadcast in mother language and the abolition of the Article 8 of the Fight with Terrorism (*Radikal*, 10 June 2003).

The pro-EU stance of the AKP was carried to the government as well after Abdullah Gül has been assigned Prime Minister and given the responsibility to establish the Cabinet by the president Ahmet Necdet Sezer on 18 November 2002 as Erdoğan was banned from politics by that time<sup>60</sup>:

The most important time frame is the EU. We should look at the membership from a wider perspective. Turkey will strengthen the EU and will set an example to the Islamic world. We should get aligned with Maastricht and Copenhagen (Gül, 17 November 2002)

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<sup>60</sup> He had been convicted in accordance with Turkish Penal Code’s Article 312 (“to provoke people to hatred and hostility by inciting religious and ethnical differences”) by the State Security Court of Diyarbakir due to a poem he had recited at a rally in Siirt on 12 December 1997, likening mosques to ‘barracks’, minarets to ‘bayonets’, and believers to ‘soldiers’. He was able to be elected as a member of the Parliament from Siirt at the 2 February 2003 by-elections as the ban he had been convicted to had been abolished by the necessary legal arrangements beforehand by the Parliament.

However, after the AKP came to power, the army's sensitivity in terms of Europe has been articulated with reference to the fear that Turkey now had a religiously oriented government whose ulterior motives were, in their view, in doubt. They thus entertained the idea that the AKP government was enthusiastic about liberalizing reforms so that they would have a freer hand to promote political Islam in Turkey with the army rendered less powerful (Heper, 2005). The changes made in Anti-Terrorism Law would no longer have a deterrence effect on the perpetrators of those crimes; TV broadcasting in Kurdish would incite ethnic separatism; the admitting to Turkey of observers during elections would mean granting capitulations to foreigners (quoted in Heper, 2005: 38). Hilmi Özkök, who was the Chief of Staff between 2002 and 2006, said at a speech he made in August 2005 that, 'despite the limitations on the authority of Turkish Armed Forces, the struggle against PKK will continue' (*Zaman*, 6 August 2005). The 'limited authority' mainly meant the restructuration and civilisation of National Security Council General Secretariat within the framework of Seventh Harmonization Package in August 2003 (*Radikal*, 18 November 2004). Therefore, in line with the changes stipulated during the reform process, the Turkish Army would lose its power and strength, which has been linked by Erol Manisalı to the loss of sovereignty at various instances:

Like it or not, the EU is a Christian club. The EU is for our benefit; however, if it is going to take over the domestic markets, terminate the national industry, govern bureaucracy from Brussels, declare conditions on Cyprus, European Army, PKK and Armenians which are completely unacceptable to Turkey and say, 'you cannot join otherwise', I will continue claiming, 'it is trying to disintegrate me, it is declaring all the conditions not to take me in' (...) As long as this continues, even the Turkish Armed Forces will not be able to move their finger after 15 years (quoted in *Radikal*, 8 March 2002).



These concerns about the loss of sovereignty in terms of Cyprus, minimization of the army's power and the detrimental effects of the harmonization packages on Turkey's sensitivities culminated in what has been referred to as, 'Red Apple Coalition'. The so-called, 'Red Apple Coalition' starting from the early stages of the EU accession clearly constituted a Eurosceptic haven for those who evaluated 'Europe' as a threat and has been widely used within the debates starting from 2003. 'Red Apple' is a frequently used concept in Turkish politics, denoting the global leadership by Oğuz Turks, one of the tribes deemed as the racial ancestors of the Turks.

It is an imaginary goal that sometimes denotes a location at the west side of the Turks, sometimes represented as a golden red ball shining over the throne or a shrine. The first red apple of the Turks was Peking. The first red apple of the Ottomans was to sustain the Turkish unity in Anatolia by ending the era of beyliks. One of the most significant 'Red Apples' afterwards has been Istanbul. After the conquest of Istanbul, it has been carried to Rome, to the dome of St. Pietro. After 1960, it has been developed by Alparslan Türkeş<sup>61</sup> (*Radikal*, 3 August 2003).

As it is clearly seen, the concept of 'Red Apple' has frequently been used by the extreme right in Turkish politics in order to denote the goals and ideals of Turks and Turkish nationalism. However, during this period, it has been the name of the civil society movement which brought together some certain left groups and nationalists; a trend which has first emerged in the aforementioned declaration on Cyprus. Sparked by a meeting on 23 February 2003 to show support to Denktaş in his hard-liner stance in terms of Cyprus issue, 'members of BBP (Büyük Birlik Partisi-Grand Unity Party), a political party usually known for its extreme

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<sup>61</sup> The then leader of MHP

nationalist and religious tone, MHP and DSP said no to imperialism together' (*Radikal*, 3 August 2003). 'This big political leap is interesting to show how superficial the differences are between those who claim to have different positions. Unbearable discovery of 'big politics' has brought together those who stood at different points in small politics at a common denominator' (*Radikal*, 3 August 2003). Therefore, the Red Apple this time designated a societal alliance able to overcome the traps and dangers posed by 'Europe'. One of the prominent figures of the Red Apple coalition, Yekta Güngör Özden, founding father and the then leader of Republican Democracy Party and former chair of Constitutional Court, declared that Europe's appeal to Kurdish nationalists and fundamental Islamists is unacceptable for the Turkish Republic:

No sane man could claim that the US is a true friend with its increasing provocation of Europe by appealing to the so-called Kurdish nationalists who want separate our country and to the fundamental Islamists aiming to drag the country to darkness by realising sheria (quoted in *Radikal*, 3 August 2003).

Another widely used concept within the context of this coalition was Kuva-yi Milliye. Kuva-yi Milliye is the large societal alliance in Anatolia in the 1920s, usually used to denote the popular support behind Mustafa Kemal during the War of Independence. Red Apple coalition advocated that a similar societal alliance is needed in order to overcome the threat posed by the EU and the United States alike. Erkin Yurdakul, the editor of the journal, 'Turkish Left', pointed to the need for such a societal alliance:

We experience serious developments in terms of the disintegration of Turkey. The EU's Harmonisation Package and the USA have significant plans about this (...) We think that everybody should take a role within this struggle in the direction of

national struggle. This is a call for Kuva-yi Milliye, not a call for a particular political party (quoted in *Radikal*, 3 August 2003).

As mentioned before, after AKP's coming to power, it has been predominantly referred to as 'the collaborator of Europe'. This designation affected the Red Apple coalition as well, which justified the urge to establish a societal alliance because of the distrust felt against the political parties, especially to AKP in power. Bedri Baykam, one of the most active members of the ÇYDD (Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği-Association for the Support of Contemporary Life) and ADD (Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği-Atatürkist Thought Association) pointed to this association between the emergence of 'Europe' as a threat since Sevres and Lausanne and AKP which is the stalking horse of the West:

Those who take our country under blockade externally are collaborating with the AKP. The West which cannot digest Lausanne for some 80 years is now attempting to realise Sevres by the help of insidious policies and collateral traps (quoted in *Radikal*, 3 August 2003).

Another historical juncture during this period was the proclamation of Kurds and Alevis as minorities in the Progress Report by the European Commission. Along those lines, on 9 December 2004, an advertisement with the title, 'What do the Kurds want in Turkey?' has been published at International Herald Tribune, signed by ex-DEP MPs and Kurdish intellectuals. Referring to 2004 Progress Report by the European Commission, the declaration also made a reference to the Cyprus issue and deemed the necessity of joining the EU, urging for a new democratic constitution, a general amnesty which would have a direct impact on PKK militants and the implementation of a vast economic development programme within the Kurdish region under the auspices of the European support (Abbasoğlu et.al, 2004):

Having been victims of great injustice throughout the 20th century, the Kurds now pin their hopes for a better future on the process Turkey must undergo to become a member of the European Union, which they perceive as being, above all, a multicultural area of peace, democracy and pluralism. To join this family of democracies, Turkey itself must become a true democracy, with respect for its own cultural diversity and political pluralism. In particular, it must guarantee its Kurdish citizens the same rights that the Basques, Catalans, Scots, Lapps, South Tyroleans and Walloons enjoy in the democratic countries of Europe - and which it is itself demanding for the Turkish minority in Cyprus (Abbasoglu et.al, 9 December 2004).

On the part of the state elites, another important milestone during this period has been Erdoğan's first visit to Diyarbakır after inauguration on 12 August 2005. This visit was quite crucial as Erdoğan mentioned the existence of a 'Kurdish issue', whereas the Turkish official stance has always explained the PKK problem as the 'South-Eastern issue', linking it with the region's underdevelopment, or a 'terrorism problem'. Deniz Baykal warned Erdoğan on the ground that he is 'flirting with terrorism', stating, 'separating people according to their ethnical identities will lead to disintegration' (quoted in *Radikal*, 13 August 2005). Along the same lines, Erdoğan's speech in Hakkari on 23 November 2005 stating that Turkey should respect all sub-identities, but everyone has an upper identity, a situation which shouldn't disturb anyone and offering the use of a rather legal term, *Türkiyelilik*, ('of-Turkey-ness'), rather than the mostly used term, *Türklük*, ('Turkishness') was also an important development in this respect (Erdoğan, 23 November 2005a). This was again fiercely opposed by CHP leader Deniz Baykal on the grounds that Turkishness was not an ethnic identity and cannot be reduced to a sub-identity as 'it entails Kurds, Albanians, Georgians etc. as well' (quoted in *Radikal*, 23 November 2005b). Sinan Aygün, chair of Ankara Commerce Chamber, was also amongst the opponents of the designation, arguing, 'there is only one identity, which is the

identity of Turkishness (...) Republic, democracy, secularism, flag and Atatürk should be the common denominator of everyone' (quoted in *Zaman*, 4 November 2006).

The start of negotiations on 3 October 2005 provided a further dimension to the debates on 'Europe'. Mainstream civil society, which acted as a watch dog over the governments for the ratification of the harmonisation packages, was probably the most enthusiastic part of the society, which is reflected well in the words of Fuat Keyman, a Turkish academician working on civil society:

An introverted Turkey is an unstable one. Other states do not want an unstable Turkey. It is impossible for Turkey to be introvert. Therefore, on 3 October, Turkey will start negotiations with the EU. Every step Turkey takes with respect to the EU relations will render Turkey more stable within a span of 10 years, the end result be a full membership or privileged partnership. In a more stable Turkey, people will expect more from politics. They will all political parties to action to find a solution to their problems regarding agriculture, energy, environment, woman rights etc. (Keyman, 8 August 2005).

Similarly, economist Korkmaz İlkorur argued that the negotiations will create a strong civil society and a civic platform in Turkey where the civil society is not historically very strong:

The so-called 'negotiations' are nothing but a process through which the regulations covering civil society are re-made in a manner that suits the spirit of the civil society undertaken in the name of harmonisation. This process, firstly, necessitates a civic platform. During the negotiation process, the hardest job will be to form this platform of civil society in a society which [historically] does not have this tradition (İlkorur, 11 October 2005).

On the other hand, the start of negotiations was harshly criticized by Devlet Bahçeli. He called Turkey to 'overrule the negotiations' (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 3 October 2005). Critique

of AKP was also a substantial part of this stance as, ‘the streets have been surrendered to criminals; our roads have been given to terrorists; our squares have been granted to separatists; our capital has been granted to compradors and our future has been donated to foreigners by AKP’ (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 3 October 2005). On the day of the start of negotiations, the Turkish Communist Party organised a meeting in Istanbul named, ‘Rally for Societal Campaign against Imperialism’. Kemal Okuyan, Secretary General of the party, argued that the EU, under the guise of reforms was leading Turkey to destruction, ‘which is compromised by the state officials who do not care about the country whatsoever’ (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 3 October 2005).

The launch of negotiations also meant the outmost materialization of the ‘double-standards’ posed by Europe for some. Hüseyin Kıvrıkoğlu, the then Chief of General Staff, points to this ambivalent position of the army and the double standards imposed on Turkey, which had never been the case with other accession countries in an interview with Fikret Bila on 31 December 2005:

Turkish Armed Forces has never been against Turkey’s goal of full EU membership. However, what we kept on saying, what really mattered during this process was Turkey’s integrity with its state and peoples (...) The EU should have been sincere in this respect. The EU should not have double standards. The EU puts conditions before Turkey that it never did to the other countries (...) The double standards of the EU has created an impression as if it tried to direct Turkey to a position between Sevres and Lausanne. Today, Turkish Armed Forces and all the security forces are kind of impotent. They cannot intervene. But, the EU can. Even to the judiciary. It becomes a party in the trials, such as in case of Orhan Pamuk (...) There should not be an image of Turkey that fulfils anything demanded. Because there will not be an end to the demands. The more you take steps, the more demands come. All of this means the disintegration of Turkey (quoted in Dağı, 14 January 2006).

Moreover, negotiations, coupled with the then European debates on devising an EU constitution, meant one step forward towards the delegation of sovereignty to the EU level. Emin Şirin, an independent MEP, was one of the significant figures drawing attention to this point. He has become a member of the Parliament after 3 November 2002 elections from AKP. In 2003, he was the first MEP resigning from AKP after it came to power and afterwards joined Liberal Democratic Party, Young Party and Motherland Party respectively:

The EU and the US want to control and use their influences on not only the lands of Turkey, but also on the Turkish society, the resources of the Anatolian lands and the Turkish army. The government today is too passive (...) The foreign trusts like Konrad Adenauer [Foundation] remove the cornerstones and change the wind in Turkey (...) For instance, Soros wants the EU constitution to be accepted in Turkey immediately (...) The army will not be able to continue with its current structure and it will be an army of fortune. Every kind of religious symbol will be visible everywhere including in the formal ceremonies (...) As that constitution is ratified by two-thirds of the member states, you are delegating your full sovereignty for any issue to the Brussels bureaucracy. Is it that they can make Turkey do anything that they could not get done since Tanzimat in this period that Turkey is so euphoric about? (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 9 January 2005).

Debates on Article 301 stamped 2005 and 2006 during the charges pressed against well-known novelists and journalists such as Orhan Pamuk, Hrant Dink, Perihan Mağden, Elif Şafak , Baskin Oran, Ibrahim Kaboğlu Murat Belge, Ismet Berkan, Haluk Şahin, Erol Katırcıoğlu, Hasan Cemal and even Joost Lagendijk, chairman of the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee. As mentioned before, the cases, which were brought by a group of lawyers named *Büyük Hukukçular Birliği* (Great Union of Jurists), led by Kemal Kerişsiz attracted outmost attention of both domestic and international public opinion and

predominantly determined the debates in Turkey. During the Orhan Pamuk case which started on 16 December 2005. The first hearing of the trial was suspended due to the furore and turmoil inside and outside of the courtroom, where ‘domestic and European supporters of Pamuk has been subject to violence by the protesters’ (*Radikal*, 17 December 2005). After the trial, a group of 169 intellectuals including Yaşar Kemal, Çetin Altan, Etyen Mahçupyan, Adalet Ağaoglu and Alaaddin Dinçer issued a communiqué suggesting the annulment of the Article 301 as soon as possible and deemed that, ‘what has been experienced during the Pamuk trial as a fatal intervention to the democratisation process’ (*Radikal*, 27 December 2005). On the other hand, not everyone saw this case as a litmus test for Turkish democracy. Acute interest shown in the case by European officials has been referred to also as an ‘intervention to judiciary’. Mehmet Şandır, the then Deputy Chair of MHP, argued that, ‘The Turkish judiciary has been rendered fragile against the EU aggression; this is a disgrace, the responsibility for which rests with the AKP’ (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 17 December 2005). Yaşar Okuyan, the Chair of HP (Hür Parti-Free Party), referred to Verhaugen, who said that it is a question of Turkey being tried before the trial, ‘some ignorant EU officials are trying to cover up the dirty traces in their pasts’, referring to Belgium’s refusal to give back to Turkey the DHKP-C militant Fehriye Erdal, who assassinated Özdemir Sabancı, a famous businessman, in 1996, and who subsequently fled to Belgium (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 17 December 2007). ‘Intervention to Turkish judiciary’ was also a significant reference point in terms of the trial of Murat Belge, İsmet Berkan, Haluk Şahin, Erol Katırcıoğlu and Hasan Cemal on 7 February 2006. The first hearing of the trial witnessed numerous protests with slogans such as ‘the Brussels vocalists’ and ‘hands daring to touch Justice shall be broken’ (*Radikal*, 8 February 2006). Kemal Keriñsiz, who was again at the compliant chair, said:



‘we have foreigners here. They are occupying Turkish courts (...) They settled on the Turkish judiciary like a gray cloud’, pointing to Lagendijk, members of European Commission and CPJ (Committee to Protect Journalists), who were among the audience (*Radikal*, 8 February 2006). Though not as intensified as the Orhan Pamuk case, the Elif Şafak case has been subject to protests and demonstrations as well. A group including Pakize Akbaba, Chair of *Şehit Aileleri Derneği* (Martyrs’ Families Association) and Sevgi Erenerol, the spokesperson of Turkish Orthodox Patriarchy, protested Şafak in front of the court building with the EU flags with swastikas at the centre (*Radikal*, 22 September 2006). The protests were mainly directed to the European members of the audience such as Joost Lagendijk, representatives of PEN and Amnesty International. Before the Şafak trial, Kerinçsiz called, ‘everyone for the national duty to charge the enemies of Turkishness for swearing and humiliating Turkish society at Beyoglu Court’, which has later been brought before the court by two civil society initiatives<sup>62</sup> (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 20 September 2006).

As already mentioned above, starting from 2005 and 2006, ‘Europe’ has been replaced by other antagonisms in terms of sustaining the hegemony. The political actors did not need to create their subject positions with regard to ‘Europe’ because the notion was not the lingua franca of politics anymore. ‘Europe’ did not disappear altogether from the political scene. However, starting from 2005 and 2006, ‘Europe’ is not a performative action anymore. The same elements of the debate that have previously been articulated with regard to ‘Europe’ emerged as part and parcels of different debates and antagonisms. One of these antagonisms was nationalism, which I will be exploring below.

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<sup>62</sup> Peace Initiative and Citizens Initiative

Starting from 2005, a significant rise of violence committed in the name of ‘nationalism’ in line with the re-launch of PKK terrorism also affected the period, as mentioned above. Several lynch attempts occurred in different parts of Turkey, always based on the rumours that the victims were ‘burning flags’ or ‘chanting pro-PKK slogans’.

The assassination of Hrant Dink on 19 January 2007 by a 17-year-old was also articulated within the nationalism debate. The homicide caused widely felt shame, anger and self-questioning within the Turkish society, which accompanied the remarkable funeral, attended by more than 100000 people. Many in the crowd wore Hrant Dink masks and carried banners proclaiming, ‘Hepimiz Hrant Dink'iz, Hepimiz Ermeniyiz’ (‘we are all Hrant Dink, we are all Armenians’) (*Radikal*, 24 January 2007). This slogan flagging the rapprochement between two communities has later been criticized by Devlet Bahçeli, MHP leader, as a ‘bizarreness developed by those who cannot be seen at the funerals of the martyrs’ and by Tülay Özüerman, CHP Party Assembly member, as: ‘we are now in a position to be ashamed of saying “I’m a Turk”’ and by Tayyip Erdoğan, as: ‘This slogan is annoying. The victim was a citizen of the Turkish Republic. His ethnic identity does not matter’ (quoted in *Radikal*, 25 January 2007 and *Radikal*, 27 January 2007).

Nevertheless, the political environment conducive to the lynch culture, which ‘created a criminal from a baby’<sup>63</sup>, has been questioned thoroughly. As a reaction to the above slogan, Milli Mucadele Dernegi (National Struggle Association), which has been established by the

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<sup>63</sup> This was a part of the eulogy delivered by Rakel Dink, Hrant Dink’s wife at his funeral on 24 January 2007: ‘My brothers and sisters, one cannot accomplish anything without first questioning the darkness that creates an assassin from a baby’.

cadre previously publishing *Turksolu* (Turkish Left) Journal, has marched with the banners, 'we are all Turks, and we are all Mustafa Kemals' (*Radikal*, 17 February 2007). This reactionary wave has also found its counterpart in the football pitches. On 28 January 2007, in a football match between Trabzonspor- Kayserispor in Trabzon and in another match on the same day, placards reading 'we are all Turkish', 'we will not say we are Armenians even if you kill us' were displayed. At a match between Malatyaspor and Elazigspor, Malatyaspor, football team of Malatya which is Hrant Dink's hometown, has been condemned by a placard, saying 'Armenian Malatya' (*Radikal*, 29 January 2007).

The rising ultra-nationalist wave coupled with the assassination of the priest of Santa Maria Catholic Church in Trabzon, Andrea Sentore, on 6 February 2006 and of 3 Christians working at a publishing house publishing books on Christianity in Malatya in response to their alleged missionary activities on 18 April 2007, brought the sub-identity/upper identity debates to the forefront (*Radikal*, 6 February 2006 and *Radikal*, 19 April 2007 respectively). Erdoğan at a speech he made at Bursa Chamber of Industry and Commerce on 21 April 2007 condemned the Malatya homicide with reference to sub-identities and referred to the wider nationalism debate going on at the political landscape:

We do not endorse ultra-nationalism (...) This is a process which started with the assassination of Hrant Dink (...) There are 36 ethnic identities in Turkey. I am clear about this. They are all sub-identities (...) whereas upper identity is the citizenship of the Turkish Republic. Belief nationalism is malicious (...) we are against belief and religious nationalism (...) We are doing whatever necessary for laicism. We are equidistant to each and every believer (quoted in *Zaman*, 22 April 2007).

In April 2007, Turkish political landscape was highly predominated by presidency debates as the end of tenure of Turkey's 11<sup>th</sup> President Ahmet Necdet Sezer's tenure was soon to terminate. The main axis of the debate was that the fact that the party in power, Justice and Development Party has the parliamentary majority to vote for a candidate in accordance with its 'own goals', thereby posing a threat to the secular regime and the Republican values. Chief of General Staff Yaşar Büyükanıt's emphasis on the necessity of having a president 'who is genuinely bound by the basic values of republic values, not someone just paying lip service to them' (*Radikal*, 13 April 2007) and Ahmet Necdet Sezer's last speech at the War Academy as the President, which mentions the threat posed against the political regime in Turkey (*Radikal*, 14 April 2007) were two important signs that showed that the AKP's bid for the Presidency was seen as a controversy to the Republic. In this debate, the presidency of Tayyip Erdoğan was particularly on the forefront as his daughter and wife were wearing headscarves, he had an imam-preacher certificate and he appointed Islamist hard-liners to the bureaucratic points. The tension has even been more exacerbated when Abdullah Gül as the AKP nominee for presidency has not been declared to the public at the very last minute. In 'Claim your Republic' rallies, demonstrators from different backgrounds chanted slogans such as, 'we do not want imams at Çankaya', 'neither US nor EU, ultimately independent Turkey' and 'Çankaya is secular and secular it will remain' (*Radikal*, 15 April 2007). The rallies highlighted the anxiety of the masses who felt that the laicist Republic and Republican values were under threat by the election of an AKP-nominated president.

Another example of the depiction of a possible Islamist-oriented president as a threat to the Republic was two ads by Cumhuriyet, which angered the AKP government and led to a

debate in AKP group meetings and the parliament floor about suing the paper. In the first ad, a ticking clock with its hands moving backwards was shown, with a slogan in front: ‘On May 16, the clocks are being set back 100 years. Are you aware of the danger? Defend your republic!’ (*Cumhuriyet*, 7 March 2007). The second ad included the caption ‘1881-2007<sup>64</sup>’ and with the slogan, ‘In May 2007 the presidential election will be held. Are you aware of the danger? Defend your republic!’ (*Cumhuriyet*, 8 March 2007). As the New York Times noted in reporting the rallies, ‘there were two Turkeys now’ (*New York Times*, 15 April 2007; also see Mert, 19 April 2007).

Within this environment, the AKP in general, and Erdoğan in particular, frequently made the point that the numbers of demonstrators and impact of the rallies were exaggerated. In two related statements, Erdoğan compared the number of Republican rally demonstrators and of those who attended the opening ceremony of Karadeniz (Black Sea) Coastal Motorway and belittled the former:

More people showed for the opening of Karadeniz (Black Sea) Coastal Motorway. It was a march showing the real emotions of that region’s people, [and the people attending were] not pseudo aggregates from 81 cities (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 18 April 2007).

In another speech, he pointed out the same distinction between those people who gather at the squares, i.e. Republican rallies, and those whom ‘they’ would gather if ‘they’ wanted:

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<sup>64</sup> 1881 is the year Atatürk was born and 2007; the year of the presidential election, was depicted as his death and extinction of everything he achieved for the Turkish Republic.

After all, I am a representative of those silent masses. Look at the squares, some certain people gather (...) I am watching with patience. Due to my position...However, if I supported tension vis-à-vis those incidents, we could gather 10 times [more people] to those very same squares<sup>65</sup> (quoted in *Radikal*, 22 June 2008).

Within the same context, another significant debate in Turkish politics has been revolving around the concept of so-called ‘neighbourhood pressure’. In an interview in May 2007, seminal Turkish scholar, Şerif Mardin used the concept, ‘neighbourhood pressure’ to denote the communal pressure created and exerted by the bigot Islamists at the very lowest level possible, i.e. neighbourhood, on the secular-oriented people to adopt some certain lifestyles. According to Mardin, this pressure might occur irrespective of the AKP in power and even AKP might have to be abiding by this religious authoritarian environment created by the political Islam (Mardin, 20 May 2007). Especially during the presidential elections, this designation has long been the main reference point of the secularist circles against the AKP policies on the grounds that this neighbourhood pressure is a clear indication of the assault on the lives on secular people at the lowest level of the society and finally hidden agenda of the AKP to Islamicise Turkey.

This debate has been articulated in another interview given by him where he was asked whether Turkey would approximate Malaysia, an illiberal democracy with mild Islamism in power where individual autonomy is limited (Mardin, 16 September 2007). Depiction of a Turkey where neighbourhood pressure is commonplace, and which will soon be the next Malaysia, has long been the main reference point in the delineating of the political frontiers.

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<sup>65</sup> This speech has also been included within the indictment regarding the closure of AKP devised by the Public prosecutor, Abdullah Yalcinkaya on 14 March 2008.

This sense of exclusion and pressure on the part of the secular circles has been even more exacerbated after AKP's landmark electoral victory in the general elections of 22 July 2007. In the 22 July elections, AKP got 46.7% whereas CHP got 20.9% and MHP got 14.2% of the votes (*Radikal*, 27 July 2007). Within this context, the following remark by Fazıl Say, one of the most prominent Turkish pianists, shook the public opinion. In an interview in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Fazıl Say said:

I am contemplating to leave Turkey, not now though. Our 'Turkey' dreams are almost dead. The wives of all ministers wear headscarves in Turkey now. The Islamists already won, we could only get 30 % while they got 70%<sup>66</sup>. We are in minority now, we are excluded. They have not invited me to the dinner at Çankaya. If it continues like this, I have a daughter; I will take her and leave the country (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 15 December 2007).

The re-launch of PKK terrorism in June 2004 was also noteworthy during the period. In particular, the PKK ambushes in Şırnak on 7-8 October 2007, in Dağlıca, Hakkari, on 21 October 2007 were important developments on the ground during this period. The re-launch of terrorist activities of PKK has been coupled with the events in Şemdinli in November 2005 and the Newroz celebrations in March 2006 which later turned into street riots in Diyarbakır organised by PKK.

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<sup>66</sup> It is been debated for a long time to what parties or whom the percentages 70% and 30% refer by the public opinion but it approximately corresponds to the votes of AKP.

Against this backdrop, 13 civil society associations with greatest number of members<sup>67</sup> issued a declaration constituting a ‘common stance against terror’ and stated that whatever has to be done to stop terror and its supporters should be done immediately (*Radikal*, 23 October 2007). Especially after the Hakkari attacks, numerous anti-terrorism demonstrations were organized in different parts of Turkey. The main target was the DTP, especially through the slogans, ‘we do not want PKK in the Parliament’, and ‘the martyrs will not be dead, and the motherland will not be separated’ (*Radikal*, 25 October 2007). The general tone of the reactions exhibited was very strong, stretching from protests directed to the DTP to individual citizens from Kurdish origin being sacked. In big cities, outraged masses protested in front of DTP local branches, denouncing terror while urging a military incursion. Besides this increasing rage against terrorism, there was also a call for ‘moderation’ and ‘serenity’ within society. The rally ‘Free, Democratic and Equalitarian Turkey’ on 3 November 2007 organized by KESK, TMMOB and TTB and supported by political parties like DTP and ÖDP (Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi- Freedom and Democracy Party) and intellectuals like Adalet Ağaoğlu, Oral Çalışlar and Oya Baydar aimed to draw attention to the need for a peaceful and unarmed environment against the ‘hysteria for violence rising in the streets’ (*Radikal*, 27 October 2007).

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<sup>67</sup> Among those civil society associations were TOBB, TİSK, TZOB, TESK, TÜRK-İŞ, HAK-İŞ, KAMU-SEN, MEMUR-SEN, TÜSİAD, MÜSİAD, ASKON, TUSKON and TBB.



### **3. GENERAL FINDINGS**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

In the previous section, I gave a temporal sketch of the period to show how the key events outlined in Chapter 5 and the discourses on Europe highlighted in Chapter 6 have interacted. In doing this, I aimed to show the possible (dis)continuity and recurrence of the discourses and what role ‘Europe’ played within the debates and what antagonisms it created within the political landscape. In this section, after locating the discourses in a chronological perspective, I will state the general features of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in this period. In this respect, I will focus on the way in which discourses on ‘Europe’ in the mentioned period delineated political frontiers and how different political demands and identities within society were articulated through the logics of equivalence and difference. . I will argue that, interestingly enough, discourses on ‘Europe’ were attempted to be hegemonic either in a very apolitical and technocratic way where ‘Europe’ has been presented as ‘everybody’s project’ or through the polarisation of the society and demonisation of ‘the Other’.

In this respect, this section will aim at showing the main features of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ and highlighting how hegemonic antagonisms changed starting from 2005 and 2006 which led ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ to cease. I will argue that wane of hegemony of ‘Europe’ within the Turkish context did not necessarily mean that discourses on ‘Europe’ disappeared altogether from the political landscape. Rather, elements previously articulated through discourses on ‘Europe’ started to materialise in different contexts and articulations. For

example, while the notion of ‘sub-identity’ was previously explained with reference to ‘Europe’, starting from 2005 it began to be contextualised within a nationalism-liberalism debate. Similarly, while ‘Turkishness’ was the keyword for  $D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$  within the Article 301 debates whereas it has been articulated as an attribute to the liberalism-nationalism antagonism within the framework of Hrant Dink’s assassination. Therefore, antagonisms created by ‘Europe’ have been substituted by different antagonisms- namely the antagonisms of nationalism vs. liberalism and secularism vs. Islamism in hegemonising the ‘social’, where ‘substitution’ means the emergence of the elements of discourse within different antagonisms rather than disappearance of the discourse altogether.

Not surprisingly, Turkey’s candidacy for the EU, which was granted on 17 December 1999, has dovetailed with the eruption of different discourses on Europe. Although those discourses designated in the previous chapter are neither mutually exclusive and nor completely unconnected from each other, and moreover vary in the extent to which they are articulated (for instance the discourse  $D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$  is a more general discourse than the discourse  $D_{\text{upper identity}}$ ), they point to different instances of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’.

As the empirical study with the newspapers *Radikal*, *Cumhuriyet* and *Zaman* showed, the discourses also have different resonances throughout the time span.  $D_{\text{multiple identities}}$ ,  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  and  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  have been more significant and more recurrent in the specified period in the sense that more statements entailed the chains of equivalences articulated by those discourses. It is also another significant point that the most general discourses on

‘Europe’ appeared to be the discourses D<sub>threat to sovereignty</sub> and D<sub>threat to Turkishness</sub> as they incorporate more diverse elements within the signification chain than the other discourses.

The most noteworthy finding of the project with regard to discourses on ‘Europe’ is that, starting from 1999, they increasingly attempted to demarcate the political frontiers and the notion has increasingly been articulated within the existing and respective political constellations, attempting to hegemonise *the social*. However, starting from 2005 and 2006 what we see is that the discourses on ‘Europe’ are less and less significant to draw the political frontiers. This does not necessarily mean the disappearance of ‘Europe’ from the political landscape altogether. It just means that the discourses on ‘Europe’ less and less demarcate the political frontiers and dichotomise *the social*. Starting from 2005 and 2006, the signification chains of the discourses on ‘Europe’ have been replaced by different antagonisms- namely the antagonisms of nationalism vs. liberalism and secularism vs. Islamism in hegemonising *the social*. The notion of ‘Europe’ has either been included within the signification chains of those antagonisms or just has reappeared as a particular political project. As Çelik argues in the case of Kemalist imaginary in Turkish politics, Europe ‘became less and less able to express a metaphorical fullness, and to absorb social demands and dislocations’ (Çelik, 2000: 201).

In the following section, I will highlight the main features of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. I will argue that through the logics of equivalence and difference, ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ demarcated the political frontiers either in a very apolitical way designating it as a natural technocratic project or in a polarizing way where *the Other* is demonised and prohibited.

### 3.2. Features of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’

In this section, I will show that the dominant discourses on ‘Europe’ were predominantly articulated through logics of equivalence and difference which created antagonisms in different ways in the first period from 1999 to 2005. The discourses on ‘Europe’ were either articulated through the *logic of difference*, where the differences were marginalised between the constitutive components of the discourses through signifying non-adversarial and positive differences or through the *logic of equivalence*, where the political frontiers are constructed on a symbolic division in society and perception of a threat from *the Other*. It is important to note that these two different logics are not mutually exclusive and completely distinct from each other but are dialectical and two sides of the same coin. For this reason, there is not a one-to-one correspondence between logics and two sides of the bipolar hegemony. That is, it is not possible to claim that there is one-to-one correspondence between the logic of difference and pro-EU positions or between the logic of equivalence and anti-EU positions. *The logic of difference* might entail the cooption of different sections of society in the name of the European project or it might articulate a societal alliance against Europe bringing together different demands. That is the main reason why I analyse the discourses on ‘Europe’ in terms of a bipolar hegemony rather than an analysis of pro-Europe/anti-Europe positions.

To start with, ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ materialised through the cooption of ‘people’ under the rubric of ‘Europe’. The discourses on ‘Europe’ have been inscribed in an inclusive manner, which can be seen as a part of an operation to construct differential identities in terms of the *logic of difference*. Starting from DSP-ANAP-MHP coalition and stretching to AKP

government, 'Europe' was everybody's project in the sense that it almost had an apolitical, natural and consensual connotation.

For instance, İsmail Cem, Minister of Foreign Affairs in DSP-ANAP-MHP coalition, frequently mentioned how it is 'wrong to divide people into being pro-Europeans and anti-Europeans (...) The EU should not be the seismic line dividing us; it is rather a common platform bringing us together' (quoted in *Radikal*, 22 December 2001). He often claimed that, 'Europe is not an issue of controversy but an issue of compromise' (quoted in *Radikal*, 5 March 2002) and 'the EU is an extra-political party issue' (quoted in *Radikal*, 20 August 2002). Similarly, for Mesut Yılmaz, the vice-Prime Minister of DSP-ANAP-MHP coalition and Chair of ANAP, 'the EU is a national issue for Turkey. It is owned by the people, regardless of political parties' (quoted in *Radikal*, 29 May 2002). Here, both Yılmaz and Cem, through the invitation of all citizens of Turkey to the ideal of 'Europe', introduce the notion as consensual and non-ideological. Here, 'Europe' emerges as a political project which brings subjects with differential identities together. However, particularisation of identities does not necessarily mean their politicisation as the antagonistic frontier is not sharp and is extended to the margins of the society instead. Through the operation of this logic, the ideal of 'Europe' brings the Kurds and the Alevis together.

AKP, which came to power in the aftermath of July 2002 elections, also presented itself as the genuine and *natural* translation of the universal will, the representative of various demands within the society, almost subscribing to a 'de-politicised' connotation of 'Europe'. Tayyip Erdoğan, in the first speech he made after the launch of the negotiations with the EU, pointed

out to the ‘natural’ character of the Turkish European project, neutralising the internal contradictions of the society:

Turkey managed to turn from a crucial juncture. The EU membership is a *natural* extension of Turkey’s historical walk. The EU membership is a manifestation of Turkey’s claim to be a democratic, libertarian, just and developed society. Our goal is a Turkey which is located among democratic, free and advanced countries. The EU is the most appropriate itinerary to do that (Erdoğan, 4 October 2005-*emphasis added*).

In another speech, he mentioned the necessity to realise the ‘40-year-old European dream of 70 millions’<sup>68</sup> (quoted in *Radikal*, 15 December 2004). Erdoğan made this speech just before the 17 December 2004 Luxembourg summit, when the European Council decided that EU-Turkey accession negotiations would start on 3 October 2005, and mentioned that whatever had been stipulated by the EU has been fulfilled by Turkey and therefore, if the EU was as multicultural and just as it claimed to be, it should say ‘Yes’ to the Turkish EU membership. It is important to iterate that ‘Europe’ in this context is not a political project or terrain but an apolitical notion bereft of any opposition or adversary for which ‘we, as the whole nation, struggled arduously’ (quoted in *Radikal*, 15 December 2004).

Within this picture, the notion of ‘Europe’ emerges as an ‘Eden’ for ‘the people’, being defined as an extra-political party issue. It also emerges as an external power/state-like entity realising the demands and interests of the people, solely for ‘the people’ and for their ‘unfilled demands’.

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<sup>68</sup> Estimated population of Turkey.

Alternatively, the notion of ‘people’ has been the reference point to deal with the threat of ‘Europe’. As already mentioned in the previous section, Red Apple was a coalition bringing together some certain left groups and nationalists under the umbrella of Euroscepticism especially during the early stages of the EU accession. In the words of Erkin Yurdakul, the editor of the journal, ‘Turkish Left’, ‘everybody should take within this national struggle against ‘Europe’, which is a call for Kuva-yi Milliye, not a call for a particular political party (quoted in *Radikal*, 3 August 2003). Although the antagonistic frontier in case of Red Apple coalition is stronger than it is for the AKP’s depiction of ‘Europe’ as a political project, the co-existence of different political tendencies within the coalition and de-politicisation of potential areas of conflict between them draw upon *the logic of difference*.

Similarly, technocratism was an important tool for de-politicising areas of potential conflict by constructing differential and non-antagonistic identities and in co-opting different sections of the society (Norval, 1990: 146). In the following quotation, Erdal Güven mentions the EU as infrastructure and prerequisite for individual freedom and social justice, beyond any political affiliation or ideology, by referring to the infamous catch phrase of Kemal Derviş, the state minister responsible for the economic affairs in the DSP-MHP-ANAP government. He is usually known for the staunch economic programme based on the floating exchange rate regime he had devised and the Harmonisation Packages he struggled to get ratified by the Parliament. In the aftermath of 2001 economic crisis in Turkey, he was appointed directly by the Executive (appointed by the government and approved by the President) as a technocrat:

The EU's values are the infrastructure for living humanely and fare better than any kind of party programme, alliance, plan or ideology. Those values are the most optimal and rational combination of economic welfare, social justice, individual freedom and coexistence with the neighbours. [Kemal] Derviş has summarised this as 'the happiness formula'. This is what exactly it is (Güven, 18 August 2002)

By delinking it with any political tendency or project, 'Europe' in this context is given a technocratic and overarching connotation which cross-cuts any possible adversarial clashes between different demands within the society. For Norval, within the framework of this strategy, the power is concentrated in the executive branch and roles of the cabinet, parliament and the caucus are diminished (Norval, 1990: 146).

It is also significant that within the Turkish context, this apolitical and technocratic discourse also comprised the critique of the elite, where they are despised and blamed for the problems and shortcomings faced during the EU process. It is interesting to infer from the empirical study that this discourse on elites stipulated a monolithic and general category of the 'elite', which is not necessarily substantiated with regard to groups or people entailed. It is equally used by the AKP circles and members of the army, who are allegedly part of the 'elite', as well as intellectuals and the critiques of the power-holders. In this picture, the dislike against the 'elites' very much dovetailed with the depiction of 'Europe' as a natural, uncontested, non-adversarial category, stipulating a discourse of politics without politics, where 'politics is the art of suppressing the political' (Ranciere, 1995: 11). In this picture, 'Europe' emerges as an external power/state-like entity realising the demands and interests of the people that could not be fulfilled by the Turkish state elites. Mehmet Altan, a prominent figure in *Movement for*



*Europe 2002*, points out to this representation crisis and calls out the Turkish people to scrutinise the EU process. According to Altan, the EU replaces the state in Turkey in protecting the interests of the people as the sultan-like elite and the politicians are not willing to do so:

Our EU process shows that in Turkey the governors never represent the interests of the governed (...) [Therefore], the world does not believe in Turkey's governors either. That's why it is scrutinising whether they deceive their own people or not. Nevertheless, the EU represents the ideal state that should also exist in Turkey. That is, the state has been replaced by the EU in Turkey. The EU is realising the things that actually has to be realised by the Turkish state and it advocates the interests of the Turkish people (...) That's why those governors in Ankara and the spokespersons of the Turkish state who consider themselves sultans react to the decision in Copenhagen (...) We, as the people claiming our own future, will continue this movement in order to prevent the sacrifice of the EU process to the political interest and a bureaucratic annuity. We will attempt to be the auditor of the politicians' sincerity and bureaucracy's practices. (Altan, 16 December 2002).

Therefore, within this framework, 'Europe' has been articulated in the way that the elite, in order to perpetuate their power, compromise with unacceptable demands of the EU. In the following statement, Tuncer Kılınç claims that the politicians, not to sacrifice their power, sacrifice the policy priorities of Turkey instead. The phrase, 'ignorance and heresy' is widely used in Turkish politics, which had originally coined by Atatürk in his 'Address to the Turkish Youth' dated 20 October 1927. In the address, he warns the Turkish Youth against the fact that 'those who have power might be in negligence, heresy and even treason':

Politicians who lie to the public in order to be voted are ready to sacrifice Cyprus and our rights on Aegean in order to get a date from the EU. Those who would deem the EU as a Christian club have been pro-EU more than anybody else. The West sees the Armed Forces and Kemalism as obstacles for Turkey. Compradors, Second Republicans

and those in ‘negligence and heresy’ with the words of Atatürk applaud these demands (quoted in *Radikal*, 19 May 2004).

By the same token, Ümit Özdağ links the presentation of the EU accession process as an external pressure to the fear of the Turkish elite to lose power. He was the then head of ASAM (Avrasya Stratejik Arastirmalar Merkezi-Eurasia Strategical Research Centre), who has later been a nominee for the Chairmanship of MHP and who is known for his staunch nationalist outlook:

We should be realising the EU standards without an external pressure as they are genuinely good standards, not because they belong to the EU. However, the Turkish elite are corrupted. They could have never been honourable enough to realize this [process] through its own dynamics. They could only present those to the Turkish people as external sanctions (quoted in *Radikal*, 10 March 2003).

On the other hand, within the same period, another way of sustaining the hegemony of the discourses on ‘Europe’ has been through *the logic of equivalence* where the social space is split into two antagonistic camps which equalise their inner differences. In case of *the logic of equivalence*, the co-option of different sectors of the society around the discourses on ‘Europe’ has been substituted with a more exclusionary, antagonised demarcation of the political frontiers. This time, the political frontiers were constructed on a symbolic division in society and perception of a threat from *the Other*. What we see is the condensation of the meaning around two poles (Howarth et. al., 2000:11). *The Other* in this respect has been the others of Europe’-‘the Third-World’ or ‘the Middle East’ ‘Europe’ with its different connotations,

In this sense, sustaining ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ meant the dichotomisation of the social space either in the form of articulation of ‘Europe’ as a front that is seeking for an opportunity to invade the Republic of Turkey culturally and politically. Especially within the framework of discourse D<sub>threat to sovereignty</sub>, perception of a threat from the ‘Other’ is central and the society is symbolically divided between two camps: those who are from ‘us’ versus those who are not from us, i.e. ‘them’, the Turks versus Europeans, Armenians, Kurds, Greeks, Greek Cypriots etc.

In the following statement, Nuh Mete Yüksel, a Prosecutor of State Security Courts, mentioned a similar front drawn between the ‘alerted gatekeepers of this country’ and the supporters of ‘the demands of the EU and the separatist movement’. State Security Courts have been designed by 1982 Constitution in order to deal with the cases about ‘Turkish Republic’s internal and external security’. The courts have been abolished in 2004 and this right has been given to Criminal Courts. Yüksel made this statement right after bringing about a case against 26 university students who petitioned in favour of university education in Kurdish in March 2002. He builds on the ‘peace’ discourse used by the proponents of Kurdish education and argues that these claims are closely related to the separatist movement and its ‘Byzantine trick’, the term used for well-organised tricks and conspiracies. It is interesting to see that the Byzantine Empire is included within the signification chain of the ‘Other’:

Claiming ‘we do not want disintegration, we want to live peacefully’ within the framework of Kurdish education demands is a lie and hypocrisy. This is a Byzantine trick. The separatist movement is tempering with our people’s destinies living in Eastern and South-Eastern Turkey. You cannot expect good will from separatist movements (...) No reasoning, including the EU countries’ demands coinciding with the demands of the separatist movement, cannot render the steps leading to

disintegration excusable. The 1000-year-old Turkic land deposited by Atatürk cannot be disintegrated for the sake of foreigners' caprices. The alerted gatekeepers of this country will not let this happen (quoted in *Radikal*, 16 March 2002).

In the following statement, Rahşan Ecevit, the founder and ex-vice president of DSP (Demokratik Sol Parti-Democratic Left Party), points out to the missionary practices in Turkey and poses 'them' who first imposed fundamentalist Muslim symbols and then introduced problem of missionary against 'us' who is losing its religion on the way to 'Europe'. Clearly, the inner differences of 'them' is equalised in a way that the EU that induces missionary practices and those who provoke political Islam are components of the same *Other*.

We're losing our religion on the way to the EU. I'm Muslim. I cannot tolerate that Islam regresses here. I want to experience a robust Islam together with both Alevis and Sunnis, free from religious exploitation. But, **they** [first] put the sariks and headscarves on Turkey's head and made her wear cubbes and burkas. They wanted to throw her to the league of uncivilised Muslim countries. Then, the EU fashion stepped in. Now, you can even find a church in the apartments. Some of our citizens are converted to Christianity either through convincing or providing interest (...) The cross comes in right after the takke (...) **I** want my country back (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 3 January 2005).

Alternatively, the dichotomisation of the social space has sometimes taken the form of iterating the impossibility of thinking another alternative. The 'Other' within this picture was either 'the Middle East' or 'the Third World'. The meaning is condensed around two poles, where you can either choose between 'Europe' or be bereft of democracy, human rights, etc. This 'either/or' dichotomy has usually been used within the European integration, within Eastern enlargement in particular, where Central and Eastern European countries would either 'return to Europe' and have all the intrinsic qualities associated with it, or, they would remain

‘static, illiberal, submerged into never-ending circles and strives’ (Bideleux and Jeffries, 1998:10).

In this statement, as a response to Halil Kalkanli’s statement that ‘we support full heartedly that Turkey join the EU on a honorary, dignified and equal basis’, the then Chair of PR section of General Chief of Staff (Kalkanli, 1 March 2002), Murat Yetkin, a journalist known for his liberal stance, argues that staying out of the ideal of ‘Europe’ is synonymous with turning into a Middle Eastern dictatorship:

I don’t think that staying out of the EU, which is the most successful peace and development project throughout the history, would bring honour to Turkey. I believe that conversion to a poor Middle Eastern dictatorship will render the people even more dishonourable. I would like to raise my child with the EU’s economic, social and political standards, i.e. within a more humane environment (Yetkin, 1 March 2002).

This discourse on the impossibility of thinking any other alternative has especially been used against the DSP-ANAP-MHP coalition government in the 1999-2002 period in order to criticize the delays in adopting Copenhagen Criteria and/or National Programme especially due to MHP’s controversial stance against the abolishment of capital punishment. For Turker Alkan, a liberal journalist known for his mild and consensual attitude, delays in the realization of National Programme was equivalent to being a Third-World country:

What matters for us is that the EU’s authorities formally accept us as a candidate. We have a National Programme we had devised accordingly and the schedule is in effect. It is hard to understand the logic of speculating as ‘they do not want us’. If you will be honest enough to say, ‘I will not be able to fulfil this National Programme; it is too democratic for me. The Turkish society and I are not ready for this much of democracy and human rights; I am giving up trying to join the EU. It is then worth

being a Middle Eastern country where the soldiers commit coup d'états occasionally and the dictators like Saddam wander around'; I can understand this (Alkan, 9 March 2002).

Similarly, for Mahfi Eğilmez, another liberal journalist, 'we should see that there is only one alternative to EU membership: being a Third Class Middle Eastern country. If our politicians want to keep Turkey as a Middle Eastern country, they should know that power in Turkey will sooner or later belong to radical parties' (Egilmez, 16 May 2002).

In a nutshell, 'Europe-as-hegemony' attempted either to act as a consensual 'everybody's project' which cancelled the political differences between different sections of the society yet retained their differential identities or to split the society into two antagonistic camps in a more exclusionary manner where *the Other* has been demonised, *the Other* being 'the Third-World' or 'the Middle East' or 'Europe' itself.

### **3.3. Reflecting on the findings: merits and limitations of the analytical framework**

In the previous section, I aimed at identifying two moves of 'Europe-as-hegemony' in demarcating political frontiers: logic of equivalence and logic of difference. I attempted to show that how a politicised struggle of shifting meanings worked in case of notion of 'Europe' in Turkey after 1999 and how different political identities aligned themselves vis-à-vis the concept. I argued that the logics of equivalence and difference are very helpful in showing how the inclusion and exclusion of various political identities worked for 'Europe-as-hegemony' and thus how the political frontiers have been drawn.

I think the analysis above is relevant in broadly two senses. First, it shows how ‘Europe’ created contestation in Turkish politics thereby demarcating political frontiers and attempting at hegemony. Secondly, and more particularly, it points out to how the logics of equivalence and difference operated in establishing ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in Turkish politics. However, I do not claim that ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ was successful in being a hegemony *per se* and this has at least two reasons. First of all, I claim that there is not a straightforward relationship between understanding how the logics of equivalence and difference operate in Turkish politics on the one hand and claiming the emergence of ‘hegemony’ on the other. This goes back to my argument in Chapter 3: the notion of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ is the *hegemonic struggle*, not *the hegemony per se*. Therefore, I claim that although logics of equivalence and difference are very helpful in understanding ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ as a struggle, it is not easy to claim that these attempts were successful as a hegemonic practice as Laclau and Mouffe would argue. The analysis of the newspapers and parliamentary debates did not provide enough empirical evidence to point to the split of *the social (logic of equivalence)* or the expansion of the limits of *the political* to the margins of the society (*logic of difference*) by ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. Moreover, I hereby solely refer to the functioning of logics of equivalence and difference whereas various ‘Essex School’ scholars scrutinised above focusing on these logics usually focus on how these logics have been instrumental in answering to the social demands attached to those logics. For instance, Buenfil’s account of Mexico shows that the mobilisation of the Mexican armed movement, teachers, workers and peasant leaders under the rubric of the *oppressed* created a ruling bloc out of these groups and has been instrumental in unifying their demands (Buenfil, 2000). Similarly, both Howarth’s and Norval’s various studies show that the rise of the Charterist movement and National Party

(NP) in the 1980s coopted the African workers, Indians and Coloureds around the notion of 'blackness' who had a common demand: challenging the common enemy of Grand Apartheid (Howarth, 1997; 2000; Norval, 1990; 1994; 1996; 1998). Therefore, an analysis of logics of difference and equivalence has to incorporate a focus on the demands of different sections of the society to show how these logics will be instrumental in forming a historical bloc, on which further research into these logics should focus.

### **3. 4. Whatever happened to 'Europe-as-hegemony' in the aftermath of 2005 and 2006?**

In this section, I will substantiate my initial claim that contrary to the immediate aftermath of 1999 when the discourses on 'Europe' were increasingly feeding into the existing discourses in Turkish political landscape, starting from 2005 to 2006 what we see is that the discourses on 'Europe' are less and less significant to draw the political frontiers. In this respect, the antagonisms of nationalism vs. liberalism and secularism vs. Islamism replaced the signification chains of the discourses on 'Europe' hegemonising the 'social', which are now the main instruments for politics as the 'practice of creation, reproduction and transformation of social relations' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 153). In the new period, the subjects do not position themselves within the discourses on 'Europe' as much as they did before. Starting from 2005 and 2006, 'Europe' is not the common language anymore, failing to set the limits of objectivity. Instead, different dichotomies such as secularism vs. Islamism and 'nationalism vs. liberalism' started shaping politics. Here, I vulgarise the dichotomies calling them 'secularism vs. Islamism' and 'nationalism vs. liberalism' in the sense that these designations are actually coined in Turkish politics by the proponents of the other side of the dichotomy. For instance, when the events that I will be referring to below unfolded,



‘nationalism’ was almost an allegation posed by the so-called ‘liberals’ whereas Islamism was the biggest threat for those who were ‘secular’. Within this framework, I argue that the fact that political space is now organised with regard to different antagonisms does not mean that ‘Europe’ completely disappeared from the picture. Rather, elements previously articulated by the discourses on ‘Europe’ such as ‘minority’ ‘sub-identity’ and ‘Turkishness’ started to materialise in different contexts and articulations.

As mentioned previously, the notion of ‘Europe’ was a significant element within the framework of *D multiple identity* and it was articulated as equivalent to ‘Europe’ with respect to the latter’s significance in terms of amelioration of minority rights. It was also articulated by *D threat to sovereignty* in the sense that there was a link between ‘Europe’s’ fictitious construction of ‘minorities’ in Turkey and ethnic separation instigated by PKK (Baykal, 23 March 2007). However, especially within the framework of presidential elections and debates on so-called ‘neighbourhood pressure’, ‘minority’ had a completely different connotation. In Fazil Say’s landmark statement about leaving the country due to the exclusion he felt, ‘the minority’ was the secular circles, ‘whose wives do not wear headscarves’ and ‘who are not invited to Çankaya anymore’ (quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, 15 December 2007). ‘Minority’ is now articulated in terms of being secular or not, not with reference to ‘Europe’. This statement also points to the fact that the antagonisms setting the political frontiers are now articulated by other antagonisms than ‘Europe’. On the ‘we’ side, there is a group which is represented by 30% and who feel threatened by the waning ‘Turkey’ dreams and by the headscarf-wearing wives of ministers. ‘Them’, on the other hand, is the group which is represented by the 70% of the votes and which constitutes the majority and exerts pressure on ‘us’.

Similarly, ‘Turkishness’ which was the keyword of the article 301 debates and a significant element in *D threat to Turkishness*, has emerged as a connotation used within the debates of nationalism that flourished after the rising ultra-nationalist violence incidents and Hrant Dink’s assassination. The main motto of Hrant Dink’s funeral, ‘Hepimiz Hrant Dink’iz, Hepimiz Ermeniyiz’ (‘we are all Hrant Dink, we are all Armenians’) and the slogan of Milli Mücadele Derneği, ‘we are all Turks, and we are all Mustafa Kemals’ as a reaction of the former show that the debate on ‘Turkishness’ is now maintained with reference to different antagonisms (*Radikal*, 24 January 2007, *Radikal*, 17 February 2007 respectively). The reflection of this in the football pitches was also noteworthy to point to how *the political* was shaped. On 28 January 2007, in a football match between Trabzonspor- Kayserispor in Trabzon and in another match on the same day, placards reading ‘we are all Turkish’, ‘we will not say we are Armenians even if you kill us’ were displayed. At a match between Malatyaspor and Elazığspor, Malatyaspor, football team of Malatya which is Hrant Dink’s hometown, has been condemned by a placard, saying ‘Armenian Malatya’ (*Radikal*, 29 January 2007). These slogans iterate that the political space is now organised with regard to the distinction between those who are ‘all Hrant Dink’ and those who denigrate this and prefer to be ‘all Turkish/Mustafa Kemal’ instead. ‘Turkishness’ is not articulated by its relation to ‘Europe’, but with regard to the so-called nationalists vs. liberals dichotomy.

Along the same lines, the sub-identity vs. upper-identity debates which were precipitated with regard to was now a part of a wider nationalism debate, which has been stated in his speech condemning the homicides in Malatya. For him there are 36 sub-identities in Turkey whereas

upper identity is the citizenship of the Turkish Republic and he was against ‘belief and religious nationalism’ (quoted in *Zaman*, 21 April 2007).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

So far, this thesis aimed at understanding the emergence of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in the aftermath of 1999 in Turkish political debates. For this aim, rather than making an unproblematic association between particular political camps and ‘pro-’/‘anti-’ Europe positions, I attempted to look at the political debates through the hegemony lens. By calling the role Europe plays within the debates as ‘bipolar hegemony’ where both poles of the discourses (pro- vs. anti-Europe) are parts of the same hegemonic discourse and reify a particular construction of the world, I argued that hegemony of Europe is sustained via ‘chains of difference’ and ‘chains of equivalence’. After singling out the discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish political debates in the 1999-2008 period in Chapter 6 ( $D_{\text{multiple identity}}$ ,  $D_{\text{territorial integrity/anti-terrorism}}$ ,  $D_{\text{threat to sovereignty}}$  and  $D_{\text{threat to Turkishness}}$ ) by using the questions listed in Chapter 4, in this chapter, I diachronised the already-sketched discourses on ‘Europe’ by locating them within the timeline of key events scrutinised in Chapter 5. The idea behind this was to highlight the possible (dis)continuity and recurrence of the discourses and to outline how politics has been precipitated in Turkey via discourses on ‘Europe’ and what role the former played within the debates during the focused period.

Subsequently, I outlined the general features of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. For this aim, I focused on the way in which discourses on ‘Europe’ in the mentioned period delineated

political frontiers and how different political demands and identities within the society operated through *the logics of difference* and *equivalence*. I showed that discourses on ‘Europe’ attempted to hegemonise *the social* either in a very apolitical and technocratic way where ‘Europe’ has been presented as ‘everybody’s project’ or by polarising the society and demonising *the Other*. However, it is crucial to remember that the concept of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in this project iterates a *hegemonic struggle*, rather than the *hegemony per se*. The operation of the logics of equivalence and difference does not necessarily point to the emergence of ‘hegemony’ as such, which I have already argued in Chapter 3. To claim the emergence of *hegemony*, we need more empirical evidence on the hegemonic practices within the realms of economy, foreign policy, education and alike.

Within this framework, the main argument of this chapter has been that discourses on ‘Europe’ were unable to create antagonisms and delineate political frontiers starting from 2005 and 2006, which led ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ to cease, which did not necessarily mean that discourses on ‘Europe’ disappeared altogether from the political landscape. Rather, elements previously articulated by the discourses on ‘Europe’ started to materialize in different contexts and articulations. I substantiated this argument by showing how the notions of ‘sub-identity’, ‘Turkishness’ and ‘minority’ was previously explained with reference to ‘Europe’, starting from 2005, they started being located on wider debates of nationalism-liberalism and secularism-Islamism. Therefore, antagonisms created by ‘Europe’ have been substituted by different antagonisms.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

In this thesis, departing from a more general concern with understanding how political frontiers are demarcated in Turkish politics, I aimed at scrutinising the emergence of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in the aftermath of 1999 in Turkish political debates. Rather than approaching this puzzle from a Europeanisation literature perspective, which a researcher working on Europe in Turkish politics would typically do, I singled out discourses on ‘Europe’ in the Turkish political terrain and I explored how those discourses shaped politics and demarcated political frontiers which would sustain the hegemony of ‘Europe’. I called this hegemony ‘bipolar hegemony’ as, I argued, there is often not that much difference between being anti-/pro-Europe in terms of reifying a particular conception of ‘Europe’. After singling out 4 main discourses on ‘Europe’ (i.e. ‘Europe’ as a keyword for multiple identities, ‘Europe’ as a )Rather than seeing different representations of ‘Europe’ as uncontested discourses of some political inclinations, I focused on how political frontiers were delineated by representing ‘Europe’ as an overarching project that would unite different sections of society (*logic of difference*) or by polarising society into two irreconcilable parts (*logic of equivalence*). This thesis showed that ‘Europe’ has on the one hand been represented as everybody’s project either in terms of healing all problems of the Turkish society or uniting people against loss of sovereignty and as an ‘either-or’ situation where people have to choose between ‘Europe’ and

being a Third world country or between being against 'Europe' and disintegration on the other.

### **The thesis**

In this respect, the overall thesis has been that 'Europe-as-hegemony' after 1999 emerged by discourses on 'Europe' delienating political frontiers; this ceased from 2005 to 2006. This did not mean that discourses on 'Europe' disappeared altogether from the political landscape in 2005/06. Rather, elements previously articulated by the discourses on 'Europe' started to materialise in different contexts and articulations of 'Europe' have been silenced. This does not necessarily mean that the discourses on 'Europe' completely disappeared from the political landscape in the aftermath of 2005 and 2006. Rather, they have been silenced so that they were not able to create political identities anymore.

### **Project glossary**

To start with, due to the key developments of the period I had selected, 'Europe' more often than not meant the EU in this project. In this respect, 'Europe' within the framework of this project was taken as a construction and a signifier around which some particular meanings were articulated. As Chapter 7 showed, starting from 1999, 'Europe' increasingly penetrated the domestic debates and determined the way in which politics was managed. It determined the sides of the debates such as Cyprus, minority rights, sub-identity and like. Therefore, rather than being a taken-for-granted notion, 'Europe' was a construction articulated differently in different contexts. As it determined the sides of the debates, it also had an

impact on politics. Therefore, ‘Europe’ within the context of this project emerged both as a *construction* and an *impact*.

Similarly, ‘discourse’ in this project meant the ways in which ‘Europe’ emerged as a political issue. Besides relating itself to the privileged signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’, ‘Europe’ also fixed itself to particular meanings such as ‘minority’, ‘threat to Turkishness’ and ‘decrease in terrorism’ and emerged as equivalent to those elements. This temporary fixation has been taken as ‘discourse’ by this project.

Another important concept I was interested in has been the ‘political frontier’, as the core aim of this project is to explore the extent to which ‘Europe’ demarcates the political frontiers in Turkish politics after 1999. By ‘political frontier’, I meant the symbolic dividing line between different political identities which is contingently constructed. What distinguished Devlet Bahçeli who mentioned the ‘hidden agenda’ of the EU from Ümit Fırat who took Europe as a guarantee for territorial integrity of Turkey? What role did ‘Europe’ play in the demarcation of this difference? I used the notion of ‘political frontiers’ to define the differential positions of those discourses. In this picture, political frontier between Devlet Bahçeli and Ümit Fırat has been demarcated by different conceptions of ‘Europe’, what I called as ‘antagonism’.

**Last, but not least, the concept of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ is the name of the struggle itself for the hegemonic positions of political identities and discourses. Therefore, it identifies the hegemonic struggle on the part of discourses on ‘Europe’, not the *hegemony per se*.**

### **Broader relevance of the project**

The main contribution of this project has been the exploration of discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish politics through a hegemony lens. This offers an alternative approach to the main scholarly tendencies to use the Europeanisation literature to understand ‘Europe’ at domestic level on one hand, and presenting Turkish discourses on ‘Europe’ through a pro- vs. anti-Europe bifurcation on the other. Rather than making this unproblematic association between political camps and stances vis-à-vis ‘Europe’, I argued that it does not really matter whether a discourse is pro- or anti-European as in both cases it is the ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ iterated. I termed this as, ‘bipolar hegemony’, which offers a fruitful analytical framework for students of political science.

I also coined ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ as the privileged signifiers of Turkish politics, which is also a novel claim. I argued that for any signifier to be hegemonic in Turkish politics, it has to relate itself to the signifiers of ‘security’ and ‘democracy’ which have materialised in different ways in different periods, yet always significant and ‘privileged’. As there is not a prescribed and free-standing set of rules and techniques that could be taken out from the shelf and applied in discourse theory and ‘methodological deficit is one of the most important alleged deficits of the discourse theory’ (Howarth, 2008), conception of privileged signifiers as such emerges as a helpful tool to operationalise particular discourses.



Finally, I claimed that as helpful as the logics of difference and equivalence are in identifying antagonisms and delineation of political frontiers and understanding the emergence of a hegemonic struggle, they do not straightforwardly show the emergence of *hegemony per se*. Chapter 7 of this thesis where I operationalise these logics also shows that claiming that the *the social* is split into two antagonistic poles (*logic of equivalence*) or this split is expanded to the margins of society (*logic of difference*) is not as easy as the Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework would argue. Indeed, the current analysis of newspapers and parliamentary debates to trace ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in Turkish politics after 1999 shows that we need more empirical evidence to claim that these particular discourses were hegemonic. The questioning of the link between hegemonic logics and hegemony this thesis attempted to make is a novel attempt.

All in all, although it cannot give a fully-fledged and empirically-supported account of the hegemony of ‘Europe’ in the aftermath of 1999, this study is an original reading of the post-1999 Turkish politics in terms of discourses on ‘Europe’ with its particular focus on the hegemonic struggle these discourses emerge within.

### **Avenues for further research**

However much it has been an exciting scholarly venture for me to devise the aforementioned novel approach, the contribution of this project is largely theoretical. This mainly stems from the theoretical framework and analytical toolkit employed. It is difficult to deal with and operationalise the concept of hegemony, as has already been pointed out by many scholars talking about the concept in its Gramscian sense (Tünay, 1983; Morton, 2007), particularly as

it is understood ‘as a contested, fragile and tenuous process, rather than simply a structure or edifice’ (Morton, 2007: 78). This is complicated further still when one considers how the concept is approached from a discourse theory point of view, as discourse theory stresses the ultimate contingency of all social identity and the partial fixity of meaning and hegemony (Howarth et. al., 2000), thereby adding a contingency dimension to the concept. When combined with the methodological deficit of discourse theory, therefore, this resulted in a more modest empirical contribution to the literature. Besides, hegemony is a pervasive and versatile concept.

There are also some limitations of the current study stemming from the analytical framework employed. As inspirational and groundbreaking as Laclau and Mouffe’s approach to discourses, hegemony and political frontiers is, their theoretical framework entails a number of limitations the current attempt also suffers from. The extension of scope of politics, the criticism of the ontological primacy of a particular category like class and the contingency aspect brought about in terms of the construction of political identities, without any doubt, is path-breaking in terms of explaining social phenomena. In particular, this thesis’s fundamental aim of unveiling how discourses on ‘Europe’ demarcate political frontiers in Turkish politics after 1999 is definitely congruent with Laclau and Mouffe’s designation of *the political* as a terrain criss-crossed with antagonisms open to articulation and negotiation. However, a critical evaluation of the aforementioned theoretical framework is also needed to understand and point out to the limitations of this project and to show future research trajectories to reflect on these limitations.

The main criticism posed against Laclau and Mouffe has been the failure of their theoretical framework to take into account material factors and the realm of economy as a whole (e.g. Townshend, 2003, 2004; Geras, 1987; Lewis, 2005). According to Townshend, ‘there could be some form of explanatory primacy of material factors’ within the Laclau-Mouffean analytical framework (Townshend, 2004: 274). Similarly, in her account of the book, *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change*, she classifies the contributors of the book as ‘thick’ and ‘thin’ theorists where the ““thick” explicitly deny the importance of institutional and socio-economic factors in shaping discourse and the role of “interests” in explaining political motivation [while] the “thin” theorists (...) implicitly invite, or explicitly allow, a greater constitutive role for socio-economic factors and preconstituted interests, in effect opening up the possibility of greater methodological pluralism’ (Townshend, 2003: 133). This new ‘postmodern politics’—while it “repoliticizes” a series of domains previously considered “apolitical” or “private”; the fact remains, [...] that it does *not* in fact repoliticise capitalism, because the very notion and form of the “political” within which it operates is grounded in the “depoliticisation” of the economy’ (Butler, 2000: 98). In line with this, the current attempt which aims to explore the emergence and disappearance of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ does not make any reference to the material aspects of this hegemony and how the discourses on ‘Europe’ are articulated within the realm of the economy. Future research on ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ might entail a degree of more materialist forms of explanation so as to explore the notion’s ‘material possibility’ and its relationship to ‘existing market orders’ in Turkish politics (Townshend, 2003: 136).

In line with the non-materiality of Laclau-Mouffean analytical framework, another crucial question that needs to be contemplated is whether the notion of ‘hegemony’ is a dynamic concept or not. The thesis so far aimed at exploring how different positions and political identities have been formed by the discourses on ‘Europe’ in Turkish politics after 1999. However, in line with this aim, ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ within this study emerges as a struggle to maintain the already existing hegemony of the notion. Therefore, the question explored here is not how ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ is formed, but how it is maintained. Similarly, the Laclau-Mouffean theoretical framework does not interrogate the success conditions of discourses. By this token, this thesis did not explore why discourses on ‘Europe’ succeeded in hegemonising *the social* in Turkey after 1999. A more structurally-informed reading of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ might answer these questions.

Similarly, the explanatory power of the concepts of logic of equivalence and logic of difference also has to be rethought, as already mentioned before. In Chapter 7 and Chapter 8, I investigated how logics of equivalence and difference worked in forming bipolar hegemony of ‘Europe’. However, as this study confined itself to 3 newspapers, there is not enough empirical evidence to claim that *the social* was really split into two (logic of equivalence) or ‘Europe’ emerged as a non-adversarial category (logic of difference). It would be interesting to see in possible future research projects how discourses on ‘Europe’ shape social demands and have an impact on the realms of political economy, mass culture, foreign policy and the like. This exercise will also help refer to the question of how we might identify ‘collective will’ in establishing ‘Europe-as-hegemony’. In sum, further research might fruitfully explore,

the impact of ‘Europe-as-hegemony’ in different domains of social phenomena in Turkey, and scrutinise a more historical narrative of ‘Europe’

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