CYPRUS POLICY OF TURKEY IN THE 2000s:
HAS THE "NATIONAL CAUSE" BECOME AN "IMPEDIMENT TO
PROGRESS"?

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ABSTRACT

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This study claims that there has been realized an obvious transformation in the way in which the Cyprus question is perceived and handled in Turkey, both in official state policy and popular opinion, during 2000s. It is aimed in this study to depict this transformation with its different dimensions and analyze this transformation with a historical perspective in terms of the actors and dynamics involved. The social and political dynamics which brought about such a transformation are investigated and the positions and attitudes of certain social actors, with special reference to big capital and its representative TÜSİAD, are disclosed within the scope of this study.

It is maintained in this study that in order to understand and analyze the transformation in the Cyprus policy of Turkey and the public opinion, it is necessary to relate this process with general political atmosphere of the country as well as the hegemonic visions/projects/opinions of the period. In this case, it is actually impossible to understand and analyze the transformation of the official policy and public opinion on Cyprus separate from the EU membership project specifically in 2000s. This study analyzes this transformation as a dimension of a general process that is the construction of EU membership objective as a hegemonic project. Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony and Bob Jessop's conceptualization of hegemonic project have been utilized in this analysis.

Keywords: Cyprus question, Turkey's EU membership process, TÜSİAD, hegemonic project.

ÖZ

2000'li YILLARDA TÜRKİYE'NİN KIBRIS POLİTİKASI: "ULUSAL DAVA" "GELİŞMENİN ÖNÜNDE BİR ENGEL"E Mİ DÖNÜŞTÜ?

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Bu çalışma, 2000'li yıllarda Türkiye'de Kıbrıs sonunun hem resmi devlet politikası bağlamında hem de kamuoyunda algılanış ve ele alınışında bariz bir dönüşüm yaşandığı iddiasındadır. Bu çalışma söz konusu dönüşümü değişik boyutlarıyla betimlemeyi ve tarihsel bir perspektif ışığında analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma kapsamında böylesi bir dönüşümü doğuran siyasal ve toplumsal dinamikler araştırılacak ve büyük sermaye ile onun temsilcisi olan TÜSİAD başta olmak üzere bazı toplumsal aktörlerin tavır ve pozisyonları gösterilecektir.

Bu çalışmada Türkiye'nin Kıbrıs politikasındaki ve kamuoyunun konuya bakışındaki dönüşümü anlamak ve analiz etmek için, sürecin ülkenin genel siyasi atmosferi ve dönemin hegemonik vizyon/proje/görüşleri ile ilişkilendirilmesinin gerekliliği savunulmaktadır. Bu örnekte Kıbrıs hakkındaki resmi politika ve kamuoyu görüşünün özellikle 2000'li yıllardaki dönüşümünü AB üyelik sürecinden bağımsız olarak anlamak ve analiz etmek mümkün değildir. Bu çalışmada söz konusu değişim genel bir sürecin bir boyutu olarak analiz edilmektedir: AB üyelik hedefinin bir hegemonik proje olarak kurulması. Bu analiz için Antonio Gramsci'nin hegemonya teorisinden ve Bob Jessop'un hegemonik proje kavramlaştırmasından yararlanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kıbrıs sorunu, Türkiye'nin AB üyelik süreci, TÜSİAD, hegemonik proje

To My Parents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Cyprus question has always been one of the major policy issues for Turkey, which had significant repercussions in terms of both domestic and international politics, since 1950s. Many generations have grown up with the belief that Cyprus question is a matter of national cause which should be defended at any costs. Significance of the Cyprus question went beyond a desire to protect Turkish Cypriots from the Greek threat, and it turned into a manifestation of Turkish might, the primordial concern through which Turkish people express their nationalist sentiments with reference to certain concepts such as national honour and pride.

This picture radically changed in the 2000s. We witnessed a transformation in the way in which the Cyprus problem is perceived, defined and handled during these recent years. This transformation has changed not only the official Cyprus policy of Turkey but also an important segment of the public opinion and popular discourse on the Cyprus problem. It involves a fundamental change in the definition and basic premises of the Cyprus question. In 2000s, Cyprus question began to be defined and perceived by many as a constraint which prevents Turkey to take steps towards a better future in the process of integration to the EU.

Thus, transformation of the Cyprus policy as well as popular conceptualization of the Cyprus problem in 2000s should be seen as a break away point which has dramatically changed the traditional policy and long standing tendencies of the public opinion. In other words, one of the most constant and settled themes of Turkish social and political life, having a past of about fifty years, has been radically transformed within just a few years. This study aims to disclose the reasons and dynamics of this profound and rapid transformation, the positions of social actors during this transformation period, and the interaction among these social actors as well as their interactions with the public opinion.

This study claims that it is impossible to understand and analyze this profound transformation separate from the general socio-economic and political environment since Cyprus question has never been defined and perceived from within the own dynamics of the island including the lives, conditions and concerns of the Cypriots. The living conditions of Turkish Cypriots have always remained in a secondary position in the face of macro determinants of Turkish politics with regard to international dynamics. Official Cyprus policy of Turkey, as well as the tendencies of the public opinion on this issue, has been established through those macro determinants. Indeed, it can be argued that the Cyprus policy should be seen as a symbolic element, as an indicator reflecting the hegemonic social-political projects, visions and tendencies in Turkey.

Starting at this point, it becomes necessary to analyse this recent transformation of Cyprus policy in close connection with the dominant social-political visions, generalized tendencies and objectives and the hegemonic project(s) of Turkish political arena in general. It will be argued in this study that EU membership project is the underlying motive of such a transformation in 2000s.

Relationships between Turkey and EU/EEC (European Union/European Economic Community) date back to 1959, the year in which Turkey has submitted its first application for full membership. In 1963, the Association Agreement was signed between Turkey and the EEC. In 1971, Turkey signed the Added Protocol which regulated the transition process to the Common Market. However, Turkey preferred to delay the process of accession to the Common Market during 1970s as Turkish capitalism was pursuing its accumulation through the import-substitution strategy under protectionist measures. Neither the bourgeoisie nor the state bureaucracy (especially the effective State Planning Organization) was willing to access the EEC since it was believed at that time that such an accession would harm the "national industry" of Turkey (Eralp, 1997: 95-96).

The picture changed radically after 1980. The new accumulation strategy, which was introduced together with January 24th Decisions and implemented without any serious reaction in a social environment "sterilized" by the military coup,

dramatically changed the conditions of existence as well as the objectives of Turkish State and the capital[1]. Liberalisation was standing in the centre of new policies and regulations introduced with January 24th Decisions in the forms of foreign trade liberalization, foreign exchange and capital market liberalization, price liberalization, interest rate liberalization, etc. (Kazgan, 1999: 147-148). This strong wind of liberalization which was blowing all over the world and blasting the rights of working people imposed not only a dramatically different organisation of state-society relations within the country, but also entirely new models of integration in the international arena.

With the 1980 transformation, the objective of the integration with the world economy began to be perceived "as an end in itself" (Yalman, 2001: 42). Turkey's opinion on membership to EU has changed dramatically since integration to the world economy gained a great importance compared to previous periods with the dramatic transformation of the capital accumulation model, from an import substitution oriented development strategy which was based on interventionist measures and public investments to an export promotion oriented growth strategy based on liberalization and privatization. EU membership began to be regarded as the primary means of integration to the global economic and political structure; as the necessary step of the transformation process has been started with January 24th Decisions and continued with the military coup as well as the Özal regime. Turkey's application for EU membership in 1987 should be read within this specific historical conjuncture of 1980s.

In 1980s and also in 1990s, Turkey could not make a serious progress towards the EU membership mostly because of political problems on issues like democratisation, human rights and minority rights. But in the end of extraordinary conditions forced by the military regime at first and Kurdish uprise afterwards, relations between EU and Turkey have been normalized by the end of 1990s. Indeed, after the Helsinki Summit (December 1999) in which EU has recognized Turkey as a candidate

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[1]For detailed information about the content of the January 24th decisions and characteristics of the new accumulation strategy, see Kazgan (1999) and Boratav (1993).

country for full membership, the EU membership has become the central theme of social and political life in Turkey. All political and social actors have started to define themselves with reference to the EU membership process. EU membership has begun to represent not only the sole future perspective for the dominant class but also the sole source of hope towards a better life for the majority of Turkish society. In other words, the EU membership project has become the focal point of enthusiasm for both the rulers and the ruled.

This picture enables us to state that Turkey's membership to EU began to gain the features of a hegemonic project which embraces the wide sections of the society (Kaya, 2002-03: 175). A hegemonic project can be defined as a concrete programme developed in a particular historical moment through which a particular class/group maintains its hegemony. It is the hegemonic project which would make the articulation of interests of subordinate classes/groups to that of the hegemonic one, possible; which would establish the famous unstable equilibria (Gramsci, 2000: 206) between interests of the fundamental group and those of subordinate groups – an equilibria in which interests of the dominant group prevail – temporarily within specific historical conditions.

Thus, as Jessop underlines (1990: 209), hegemonic project links the realization of certain particular interest of subordinate social forces to the pursuit of a "national-popular" programme which favours the long-term interest of the hegemonic force. Unlike the accumulation strategies, hegemonic projects can be in relation principally with various non-economic objectives – even if economically conditioned and economically relevant. For instance, a hegemonic project might include military success, social reform, political stability or moral regeneration (Jessop, 1990: 208)[2].

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[2] With reference to the useful definition of Tünay (1993: 13) "hegemony refers to domination by the creation of a collective will which articulates the interests of other classes or groups to that of the hegemonic class". The concept of hegemony is used to define the ruling practice of the dominant class which contains a notion of intellectual and moral leadership besides coercive domination (Gramsci, 2000: 249). This notion of intellectual and moral leadership involved in the constitution and reproduction of a collective will, a national-popular outlook, a common world view which is adequate to the needs of social and economic production (Jessop, 1982: 148).

EU membership should be analysed as an *expansive* hegemonic project unlike the *passive revolution*[3] of 1980s which has, as Yalman (2001: 45-46) indicates, restructured the state-society relations in an authoritarian way and attempted to gain the consent of people repressively with the aim of de-politization[4]. The objective of EU membership gave the dominant class the chance to establish its hegemony in an *expansive* way thanks to its functioning, with the words of Jessop (1990: 212), as a consensual programme that achieved to gain the active support of a substantial majority of popular masses[5].

The passive revolution attempt of 1980s could be deemed successful in terms of internalisation of the free market discourse and individualistic competitive values by large sections of society and concussion administered to the social and political struggle of the working class. However, starting from the middle of 1980's, weaknesses of that hegemonic project[6] began to arise and Turkish capitalism has passed 1990's in the grip of structural instability and various economic and political

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For further information about the concepts of hegemony and hegemonic project, see Gramsci (2000), Jessop (1982) and (1990), Mouffe (1977), Buci-Glucksmann (1982), Anderson (1977), Hall, Lumley and McLennan (1977), Carnoy (1984) and Hoffman (1984)

[3] Gramsci defines the concept of passive revolution as "revolution" without a "revolution" (Gramsci, 2000: 250). The term passive revolution indicates a reorganisation of economic, political and ideological relations, often in response to a crisis that maintains the passivity of subordinate groups and the separation of leaders and the led (Jessop, 1982: 150).

For further information about the concept of passive revolution, see Gramsci (2000), Jessop (1982) and (1990), Mouffe (1977) and Buci-Gluksmann (1982).

[4] For detailed explanation of the 1980 transformation as a case of passive revolution, see Tünay (1993) and Yalman (2001).

[5] Different from the *passive revolution* which neutralize other social forces; *expansive hegemony* is established through the articulation of the interests of subordinate classes to that of the fundamental class'. The projects aims at an expansive hegemony (could also named as the "one nation" projects) are the projects in which the support of the entire population is mobilized through material concessions and symbolic rewards (Jessop, 1990: 211). This support and "active consent" of dominated groups is mobilized and reproduced by the ruling class through their exercise of intellectual, political and moral leadership (Jessop, 1982: 148).

For detailed information about the concept of expansive hegemony, see Jessop (1982) and (1990).

[6] For detailed information about the weaknesses of this attempt of passive revolution, see Tünay (1993), Boratav (1995) and Kaya (2002).

crises. There was a lack of a hegemonic project which would re-organise the system around certain aims and values and would provide a social integrity as well as economic and political stability.

That missing hegemonic project appeared at the end of 1990s and became evident in the beginning of 2000s in terms of the EU membership. In fact, the EU membership project should be seen as the second phase, as well as the second face, of the neo-liberal hegemony (or as a reformulation of the neo-liberal hegemony in an *expansive* form) which has been tried to be established in a very different form in 1980's, since the material ground on which this expansive hegemonic project of EU membership is based is not different from the previous era. The essence of the capital accumulation strategy has not changed since 1980's despite certain modifications. That is to say, neo-liberal model is constant but the ways in which it attains a hegemonic position are changing. Unlike the authoritarian and repressive strategies of the 1980s, in 2000s neo-liberalism has had a change to disguise itself in a more expansive form under the magical aura of the EU, addressing the economical, social and political needs of Turkish people and promising a better life.

With official recognition of the candidate status of Turkey for EU membership in December 1999 at Helsinki Summit, the old dream of EU membership turned to a realistic objective. After the Helsinki turn, historical conditions has matured for EU membership objective to be constructed as a hegemonic project. That is to say, a new hegemonic project appeared only when the tendencies and dynamics of the international system and domestic social and political agenda overlapped. On such a material ground, the EU membership objective has acquired a hegemonic position by gaining the active support of the majority of Turkish society. Different components of the society have endorsed the EU membership project on the basis of various reasons and expectations. However, this process in which different sections of society have adopted the objective of EU membership through different reasons, has been essentially organized and led by the big business which perceives its future within the EU.

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The big capital, represented by TÜSİAD, leads other fractions of bourgeoisie and certain sections of society in the process of constructing the EU membership as a hegemonic project. As its previous chairman underlines, TÜSİAD had started "lobbying" activities towards the goal of EU membership long before the issue has become the main heading in Turkey's social and political agenda (Özilhan, 2003: 6). The clear position of TUSİAD had a great effect in the determination of "road maps" of governments towards the EU membership (Türkay, 2004: 4).

The objective of EU membership re-united different fractions of Turkish capital in the leadership of the big business after a long period of time. EU membership project is desirable in the eyes of Turkish capital because of the fact that it would mean further integration to the global economic circles and it would make the Turkish capital a part of the European capital and market while it would further transform the Turkish social formation in accordance with neo-liberal accumulation strategy through the adjustment process.

Extra-ordinary measures introduced by the authoritarian military regime and continued during 1980s and 1990s in different forms which restricted both political democracy and social rights, became unnecessary in the end of 1990s. Because, the systemic threat "inflicted" by leftist movements and working class militancy was eliminated by the coercive and ideological means of 1980s and the armed struggle which lasted for 15 years in the south-eastern regions of Turkey came to an end in the end of 1990s. In such a context, the authoritarian structure which was feverishly supported by all sections of Turkish capital in the early 1980s, has become a burden on the shoulders Turkish capital, especially on its big sections since it has prevented Turkey from further international integration.

EU membership appeared as a perfect means both for "normalization" of Turkish socio-political structure which began to impede Turkish involvement in the international division of labour (by drawing the reaction of international organizations and public opinion in general) and for further adjustment of Turkey to neo-liberal measures and standards in question. As Türkay (2003: 196) underlines,

the EU is being presented as the prototype of globalization and the vehicle that would carry Turkey to the process of globalization at the same time.

Transformation of the EU itself was paving the ground for expectations of Turkish capital in the direction of neo-liberal adjustment. After the Maastricht turn, the EU internalized neo-liberal manifestations and adopted them in its official documents as the rules of economic stability and development. In 1993, "the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the union" has been determined as one of the criteria to judge if a candidate country is eligible to join the EU (EC, 1993). Thus, the adjustment to the EU began to be interpreted as the adjustment to neo-liberal rules and regulations for candidate countries.

Several ideological agencies such as mass media, organic intellectuals (of capital), political parties, non-governmental organizations, schools and even the trade unions have contributed to the ideological and educative process of constructing the EU membership as a hegemonic project led by TÜSİAD. Explicitly, Özilhan (2003: 6) underlines that EU membership process is adopted by different sections of society with the help of impulsion by the private sector and "civil society". He also states that the government was directed to certain objectives in line with the EU accession based on a far-reaching social consensus. Özilhan openly indicates to the central role of TÜSİAD in establishment of so called social consensus as well as the direction of government to take steps towards the EU accession. Thus, he affirms the pioneering role of TÜSİAD in establishing the EU membership as a hegemonic project.

Certain researches made indicate that about 90% of the business world supports the EU integration (Uzgel: 2004: 219). In other words, not only the big capital but also the small and medium capital groups are supporting Turkey's membership to the EU feverishly and expressing this support openly through their organisations (such as TOBB "The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey" and Turkish SİAD "Industrialists' and Businessmen's Associations" Platform representing local industrialists' and businessmen's associations). The research made by Kazgan

(mentioned above) showed that the business firms advocate the EU membership independently from their capacity of competition (Uzgel, 2004: 216).

Chairman of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), Rıfat Hisarcıklıoğlu, states that EU adjustment process would create, in business terms, a propitious climate for cooperation and investment (Hisarcıklıoglu, 2004). TOBB also lead an initiative that aims to publicize the fervent attitude of Turkish business world towards the EU membership. An announcement has been prepared by this intitiative, which is signed by TÜSİAD, IKV (Economic Development Foundation), IMKB (Istanbul Stock Exchange), ISO (Istanbul Chamber of Industry), ITO (Istanbul Chamber of Commerce), TISK (Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations), Hak-İş (The Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions), TIM (Turkish Assembly of Exporters), YSD (Charter of Foreign Investors), DEIK (Foreign Economic Relations Board), UND (International Transporters' Association of Turkey) and TURSAB (Association of Turkish Travel Agencies), in this direction. In this announcement, EU membership is defined as a national policy and a social transformation project which would help us in adopting the changing global conditions and Turkish government is invited to accelerate the adjustment process (Ekonomik Forum, 05/2003: 10)

Turkish SİAD Platform (TSP), which includes 60 local industrialists' and businessmen's associations, has also repeatedly declared its fervid support to the EU membership project. It defines the EU membership project as the sole development strategy and social model for Turkey which is essential for both short-term macroeconomic stability and long-term development targets. Moreover, the EU membership is also presented as an indispensable objective since it is the only way for Turkey to attract the foreign capital and investment and to provide prosperity for 65 Millions of people (TSP, 07/06/2002).

Under the constructive role of big capital and having the support of all its sections, EU membership gradually turned to an indisputable national objective. Especially after the Helsinki Summit, the EU membership objective has become the symbol of

the collective will as well as the constructive element of new historical bloc[7] and a social consensus. Indeed, this issue has become the primary basis for all the future visions and expectations of the country. More importantly, the EU membership issue began to draw the borders of the rational-legitimate political terrain. The consensus among major political parties about the EU membership issue has defined "the centre ground of politics" (Jessop, 1990: 183) and the mainstream political arena began to construct itself on the basis of this EU membership objective.

Following Jessop (1990: 181-208), it can be argued that any demands, interests and arguments that are inconsistent with the central ground of the hegemonic project (EU membership) are deemed immoral and/or irrational, thus the counter-hegemonic forces have been progressively neutralized or eliminated. In this sense, within the period after Helsinki Summit, political parties or social groups that are against the EU membership (such as certain nationalist and socialist parties and groups) are gradually marginalized and accused of being irrational, archaic or isolationist. In fact, the unquestionable legitimacy of EU membership makes even the extreme nationalists (such as Nationalist Action Party – MHP) to declare that they support the EU integration and work for it (Güneş-Ayata, 2003: 211). This political environment opened the way for the victory of AKP (Justice and Development Party) in the November 2002 elections. AKP was the one which commits itself to the goal of EU membership more feverishly than other pro-EU parties and its victory has perfected the hegemonic position of the EU membership objective.

On the other hand, the mainstream media (especially major newspapers such as *Hürriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Sabah* and *Radikal*) has been one of the fervid advocates of the EU membership. Certain non-governmental organisations, especially the ones with certain links to the private sector such as IKV (Economic Development Foundation), TESEV (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation) and EDP (Economics and Foreign Policy Forum) have been quite active in promoting the EU membership using their own channels besides the media. IKV led the creation of *Avrupa Hareketi*

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[7] Historical bloc can be defined as the complex unity of the structures and superstructures (Gramsci: 2000: 192); as the specific configuration of the social formation in a specific historical context.

2002 (Movement for Europe 2002), a broad platform that mobilized 175 non-governmental organizations to take collective actions in favour of Turkey's accession to the EU (Öniş, 2003: 20).

Turkish General Staff has also maintained its attitude on behalf of the EU membership, albeit certain reservations. Interestingly, it is widely argued that the military is against Turkey's membership to the EU since it would lose its privileged position in that case. This kind of an argument is too shallow to analyse the position of the military in the face of EU membership since it is impossible to entirely decompose the interests of the capitalist system and the military as the system's defender. In Turkish case, it seems impossible for the General Staff to oppose the EU membership both because its mission to ensure and enhance the Kemalist modernisation/westernisation objective and its position within the economic structure as an important economic actor in Turkey. As Öniş states (2003: 20), "there has been a close overlap between economic interests of big business and the military-security arm of the state in Turkey, a relationship that has been steadily strengthened from the import-substitution era onwards."

The EU membership process succeeded in gaining the support of "dissident" sections in the society as well. The majority of leftist intellectuals and certain leftist movements have become advocates of the EU integration mostly on the grounds of the democratisation process[8]. In their eyes, the adoption of Copenhagen Criteria, with the emphasis on stabilisation of democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for minorities, has appeared as a chance for Turkey to transform itself from an authoritarian regime to a democratic country. As underlined by Keyder (2004: 231), the dissident groups including not only the leftist intelligentsia but also the Kurdish and Islamist movements as well as human rights activists began to perceive

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[8] For detailed information about the process of democratization and for an analysis about the affirmative approach of capital to the democratization process in the last period, see Öniş (2003), Öniş and Türem (2001) and Güveloğlu (2003).

the EU membership process as the only way to reduce the absolute state domination and reach a true democratic and pluralist system from the end of 1990s onwards[9].

Therefore, the consensus established in the direction of EU membership among the capital, the government as well as the other parts of the state such as the military and bureaucracy, the mainstream media, certain NGOs and intellectuals achieved to gain a huge support from the majority of Turkish society as well as the dissident groups. According to the Eurobarometer, Turkey was one of the high-ranking countries in support of EU membership with 65 percent in 2002. Moreover, 71 percent of the sample was thinking that the country will benefit from such membership (Güneş-Ayata, 2003: 206). By the year 2004, Turkey has become the most high-ranking country among the acceding and candidate countries in support of EU membership with 71 percent (European Commission, 2004).

Thus, under the leadership of big capital and through the endorsement of different components in the Turkish state and society, EU membership project has been constructed as an indisputable national objective and manifestation of the general interest in the society within a few years. All other social and political projects and perspectives began to be subordinated by the hegemonic project of EU membership. In other words, the EU membership project began to define the entire social and political map of the country.

Within this social and political atmosphere, Cyprus question has been one of the most important components of the agenda. With the emergence of the EU membership objective as a hegemonic project on the basis of which a social consensus and a new historical bloc has been established and through which the active consent of the majority of the society has been mobilized, Cyprus question began to be conceived in terms of this hegemonic project through the linkage between the EU membership process and the settlement of Cyprus question. Indeed, the Cyprus question could be seen as a *par excellence* example of the transformation

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[9] For the arguments of the libertarian leftist intellectuals which pave the ground for their support given to the EU membership of Turkey, see Keyder (2004), Belge (2003), İnsel (2002) and Gülalp (2004).

of certain traditional political perspectives which becomes necessary on the way to the EU membership.

Seeing that settlement of the Cyprus problem appears as a necessity (not as an official precondition but as a *sine qua non*) on the way of Turkey towards the EU accession, it became inevitable for rulers of the country to change their visions and approaches about the Cyprus problem. In short, Turkey has withdrawn from the majority of its claims on Cyprus, whether permanently or temporarily, as long as it seems impossible for her to withdraw the objective of the EU membership since it appears as the only realistic and desirable vision about the future of the country.

In this study, the process of transformation of the official policy as well as the popular opinion and discourse on Cyprus question will be examined on the basis of this EU membership factor within a historical perspective. The main claim of the study is that: this transformation process could not be understood and analysed separately from general social and political context of Turkey in the last period, especially from the concerns pertinent to EU membership process. Indeed, architects of the construction of the EU membership as a hegemonic project and initiators of transformation of the official Cyprus policy and the popular perception of the Cyprus question are the same spheres of the society. This study aims to disclose the connection between the EU membership project and the transformation in the Turkish opinion on Cyprus from a solid and intransigent attitude to a moderate and compromising one in terms of historical processes, actors and dynamics.

One of the most important points of this connection is the role of Turkish capital in these two processes as the leading actor. Turkish capital, especially the big capital and its representative TÜSİAD, has been the pioneer in promoting the EU membership process and the construction of this project as a hegemonic one both within the political and social arena as well as the transformation of the solid official policy and rigid-nationalist popular opinion on the Cyprus question. In accordance with its future visions and interests, Turkish capital has intervened in the Cyprus question with all its efforts and means to ensure the settlement of the problem in line with the EU membership objective. In this process, especially TÜSİAD has acted as

an effective, powerful and determining agent who has a great influence both on the political decision-making process and the formation of the public opinion.

Various sources have been utilized to disclose the connection between the transformation of Cyprus policy and the EU membership process and analyze this connection within a historical perspective with reference to actors and dynamics within the limited context of this study. In addition to relevant books and articles, official documents of the Turkish Republic as well as relevant documents of the international organizations like UN and EU; regular publications, journals, brochures, reports and press announcements of certain institutions and organizations as well as speeches and declarations of certain social and political actors have been gathered and analyzed in accordance with a textual-interpretive method. Detailed examination of national press organs (especially major newspapers which are effective in the formation of public opinion and represent certain approaches such as *Hürriyet*, *Radikal* and *Cumhuriyet*) have also been made. Independent reports, queries and public opinion polls have been used to demonstrate certain statistical data.

Besides all the above-mentioned materials, three exclusive interviews have been made with Cem Duna (Vice Chairman at TÜSİAD), Onur Öymen (Vice Chairman at CHP) and Mehmet Dülger (AKP Deputy and Chairman at TBMM Foreign Affairs Commission) to illustrate the views of the most important social (TÜSİAD) and political (AKP and CHP) actors in detail, referring directly to the authorized representatives of these actors. These interviews have added a scientific value to the study as they enabled us to sustain the main theme of the study directly on primary sources.

By using all these materials, it is aimed to present a holistic picture of the transformation process in the Cyprus policy with reference to historically specific conditions and dynamics of the period. Beyond arranging and describing distinct events and opinions, this study aims to make an integral analysis of this transformation period through establishing certain relations between separately appearing events and aspects and perceiving them as parts of the same social totality.

With those aims, in the following chapter of the study , historical development of the Cyprus problem is briefly demonstrated with a special emphasis on certain turning points underlining the modifications in the Cyprus policy of Turkey in accordance with certain changes in the socio-economic and political environment (accumulation strategies and hegemonic projects) both in the national and international aspects. To reveal the historical background of the problem seems necessary to sustain one of the premises of the study about the close connection between the perception of the Cyprus problem and the macro socio-economic and political atmosphere involved.

The transformation period in which the official policy, social perception and popular discourse about the Cyprus problem have all changed radically is examined and analysed in detail in the third chapter with a special emphasis on the role of Turkish capital in this process. In this connection, the process of establishing a consensus towards the solution of the Cyprus problem on the way to the EU membership is analysed in terms of its reasons, actors and dynamics. Actors and foundations of the opposing camp which counters the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of the Annan Plan mainly with nationalist arguments are also displayed in this chapter.

In the third chapter, it is also intended to analyse the Cyprus question as an arena of the hegemonic struggle which has continued in various fields in accordance with the hegemonic project of the EU membership. Conceiving this issue as an arena of hegemonic struggle, positions of certain social actors who are not frankly partials of any sides such as the General Staff and the process of establishing the affirmative public opinion on this issue in line with the EU membership project will be discussed. In addition, this chapter will contain certain implications about the future development of the Cyprus question in relation with the future of EU membership project.

The last chapter underlines the main arguments of this study and presents the main conclusions of the study. The last chapter also emphizes certain theoretical and methodological points which are inferred from this study.

Lastly, it should be underlined that this study is aimed to understand and analyze especially the period between December 1999 (Helsinki Summit) and April 2004

(Referendum in Cyprus). Thus, all the premises of this study about the transformation of the Cyprus policy and the public opinion in Cyprus as well as the hegemonic position of the EU membership project should be evaluated within this historical context. In other words, both the official policy and the public opinion on Cyprus and the position of the EU membership project could possible change in future in accordance with the social and political developments.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM

This chapter aims to give a short historical background of the problem which seems necessary to understand the present situation of and also to support one of the main premises of the thesis study about the internal relation between the way in which the Cyprus problem is perceived/handled and the national/international atmosphere in both socio-economic and political sense. But, it should be underlined that this chapter do not attempt to give a detailed history of the problem with all developments and events involved and it aims more to underline the turning points which indicate certain modifications in the Turkish opinion. It should be taken for granted that the late periods would be examined in more detail in comparison with earlier periods since the true subject matter of this study is the transformation experienced in 2000s.

Cyprus has entered the Turkish agenda some centuries ago, during the Ottoman period, with the conquest of the island in 1571. However, the Cyprus problem as we perceive today has appeared in a relatively late period. It was the uprising of Greek Cypriots against the British domination with an aim to join Greece which gained power in 1950s by the help of the wind of de-colonization. This aim of Greek Cypriots was supported by Hellenistic claims of Greece on Cyprus. Turkey, despite its approval of the British domination in Cyprus, opposed a possible Greek domination in the island unequivocally. Thus, Turkey involved in the Cyprus problem in order to prevent the island from being Greek soil in 1950s. Despite the fact that Turkey has become officially a part of the Cyprus problem in 1955 with the London Conference, 1950 is a more agreeable as the starting date of the Cyprus problem of Turkey since it is the beginning point of the period in which Greek uprising came to the world agenda and threatened the British domination seriously.

Island of Cyprus had been under the dominance of Ottoman Empire from 1571 to 1878. Ancestors of present Turkish Cypriots are the Ottomans who migrated from Anatolia between 1571 and 1878. Ottoman Empire left the island to Britain temporarily in 1878; and, in 1914, Britain declared the confiscation of the island. The new Turkish Republic accepted the annexation of Cyprus by Britain according to Article 20 the Lausanne Treaty signed on July 24th, 1923; thus giving up from its claims on the island. The Lausanne Treaty closed the Cyprus page for Turkey and the Turkish Republic had not attempted to re-open it until the rise of the anti-colonial struggle in Cyprus against the British domination.

2.1. Half Century-Long History: The Period of 1950-1999

This historical period between the years 1950-1999 could be analysed under the headings of two sub-periods. In the first period covering the time zone before the Turkish Intervention (1950-1974), Cyprus problem appeared as an important issue in the international community and Turkey was seen as a side in the problem together with United Kingdom and Greece. In this period, the years 1955 (in which the London Conference was held and Turkey was accepted as a part of the problem both in the national and international arenas), 1960 (in which federal and joint Republic of Cyprus has been established) and 1963 (in which the joint characteristic of the Republic of Cyprus has collapsed upon withdrawal of the Turkish Cypriots' deputies from the House of Representatives after Makarios' attempt to change the constitution) could be seen as the critical stepping stones which indicate certain changes both in the objective situation and the Cyprus policy of Turkey.

Unlike the period of 1950-1974, the Cyprus problem has been conceived as the problem of Turkey in the international arena after the Turkish Intervention (1974-1999). Turkey has started to be seen as the creator of the Cyprus problem following the 1974 military intervention and has been convicted and stigmatized as the occupier country in the eyes of the international community. From this date onwards, Turkey has been obliged to face this stigma in every occasion within the international arena. In this period, 1980 (in which the military has seized the power with a *coup*

d'etat in Turkey and interrupted the Cyprus peace negotiations), 1983 (in which the military regime has come to an end and ANAP (Motherland Party) has established the government under the leadership of Özal) and 1991 (in which Demirel government has acceded and turned the moderate discourse of ANAP government on Cyprus problem to a more solid-nationalistic one) could be seen as the critical points which indicate serious changes in the tendencies and attitudes of Turkey about the Cyprus problem.

2.1.1. The period before the Turkish Intervention: 1950-1974

The movement of de-colonization which gained power in the post Second World War period has deeply affected the social and political atmosphere in the Island of Cyprus. By the beginning of 1950s, the independence struggle against the British domination gained impulse in the island while, on the other hand, the present picture of dividedness mainly emerged in the early 1950s. It was mainly the Greek people who struggled against the British domination and the aim in this struggle was *enosis* (integration with Greece) rather than independence (Hakkı, 2004: 17). The objective of enosis kept the Turkish people away from the struggle against British domination and even impelled them to advocate the British domination. Leaders of the Turkish society took place on the British side (Hasgüler, 2000: 205) and Turkish people were used as police power by Britain against the Greek-oriented anti-colonialist struggle[10] (Hasgüler, 2000: 42).

These factors destroyed the chance of Turkish and Greek people fighting against the British imperialism together. In essence, such a joint struggle could provide a peaceful and solidaristic ground for Greek and Turkish people to live together. Nevertheless, the efforts of some leftist organizations and trade-unions to unite Greek and Turkish societies could not achieve to change the divided picture of the island.

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[10] According to the information given by the undersecretary of the governor of the period, John Reddaway, in 1958 there were 70 Greek and 1700 Turkish assistant police officer and no Greek but 542 Turkish expeditionary police officer in Cyprus (Hasgüler, 2000: 42).

In the first five years of 1950s, both Turkey and Greece preferred to follow a moderate policy about the Cyprus question. Both countries recognized the British rule as a legitimate administration while the official policy of Greece was to solve the problem through bilateral negotiations with Britain (Fırat, 2004a: 597). In spite of the Turkish Cypriot reaction against the demand of enosis, Turkey had perceived the Cyprus problem as a problem of United Kingdom during 1950-1954 and supported the British policy in this respect. In this sense, what was advocated by Turkey was preservation of the British rule and *status-quo* in Cyprus (Fırat, 2004a: 598).

Although Turkish Cypriots began to be organized against enosis both in Cyprus and Turkey in the post-war period, Turkish government did not pay much attention to this movement until 1954. The Foreign Minister of the time, Fuat Köprülü, stated that Turkey did not have a "Cyprus problem" on 20 June 1950 (Fırat, 2004a: 598). In other words, Turkey did not prefer to be involved in the Cyprus problem in the first half of 1950s since it had not conceive the Greek Cypriot demand of enosis as a serious threat until mid-1950s.

Coming up to the middle of 1950s, Greece changed its Cyprus policy and decided to internationalize the Cyprus problem through the UN in the view of solid British policy rejecting to recognize the claims of Greek Cypriots (Fırat, 2004a: 597). Turkey's attitude began to change with the application of Greece to the UN for recognition of the self-determination right for Cypriot people on 16 August 1954 (Hakkı, 2004: 17). This is the date from which the Cyprus question has begun to be formulated as a national case in Turkey.

Just after this application, on 23 August 1954, Turkish National Student Federation disseminated a statement declaring to the whole world that "Cyprus is Turkish". Establishment of the "Cyprus is Turkish Committee" was announced the next day after this declaration (An, 2003: 36-37). Parallel to this organization in Turkey, the Cyprus Turkish National Party which had been established in 1945 under the leadership of Dr. Fazıl Küçük, changed its name to the "Cyprus is Turkish Party"! (Hakkı, 2004: 18).

On the other hand, the British government made an invitation to the Turkish and Greek governments for a conference to discuss "the problems on politics and security in East Mediterranean region" on 20 June 1955 (Fırat, 2004a: 600). Starting with the London Conference, Turkey has become a legal and political side in the Cyprus question. London Conference ended up without any conclusions mostly because of the destructive effect of the September 6-7 events which was a massive aggression oriented to the Greek minority living in Turkey, especially in İstanbul[11] (Fırat, 2004a: 602).

By the middle of 1950's, the struggle against British domination was wrapped in the form of armed struggle. EOKA (*Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston*: National Organization of Cypriot Fighters) started to use arms towards the ideal of *enosis* in 1955 under the leadership of Grivas (Fırat, 2004a: 602). And, Turkey began to voice the *taksim* thesis which claims the division of the island between Turkey and Greece against the armed struggle of Greek Cypriots aiming to achieve the *enosis*,. In other words, Turkey intervened to the Cyprus problem when it became obvious that it is not possible for British rule to survive in Cyprus in order to to prevent the worst scenario: the annexation of the island to Greece, so-called *enosis*.

In the meantime, *taksim* thesis was quickly adopted by the top Turkish state authorities while Prime Minister Adnan Menderes presented the *taksim* thesis as Turkey's official Cyprus policy in TBMM (Turkish Great National Assembly) on 28 December 1956 (Fırat, 2004a: 604). In addition, Turkey also internationalized *taksim* thesis by declarations and publicized it with mass demonstrations of "*ya taksim ya ölüm*" (either division or death) in the period between 1955 and 1959. Meanwhile the situation in Cyprus was deteriorating gradually. EOKA was targeting not only British officers but also Cypriots (both Greek and Turkish) who were regarded as obstacles in front of the enosis ideal by the organization. In 1958, Turkish Cypriots formed TMT (Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı: Turkish Resistance Organization) under leadership of Mr. Rauf Denktaş. And, with the establishment of TMT, the tension

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[11] It is strongly possible that the message sent by the Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu from London to Ankara on 5 September saying "I am in a weak position. I should be able to say that we could not engross Turkish public opinion" triggered the aggression against the Greek people in Turkey on 6-7 September (An, 2002: 68; Hakkı, 2004: 21).

between two societies turned into a warfare situation. There experienced several shootouts between Greek and Turkish societies especially in Nicosia (Lefkoşa), Larnaca (Larnaka) and Famagusta (Gazimagosa) (Hasgüler, 2000: 216).

Towards the end of 1950s, Britain was convinced to withdraw from Cyprus, in return for some privileges such as military bases. By the end of 1958, USA began to force Turkey and Greece for a solution considering the conditions of the Cold War (Tayfur, 2002: 33). As a result, Greece and Turkey declared that they abandoned their theses of *enosis* and *taksim*. Then, in the face of their interests at NATO, Greece and Turkey retreated from their official policies which were being claimed as "national causes" by both sides (Fırat, 2004a: 608).

In February 1959, all the sides agreed on the establishment of an independent "Republic of Cyprus" in London and Zurich Conferences. According to this agreement, the new republic would recognize Turkey, Greece and Britain as the guarantor powers.

Republic of Cyprus, which was based on the principle of two-sided federation, was established on 16 August 1960. However, the stability established by the formation of a joint republic in this way did not last for long. Makarios, President of Cyprus Republic and one of the interesting figures of the non-alignment movement who was known as the "red priest", suggested changes in some certain constitutional articles in 1963. Proposal of Makarios was consisting of 13 articles and claiming a comprehensive change in the constitution which would destroy the joint and federal characteristics of the Republic of Cyprus. This proposal turned to be the beginning of the end and Turkish Cypriots withdrew from the House of Representatives after this proposal (Hasgüler, 2000: 225-230). Thus, the joint character of Cyprus Republic actually ended up after only 3 years.

The armed conflict between Turkish and Greek societies re-started at the end of 1963. In 1964, Turkey began to prepare for a military intervention to the island in order to ensure the security of Turkish Cypriots. However, the famous Johnson Letter (dated 5 June 1964) prevented Turkey from an extensive intervention; at least

it ensured the postponement of the intervention to an appropriate date (Hakkı, 2004: 27).

The armed conflict between Turkish and Greek Cypriots continued intermittently until 1974. And, "Provisional Turkish Cypriot Administration" was established on 28 December 1967 following the rise of aggressiveness between two societies. The tension rose with the coup made against Makarios by EOKA-B to realize the ideal of enosis. EOKA-B was a fascist-inspired pro-enosis underground organization which was established with the support of the Greek Junta of Colonels. In 15 July 1974, EOKA-B seized the power and declared the establishment of Cyprus Hellenic Republic under the leadership of Nicos Samson (Fırat, 2004a: 741).

This ultra-nationalist attempt to seize the power in Cyprus caused Turkey make a justification towards an intervention to the island. Then, Turkey, on the basis of the Treaty of Guarantee, gained the control over the 36% of Cyprus (north part of the island) after two military operations made respectively on 20 July and 14 August 1974.

2.1.2. The period after Turkish Intervention: 1974-1999

International public opinion seriously reacted against the Turkish intervention. General Assembly of the UN called all the states involved "to respect the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of the Republic of Cyprus and refrain from all acts and interventions directed against it" and demanded "the withdrawal without further delay of all foreign armed forces, foreign military presence and personnel from the Republic of Cyprus and the cessation of all foreign interference in their affairs" by its resolutions 3212 (dated 01/11/1975) and 3395 (dated 20/11/1975) (Bozkurt and Demirel: 2004: 66-67).

In addition, the UN Security Council recorded "its formal disapproval on unilateral military actions undertaken against the Republic of Cyprus" and urgently requested all the states "to refrain from any action which might prejudice the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of the Republic of Cyprus, as

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well as from any attempt at partition of the island or its unification with any other country" by its resolutions 360 (dated 16/08/1974) and 367 (dated 12/05/1975) (Bozkurt and Demirel: 2004: 75-76).

Establishment of Turkish Federated State of Cyprus was declared under the leadership of Rauf Denktaş on 13 February 1975 in spite of all the international reactions in this respect. Vienna Agreement of population exchange which would detach Northern Greeks and Southern Turks both from their hometowns and estates was signed in 2 August 1975. In fact, in the second half of 1970's, the atmosphere was giving hopes for a solution. Denktaş and Makarios agreed on four guidelines for re-establishment of a bi-communal federal republic on 12 February 1977. Two years later, Ten Point Agreement was signed by Denktaş and Kipriyanu on the basis of the Denktas-Makarios guidelines of February 12th (Fırat, 2004a: 766). Unfortunately, this positive atmosphere was disappeared with the military coup of 1980.

The military power suspended the efforts towards the solution of Cyprus problem and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (KKTC), which has been recognized only by Turkey till now, was established in 15 November 1983. UN Security Council deplored the declaration of purported secession by Turkish Cypriot authorities in part of the Republic of Cyprus; considered the above declaration as legally invalid and called for its withdrawal while reiterating its call all the states not to recognize the purported state of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" set up by secessionist acts and calling them not to facilitate or in any way assist the aforesaid secessionist entity by its resolutions 541 (dated 18/11/1983) and 550 (dated 11/05/1984) (Bozkurt and Demirel, 2004: 78-80). Therefore, KKTC has remained as an unrecognized phantom state which is, not able to make any kind of international business and participate to any international sports, arts, etc. activities. Such an isolatid condition made KKTC and Turkish Cypriots extremely dependent to Turkey.

The years between 1983 and 1991 could be named as "Özal years" in Turkish political history. With the end of military regime and transition to "democracy", ANAP (Motherland Party) of Turgut Özal came to the power in 1983. Özal was the designer of the January 24th (1980) decisions, the famous stability program which

has introduced the neo-liberal structural adjustment prescriptions based on devaluation, privatization, elimination of import quotas and liberalization of foreign trade regime, promotion of exports, elimination of state investments (especially in heavy industries), social expenditures and real wages of working people (Boratav, 1993: 121-123).

Precursors of the popular argument in the 2000s claiming the Cyprus problem as an obstacle preventing Turkey's integration with the world and the EU, which binds Turkey in every aspect within the international arena and which should be solved immediately can be found in the Özalist perspective of 1980's. To understand the reasons that lay the ground for the emergence of such an argumentation, it is essential to refer to the changing historical and structural conditions of the period.

The core element of the neo-liberal accumulation strategy was the integration with the world economy. All the policies were designed to open up the Turkish economy to the world and attract the foreign capital for investments in Turkey. But the target of integration with the world economy could not be realized only through economic transformations and the political dimension, especially the foreign policy should also be designed accordingly. With the end of the military regime political requirements of the neo-liberal project came to foreground. While the objective of integration with world economy was evolving from a preference to a necessity for Turkish capital, economic and political factors which impede this process of integration began to be formulated as obstacles preventing Turkey from developing and catching up.

Özal's government appeared on the political scene with the "historical responsibility" of covering these needs as the political representative of the "new era". What was lying behind the "active foreign policy" discourse of Özal and his insistence on the close connection between the economy and politics (Gürbey, 2001: 292) was political necessities of the neo-liberal project. Özal came to power with absolute support of the big capital and he has based his foreign policy on the objective of integration with the world economy. Therefore, it was urgent and necessary from his perspective to solve the problems which prevent Turkey from getting integrated to the world (Fırat, 2004b: 117). It could be said from the Özalist

point of view that the foreign policy has widely been perceived as a tool to achieve the "economic" objectives.

For Özal, Cyprus was the primary problem raising difficulties in each and every economic or political attempt by Turkey in the international arena; thus Turkey had to solve this problem in order to achieve its objectives (Fırat: 2004b: 117-120). But, Özal and his government was not the only source of power. The General Staff, civilian bureaucracy (especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the press and public opinion were very sensitive about the Cyprus question and they opposed any serious steps towards reconciliation (Uzgel, 2004: 404, 436). The military perspective was still effective upon the state bureaucracy and public opinion. Furthermore, Turkish capital, with its essential sections, was neither powerful nor willing to oppose the military understanding. Its priority was still the preservation of stability which could be ensured only with the intervention of armed forces. Thus, Özal succeeded to make a change in the Cyprus policy of Turkey during 1980s but could not able to make a transformation in that at a dramatic level.

Özal government came across a bad surprise just in the beginning of their period of power. Özal felt very displeased about the establishment of the KKTC just before the establishment of his government (Uzgel, 2004: 339) and tried to moderate the Cyprus policy of Turkey. He made suggestions on decreasing the number of Turkish soldiers in Cyprus and forced Denktaş to maintain a moderate attitude (Fırat, 2004b: 118-120). Especially during the New York talks (1984-1985), Özal pushed Denktaş to sign up the agreement suggested by the UN and he even declared that he has "encouraged" Denktaş for being positive and constructive (Uzgel, 2004: 349). This pertinacious attitude of Özal prevailed and Denktaş gave up insisting on the guarantor status of Turkey and rotating chairmanship procedure and he accepted the reduction of the Turkish zone (from 36% of the island to 29%) for the first and the last time (Fırat, 2004b: 119).

In addition to his trials on taking steps towards the solution of Cyprus problem, Özal also made an attempt to improve Turkey's strained relations with Greece which would directly affect the Cyprus question in a positive manner. He met with Greek

Prime Minister Papandreou in Davos and Brussels in 1988 to discuss problems between the two countries (Fırat, 2004b: 114-115). This attempt known as Davos process was important since it was indicating the positive attitude of Turkey towards restoring relations with Greece.

By 1990, the Cyprus game began to be played with contributions of an important player, the EC-EU, and it became a problem of EC-EU, as well. The EC-EU has become an authority on the Cyprus problem with the membership applications of Turkey (1987) and Republic of Cyprus (1990). Thus, from that date onwards, the development of the Cyprus problem should be read in a close relationship also with the EC-EU factor.

Özal (who became the President in November 1989) and the ANAP government tried to make new steps towards settlement of the problem. Özal suggested a high level meeting with the participation of Greece and Turkey; but with the end of the ANAP period in November 1991, the new Turkish government led by Demirel abandoned the pragmatic approach of Özal and returned to the previous traditional Cyprus thesis of Turkey (Fırat, 2004b: 455).

The failure of Denktas-Vasiliu talks in February 1990, the declaration of the European Council after the Dublin Summit in June 1990 reiterating that the Cyprus problem affected relations between EC and Turkey" (EC, 1990), the application of Republic of Cyprus for EU membership in July 1990 (three years after the Turkish re-application) and the acceptance of this application by the EU despite the objections of Turkey and KKTC (Fırat, 2004b: 453) let Turkey down and prepared the ground for a return to the traditional uncompromising Cyprus policy.

After rejection of the "Set of Ideas" presented by the UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali, the EU declared in June 1993 that there was no constraint on the EU membership process of Republic of Cyprus. It was fixed in the Corfu Summit (June 1994) that the Republic of Cyprus would be considered in the next phase of enlargement (Brewin, 1999: 149). The future EU membership of Republic of Cyprus would mean the collapse of the Turkish thesis which was based on incapability of the

Republic of Cyprus to represent the whole Cyprus Island[12] and impossibility of the Republic of Cyprus to become a member of an international organization or alliance which do not include both Greece and Turkey[13] (Bozkurt and Demirel, 2004: 204-205).

Another reason lying behind the sharp reaction of Turkey to EU membership process of the Republic of Cyprus was the fact that its prospective EU membership would render the Treaty of Guarantee invalid (Uslu, 2001: 271). Moreover, Turkish military forces in Cyprus would be regarded as occupying the territory of a member state by the EU in the case of EU membership of the Republic of Cyprus (Güney, 2000: 19).

Cyprus Island had witnessed almost 10 years of inactivity during the period between 1993 and 2002 with occasional exchange of accusations, and failure to achieve any substantial process (Aydın, 2003: 233). Although the 1990's could be evaluated as the years of uncompromising Cyprus policy for Turkey, there were periods in which Turkey pragmatically made concessions in order to reach its short term objectives. For instance, the hot agenda of Customs Union and the objective of making progress in its relations with the EU through accession to the Customs Union made Turkey to retreat from its thesis.

In 1995, Turkey indirectly accepted the EU membership of the Republic of Cyprus in order to be a member of the Customs Union (Çağlar, 2003: 173). Greece gave up its right of vetoing, which had blocked the conclusion of a customs union between the EU and Turkey in return for the EU's commitment to begin accession negotiations with Cyprus (Bailer-Allen, 2000: 42). And, as Dodd (1999: 140) states, Çiller's government admitted the opening of EU-Cyprus accession negotiations, by maintaining it was nothing to do with Turkey, in return for Greece not to veto the membership of Turkey to the Customs Union.

This kind of short term actions did not actually change the solid Cyprus policy of Turkey in 1990's. The concealed agreement between Turkey and the EU about the

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[12] based on the idea that the joint Republic of Cyprus has been transformed to a Greek Republic with the exclusion of Turkish Cypriots from the joint republic after 1963.

[13] based on 1959 London and Zurich Conferences.

beginning of accession negotiations of the Republic of Cyprus was hidden from Turkish public opinion. Turkish government took contrary steps within the country[14] while acting pragmatically in international arena. In the last days of 1995, TBMM promised full support for the KKTC in the vital fields of security, economy and the rejection of the application by Republic of Cyprus for the EU membership (Dodd, 1999: 142).

One of the most important reasons that made the solid Cyprus policy of Turkey enduring in 1990's was the raising nationalism in Turkey. Especially the second half of 1990's was a period in which the mainstream policy was embracing nationalism as a political discourse. Nationalism was the strongest and most evident response that was generated by Turkish politics in 1990's, against the feeling of dissolution created by the raising Kurdish movement (Yeğen, 2002: 889). In these years, the nationalist discourse was being used heavily to legitimize the continuing war and the methods used against the Kurdish uprise, were not only political but also ideological and psychological.

Cyprus question was one of the first issues which would be affected directly from the rising influence of the nationalist ideology and discourse. In fact, Cyprus problem has been used by the nationalist discourse as a political material since the 1950's (Kızılyürek, 2002: 341). As stated by Varlı (2004: 36) the Cyprus problem provided the motivation needed by the nationalist ideology to remain in a dynamic, strong and standing position.

The atmosphere determined by nationalism was apparent in both the relations with Greece and the attitude against Cyprus question. The Imia (Kardak) crises which brought Turkey and Greece at the doorstep of a war for a small uninhabited rocky island in January 1996, the killing of two Greek Cypriots by Turkish soldiers for attacking the Turkish flag in a demonstration on the Green Line in August 1996 and the famous words of then Foreign Minister Çiller like "we will break the hands of

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[14] such as the resolution by TBMM (Turkish Great National Assembly) in April 1995, maintaining that Turkey would integrate with Northern Cyprus in case of a decision by the EU to accept the southern part for membership (Uğur, 2003: 168) or the joint declaration which was signed in December 1995 between Turkey and KKTC (Güney, 2000: 22).

anyone touching our flag" (Dodd, 1999: 143) should be seen as indicators of the tense atmosphere and the effects of nationalism on the Greek-Turkish relations as well as the Cyprus question.

The announcement of Republic of Cyprus on purchasing S-300 surface-to-air missiles from Russia further tightened the already tense relations between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus; and, the insistent reaction of Turkey claiming that S-300 missiles would create a serious threat for its southern coasts and missiles were sent to Crete in the end (Tank, 2002: 154). These continuous conflicts strengthened the nationalist reactions as well as the relations between Turkey and KKTC; and, above all, they provided a strong legitimacy to the resolute attitude of political representatives of Northern Cyprus in the eyes of Turkish society.

This picture completed by the resolution of the European Council (EC, 1997) announcing that Turkey would not feature even among the second wave of applicants for EU membership in the Luxemburg Summit – December 1997 (Dodd, 1999: 144). In addition, the Luxemburg declaration made it clear that strengthening of relations between Turkey and the EU would be depending upon the "establishment of stable and satisfactory relations with Greece", the settlement of disputes between the two countries based on legal rules and the support for a political settlement in Cyprus (Uğur, 2003: 168).

The impact of the Luxemburg shock upon Turkey resulted unavoidably in a feeling of exclusion (Güney, 2000: 23). This feeling directed Turkey to adhere to the nationalist discourse and sharpen its solid and uncompromising attitude about the Cyprus problem which had already been obvious in the political map of 1990s. Even the Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz, who had the most reconciliatory attitude towards EU and Cyprus questions as the chairman of Özal's ANAP, adopted an uncompromising language against the decision of the European Council. He stated that Turkey will freeze its relations with the EU and would go ahead with its policy of integrating Northern Cyprus (Uğur, 2003: 168).

With the fading hopes towards the EU membership, there was nothing left to motivate Turkey for settlement of the Cyprus problem; and in such an environment,

second half of the 1990s (especially the period between 1996 and 1999) has probably witnessed the most solid state of Turkey's official policy on Cyprus. The deterioration in relations between Turkey and the EU ascended with launching of substantive negotiations between Republic of Cyprus and the EU on full membership during General Affairs Council Meeting held in Brussels on 9-10 November 1998 (Güney, 2000: 24). In 1998, the thesis of confederation[15] was officially adopted and declared by the government (Cem, 2004: 206).

2.2. The Period of Transformation: 1999-2004

The Cyprus question had partaken in the Turkish agenda in the first years of 1950s and has been formulated as a "problem" of Turkey since 1955. What differentiates the last period (beginning with the end of 1999) from the previous one was the way the Cyprus problem is perceived both officially and popularly. In other words, there took place an obvious transformation about the Cyprus problem in official state policy, in discourses of certain social and political actors (such as political parties, mainstream media circles, big business under the leadership of TÜSİAD, certain intellectuals and NGOs) and also in public opinion. What crystallize the difference of this period are the transformation of the definition and perception of the Cyprus problem from a national cause to an obstacle. 2000s are the years in which Turkey (and Turkish people) gave up its forty-five years old definition of Cyprus question as a national cause.

The main lines of the traditional Turkish view as to the Cyprus problem may be summarized as follows[16]:

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[15] which indicates the stiffening of Turkey's Cyprus policy and which is against not only the to very first foundation principles of Republic of Cyprus established in 1960 with the consent and support of Turkey, but also to the agreements reached between Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities as well as prior UN decisions and previous policies of Turkey.

[16] taken from the web site of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MainIssues/Cyprus/Cyprus_Issue.htm and http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MainIssues/Cyprus/Cyprus_HistoricalOverview. htm

- The main cause of the Cyprus problem is the aim of Greeks and Greek Cypriots towards annexation of Cyprus to Greece in order to Hellenize the entire population of the island, which is popularly named as *enosis*.

- The joint Cyprus Republic which was established in 1960 has indeed dissolved with violation of the constitution which ensured the bi-communal structure of the republic by Greek Cypriots. The present Greek Cypriot administration is not representing the whole island and its recognition as the Republic of Cyprus in international arena is neither legal nor legitimate.

- Greek Cypriots repudiated the solemn international agreements, violated the human rights of Turkish Cypriots on a massive scale and massacred them cruelly between the years 1963 and 1974. Natural rights and security of Turkish Cypriots could only be ensured with the 1974 intervention.

- Turkey's intervention in 1974 was made in order to ensure the distressed security of Turkish Cypriots in accordance with the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. It was a legal and legitimate resistance against the attempt of Greece to annex the island through a coup. Thus, it should be seen as a consequence of the Cyprus problem, but not as the cause.

- For the security of Turkish Cypriots, Greek and Turkish societies should live separately in their sovereign territories instead of integration. And also the existence of Turkish soldiers in the island is essential to preserve Turkish Cypriots from any potential attacks by Greeks.

- The condition of any settlement in Cyprus is the acceptance of the existence of two separate sovereign states in the island.

- The problem of Cyprus and Turkey's process of integration with the EU are unrelated issues.

- The application of the Greek Cypriot Administration for EU membership on behalf of the whole Cyprus Island is illegal. The accession of the Greek Cypriot Administration to the EU would be in contradiction with relevant

provisions of 1959-1960 Treaties prohibiting Cyprus from joining any international organization of which both Turkey and Greece are not members, thus it would constitute a violation of international law. In addition, the Greek Cypriot side has no authority to negotiate on behalf of the whole Island.

In a short time period between the years 2000 and 2004, Turkey witnessed a dramatic change in the way in which the Cyprus problem perceived and handled. Almost all the above-mentioned arguments have been abandoned, either explicitly or implicitly, during this period.

This change of perception first emerged among the business world and mainstream media circles; and then leaped to the governmental level with the 2002 elections. AKP government has symbolized a break in the continuity of Turkish foreign policy especially on the Cyprus issue. In the period between the end of 2002 and beginning of 2004, the Turkish state, with its main components covering not only the government but also the armed forces and civilian bureaucracy, has been convinced to accept a settlement in Cyprus on the basis of the Annan Plan. Thus, it seems appropriate to analyse this historical period under the headings of two sub-periods taking the year 2002 as the division point.

2.2.1. Formation of the Reaction against Official Cyprus Policy: 1999-2002

Helsinki Summit (10-11/12/1999) should be considered as a turning point in the historical development of the Cyprus problem. In Helsinki Summit, Turkey was officially declared as the candidate country for full membership to the EU. With this candidacy status, the hope towards the EU membership of Turkey, which was tend to fade after the Luxemburg Summit, refreshed again. A new phase started in the long adventure of Turkey with the EU with the acceptance of Turkey as an official candidate.

With the emergence of the EU membership as a real possibility, obstacles in front of the EU membership for Turkey began to be considered in a more serious manner:

democratization, human rights issues, minority rights, situation of MGK (National Security Council) and armed forces within the system and the last, but not least, the Cyprus problem…

In fact, the EU was repeatedly underlining the connection between the Cyprus dispute and Turkey's accession process both in written documents and verbal statements before the Helsinki turn. For instance, in 13 December 1995, the European Parliament approved the Customs Union Protocol between Turkey and EU and warned Turkey at the same time with a resolution made unanimously: "Turkish government and TBMM should take concrete steps to put an end to the dividedness of Cyprus and should withdraw from the occupied Cyprus territory" (Bozkurt and Demirel, 2004: 219). However, with the candidate status of Turkey, Cyprus has officially become a problem between the EU and Turkey and the settlement of this problem began to be considered as a necessary condition for Turkey to start negotiations (Bozkurt and Demirel: 2004: 221).

The political will towards settlement of the Cyprus problem on a comprehensive basis was stated, especially in paragraphs 4 and 9(a), besides the fulfilment of Copenhagen criteria, as a necessity for Turkey to start full membership negotiations in the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council declared after the Helsinki Summit despite the objections of the Turkish government at that time (EC, 10-11/12/1999). In other words, it became clear after the Helsinki summit that the membership process would be directly affected by the Cyprus question (Güven, 2003: 15).

On the other hand, the peaceful atmosphere between Turkey and Greece emerged during İstanbul and Athens earthquakes with the solidarity of Greek and Turkish people and it was reflected to the official relations through a close relationship between Yorgo Papandreou and İsmail Cem (Yalçınkaya, 2003: 193), in connection with the conclusions of Helsinki Summit, paved the ground for the formation of demand towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem. But the main factor that legitimized the demands towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem was the will of the Turkish Cypriots towards the solution in this respect.

There emerged a collective will in Northern Cyprus towards the settlement of the problem especially after the beginning of membership negotiations between the Cyprus Republic and the EU in 1998 and declaration of the European Council after the Helsinki Summit stated that the Cyprus Republic would be a EU member with the first wave of enlargement with or without a settlement (EC, 10-11/12/1999). Turkish Cypriots showed reactions against the official policies of KKTC and President Rauf Denktaş symbolizing these official policies, thinking that accession for the South alone would intensify their isolation and continue their dependency to Turkey, augmenting the already considerable economic gap between the North and South (Tank, 2002: 149). The voice of the opposition demanding a united, independent and European Cyprus having a federal status has gradually gained strength after the year 2000.

The number of Turkish Cypriots demanding a united Cyprus and applying to the Cyprus Republic to get Cypriot passports in order to make use of the EU membership advantages was rising continuously. Many NGOs, political parties, trade unions and other organizations formed a platform called "This Homeland Is Ours" and organized the most crowded demonstration in the history of KKTC on 18 July 2000 (Güven, 2003: 42). Peace, democracy, federation and the EU were the main themes of this demonstration. The people of Northern Cyprus began to force the *status-quo* which had been stable since 1974. According to a public opinion survey held by COMAR in Northern Cyprus on 8-9 September 2000, 97% of the Turkish Cypriots demanded to join the EU while 58.9% would like to have a solution at any cost and 57% accepted the abandonment of certain regions to the Southern part for the sake of a solution. The ratio of the Turkish Cypriots demanding integration with Turkey was only 7% (Güven: 2003: 55-56).

Meanwhile, negotiations going on between the political representatives of Cypriot people were not giving hope. Nothing came out from Denktaş-Klerides negotiations held between December 1999 and November 2000 in New York. General Secretary of the UN, Kofi Annan, presented a document to provide a ground for a comprehensive solution in 8 November 2000; and, Denktaş left the negotiation table immediately after the presentation of this document, claiming that one sovereign

joint state in Cyprus as suggested by the document is against the Turkish thesis based on the acceptance of two separate and sovereign states in the island.

MGK declared in 24 November 2000 that Turkish Republic supports Denktaş's conduct. A few months later, the EU announced the Accession Partnership Document for Turkey which was calling Turkey to support the UN Secretary General's efforts aiming at a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. Settlement of this problem was not officially stated as a precondition for Turkey's accession in the document but the will and support of Turkey which should be given to the efforts of the Secretary General for the settlement process was cited as a short-term priority to be fulfilled for starting negotiations (EC, 08/03/2001). Starting with the declaration of Accession Partnership Document, the EU has mentioned its expectation towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem each year in its Regular Progress Reports, both within the short-term priorities as well as the enhanced political dialogues and criteria. Thus, it became clear that Turkey must at least make an effort to settle the Cyprus dispute in order to take a forward step towards its EU membership. In other words, the Cyprus question would be a major obstacle in Turkey's EU accession unless the Cyprus policy is seriously transformed.

Despite the explicit attitude of the EU forcing the settlement of this problem and the reaction of Turkish Cypriots against continuation of the present situation, The Turkish state, including the government, state bureaucracy and the armed forces, and the Denktaş administration in Northern Cyprus were insisting on a solid, intransigent policy claiming confederation thesis based on two separate sovereign states. In May 2001, MGK declared that the only way to reconciliation in Cyprus is the acceptance of the existence of two equally sovereign states (*Radikal*, 30/05/2001).

The EU was reacting against the hardening tone of Turkey and the European Parliament declared in its report published in July 2001 that "if Turkey were to carry out its threat of annexing the north of Cyprus in response to Cypriot accession to the EU and proclaim the northern part as its 82nd province in clear branch of international law, it would put an end to its own ambitions of European Union membership" (EP, 17/12/2001).

After the EU re-stated in 1 November 2001 that the Cyprus Republic would join to the EU whether the problem would be settled or not, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, İsmail Cem, started a huge dispute with his speech made in TBMM:

> In the event of EU membership of the Greek Cypriot Administration, Turkey has to make a decision. It would either say "that's that", which is desired by nobody, or has to remark that it does not recognize this decision. In such a situation Turkey may be forced to make a final decision. We should know such a final decision would cost Turkey a bundle and we have to make such a decision (Güven, 2003: 84).

Within the same month, the Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit declared that Turkey would consider annexing the North Cyprus in the event of the EU membership of the Greek Cypriot Administration (Tank, 2002: 152). These statements were indicating that Turkey came to a historical point in which it has to make a decision between the EU membership and Cyprus. From this point onwards, a huge debate broke out in order to designate the direction of the decision.

Some of the major intellectuals and columnists reacted to the speech by İsmail Cem claiming that this policy would jeopardize the EU membership objective of Turkey. They argued that abandonment of the EU membership objective would drag Turkey to a dark future, would serve to the isolationist nationalism (Belge, 04/11/2001) and would cost our children a lot (Yetkin, 08/11/2001). They warned the Turkish government of a situation like solar eclipse around the EU (Berkan, 10/11/2001) and reminded that discussing the European ideal would mean to discuss the future existence of Turkey, which was formed through a 150-years-old struggle towards modernization (Kahraman, 09/11/2001).

The strongest reaction against the statements of government came from TÜSİAD (Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association) which represents the big business circles[17]:

> Statements made in last few days about Cyprus, which is an important issue for the foreign policy of Turkey, are a matter of concern for the Turkish business world. The attitude which does not move towards a

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[17] 391 enterprises which are members to TÜSİAD represent 50% of the total added value created in Turkey in sectoral terms (*Görüş*: 09/1996: 15).

solution to the Cyprus problem makes the issue to preserve its determining position on foreign relations of Turkey and impedes Turkey to reach a positive point, to a point in which Turkey would normally exist, in its relations with the outside world.

The major national interest of our country is to realize the objective of EU membership in accordance with the objectives of stable economic growth and rising welfare standards, as soon as possible. For this reason, it is essential for the Cyprus policy to be taken in a way in which it would not create deep crises with the EU in the coming period in order to prevent the Cyprus question to become an obstacle in front of Turkey's membership to the EU. It should not be forgotten that the historical and social responsibility of a deadlock in Cyprus question causing a breakdown in Turkey-EU relations and in the full membership perspective of Turkey would be very heavy.

Moreover, suggestions made in direction of a solution to the Cyprus problem and "costs to be paid"[18] which has been voiced recently should be discussed within the public opinion within the framework of the concrete data on national interest and transparency (TÜSİAD, 16/11/2001).

We do not approve the support given to the uncompromising attitude of Denktas by Turkey. We have hesitations on the possible occurrence of irreparable damages in the relations between the EU and Turkey in case of the EU membership of the Greek Cypriot Administration (TÜSİAD, 26/11/2001).

This reaction of TÜSİAD supported by very important figures of Turkish business world such as Sakıp Sabancı (*Radikal*, 28/11/2001) as well as liberal intellectuals and media circles. Some were even reproaching TÜSİAD for being late in its reactions (Güven, 30/11/2001). On the other hand, the attitude of TÜSİAD supported by liberal circles was responded by an announcement signed by important academic and intellectual figures like Kurthan Fişek, Alpaslan Işıklı, Atilla İlhan, Gülten Kazgan, Sina Akşin, Mümtaz Soysal, Çetin Yetkin and Erol Manisalı declaring that they were opposing "certain business circles" for their attempts against the national interests of the country and supporting the impositions on the Cyprus question *(Cumhuriyet,* 13/12/2001). The announcement was claiming that "a very limited but very strong circle" (indicating TÜSİAD) is inoculating the public opinion in direction of making concessions in the Cyprus dispute.

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[18] Alluding the words of İsmail Cem.

Since the Cyprus problem appeared to be the primary obstacle in front of Turkey's EU membership, the debate on Cyprus has become a symbol of the macro debate on the country's future. The sections that perceive the EU membership as an urgent and indisputable necessity for Turkey gradually raised their voices towards the solution of Cyprus problem especially from 2001 onwards.

The EU continuously maintained the idea that Turkey had to make a selection between the EU membership and Cyprus. Co-chairman of Turkey-EU Joint Parliamentary Commission, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, declared that Cyprus is the gate of the EU for Turkey right after the issue of TÜSİAD *(Radikal*, 28/12/2001). It was argued that EU representatives purposely forced Turkey to make a decision between Cyprus and the EU since they were convinced that Turkey would not sacrifice the prospect of its membership because of the Cyprus problem (Suvarierol, 2003: 66). The EU had an opportunity to force both the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey with the same carrot of the EU membership.

This carrot policy succeeded in shaping the official policy, dominant discourse and public opinion both in Turkey and the Northern Cyprus. The prominent liberal intellectuals and columnists defined the Cyprus problem as the main obstacle in front of the EU membership of Turkey over and over again (Yetkin, 08/11/2001; Dağı, 30/05/2002; Berkan, 05/06/2002). Thus, connected with the raising will, hope and enthusiasm about the EU membership, the demand towards the settlement of Cyprus problem began to rise on a gradual basis. As underlined by Öniş (2003: 19), TÜSİAD has become extremely vocal during the course of 2002, stressing the urgency of this need to make progress in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution on the Cyprus dispute, by the use of widespread media campaigns to influence both the policy makers and the public opinion.

The year 2002 should be regarded as the turning point in the transformation of the Cyprus policy. Beginning from the end of the year 1999 mainstream media circles, liberal intellectuals and more importantly, big business which is represented by TÜSİAD began to show reaction against the solid official policy in Cyprus question and demand an internationally acceptable solution. But it was the year 2002 in which

the dominant and opponent positions relocated. The former opponent position (pro-solution front) raised their voice seeing that Turkey-EU relations clugged because of the Cyprus problem in the last months of 2001. Thinking that any breakdowns in relations between Turkey and EU due to the Cyprus dispute would directly determine the future of the country, they decided to enforce the settlement of the problem in accordance with the EU membership objective at any cost and by the use of all possible means in this respect.

The primary target of the pro-solution front, in the leadership of TÜSİAD, was the government. The insistence of the Turkish government on the traditional uncompromising Cyprus policy in spite of all warnings and notifications by the EU was disconcerting the big business and liberal circles. Turkish Government (57th Government of the Turkish Republic which has been ruling the country since 1999) was composed of three political parties: Democratic Left Party (DSP), Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and the Motherland Party (ANAP). The Prime Minister Ecevit (President of DSP) was the leader in the 1974 intervention and considering the Cyprus problem as his own case. MHP has been used the Cyprus question as a political as well as demagogic instrument for years in its ultra-nationalistic discourse. Thus, neither DSP nor MHP was willing to abandon from the traditional solid Cyprus policy. The only component of the government that has voiced a different point of view on the Cyprus problem was ANAP (Motherland Party).

Despite being affected by the nationalist atmosphere of 1990's, ANAP was the holder of the liberal heritage of Özal and the most fervent supporter of the EU membership within the government. Thus, Yılmaz (President of ANAP) exhibited a different attitude about the Cyprus question from the other leaders of tripartite coalition in order to prevent the EU-Turkey relations from a serious breakdown. But, ANAP was the smallest component of the coalition and did not succeed in affecting the governmental policy. Ecevit, Bahçeli (President of MHP) and the Foreign Minister İsmail Cem reacted sharply to the statements of Yılmaz claiming a more active and compromising Cyprus policy *(Radikal*, 12-13/5/2002).

2.2.2. Transformation of the Official Policy: 2002-2004

With the election victory of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) which introduced an understanding which is very different from the traditional official policy and solid thesis of Turkey about the Cyprus problem, the relocation process between dominant and opponent positions has been completed. The reaction against the traditional Cyprus policy of Turkey first rose from business circles and, with the support of the mainstream media and liberal intellectuals, it began to influence the public opinion as well. This reaction seized the governmental position after November 2002 elections and began to construct itself not as a reactionary but as a hegemonic discourse. Thus, by the end of 2002, a consensus has been established among the big capital, the government, mainstream media circles, liberal intellectuals and NGOs towards the settlement of the problem to remove the Cyprus obstacle in front of Turkey on the way to membership. The cement of this consensus was the objective of the EU membership.

It was believed that the most important obstacle that would impede the transformation in the Cyprus policy was the public opinion. Turkish people have perceived the Cyprus question as a national cause immune of any social/political discrepancies and beyond any disputes along the second half of the twentieth century. Turkish public opinion has been shaped by a strong nationalistic discourse about the Cyprus problem since 1950's. Thus, the pro-solution front has hesitations about a popular reaction against any possible settlement attempts based on Annan Plan. But this misgiving has not been materialized and they succeeded in convincing the public opinion on a settlement in the direction of Annan Plan, probably easier than they have hoped, despite the fact that such a settlement would indicate a retreat from traditional claims of Turkey and necessitate certain concessions. A public opinion survey done by Bosporus University has shown by the year 2002 that the majority of Turkish people have been convinced on the necessity for settling the Cyprus problem on the basis of reconciliation in order to facilitate EU membership of Turkey (Çarkoğlu and Kirişçi, 2002).

AKP filled the gap emerging between the government and big business circles about the EU membership strategy in general and specifically on the Cyprus problem. AKP declared its commitment to the EU membership objective over and over again before the elections in order to overcome the suspicions and its negative image of Islamist heritage. Being aware of the discontent of big business and liberal circles about the Cyprus policy, AKP states that the Cyprus problem has to be settled definitely and the Belgium model could be considered as a favourable proposal in the case of Turkish and Greek Cypriots as stated in its election manifesto (AKP, 2002: 82).

In 4 November 2002, the day following the general elections, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan voiced the Belgium model as a suggestion to settle the Cyprus problem in the Greek national TV channel NET, not as the prime minister of Turkey but as the president of AKP which had won a great victory in the elections and qualified to establish the government alone (Şimşir, 2003: 40). This suggestion of Belgium model was indicating a serious turn in the Cyprus policy of Turkey which had been based on a two-state model (confederation thesis) since 1998.

The Foreign Minister of the time, Şükrü Sina Gürel, reacted to the declarations of Erdoğan sharply by reminding that Turkey demands negotiations not between two societies but between two separate and sovereign states. He also accused Erdoğan of ignorance owing to his statements about inter-societal talks and the Belgium model (Şimşir, 2003: 41). Erdoğan generally retreated from his statements in the view of serious reactions from the public opinion, other political parties or the military, but the compromising attitude of AKP willing to settle the Cyprus problem, did not change.

Shortly after the election victory of AKP, in 11 November 2002, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan introduced a plan named "Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem" (which is widely known as Annan Plan) as a result of the talks that had continued from January to November between the leaders of Greek and Turkish Cypriots. From the end of 2002 onwards, the Annan Plan has become the focal point of the debate between the parties.

Beginning from this date, the positions of the debate have drawn in respect of the Annan Plan.

Annan Plan should also be seen as the turning point in the relocation process between the dominant and opponent positions in the Cyprus problem. Those who oppose the Annan Plan ironically found themselves in an opposing position against the continuously rising demand towards the settlement of the problem on the basis of the Annan Plan, in general after the end 2002. Being a positive settlement proposal, the Annan Plan helped the pro-solution camp to become hegemonic and made the official position of the previous period fall in a negative/opponent position.

Annan Plan was not accepted as a basis for negotiations both by the existing government of Turkey *(Radikal*, 14/11/2002) (the Ecevit government) and the President of KKTC on the ground that the plan would turn the Turkish Cypriots to a minority (Şimşir: 2003: 63). In fact, the Annan Plan was meeting the conditions of Turkish side more than any other plan which had been previously introduced. It was offering a federal state consisting of two constituent states which are of equal status (UN, 2002) meaning that political equality which was insistently demanded by the Turkish side was covered in the plan.

Nevertheless, the KKTC leadership and defenders of the traditional Cyprus policy in Turkey indicated certain drawbacks on the basis of their reaction to the plan. They claimed that the Greek settlement would "invade" the Turkish side and cause the Turkish Cypriots to be a minority in their own country; it was not acceptable for KKTC to give their rich agricultural areas of Morphou/Güzelyurt to the Greek side; property transfers and withdrawals of KKTC from certain villages would cause a serious tension since it would make thousands of Turkish Cypriots homeless in both aspects; Turkish Cypriots would be faced with continuous Greek threat in case of the withdrawal of Turkish soldiers and the plan could be violated easily unless it would be safeguarded by the EU juridical system.

On the other hand, Erdoğan declared that he found the Annan Plan negotiable and accused the opponents of the plan of intransigence. He stated that the Cyprus problem could only be settled by mutual sacrifices and conciliations *(Radikal,*

17/11/2002). He also had offers on evaluating the Cyprus question and the accession negotiations of Turkey within the same package in his London and Brussels visits on 20th of November (Şimşir, 2003: 103). Videlicet, Erdoğan was implying that Turkey would solve the Cyprus problem if the EU grant a date for accession negotiations on 12 December 2002 in Copenhagen Summit[19]. The statements of Erdoğan associating the Cyprus question with the EU membership process of Turkey indicates a serious turning point in the Turkish foreign policy discourse which rejected any connection between the Cyprus question and the EU-Turkey relations claiming that Cyprus problem was belonging to the Cypriots and thus should be settled by them.

Major political parties including DSP, MHP and CHP (Republican Peoples' Party) reacted to the statements of Erdoğan sharply (Şimşir, 2003: 107) but Erdoğan received a serious support from big business circles. TÜSİAD, which had welcomed the Annan Plan as an important opportunity to reach a permanent settlement in Cyprus (TÜSİAD, 14/11/2002), supported Erdoğan claiming that the Annan Plan should be accepted as the basis for Cyprus negotiations (TÜSİAD, 26/11/2002). TÜSİAD declared also that Turkish government should take political risks to solve the Cyprus problem since Turkey would never find this much conformable time and conditions (*Radikal*, 14/12/2002).

The opponents of the Annan Plan, both from KKTC and Turkey, expected a reaction against the plan from the Turkish military. But, the military did not prefer to be directly involved in the issue. Both the chief of Turkish General Staff, Hilmi Özkök and second chief Yaşar Büyükanıt declared that the decision about the plan would be made by the newly established government *(Radikal*, 17/11/2002). These statements should be seen as the indicators of the future attitude of the Turkish General Staff contrary to the expectations.

In the meantime, Turkish Cypriots began to express their will on the streets. They organized two great demonstrations on 26 December 2002 and 14 January 2003 demanding the resignation of Denktaş and the settlement of the Cyprus problem until

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[19] In addition to the statements of Erdoğan, Abdullah Gül as the Prime Minister of Turkey said to the Greek Prime Minister Costas Simithis that the Cyprus problem would be settled if Turkey would be given the negotiation date from the EU – *Radikal*, 12/12/2002.

28 February 2003, as anticipated in the Annan Plan. These demonstrations were the most crowded demonstrations in the history of KKTC: thirty thousand Turkish Cypriots attended the first demonstration and the number doubled in the second one (*Radikal*, 17/12/2002 and 15/01/2003). According to the public opinion survey done by *Cyprus* newspaper, 65.4% of the Turkish Cypriots was supporting the Annan Plan (*Radikal*, 07/01/2003).

While the Turkish Cypriots and business circles of Turkey feverishly supporting the Annan Plan and the moderate attitude of Turkish government, CHP as the main opposition party was accusing AKP of laying the ground for Cyprus towards becoming a Greek island *(Radikal*, 8/01/2003). Besides some political parties and intellectual figures, certain non-governmental organizations began to voice their opinions against the plan by the beginning of 2003. 112 NGOs led by Ankara Chamber of Commerce (ATO) declared their opposition against the attitudes of the EU and the UN for forcing Turkey to give concessions about the Cyprus problem defining the Annan Plan as the plan of occupation instead of reconciliation (*Radikal*, 01/02/2003).

Erdoğan accused the opponents of the Annan Plan of benefiting from the Cyprus deadlock (*Radikal,* 02/02/2003) but the picture which was then appearing slowly did not indicate a possible solution until February 28th. Denktaş was not convinced to accept the Annan Plan and Erdoğan retreated from his discourse gradually. Finally, negotiations between the leaders of Turkish and Greek Cypriots, Rauf Denktaş and Tassos Papadopoulos, broke up in The Hague on 10 March 2003 after the statement by Denktas declaring that he would not put the Annan Plan to referendum. Kofi Annan said he gave up striving to reach a compromise between the two societies on 11 March 2003. Turkey faced with serious criticisms coming from both the inside and outside the country after that date and European Commission declared that Turkey would be reckoned as an occupier in the EU territory after the accession of the Republic of Cyprus unless the problem has not settled by the year 2004 (*Radikal*, 12/03/2003); Kofi Annan blamed Denktaş of his intransigent attitude and Turkey of the support given to Denktaş in this issue (*Radikal*, 06/04/2003) while, finally, TÜSİAD severely criticized the government for choosing the intransigence in Cyprus

question, thus endangering the EU-Turkey relations and convicting Turkey to a political isolation (*Radikal*, 26/03/2003).

A few months later, TÜSİAD invited the Turkish government to return its positive, constructive and compromising attitude of the first months of its power claiming that the Annan Plan has approached to the Turkish view after two revisions (*Radikal*, 18/07/2003). It also criticized the government for signing a Customs Union Framework Agreement with KKTC creating disillusions and raising doubts with respect to Turkey's intentions (TÜSİAD, 12/08/2003).

Receiving severe criticisms especially from the EU agencies, the UN and Turkish business circles for months, Erdoğan began to give positive messages beginning from September 2003. He declared that the Annan Plan should be re-negotiated (*Radikal*, 18/10/2003) and that AKP had never been on the side defending the status-quo in Cyprus just before the general elections in KKTC (*Radikal*, 10/12/2003). Turkish government was seeing that there was very little time for the membership of Republic of Cyprus to the EU. To prevent itself from being an occupier on a EU territory and the EU-Turkey relations being interrupted by a serious breakdown, Turkey should take a step towards the settlement of the problem until May 2004, before the membership of the Republic of Cyprus.

Seeing that Turkey was cornered badly, the EU aggravated its pressure over Turkish government and gave Turkey a notification during the Brusells Summit in 12-13 December 2003:

> The European Council underlines the importance of Turkey's expression of political will to settle the Cyprus problem. In this respect, a settlement of the Cyprus problem would greatly facilitate Turkey's membership aspirations (EC, 2003).

Besides institutions such as the European Council and the European Commision, most of the EU bureaucrats and European politicians did not hesitate in stating that it was impossible for Turkey to start accession negotiations until the settlement of the problem in question. Present co-chairman of Turkish-EU Joint Parliamentary Commission, Joost Lagendijk, openly stated that the settlement of Cyprus problem would determine the EU membership process of Turkey (Lagendijk, 2003: 32). And,

the President of European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Elmar Brok, declared that it was impossible for Turkey to start accession negotiations until such a settlement (*Radikal*, 04/12/2003). The same message came from a more important authority in a more clement tone during the following month. President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, visited Turkey in January 2004 and stated that the settlement of the Cyprus problem would facilitate the Turkey's accession to the EU (*Radikal*, 16/01/2004).

The new government of KKTC established after 14 December 2003 elections under the leadership of a primal advocate of settlement and Annan Plan as well as the most important opponent of Rauf Denktaş and his policies, Mehmet Ali Talat, made the hopes and expectations towards a settlement until May 2004 more realistic. The compromising tone of Erdoğan gained confidence after the elections in KKTC and the mainstream media circles started feverishly supporting the changing tone of Erdoğan with an expectation of settlement (Berkan, 07/01/2004). On the other hand, the second chief of Turkish General Staff, İlker Başbuğ declared that the armed forces was defending a settlement until May 2004 (*Radikal*, 17/01/2004).

After these positive signals, Erdoğan had a meeting with Kofi Annan at Davos which was arranged between 21-25 January 2004 and told him that Turkey accepts Annan Plan as a basis for a settlement and asked him to re-start negotiations (*Radikal*, 27/01/2004). Just after the Davos Meeting, USA Presidency conveyed its support to Turkish government about its Cyprus initiative (*Radikal*, 29/01/2004) and the President of Turkish Republic, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, declared his support to a settlement until May 2004 (*Radikal,* 31/01/2004).

The picture in the first days of 2004 was indicating an agreement in the apex of the Turkish state, among the government, state bureaucracy, the general staff and the "presidency". By the year 2004, main components of the Turkish state were finally convinced that Turkey had to settle the Cyprus problem to reach its objectives designed around the EU membership. The consensus which was emerged among the big business and mainstream media circles as well as liberal intellectuals and certain NGOs and gained power with the establishment of the AKP government, succeeded

to determine the official Cyprus policy of Turkish state by 2004. With the MGK meeting held on January 23rd, the decision was made towards settling the problem in Cyprus until May 2004 in the peak of Turkish state and the process worked in that line in spite of all the cracked voices including Rauf Denktaş.

In response to the request of Turkish side, Kofi Annan invited Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders to New York to re-start negotiations on February 10th. The condition was that the dead spaces, on which two sides could not reach an agreement, would be filled by Annan himself and the Plan would be put in referendum in its final version to be fixed by Annan. This situation was admitted by the government, although it has been criticized severely by oppositional political parties[20] and certain intellectuals. TÜSİAD welcomed the invitation of Annan delightfully; declared it appreciated the efforts of the government that made the resume of negotiations possible and interpreted the possible intervention of Annan to certain points of the plan as a positive factor that promoting the reconciliation between the parties (TÜSİAD, 06/02/2004). In the following days, TÜSİAD stated its gratification about the resume of the negotiations in New York and indicated that Turkey has strengthened its position on the way to the EU membership with this development (TÜSİAD, 16/02/2004).

Prime Minister Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Gül maintained a clear and resolute attitude against all the criticisms about the Annan Plan as well as the Cyprus policy of the government while responding the opponents of the plan with a sharp language. Erdoğan claimed that the golden pages of Turkish diplomacy were being written in New York negotiations. He claimed that it was the time for Turkey to exercise its will to settle the gangrened problems with an active foreign policy approach[21] on the basis of the definition of politics as the art of generating resolution instead of deadlocks. In addition to these statements, Erdoğan declared also the end of the

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[20] For example, the chairman of the main oppositional party, Deniz Baykal reacted against the road map in which Annan would have a final command on the plan claiming that this road map present Turkey and KKTC with a fait accompli – *Radikal*, 08/12/2004.

[21] This similarity between discourses of Turgut Özal and Tayyip Erdoğan has been crystallized in the concept of active foreign policy seems very expressive to me.

historical period in which Turkey has hoped help from deadlocks (*Radikal*, 18/02/2004).

Erdoğan's statements which claimed that the settlement of the Cyprus problem would facilitate the accession of Turkey to the EU and delineated the important components of the Annan Plan such as the immigration and compensation issues as details, public elucidation of which would cause provocation and power loss (*Radikal*, 26/02/2004), was indicating the resolution of Turkish government to settle the Cyprus question at all events. This picture of resolution became clearer with the guarantee given to the Cyprus Representative of the UN, Alvaro De Soto, by the Foreign Minister Gül. Gül told De Soto that they would conclude this bargain irrespective of any possible disagreements between the Cypriot leaders (*Radikal,* 07/03/2004). As Berkan (09/02/2004) underlined, the settlement of Cyprus problem was not about the details of settlement plans but the political will of Turkish government and AKP government was explicitly exercising this political will to reach a settlement.

Meanwhile the cross talks between the KKTC President Denktaş and Turkish government, which would continue until the end of Denktaş' term of office, was started. Denktaş delineated the Annan Plan as the plan of annihilation of Turkish Cypriots while negotiations were continuing on the basis of Annan Plan (*Radikal*, 05/03/2004). He declared that he would not go to Burgenstock (Switzerland) to attend the second phase of negotiations despite the insistence of Turkish government and also accused those who accept the result of Burgenstock negotiations came out under the pressure of dishonesty (*Radikal*, 25/03/2004).

Second phase of the talks began on 24 March 2004 in Switzerland with the participation of Greece and Turkey besides the political representatives of Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The UN Secretary-General Annan finalized the Plan according to the conclusions came out of negotiations and submitted the final text of the plan to the parties in March 31st. It was decided to put this final text to a referendum in Cyprus on 24 April 2004.

During Burgenstock talks, the winds of victory began to blow in the Turkish media. It was argued that the final text was fulfilling many demands of Turkish side about certain issues such as the sovereignty rights of constituent states, derogations, property, security and settlement issues (Kırbaki, 30/03/2004; Güven, 31/03/2004). Just after the talks the positive messages began to come from all over the world (such as US Presidency, European Commission and Council and the European states such as France and Belgium (*Radikal*, 03/04/2004)), and from within the country (TÜSİAD (*Radikal*, 03-04/04/2004) and important leaders of Turkish business world like Rahmi Koç (*Radikal*, 02/04/2004)). USA's Foreign Minister of the time , Colin Powell, even stated that he would work personally for the acceptance of Annan Plan by Cypriots (*Radikal*, 05/04/2004). On the other hand, both of the oppositional parties within the TNGA, CHP and DYP (True Path Party), opposed the signing of Annan Plan claiming that it would mean the submission of the Cyprus Island (*Radikal*, 07/04/2004).

After Burgenstock talks, the cross talks between Denktaş and Turkish government toughened while Denktaş claimed postponement of the referendum and accused the government of transgressing the official Cyprus policy of Turkish state. Even President Sezer was among the ones feeling the necessity to warn him (*Radikal*, 07/04/2004). The government, especially Gül and Erdoğan, responded Denktaş many times by saying that heroic speeches and slogans could take neither Turkey nor KKTC to anywhere (*Radikal*, 20/03/2004 and 11/04/2004).

The voice of "yes" increased further as the time of referendum was approaching. The EU, USA, Turkish government, media and business were crying in chorus that it was the last chance for both Turkey and Turkish Cypriots. Finally, Turkish Cypriots approved the settlement plan by a clear majority (64.91% in favour) on April 24th while the Greek Cypriots overwhelmingly rejected it (75.83% against).

The statements of Turkish government which displayed the gratification of Turkish side about the results could be read as the indicators of the way in which Turkey perceives the Cyprus problem. Turkish government insistently underlined that Turkey has done its utmost, maintained a pro-settlement attitude and reached the

desired result, thus rendering the Cyprus obstacle which Turkey was facing in every international platform invalid (*Radikal*, 26/04/2004). As clearly seen, what lies under the willingness of Turkey to reach a settlement in Cyprus problem, was not a sincere concern about conditions and demands of the Turkish Cypriots but a serious apprehension about the future plans and objectives of Turkey.

Since the EU membership project has appeared as the only reasonable, viable and promising future objective of Turkey in the last decades, the rulers of Turkey were convinced about the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of an internationally accepted plan in order to take a step forward towards the EU membership. That is to say, the main actor of this settlement was not Cyprus as it supposed to be; but it was Turkey and its rulers instead. The road to the acceptance of Annan Plan by Turkish Cypriots was drawn with the decision of Turkish rulers in direction of the EU membership.

CHAPTER THREE

ANATOMY OF THE TRANSFORMATION PERIOD: THE ACTORS AND DYNAMICS

3.1. Preamble

Constraints on the membership objective began to be evaluated more seriously after the Helsinki Summit in which the EU membership dream turned to a concrete possibility with declaration of the candidate status of Turkey. The EU membership had been a desirable objective for the ruling spheres of the society, especially for the big capital since mid 1980s but they committed themselves fully to this objective once they were convinced that it became a real possibility for Turkey. Thanks to this conviction, in the 2000s, all the major social and political issues began to be handled with reference to the EU membership process. In other words, from 2000 onwards, the EU membership project has become the central theme in Turkey on which the major headings of Turkish politics were re-read.

Since the aged social-political topics of the country began to be seen through the glasses of EU membership project, reconfiguration of the social and political arena in Turkey became necessary. Various topics including democratisation, human rights and minority rights began to be evaluated in a very different manner in comparison with the previous era. The criterion on which those issues are perceived and evaluated has changed dramatically. Now the primary criterion has appeared as the adjustment to the EU norms. If a radical transformation was needed for this adjustment, it should surely be undertaken!

Cyprus was one of the primary issues which have been re-sighted through the glasses of the EU membership and these glasses changed the vision. Looking from the glasses of EU membership process, Cyprus question began to be seen as a constraint to be overcome immediately while the very same issue was seen as a vital national

cause in the previous period. That is to say, the turning point in the destiny of the Cyprus question was the Helsinki Summit which has provided a different criterion on which the whole socio-political map of the country has been re-configured.

This chapter aims to shed light on the process of transformation in the way the Cyprus problem is perceived, defined and handled, both officially and popularly, in terms of its actors and dynamics. It is aimed at disclosing the roles of certain social and political actors (organizations, institutions and associations) in this process. Attitudes of those actors during this transformation process, the effects of them on the conduct of the process, on the general political-ideological atmosphere, on social balances and on the public opinion as well as the relationships between them including certain alliances and oppositions will be examined and demonstrated here in detail with reference to written documents and oral interviews.

Beyond taking a general picture of attitudes and approaches of certain social and political actors, it is aimed in this chapter to think about the reasons of those approaches and attitudes and analyze them in relation with the historical conditions and social-political dynamics. For this reason, this chapter will present the attitudes of certain social and political actors (such as business organizations, political parties, certain intellectuals, certain media circles and columnists as well as certain NGOs) about the Cyprus question in relation with their approaches about the EU membership process. This chapter will also contain a reflection of the reasons and motives of those attitudes and their configuration within the Turkish social formation. In the end, the general assessment section will provide an evaluation of the picture which would be taken in previous sections in terms of the present situation and future prospective with special reference to the formation of the public opinion and attitudes of certain institutions such as the Turkish General Staff.

3.2. Formation of a Consensus towards the Settlement of Cyprus Problem on the way to the EU Membership

In the first two years of 2000s, Turkey undertook many social and political as well as economic reforms to fulfill the above-mentioned EU membership criteria. However, the Cyprus question remained untouched since it had been kept separate from other issues related to the EU adjustment process. Turkish government of the time, just as the previous ones, was rejecting the connections between the EU accession process and the Cyprus problem and thus, any explicit conditions concerning relations with the Cyprus question. So, by the end of 2002, the Cyprus problem appeared as the single overriding constraint on Turkey's progress to full membership (Öniş, 2003: 23).

Seeing this picture, certain sections of the society which perceive their future in the EU, including big capital, certain media circles and liberal intellectuals, began to intervene the Cyprus question especially after 2001. They strived to reveal the close connection between EU membership process of Turkey and the Cyprus question and, with reference to this connection, wanted the government to take steps immediately towards the settlement of the problem.

AKP government responded this demand just after the elections held in November 2002. The president of AKP, Tayyip Erdoğan, indicated the inanity of rejecting the connection between the EU membership process and the Cyprus question and claimed the abandonment of this blindness policy. For the first time in the history of EU-Turkey relations, AKP government accepted the connection between the EU membership process and Cyprus question officially, moreover suggested the evaluation of these two topics together within the same package (Şimşir, 2003: 103-4). Beginning with the AKP government, the Cyprus problem began to be a matter of bargain between the Turkish government and the EU on Turkey's accession to the EU to be used by both sides openly.

Moving from this picture it could be said that a new, compromising perspective about the Cyprus question has gained a hegemonic position gradually on the basis of the internal relationship between the Cyprus problem and the EU membership.

Within three and a half years (from December 1999 to April 2004), a certain vision of the Cyprus problem became dominant both among the rulers and the ruled. This vision was firstly promoted by the big capital, mainstream media which is essentially a part of the big capital, and liberal intellectuals. Then, after 2002 elections, new government has joined to this camp and thereby, a consensus towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem has been established. The military and traditional state bureaucracy should be counted as the elements of this consensus since they maintained a positive attitude towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem despite certain reservations.

This consensus established among the big capital, government, mainstream media and liberal intellectuals, was achieved to gain a serious public support within a relatively short time period. Turkish society abandoned its previous sight and discourse about the Cyprus question within just a few years thanks to its commitment to the EU membership objective. In other words, Turkish public opinion has been convinced about the necessity of settlement in the Cyprus problem even with certain concessions on the grounds of its conviction about the connection between the EU membership process and the Cyprus problem. For instance, according to the public opinion research made by Ali Çarkoğlu and Kemal Kirişçi, a considerable majority of Turkish people (81%) believes that the Cyprus problem should be settled by means of conciliation for the EU membership of Turkey (Çarkoğlu and Kirişçi, 2002).

3.3. Components of the Consensus

As underlined before, a consensus has been established mainly between the big capital, government, liberal intellectuals and mainstream media circles on the basis of the objective of a settlement in Cyprus. This concept of consensus is used as an abstraction, of course. The social actors and elements did not come together and reached an agreement at a specific historical moment. But there emerged a consensus among them about the necessity of a settlement in Cyprus especially on the common grounds of EU membership objective. However, this consensus did not emerge per

se. The big capital and its representative TÜSİAD have pioneered the small and medium-sized capital as well as other social actors such as media and intellectuals; forced the political power to give up its old argument and worked to constitute a public opinion favouring the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of the Annan Plan. Thus, the most important component of the consensus was the capital, especially the big business circles with their powerful representative TÜSİAD.

3.3.1. The Big Capital

The capital, as a social group, could not be analyzed as a single entity; on the contrary it contains different sections and fractions having different economic and social positions and thus, different visions and interests. This differentiation of visions and interests could be observed through the examination of the attitudes of different sections/fractions of capital about a specific economic/social/political issue. But, on the other hand, there are certain subject matters which unite those sections and fractions in line with the common interests of capital as a class. By examining the attitudes of different sections of capital about the Cyprus question, it is possible to observe both the unification and differentiation of the visions and interests of those sections.

What unites the visions and interests of all main sections and fractions of Turkish capital in this historical period is the EU membership objective. EU membership is perceived as an essential step by almost all the sections of capital on the way to further integration to the world economy and thus to magnify their sizes and profits. In other words, Turkish capital aims to integrate with the international capitalism through the EU membership (Uzgel, 2004: 205). The big capital is the most feverish supporter of the EU membership since it would draw the largest benefit from such an integration process. However, besides the big capital, the small and medium sized capital has certain expectations from the EU membership, as well[22]. Except certain

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[22] The representatives of small and medium sized capital such as TOBB (The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey) representing 364 local-level chambers of commerce, industry and commodity exchanges and TSP (Turkey SİAD's Platform) which represents 60 local industrialists'

rare examples, Turkish capital as a whole perceives its future in the EU and thus strongly support and promote the EU membership of Turkey. Since the EU membership is appeared as a common objective for all sections of capital, there emerge a per se consensus among capital on the basis of the fulfilment of the accession criteria.

What unites different sections of capital about the Cyprus question was that per se consensus to remove the obstacles in front of the EU membership of Turkey. As the settlement of the Cyprus dispute has appeared not as an official criterion but as a *sine qua non* for Turkey's EU accession, nearly all sections of capital and their representatives have maintained a pro-solution attitude about the Cyprus question. However, this pro-solution attitude has taken different forms in accordance with the positions, visions and interests of different sections of capital. As mentioned below, different organizations of capital representing its different sections reflect variations of the pro-solution attitude shared by nearly all the sections. Thus, we can define the attitude of capital with the concept of "unity in differentiation".

As underlined by Türkay (2004: 4) the big capital represents the most problem-free position about the EU membership looking from the perspective of capital accumulation. Big capital perceives the EU membership as a necessity to integrate the global economy and to improve its opportunities to compete in the global level. One of the most qualified speakers of the Turkish big capital, Cem Duna[23] expresses this necessity in a very concise manner:

> Turkish business world wants to access the EU to pursue its basic interests. It will be removed from the world economy unless it becomes a part of the globalization. Since the movements of commerce is essentially freed within certain blocs (EU, North America

and businessmen's associations feverishly support the EU membership of Turkey (Hisarcıklıoğlu, 19/04/2004; TSP, 20/06/2003 and 24/09/2004).

[23] Cem Duna is a former ambassador who was also worked as the general director of TRT in 1980s. He is the vice-chairman of the Board of Directors and the chairman of the Foreign affairs Committee of TÜSİAD now besides executing the memberships of certain top level holdings such as Doğan Holding. Being a former foreign affairs professional and a prominent capitalist at the same time, Cem Duna appears as one of the most prominent speakers of Turkish capital especially in the foreign policy issues such as the EU and Cyprus.

and South-Eastern Asia), the EU membership appears as the only way for Turkey to be a part of the global economy (Duna, 2006).

Moreover, the EU membership would symbolize and ensure the political and economic stability which is necessary to attract the foreign capital and investments. As underlined by Öniş (2003, 10-11), the positive signals provided by EU membership have enabled the countries concerned (Spain, Greece and Portugal) to attract considerable amounts of foreign direct investment.

Also, the adjustment process to the EU norms is regarded as a wonderful opportunity for the bourgeoisie to further transform the social and economic structure in accordance with the requirements of the "changing world" or the changing conditions of the accumulation strategy dominating the whole globe (Türkay, 2004: 5). In this connection:

> What could be described as the 'transnational business elites' including domestic business and the external investor community with an interest in the Turkish economy, increasingly saw the EU anchor as a means of consolidating the kind of economic environment conductive to their long term interests.
>
> The transnational coalition of business interests conceived of the EU anchor as a double anchor from the point of view of consolidating the kind of reforms pushed by the IMF in the Turkish context (Öniş, 2003: 20-21).

In other words, the EU membership process has acted as a guarantee mechanism for the neo-liberal reforms and transformations to be implemented. The big capital is aware of that:

> The implicit fear was that the economic reform process itself could easily be reversed in the absence of EU membership. Clearly, the actors concerned (transnational business elites and the representatives of the international financial community- ÖY) favored the presence of a permanent external anchor such as membership of the EU as a means of locking-in the reform process in Turkey (Öniş, 2003: 22).

On such a basis, it becomes possible to understand the content of the statements by the former Chairman of TÜSİAD Board of Directors, Tuncay Özilhan and the former Chairman of TÜSİAD High Advisory Council, Muharrem Kayhan maintaining that economic and social reforms undertaken in line with the EU adjustment process are

necessary for Turkey to reach peace, stability and welfare (Özilhan, 2003: 7; Kayhan, 2003: 11). TÜSİAD, being the representative of Turkish big capital[24], has been the pioneer agent in constructing the EU membership objective as a hegemonic project.

It would be misleading to reduce TÜSİAD to an ordinary interest group. Of course its aim is to promote the interests of the big capital since it represents the biggest firms of the country most of which are involved in all legs of the industry, finance and commerce trinity. However, TÜSİAD builds and defines itself not as a professional organisation but as a non-governmental organisation which aims to contribute to the formation and realization of the "social consensus" (*Görüş*, 09/1996: 16).

In fact, this social consensus which is aimed to be established by TÜSİAD is nothing but the liberal ideal of the big capital. As underlined in its own journal *Görüş*, TÜSİAD has been established to defend and generalize the idea of free enterprise and undertakes the leading role in the transition process of Turkey from a "protectionist/closed" economic order to a "competitive/liberal" one (*Görüş*, 09/1996: 13-15). And it expresses its principles as a contribution to the functioning of the free market economy with all its rules and regulations, the development of democracy in a contemporary level and the integration of Turkey with the external world. In line with those principles, it aims to create a country which raises its competitive power gradually within the rules of free market economy; a strong but small state which uses its resources in an efficient way and fulfils only its fundamental duties and a democratic and secular legal system which respects the freedom of thought, belief and enterprise as well as human rights (*Görüş*, 09/1996: 16).

Eczacıbaşı, the owner of one of the oldest and biggest capital groups in Turkey and one of the most powerful businessmen (2002a: 2), defines the primary mission of TÜSİAD as determining the direction of the interest in the country and uniting the interests of the big capital with those of the country. Eczacıbaşı states that the

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[24] In 1996, 391 TÜSİAD member was creating 50% of the total added value of the country (*Görüş*, 09/1996: 15).

"democratic pressure groups" could succeed as long as they achieve to unite the interests of the sections they represent with the interests of the country. He also underlines that such groups should also convince the society in this unification formula. They should announce their opinions to the society and create public opinion while being effective in the formation of decisions (Eczacıbaşı, 2002a: 3). Actually, these points Eczacıbaşı mentioned constitute the formula of hegemony. Eczacıbaşı in fact gives a perfect answer to the question "how to make an idea/world view/project hegemonic?" without using a Marxian/Gramscian language[25].

TÜSİAD was established in 1971 and began to be seen as the effective voice of the big bosses by the end of 1970s. In the end of 1970s, TÜSİAD appeared as a strong opposing force which counters policies of the social democratic-led government and even the import substitution oriented accumulation strategy, and addresses the public opinion by the use of major newspapers, etc. (Uzgel, 2004: 119). Social role of the association became increasingly important in 1980s, in an international and domestic environment where political developments were clearly favourable to private sector (Buğra, 1998: 526).

Coming to the 1990s, it became ordinary for TÜSİAD to make declarations about domestic as well as the foreign policy (Uzgel, 2004: 121). TÜSİAD has never restricted itself with the economic agenda. Indeed, TÜSİAD began to intervene in almost all the items of social and political agenda from the role of the military and

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[25] In this sense, I do not share the approach that explains the stress of TÜSİAD on the country's interests or social responsibilities on the basis of the idea that any activity oriented towards interest representation essentially lacks legitimacy in Turkey mainly because of the ideological sediment of the strong state tradition (Buğra, 1997: 348-358). This tendency of TÜSİAD to define and establish itself on the basis of national interests does not indicate the weakness of the bourgeois class in Turkey as widely advocated, on the contrary it indicates the strength of it in terms of hegemonic power. The role of TÜSİAD in the process of the settlement of Cyprus problem could be seen as a *par excellence* example of the hegemonic capacity and power of Turkish bourgeois class. As discussed before, hegemony is crystallized in the linkage established between the general-national interest and the interest of the dominant class. Through this linkage the dominant class achieves to articulate the demands and interests of the subordinate classes/groups. However, as underlined by Yalman (2001: 31), certain perspectives such as liberal-individualism and statist-institutionalism could not be able to analyse hegemonic attempts of the dominant class since they are unable to go beyond the confines of the Weberian problematic of legitimacy.

MGK in Turkish political structure to the Kurdish problem; from democratisation to Cyprus question; from electoral system to human rights issues. Seeing itself as the pioneer agent of total transformation in Turkey, TÜSİAD even published alternative history and geography text books for high schools with an aim to guide any prospective changes in the national syllabus (TÜSİAD, 23/08/2004).

What defines the direction of those interventions of TÜSİAD in various areas of social and political life has been the EU membership process. Looking closer, it becomes visible that each and every demand/suggestion of the organization has been formed in accordance with the EU accession criteria with an aim to remove the obstacles in front of Turkey's membership. Acting as an effective agent, TÜSİAD achieved to present the EU membership as a national-popular objective, as the manifestation of the collective will. TÜSİAD defines the EU membership as the most important step of the 200-years-old modernisation project of Turkey (TÜSİAD, 26/11/2001) as well as a national policy supported by the majority of Turkish society (TÜSİAD, 04/11/2002). It also presents the membership issue as a decisive verdict between being one of the developed countries (a wealthy and democratic country with a stable economic and political structure) and being a country of crises in the grip of undemocratic implementations, arbitrariness and corruption, having an unstable economic-political structure and an indefinite future (TÜSİAD, 29/05/2002).

More important than all the above, TÜSİAD claims that realization of the EU membership is the prior national interest of the country since it would procure the economic development and high levels of welfare for all the nation (TÜSİAD, 16/11/2001). In other words, through the project of EU membership, the general interest (development and welfare) is defined in line with the long-term interests of the big capital in general (further integration with the global economy, further liberalization and further transformation of the economic, social and legal structure of the country by and through structural adjustment programmes). Thus, the general interest is linked to the interest of the fundamental class through the hegemonic project (Mouffe, 1979: 10) namely; the hegemonic class universalises its own interest (Buci-Glucksmann: 1982: 120).

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TÜSİAD maintained a similar attitude about the Cyprus question. It has presented the settlement of the Cyprus question as a necessary step for the sake of the future in the country which is crystallized in the form of EU membership project. TÜSİAD has claimed throughout 2000s that a prospective settlement of the Cyprus problem would contribute to national-general interests since it would contribute also to the EU membership of Turkey. In this sense, TÜSİAD has based its arguments about the Cyprus question on the very success of the construction of the EU membership objective as a hegemonic project.

Thus, the attitude of TÜSİAD about the Cyprus question should be analysed within the specific conditions of the social and historical context, especially in relation with the EU membership process. In other words, TÜSİAD reads the Cyprus question through the variables of the EU membership project and handles the problem as a subtitle of the EU membership agenda (Özkan, 24/01/2004):

> The EU membership has been the first matter of TÜSİAD's agenda for the last 10-15 years. Cyprus question has entered to this agenda to the extent that it is related with the EU membership process (Duna, 2006).

That is to say, the attitude of TÜSİAD on the Cyprus question has been defined through its relations with the macro social-political vision of the organization. Specifically, the pro-settlement attitude of TÜSİAD on the Cyprus question does not indicate a general and constant tendency. For instance, TÜSİAD supported the 1974 intervention and declared that the private sector was ready to fulfil its duty to maintain the military success of the intervention in the economic sphere (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 08/08/1974). Indeed, the most important conglomerate of the time, Sabancı Holding, donated 1, 5 Million Turkish Liras to the Turkish Army just after the Turkish Intervention to support it (*Hürriyet*, 25/07/1974).

TÜSİAD has also published a report to inform its members on the economic and social conditions of the island. In this report, TÜSİAD calls its members to contribute to the economic and social development of Northern Cyprus in line with national responsibility (TÜSİAD, 1974: 1). As seen, after the 1974 intervention, TÜSİAD not only supported this operation but also strived to contribute the sustainability of the picture created by the intervention.

The perception of TÜSİAD about the Cyprus problem changed after the 1980 turn in relation with the comprehensive socio-economic and political transformation. This structural transformation, which introduced not only an authoritarian political regime but also a neo-liberal accumulation strategy based on the export-oriented growth and liberalization of the market, changed dramatically the conditions, tendencies, objectives, future prospects and growth perspectives of capital, especially the big sections of it. In close connection with this structural transformation that has redefined the conditions of existence of Turkish capital; big business began to perceive the Cyprus question as an obstacle in front of Turkey's further international integration (Uzgel, 2004: 327).

However, this perception did not appear as an effective and evident argument even within TÜSİAD until 2000s. For example, in the Cyprus report which is published by TÜSİAD in 1998, we come up against a very different tone in comparison with the attitude of the organisation which has maintained throughout the 2000s. Similar to the report of 1974, 1998 report was aiming to gather the necessary information about the economic and social structure of KKTC in order to lay the ground for undertakings which would strengthen the economy in the Northern Cyprus. It is stated in the report that the Northern Cypriot economy should be transformed through structural reforms (such as reduction of the public sector, privatization, re-formulation of the tax system, etc.) in order to create an effective economy (TÜSİAD, 1998: 61). What draws attention is that there pointed no serious criticism to the official Cyprus policy of Turkey in the report. On the contrary, inviting Turkish business to invest in the Northern Cyprus, it is possible to state that this report contributed the perpetuation of KKTC. Moreover, the EU membership project was not mentioned in relation with the Cyprus problem within the report.

The Helsinki Summit should be seen as a turning point which made TÜSİAD to commit itself to the settlement of the Cyprus question in favour of Turkey's EU membership process. With the appearance of the EU membership as a concrete possibility after the Helsinki Summit, the obstacles impeding the development of the process, including the Cyprus question, began to be evaluated more seriously. TÜSİAD, seeing the EU membership as an indispensable objective for Turkey

(TÜSİAD, 26/11/2001) and observing the close connection between the EU membership process of Turkey and the Cyprus problem (TÜSİAD, 04/11/2002) began to demand the settlement of the problem in order to eliminate one of the more important constraints on the EU membership of Turkey (TÜSİAD, 14/11/2002):

> Turkey should behave considering its main direction, the EU, which was determined in 1987 with the full membership application…Cyprus dispute should be settled not only due to it impedes the EU membership of Turkey but also hypothecs all the energy of the country in the international arena (Duna, 2006).

TÜSİAD abandoned to question the logic or the justness of the membership requirements, including the Cyprus problem, from the end of 1999 onwards. As manifested in the words of Özilhan (2003: 7), it demands the fulfilment of those requirements as soon as possible without wasting time in questioning. And, the settlement of the Cyprus problem was one of the primary requirements which should be fulfilled immediately:

> It is essential for the Cyprus policy to be taken in a way in which it would not create deep crises with the EU in the coming period in order to prevent the Cyprus question to become an obstacle in front of the EU membership of Turkey. It should not be forgotten that the historical and social responsibility of a deadlock in Cyprus question causing a breakdown in Turkey-EU relations and in the full membership perspective of Turkey would be very heavy (TÜSİAD, 16/11/2001).

As seen, it is the EU membership objective directing TÜSİAD to force the settlement of the Cyprus problem. Although it uses the demands of Turkish Cypriots as an argument claiming that they deserve a long-lasting settlement and peace (TÜSİAD, 04/05/2002; 14/11/2002), the essential drive of TÜSİAD to promote the settlement of the problem is not the conditions, demands or destiny of Turkish Cypriots but it's own interests crystallized in the objective of the EU membership. As understood, the determining factor of TÜSİAD's perspective on the Cyprus problem is the EU membership project.

As Özilhan underlines, TÜSİAD has committed itself to the settlement of Cyprus problem on the grounds of the idea that the Cyprus problem has the power and importance to prevent Turkey's progress on the way to the EU membership and to

define the future of the country (*Radikal*, 13/11/2003). Özilhan indicates the fact that the deadlock of the Cyprus problem would push Turkey to a political isolation in the international arena which would in turn cause an economic decline (*Radikal*, 26-27/03/2003). Thus, TÜSİAD has pushed for the settlement of the Cyprus problem to prevent itself from a serious harm which would be inevitably faced in the event of political isolation.

Moving from this picture, TÜSİAD should be seen as the primary agent of transformation in the Cyprus policy as well as the popular conception about the Cyprus question in 2000s. On the one hand it strived to shape the public opinion in favour of a settlement in Cyprus using all the positive means including major newspapers, TV programmes, reports, press releases, panels, meetings, etc. while pushing the government to a compromising attitude. Especially after the submission of the Annan Plan, TÜSİAD took the primary initiative to defend the plan against the criticisms and to prepare the way for the execution of the settlement process. TÜSİAD gave necessary reactions and responses to the opponents of the Annan Plan during the whole process; used all the means of mass communication to convince the public opinion; directed, pushed and even threatened the government when it was necessary and formulated arguments and opinions on behalf of Turkey in the event of deadlocks even before the government.

To illustrate this social and political initiative taken by TÜSİAD especially after the submission of the Annan Plan, it was necessary to remind certain interventions of the organizations to defend and promote the settlement of the problem on the basis of the Annan Plan:

Just after its submission, Annan Plan was welcomed as an important opportunity which should be appraised by Turkey (TÜSİAD, 26/11/2002) and it pushed the government to sign the framework agreement covering the general principles of Annan Plan before the Copenhagen Summit (12 December 2002):

> With signing the framework agreement before 12 December 2002, Copenhagen Summit, Turkey, which is already taken concrete steps to fulfil the Copenhagen Political Criteria, would contribute the settlement of the Cyprus problem which has been expected by the

international community for a long time. Moreover, the settlement of the Cyprus problem is indispensable not only for the EU-Turkey relations but also for the peace and welfare of the Turkish Cypriots and for the development of all the foreign relations of Turkey (TÜSİAD, 02/12/2002).

After the rupture of negotiations on Annan Plan in The Hague on 10 March 2003, mainly due to the attitudes of Denktaş, TÜSİAD declared that this failure of the negotiations opens the doors to serious threats for the future of Turkey and called the authorities of Turkey and KKTC for taking steps towards the settlement of the problem on the basis of Annan Plan. In addition, it is stated that this intransigent attitude provokes the international community against us and prevents Turkey from being a politically and economically strong country within the global order (TÜSİAD, 11/03/2003).

In July 2003 Foreign Policy Forum, which was held with the cooperation of TÜSİAD and Boğaziçi University, it organized a conference titled "Annan Plan: Myths and Realities" (Annan Planı: Hayaller ve Gerçekler) to re-put the Annan Plan on the agenda. The chairman of the organization, Özilhan, expressed the TÜSİAD's point of view in a very concise manner:

> We believe that the Cyprus question should be evaluated within the framework of the global interests of Turkey, considering the realities of the pro-Cold War and the pro-September 11 world…The Cyprus problem must be settled in anyway as it is required by the common interests. However, we know that there established a relationship between the settlement of the Cyprus problem and the EU membership of Turkey. At least it is obvious that an EU which contains the Cyprus Greek Administration would make things difficult for Turkey. Thus, we believe that the settlement of the Cyprus problem before 1 May 2004, before the EU membership of the Cyprus Greek Administration representing the whole island, is favourable for the benefit of Turkey as well as Turkish Cypriots.
>
> It is also obvious that such a settlement could only be realized within the framework of the Annan Plan in the current conjuncture. For this reason we decided to re-place the plan on the public opinion's agenda… We invite the government to re-adopt its compromising and constructive attitude about Cyprus question (Özilhan, 17/07/2003).

In the same days, Turkey signed a Customs Union Framework agreement with KKTC and TÜSİAD criticized this step claiming that it would delay the fundamental

settlement of the problem and raise doubts about Turkey's intentions. TÜSİAD indicated that such an agreement was in contradiction with the obligations of Turkey to the EU within the scope of the Customs Union; thus, engendering speculations about the EU-Turkey relations (TÜSİAD, 12/08/2003).

To promote the Annan Plan, TÜSİAD acted together with the KKTC Businessmen Association from time to time. These two organizations declared their supports to the Annan Plan with a joint press release (TÜSİAD, 10/12/2003) and organized certain meetings and seminars together. The opinion of KKTC Businessmen Association was presented as the proof of the general attitude of Turkish Cypriots on the side of peace and settlement while TÜSİAD was perceived as a great chance to influence the Turkish government and public opinion by KKTC Businessmen Association. This mutual relationship of interest paved the ground for collaboration of Turkish businessmen and Turkish Cypriots towards the settlement of Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan. This collaboration could also be seen as an indicator of the universal aim of the capital in the age of globalization: elimination of all the obstacles impeding further integration with the world economy.

TÜSİAD greeted the invitation of Kofi Annan to start negotiations in New York on 10 February 2004 as a historical opportunity on the way to the settlement of the Cyprus problem and called both parties to start the negotiation process so as to settle the problem until 1 May 2004. In addition, TÜSİAD evaluates the initiative of Annan on the finalization of the Plan (Kofi Annan would have designated the final state of the Plan in case of any disagreements between two parties) as an impulsive factor which would encourage both sides to a compromise (TÜSİAD, 06/12/2004). A few days later, TÜSİAD denoted its gratification about the re-opening of negotiations between representatives of Turkish and Greek Cypriots on the basis of Annan Plan and stated that opening of negotiations and prospective settlement of Cyprus problem would help Turkey to get a concrete date for EU accession negotiations by the end of 2004 (TÜSİAD, 16/02/2004).

Just before the April 2004 referendum, the newly elected chairman of TÜSİAD, Ömer Sabancı declared once more the support of TÜSİAD for the Annan Plan in the

seminar on "Cyprus Economy and Investment Opportunities" which was organized by TÜSİAD and KKTC Businessmen Association, and claimed that the final state of the plan was serving the common interests of Turkey and Turkish Cypriots despite certain ambiguities especially about derogations.

> In a period in which it becomes impossible to accept the deadlock as the solution both for KKTC and Turkey; we now have a legitimate arrangement which protects the rights of the Turkish side and which would provide us new horizons (Sabancı, 2004).

He also indicated that Northern Cyprus would be an attractive area for Turkish investors only within the context of the United Cyprus (Sabancı, 2004). With this statement, Sabancı reveals that the issue of investment is not perceived within the context of social responsibility by the Turkish capital. Investment is made just for profit, not for something else. And KKTC is not promising profit since it is not recognized by the world; thus, it is not possible to establish regular business relations business with the external world for an enterprise investing in KKTC. Statements of Ömer Sabancı should be read as a bold admission of the law of capital against certain responsibilities attributed to it.

As seen in the above speeches and press releases, TÜSİAD insisted on the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan from the very first day of its submission for acceptance by the Turkish Cypriots in 24 April 2004 referendum. TÜSİAD appreciated the government when it undertook initiative towards the settlement of the problem (as is the case in Davos Meeting in January 2004) and criticized and even threatened the same government when it retreated from its claim to settle the problem on the basis of Annan Plan (as is the case in the period after the failure of The Hague talks in March 2003). Starting with this picture, it is possible to state that TÜSİAD has committed itself to promote the settlement of Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan using all possible means and channels between 2002 and 2004. Moreover, it achieved to shape both the official policy and public opinion by the use of those means and channels. Indeed, TÜSİAD leaded the process of transformation of the way in which the Cyprus question perceived and assessed in connection with its leading role in the establishment of the EU membership of Turkey as a hegemonic project.

Besides TÜSİAD, certain other representatives of Turkish capital such as TSP (Turkey SIAD's Platform) representing 60 local industrialists' and businessmen's associations was elevating their voices in favour of the settlement of the problem. TSP, noticing the close relationship between the Cyprus question and the EU membership process of Turkey, has expressed its concern about the Cyprus deadlock repeatedly. It underlined that developments about the Cyprus question would affect Turkey-EU relations even though it is not an official criterion; and thus, that Turkey should be more flexible to reach a settlement in Cyprus (TSP, 12/10/2002).

TSP also stated in the announcement of the Kyrenia (Girne) Meeting made on 31 January 2003 that the opportunity emerged with the submission of the Annan plan should be utilized by both parties for the sake of Turkey and Turkish Cypriots (TSP, 31/01/2003). A few months later, TSP repeated its will towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the way to the EU membership (TSP, 20/06/2003). In its İzmir Summit, TSP interpreted the results of KKTC elections as the indication of the Turkish Cypriot consensus willing to join the EU through the settlement of the problem on the basis of a prospective compromise. Respecting this will of Turkish Cypriots, TSP called Turkish government to show its resolution on settling the Cyprus problem (TSP, 19/12/2003). Just before the 24 April referendum, TSP called the Turkish Cypriots to continue their pro-solution attitude (TSP, 02/04/2004). In other words, it invited Turkish Cypriots to say yes to Annan Plan in the referendum.

Local chambers of industry and commerce also raised their voices about the Cyprus problem. For example, Zafer Çağlayan, President of Ankara Chamber of Industry, indicated their will for a settlement in Cyprus before 1 May 2004, at least before December 2004 -before the Copenhagen summit in which Turkey was planning to get a concrete date for the opening of membership negotiations- (Çağlayan, 2004: 101). After the April 2004 referendum, Tanıl Küçük, the President of İstanbul Chamber of Commerce, expressed its gratitude to the Turkish Cypriots and the government of KKTC for changing the picture which had been perceived negatively by the world before with their positive pro-solution attitude (*Sanayi*, 07/2004:6).

However, beyond all these examples, to illustrate the "unity in difference" mentioned above and to understand the role of the capital in the transformation of the way in which the Cyprus problem perceived and handled in all its bearings, it is essential to look the attitude of one specific actor, TOBB, since it is the legal representative of local capital, especially small and medium-sized capital in Turkey. TOBB (The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey) represents 364 local chambers of commerce, industry, commerce and industry, maritime commerce, and commodity exchanges; and, unlike the membership to TÜSİAD which is voluntary, TOBB is a public organization at which membership is mandatory for all those local chambers. In this sense, TOBB provides an institutional framework which holds all the small and medium-sized capital as well as the big capital together under the same organization.

Because of the structure of the organization covering different sections of capital together, the administration of TOBB considers various balances while maintaining its attitude in any subject matter to preserve its position. Since the TOBB administration is selected with the votes of all the members, it must achieve to balance the nationalist-conservative tendencies of the local business circles and the ultra-liberal discourse which reflects the vision, demands and interests of the big capital. We can observe this effort to balance certain different tendencies in the attitude of TOBB about the Cyprus question.

Besides certain chambers which insistently demand the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan such as İSO (İstanbul Chamber of Industry) and İTO (İstanbul Chamber of Commerce), TOBB contains also certain chambers which severely oppose the Annan Plan with ultra-nationalist arguments such as ATO (Ankara Chamber of Commerce). Indeed, ATO and its President, Sinan Aygün, have acted as the pioneering agent of the nationalist camp organizing certain conferences and meetings against the Annan Plan and accusing supporters of the plan of betrayal (Aygün, 04/03/2004). Thus, TOBB has tried to balance those different tendencies and attitudes by using a careful tone and sometimes giving contradictory messages. For instance, President of TOBB, Rıfat Hisarcıklıoğlu, reacted against TÜSİAD's attitude by rejecting the connection between the Cyprus question and EU

membership process of Turkey (*Radikal*, 28/11/2001) in 2001. However, he was underlining this connection and maintaining that the political will of Turkey would eliminate one of the more important constraints on the way to the EU membership (Hisarcıklıoğlu, 19/04/2004).

In the same manner, he maintained that a settlement within the framework of Annan Plan would procure the strengthening of the EU membership perspective of Turkey as well as contributing to developing relationships between Greece and Turkey (*Ekonomik Forum*, 03/2003, p.12-13) on the one hand, while he was expressing his esteem to the "legendary" personality of Rauf Denktaş (*Ekonomik Forum*, 09/2003, p.11), to whom personally tried to impede such a settlement, on the other. Or he emphasized the national character of the Cyprus question while underlining his desire for settlement (*Ekonomik Forum*, 12/2003, p.24). These seemingly contradictory statements could be understood in relation with the structure of TOBB which could be defined as a contradictory unity. Thus, the administration of TOBB *nolen volens* reflected the contradictory structure of the organization.

However, despite all those seemingly contradictory statements, TOBB has maintained its decisive attitude in favour of the settlement in the Cyprus question on the basis of Annan Plan. But, in comparison with TÜSİAD, TOBB expressed its attitude more deliberately considering the disadvantages of the Annan Plan and the criticisms which were directed to it. For instance TOBB organized a meeting named "Economic Aspect of the Annan Plan" in Ankara, just before the April 24th referendum, on 19 Nisan 2004 to discuss the plan in detail. In this meeting Hisarcıklıoğlu underlined the economic problems which would be faced by Turkish Cypriots in the event of the affirmation of the Annan Plan. Since there has been a huge economic gap between the northern and southern parts of the island, it would be hard for Turkish Cypriots to survive without the support of Turkey. In addition, fifty seven thousand Turkish Cypriots would lose their homes with the transfer of certain parts of northern Cyprus to the Greek Cypriots, a considerable amount of real estates would be transferred, the currency would be changed, etc. Hisarcıklıoğlu claimed that this burden should be shared equally however he added that this burden should

not dissuade Turkey and Turkish Cypriots from a prospective settlement (Hisarcıklıoğlu, 19/04/2004).

Thus, TOBB perceived all those disadvantages as acceptable price which could be paid in return for the settlement of the Cyprus problem. That is why Hisarcıklıoğlu stressed that the Annan Plan should be accepted, despite the fact that it is not perfectly satisfactory, since the present situation does not promise any hope for Turkish Cypriots and prevents Turkey from progressing on the way to the EU membership (Hisarcıklıoğlu, 19/04/2004). In this sense, it should be underlined that what defines the final attitude of TOBB about the Cyprus question is the connection between the settlement of the Cyprus problem and the EU membership of Turkey in relation with its commitment to the EU membership project. Since the EU membership objective is serving to the common interests of all sections of capital represented by TOBB, it becomes necessary for the organization to adhere to the settlement of the Cyprus problem which would remove an important obstacle impeding the EU membership of Turkey.

Thus, the position of TOBB defending the settlement of the problem should be analysed through a historical perspective in relation with changing social conditions. In other words, the attitude of TOBB about the Cyprus problem could not be analysed independent from the accumulation strategy and hegemonic project of the period. For instance, despite its pro-solution environment in the 2000s, TOBB was one of the most feverish supporters of the Turkish Intervention in 1970s. Şadi Pehlivanoğlu, the General Secretary of TOBB at that time, declared that they, as the private sector, applauded the Turkish Intervention from the heart and announced that Turkish private sector was in the command of the Turkish General Staff with all its material and physical power just after the 1974 intervention (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 25/07/1974)

Similarly, the President of TOBB at that time, Sezai Dıblan, repeated that the private sector was ready to mobilize all its power and facilities to the command of the Armed Forces and called the entire business world to support them on a material basis (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 22/08/1974). He also expressed his gratitude and

blessing to Turkish Armed Forces for the "peace" operation undertaken in Cyprus (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 19/09/1974) and stated that Turkish Cypriots would live independently under the bayonet of the "glorious" Turkish Army forever (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 23/01/1975).

These statements of TOBB authorities were full of nationalistic-heroic phrases that glorify both the Turkish nationality and military such as "the noble and highborn Turkish existence", "glorious and heroine Turkish Army", "the nobility and greatness of Turkish nationality", etc.

The authorities of TOBB at that time perceived the Cyprus question as a national cause which should be handled in the spirit of "unity and cooperation", "patriotically" (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 28/11/1974). Talking within this spirit, they stressed that it was unacceptable for Turkey to give any concessions about the Cyprus question and Turkish private sector, as well as the whole Turkish nation, was ready to make any self-sacrifice for the protection of Turkish line in Cyprus (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 18/07/1974).

This stress of self-sacrifice is important since it indicates the difference between the attitudes of Turkish capital in 1970s and in 2000s. On what criteria should we evaluate this difference? Why have the representatives of Turkish capital continuously underlined their concern about the Cyprus deadlock which would cost Turkey a bundle in 2000s despite their statements underlining that they were the fighters (*mücahit*) of the new struggle which would follow the military intervention in 1970s (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 19/09/1974). Why has this stress of patriotic self-sacrifice been replaced by the concern about the troubles faced in the international arena, especially within the EU membership context, because of the Cyprus problem?

These questions could be answered in various ways. But the most important answer lies under the concept of historicality. Turkish capital perceived Cyprus as an area which could be enclosed by the industrialisation strategy of the time which was based on inward-oriented import substitution in 1970s. In fact, Northern Cyprus could easily be seen as another region of Turkey in 1970s in terms of the

development strategy of the time. Indeed, the President of TÜSİAD at that time, Feyyaz Berker stated that the opening of Cyprus to Turkish investment would provide advantages to the Turkish private sector in various ways while he was declaring that Turkish private sector was ready to pull its weight in Northern Cyprus in terms of the promotion of economic development and self-sufficiency in the region. Berker particularly underlined the tourism and mine sectors as important resources at Northern Cyprus from which Turkey could draw benefit (*Türkiye İktisat Gazetesi*, 08/08/1974).

Thus, it is possible to state that the situation emerged after the 1974 intervention did not harm the interests and objectives of the capital at that period. But the picture radically changed after 1980, thanks to the dramatic transformation of the accumulation strategy. This transformation of accumulation strategy from the inward oriented import substation to outward oriented export promotion has made the capital accumulation more sensitive and responsive to international pressures since the national economic cycle has become dependent to the international cycle of capital. In such a conjuncture, Turkish capital has become impatient to any economic, political or social issues that create difficulties in the process of international integration.

However, it committed itself to the settlement of those political and social issues that create problems within the international arena, including the Cyprus question, in 2000s, with the EU candidacy of Turkey since the aspiration of Turkish capital towards the EU membership could only become realistic after the Helsinki Summit. Therefore, it could be said that the juncture of the national and international variables made the construction of the EU membership objective as a hegemonic project and hence, the transformation of Cyprus policy, possible.

3.3.2. The AKP Government

Cyprus problem was one of the most important issues creating difficulties for international integration, especially the EU membership. The impatience of capital

about the Cyprus deadlock accrued after the Helsinki Summit, with the EU candidacy status of Turkey. On the other hand, the coalition government of the time was representing a very different point of view in Cyprus on the grounds of its nationalist character represented by DSP and MHP. 2001 was the year in which a serious dispute arose on the Cyprus problem between the government and TÜSİAD. And 2001 was also the year in which AKP was established.

AKP was established on 14 August 2001. The leader cadre of the party had been the leading figures of the Islamist FP (Virtue Party) which was closed by the Constitution Court on 22 June 2001 because of its activities against the secular character of the Turkish Republic. Some of the leading figures of FP such as Abdullah Gül and Bülent Arınç broke with their old tradition with an aim to construct a more moderate-centrist political line and established AKP under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. This team has read the notice of February 28th correctly about the borders of politics in Turkey and has re-built their political identiuy within the conservative-liberal political area. In other words, they have chosen a more "legitimate" way in direction of integration with the global capitalism (Türk, 2004: 73).

Defining itself as a conservative democratic political entity, AKP strived to differentiate itself from its Islamist roots and be presented itself as a liberal centre right party who is sensitive in religious issues. With its new political discourse and identity, AKP presented itself as a favourable political agent which would accommodate the establishment of Turkish Republic and would carry the country to the age of globalization with its liberal philosophy. With such a presentation, AKP appeared as the most favourable candidate for the Turkish capital which could commit itself to the realization of certain goals such as the EU membership.

AKP, seeing the disaccord between the government of the time and necessities of the period crystallized in the EU adjustment process, based its political discourse on the concept of transformation. The program of the party starts with these typical statements:

> Turkey is experiencing a great desire for change within acrimonious times. The serious problems in politics, economy and social life are adversely affecting the daily lives and futures of our citizens. Turkey is yearning for a dynamic "political formation", having the vision to overcome these problems, to provide peace, security and welfare for its citizens, to allow them to look securely to their futures (AKP, 2001).

In the party program the primary arguments of the liberal discourse such as "world's realities", "global dynamics", "individual", "democratization", "human rights and liberties", "market economy", "privatization", "structural transformations", "economic stability", "disciplining public spending", "international competitiveness", "quality, productivity and effectiveness", "freedom for entrepreneurial activities", "importance of foreign capital for the development of Turkish economy", "continuation of relations with EU, IMF and WB", "state remaining outside all types of economic activities", "state as a controller and regulator" are constantly repeated (AKP, 2001). In other words, the party program could be seen as a manifestation of the liberal perspective.

AKP has given important messages on foreign policy towards the transformation of the traditional policy line of Turkey in its program. It has been insistently underlined that the Cold War came to an end thus there has been a need to transform the "old political mentality", especially in the area of foreign policy:

> Our Party shall follow a realistic foreign policy befitting the history and geographical position of Turkey, free from prejudices and obsessions, based on mutuality of interests... Against changing regional and global realities, our Party believes that Turkey must redefine its foreign policy priorities (AKP, 2001).

In addition, AKP has expressed its commitment to the EU membership project at any cost in its party program:

> Turkey shall rapidly fulfil its promises in its relations with the European Union and the conditions, which the union demands of other candidate nations as well. Thus, it shall prevent the occupation of the agenda with artificial problems (AKP, 2001).

Furthermore, it has implied that the political will and "society" would gain strength in foreign policy process both in terms of decision making and implementation instead of the Foreign Affairs bureaucracy:

> Our Party believes that the decision-making and implementation process in foreign policy is inadequate with the participation of bureaucracy only. It believes that the effectiveness and strength of Turkey shall increase by ensuring the participation of the Parliament and various sections of society in such decisions (AKP, 2001).

Reading together, these statements indicate a very desirable transformation for the capital front in both the direction and formation process of Turkish foreign policy. And similar statements took place in the election manifesto of AKP in 2002. In this manifesto it was stated that the ideological approaches of the circles opposing Turkey's accession to the EU with certain concernsabout national sovereignty, national security, national interest, national and local culture issues, was delaying the fulfilment of the Copenhagen Criteria. For AKP, this concept which has aimed to continue the bureaucratic statist understanding of administration, should be re-evaluated in the light of a participatory, democratic, pluralistic and civil understanding (AKP, 2001).

As seen, AKP was promising to transform not only the social and economic structure of the country in line with neo-liberal manifests but also the basis on which the Turkish foreign policy is formulated and implemented. In other words the social, political and economic guidelines of the neo-liberal understanding have taken place together in the party program and election manifesto of AKP.

What especially important for our subject are the statements specifically on the Cyprus problem in those texts. Observing the serious dispute escalating since 2001, AKP put specific statements on the Cyprus problem which has promised its settlement:

> Our party believes in the need of the settlement of the Cyprus problem for certain. The establishment of a state rule consists of two sovereign societies as is the case in Belgium would be in favour of the both sides (AKP, 2002).

These expressions were about two sovereign societies and the Belgium model was indicating a serious differentiation in the official Cyprus policy of the previous period claiming a confederation in Cyprus based on the existence of two sovereign states. These statements also indicate a serious break with the political roots of AKP that had been against the EU membership of Turkey besides being a feverish advocate of the traditional-nationalist opinion about the Cyprus question. AKP has used its EU and Cyprus perspective as an evidence of its transformation from an Islamist to a contemporary conservative democratic identity especially to neutralize reactions against its establishment (including General Staff and civilian bureaucracy) emerged after its election victory.

These expressions could also be seen as a message given to the certain sections of society which was demanding the immediate settlement of Cyprus problem under the leadership of big capital and its representative TÜSİAD. The message was received; indeed, the election victory of AKP interpreted by some as a swipe against the mentality which wants Cyprus question to remain as a deadlock (Ülsever, 18/11/2002).

AKP has acted as an effective agent to pursue the primary goals of the big capital in various issues including the Cyprus question. The words of the President of the TBMM Foreign Affairs Commission, AKP's Antalya Deputy Mehmet Dülger, are very elucidative for illumination of the cooperation between the big capital and government about the Cyprus question:

> There emerge an alliance among the big business circles and the government about the Cyprus issue and this alliance provided legitimacy to the Cyprus policy of our government to a great extent (Dülger, 2006).

The arguments of AKP were highly identical with the arguments of the big capital and they worked together for the settlement of the problem on the basis of Annan Plan, together:

> It had become impossible to carry on the traditional Cyprus policy of Turkey. Thus, AKP maintain an attitude in favour of the Annan Plan and the acceptance of Annan Plan provided Turkey an advantageous position within the international arena (Dülger, 2006).

The primary factor designating the Cyprus policy of AKP was certainly the EU membership process:

> Turkey requires the EU membership process since it does not have the intellectual, political and organizational capacity to establish certain norms for the functioning of democracy, economy and social life and to fulfil them. Thus, Turkey needs to reference a certain focus and adjust to its rules and regulations in order to reach a certain level of development.
>
> The EU membership process is the primary factor that has forced the transformation of the Cyprus policy of Turkey in last period (Dülger, 2006).

Despite certain cracks such as TBMM Speaker Bülent Arınç[26]• and certain periods in which it retreats from its attitude temporarily against the insistence of Denktaş (such as the period between March-September 2003), AKP has generally attended its promises about the Cyprus problem. It prepared the political and social atmosphere for the settlement of Cyprus problem in Turkey; it maintained a resolute attitude as well as showing political will towards the settlement of the problem and it forced the KKTC government in this direction. The actors who were impeding this objective of settlement both from Turkey and Northern Cyprus (such as Denktaş himself) had been eliminated by the government during the negotiation process. And, finally, the admission of the Annan Plan, by both the Turkish Cypriots and Turkish public opinion, was ensured. During this process, the government received the active support of the big capital while acting in collaboration with individual figures among the business world as well as the representatives of the Turkish capital.

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[26] Arınç accused the Turkish Cypriots who shout slogans against Denktaş, Turkish General Staff and Turkish government of being sold while Erdoğan was giving opposite massages (*Radikal*, 18/01/2003).

3.3.3. Liberal Intellectuals and Mainstream Media Circles

Liberal (and liberal-leftist) intellectuals should be seen as a part of the consensus established among the big capital and AKP government on the basis of the settlement of the Cyprus problem immediately. The term "liberal intellectuals" does not indicate a coherent group; on the contrary those intellectuals who can be defined with the term "liberal" actually come from various different social and political backgrounds and represent different social and political visions. What unites those differences is a liberal tendency developed especially against the political tradition of Turkey which is defined with strong-repressive state. Most of them identify this tradition with Kemalism, with the establishment philosophy and the founding cadre of Turkish Republic. That is why certain figures within this liberal intellectuals are named as "second republicans".

This liberal intellectual circle, essentially consisting of ex-leftist activists who gave up analysing the world within a Marxian conceptual framework and adopted a liberal-democratic political identity after the 1980 military coup, accept the free market economy, thus the economic dimension of liberalism, as the essential basis for the political freedom and democracy. Therefore, they do not have any disagreements with economic orientations of the political power; on the contrary they support the economic liberalization process. However, they criticize the political power with not coupling the economic liberalization with the political liberalization. They all highlight certain demands such as the freedom of thought and speech, human rights, minority rights, etc… For them, democratization is the primary agenda of Turkey on its way towards being a developed country.

Since the majority of intellectuals, including certain leftist intellectuals, has given up to believe in the own dynamics of Turkey, they have concentrated all their hopes for a liveable country on the project of EU membership. They perceive the EU as the vehicle which would carry Turkey to a desired future of democracy and pluralism:

> The European Union means to adopt certain rules in the supra-national dimension in order to live in conformity with certain values and principles. Those values and principles are about democracy and human rights, pluralism and international fraternity of the mankind….

Hence, I support the EU membership project of Turkey (Belge, 2003: 17).

Those intellectuals have focused their intellectual effort on the promotion of the EU membership project and believe that the interruption of the EU membership process would cause a disaster for Turkey:

I have certain opinions about the short, medium and long term results of the abandonment of Turkey from the EU membership objective. I can see that such abandonment means a dark future for Turkey (Belge, 2003: 279).

The EU membership project has acted as the ground for collaboration of the liberal and liberal-leftist intellectuals with the AKP government. Intellectuals have been pleased about the AKP government as long as it works to eliminate all the obstacles in front of the EU membership project and fulfil the membership criteria at all costs. For instance one of the most important liberal-leftist intellectuals, Murat Belge, claims that Turkey has been normalizing under the power of AKP. For him, the commitment of AKP to fulfil the EU membership criteria automatically brings normalization. And the transformation of Cyprus policy is one of the most important indicators of this normalization (Belge, 11/07/2004).

Like Murat Belge, a serious number of intellectuals has evaluated the compromising attitude of AKP government about the Cyprus problem and supported this attitude of the government since they perceive this problem a serious constraint on the EU membership of Turkey, thus on democratization of the country. Seeing that the dispute about Cyprus was not just about the Cyprus Island but also about the future of the country (Berkan, 07/01/2004) and believing that the continuation of the deadlock would impede the EU membership of Turkey, all well-known liberal intellectuals maintained the necessity of the settlement of the Cyprus problem for the sake of Turkey's future on the basis of Annan Plan[27]. Therefore, it should be said that, the attitudes of intellectuals favouring a settlement in Cyprus has indicated not only their visions about the Cyprus Island but also, more importantly, their visions on

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[27] For two typical examples, look: Altan, 24/04/2004 and Birand, 02/04/2004

the future of their own country, especially on their desire towards the EU membership.

Those intellectuals, with their personal positions and attitudes and with their intellectual products addressing the public opinion through various means; have contributed to the formation of a general political climate by disseminating certain ideas and neutralizing others. They have also been effective in the shaping of the public opinion with their intellectual influence over the ordinary people.

Thus, those intellectuals helped certain ideas and objectives of the big capital about certain issues such as the Cyprus question to become widespread within the public. Indeed, some of them have acted as the organic intellectuals of big capital with an aim to generalize and publicize their concerns and objectives[28]. These (organic) intellectuals have contributed the efforts of big capital to promote a settlement in Cyprus not only by transmitting this idea of settlement to the public but also by formulating various reasons and justifications to underline why Turkey should immediately settle the this problem.

Those intellectuals who acted as the organic intellectuals of big capital especially between 2001 and 2004 were usually columnists in the major newspapers of the country. Mehmet Barlas and Mehmet Altan from *Sabah*, Mehmet Ali Birand from *Posta*, İsmet Berkan and Erdal Güven from *Radikal*, Osman Ulagay from *Milliyet*, Ertuğrul Özkök, Cüneyt Ülsever and Hadi Uluengin from *Hürriyet* could be regarded as the examples of those intellectuals. These newspapers have played important roles both in the construction of the EU membership as a hegemonic project and the presentation of the settlement of the Cyprus problem in any way as a necessary step for the future objectives of Turkey, especially for the EU membership.

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[28] "Every social group coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production creates together with itself, originally, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields." (Gramsci, 2000: 301)

"The (organic) intellectuals are 'deputies' exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government." (Gramsci, 2000: 306).

The accordance between representatives of the capital and the mainstream media circles (including not only major newspapers but also various magazines, TV and radio channels, web sites, publishing houses, etc) should not be regarded as a coincidence. It is a structural phenomenon since all the major newspapers, magazines and TV channels belong to one of a few huge media cartels owned by a big capital group such as Doğan or Doğuş Holding. Especially after 1980, the area of mass communication has gone through a serious transformation both in terms of its function as well as its structure. In the new period, in which the whole area of mass communication began to be named with the term "media", the transmission of knowledge and information became of secondary importance and the media began to produce and disperse the whole contemporary culture in the global level (Kaya, 2006: 174-175).

On the other hand, with the wave of privatization and deregulation and with the elimination of public monopolies and other protectionist measures, the media sector was entirely opened to the entrepreneurship of the big capital. With this opening, the big capital began to invest in the media sector in rising proportions and the ownership of the media began to be concentrated in the hands of a few huge conglomerates (Kaya, 2006: 175-179). We observe that this tendency of concentration has enabled the integration of the media and the big business (Kaya, 2006: 182). Indeed, one big conglomerate, Doğan Holding, has proclaimed its absolute domination with its 8 daily newspapers, 15 national TV channels, 23 magazines and various other enterprises in different areas of the media sector.

In fact, Doğan Holding is a perfect example to illustrate the integration of the big capital and the media; and it is one of the biggest ten holdings in Turkey having tens of companies in the energy, industry, trade, insurance and tourism sectors besides the media sector. That is to say, the owner of the biggest media conglomerate of the country is also among the biggest capitalist groups in Turkey. Moreover, the top executives of Doğan Holding are undertaking significant roles in the representation of the big capital. For instance a member of the Board of Directors at Doğan Holding and the chairman of the Executive Board of one of the biggest TV channels of the country (Kanal D), Arzuhan Yalçındağ, is also a member of the Board of Directors at

TÜSİAD. Additionally, a member of the Board of Directors at Doğan Broadcasting Company, Cem Duna, is also the vice-chairman of TÜSİAD.

As seen the fusion of the capital and the media has been materialized in Turkey through big conglomerates monopolized in the media sector. Starting with this picture, it could be said that the national media, being one of the most important instruments to form the public opinion, to put pressure on the political power and to affect the political decision making process, has been directly oriented by a few big capital groups owning the biggest media conglomerates. Indeed, as Kaya (2006, 184) underlines, the media with its current structure is acting as a press and public affairs agent of the big capital and the established order.

The national press still plays a crucial role in the formation of the public opinion and the political decision making process. Among the major newspapers of the country, *Hürriyet,* which is owned by Doğan Broadcasting Company, is the most prominent one since it has been the biggest and the most influential newspaper of Turkey for years. *Hürriyet* has defined the social and political headlines and has been very effective in the formation of the social-political atmosphere of the country as well as the general tendencies of the public opinion. However, one can not talk about a certain settled position of *Hürriyet* within the social-political atmosphere of Turkey. Rather, *Hürriyet* could be seen as a mirror which predominantly reflects the dominant-hegemonic position of the period within changing historical conditions. In this sense, one can have an opinion about the dominant-hegemonic visions and tendencies of the period by observing the political-social attitudes of *Hürriyet*. For instance, *Hürriyet* was the most feverish supporter of the Turkish Intervention in 1970s.

Indeed *Hürriyet* acted as a militant during the 1974 military intervention. It announced all single operations of the intervention from the headline with a heroic tone. The Cyprus case was presented as a national cause over and above all political differences (*Hürriyet*, 17/07/1974). Furthermore, *Hürriyet* intimidated Greece and Greek Cypriots with reference to the independence war, stating that all Turkish people would be a soldier in the event of a threat against "our" national existence and

rights (*Hürriyet*, 17/07/1974). *Hürriyet* announced the success of the intervention with a huge headline like "Victory, Victory" (Zafer, Zafer) and called the Turkish people to celebrate the day as a festival with national flags (*Hürriyet*, 21/07/1974). Moreover, it organized a contribution campaign to buy a new war vessel, a new *Yavuz*, for Turkish Army (*Hürriyet*, 26/07/1974).

Acting as a dedicated war hawk, *Hürriyet* declared that Turkey wanted an eye for an eye and would take its revenge from slaughters with blood (*Hürriyet*, 22/07/1974). It even dared to report a shootout with such a headline: "We did some cleaning when Greeks violate the ceasefire" (Rumlar ateşkesi bozunca biraz temizlik yaptık) (*Hürriyet*, 29/07/1974). The newspaper was full of news pointing out the love and support of the Turkish people to the "glorious" Turkish Army for its Intervention[29] after the first operation on July 20th. And *Hürriyet* announced the second operation of August 14th stating that it was necessary for Turkey to hammer the Greeks who did not get the slap (Tokattan anlamayan Rumlara yumruk atmak gerekti) (*Hürriyet*, 15/08/1975).

Hürriyet continued to act as the owner of the Cyprus case during the 1980s. Indeed, the national flag of Northern Cyprus was designed by *Hürriyet* just after the establishment of TRNC. It was carried to Cyprus and delivered directly to Rauf Denktaş by the chief editor of the newspaper and a delegation consisting of certain journalists and academics (Kaya, 2006).

Ironically, the same newspaper undertook the pioneering role in the promotion of a settlement in Cyprus in 2000s. In the post-Helsinki period, *Hürriyet* has maintained a pro-settlement attitude and moderate tone about the Cyprus policy. Despite its

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[29] Certain headlines from *Hürriyet* as examples: "Allahım Sen Ordumuzu Muvaffak Eyle"; "Türk Gençliği 'Ordu Batıya' Diye Bağırdı"; "Zafer İçin Camilerde Dualar Edildi"; "Din Görevlileri: Cenab-ı Hak Kahraman Ordumuz ile Birliktedir"; "Ailece Kan Vermeye Koştular"; "Dünyanın Yüzüne Şerefle Bakıyoruz"; "Bütün Kalpler Kıbrıs İçin Atıyor"; "Kıbrıs Türktür!": 22/07.

"Orduya Bağış Kampanyamız Çığ Gibi Büyüyor"; "Kıbrıs Destanı Yarışması"; "Onbinler Kahraman Ordumuz İçin Büyük Tezahürat Yaptı"; "Gençler Kıbrıs'ta Çarpışmak İstiyor"; "Yurtta Bağış İçin Halk Yarış Halinde"; "Adapazarı mitinginde Halk Şahlandı": 24/07.

"Bu Vatan İçin Canımız Bile Vermeye Hazırız"; "Ordumuzla Öğünüyoruz"; "Mehmetçiğin Zaferi Mersin'de Kutlandı": 25/07.

columnists who have different ideas about the Cyprus question, such as Emin Çölaşan and Oktay Ekşi, *Hürriyet* has generally taken a position by the side of settlement front with its news tone and with the attitude of its editor-in-chief, Ertuğrul Özkök. Özkök has become an important actor in Turkish political life as the chief of the most prominent tool to publicize certain themes and ideas. Özkök has advocated the settlement of the Cyprus on the basis of Annan Plan since its first submission in 2002 and has directed his newspaper on this line.

Özkök declared just after the submission of Annan Plan that he supported the plan for the sake of Turkish Cypriots and Turkey's EU membership process (Özkök, 13/11/2002). He wrote lots of articles supporting the Annan Plan between 2002 and 2004 and finally he called the Turkish Cypriots to vote for Annan Plan before the April 2004 referendum, stating that it was the first time he has declared his vote openly in public (Özkök, 10/04/2004). Besides Ertuğrul Özkök, figures such as Hadi Uluengin and Cüneyt Ülsever acted as an agent of the Annan Plan during the period between 2002 and 2004. Indeed, they began to criticize the official Cyprus policy after Helsinki summit, even before the emergence of the Annan Plan.

Interestingly, Hadi Uluengen raised his voice against the solid Cyprus policy of Ecevit government on the next day of TÜSİAD's reaction to the speech of İsmail Cem at TBMM while crticising the statements of Cem in a very sarcastic tone (Uluengin, 17/11/2001). He presented the Burgenstock negotiations as a victory for Turkish foreign policy which would broaden Turkey's horizons in various directions (Uluengin, 03/04/2004). And he called Turkish Cypriots to say yes to Annan Plan on the referendum day with a local statement (yes be annem!) for peace, freedom and welfare (Uluengin, 24/04/2004).

Similarly, Cüneyt Ülsever called Turkish Cypriots to say yes on the same day, underlining that they would determine the destiny of 72 Million Turkish people with their votes (Ülsever, 24/04/2004). He was also calling Turkey to force a solution on the basis of Annan Plan since its submission, relying on the idea that the Cyprus problem would directly determine the future of Turkey (Ülsever, 30/12/2002).

As seen in the example of *Hürriyet*, the prominent newspapers of the national press played an important role in promoting the settlement of Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan, both within the political and social arenas. In fact, as the chairman of TESEV, Can Paker, underlines, the whole mainstream media has undergone a serious transformation which has radically changed its approaches to certain issues such as Cyprus and democratization. For him, the reason of this transformation is the fact that media has begun to see its future in Europe and in the EU membership project of Turkey (*Radikal*, 15/03/2004).

Generalization of the consensus reached about the settlement of Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan to wide sections of the public was as important as the establishment of this consensus among ruling sections of the society. In other words, this consensus succeeded to a gain a serious popular support from the public, as well. Liberal intellectuals and mainstream media (which is an effective instrument consisting of the majority of liberal intellectuals as columnists) are the most important agents through whom/which the big business-government alliance socialize its ideas and objectives. Within just a few years the public opinion has been convinced the necessity of the settlement of the Cyprus problem for Turkey to attain a better future through the efforts of the mainstream media.

3.4. The Opposing Camp

During the 2000s, Turkey witnessed a dramatic relocation between the dominant and opponent positions about the Cyprus policy. The founders of the former Cyprus policy of Turkey from the 1974 intervention to 2000s has fallen to a dissident position in the view of changing political attitude of the new government and the insistent efforts of certain social groups. They have tried to re-formulate the old Turkish thesis on the basis of new historical conditions. Since the debate about Cyprus has majored on the acceptance or denial of the Annan Plan, the arguments of this camp have been mainly formulated to promote the dismissal of the Plan. This aim to ensure the dismissal of the plan has united certain different parties, groups and individuals on the same basis. Despite their different political identities and social

backgrounds, members of the opposing camp mainly share the nationalistic discourse and argumentation in common.

Considering the symbolic meaning of Cyprus for Turkish nationalism beyond the political and geo-strategic significance of the island, it becomes possible to understand the severe reaction of this camp to the changing Cyprus policy and the Annan Plan. This symbolic meaning is crystallized in the comprehension of Cyprus as the geographical point in which Turkish nation has broken its hundred-years-long psychology of defeat and retreat (Varlı, 2004: 38-39). The content of the Cyprus problem which is about the primary enemy and the primal "other" of Turkish nationalism, the Greek (Millas, 2002: 194), is a factor that redoubles the effect of this symbolic meaning.

> Northern Cyprus is an area of trial which shows what, how and how much could Turks do out of Turkey. If this trial fails, then it would become absurd to run after big dreams in anywhere else with big words (Soysal, 1995: 138).
>
> We can not generate advantages in our foreign policy by giving concessions from our rights in Aegean or from well-being of Turkish Cypriots. Especially in this period in which we talk about 'new horizons', 'Turkish world' and about our claims about being a 'great state', those who thinks that we can patronize by being an instrument of the small plans of others are mistaken (Gürel, 1993: 126).

As seen from the above quotations, Cyprus, being the sole homeland territory outside the Anatolian geography, has become a symbol of the political claims of Turkey outside Anatolia, especially on the "Turkish world" which has come to the agenda in 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Kızılyürek, 2002: 341-342).

All the elements of the opposing camp are more or less under the effect of this symbolic meaning of Cyprus. That is why the Cyprus issue has been perceived as a matter of honour and independence beyond its own limits by the opposing camp.

3.4.1. Political Parties

In fact, all the political parties except AKP have criticized the government policy favouring the acceptance of the Annan Plan either in a high or a low voice. Since it would be very difficult to demonstrate and analyse the position of each and every political party, two parties, CHP and MHP, have been chosen within them as important examples. The position of CHP is important as long as it is the main opposition party and one of the two parties which are represented in the parliament. Besides being the second major party of Turkey after the 2002 elections, CHP contravened the Cyprus policy of the government and the acceptance of the Annan Plan in every platform including the parliamentary rostrum.

The second party the position of which would be demonstrated in this study is MHP. The position of MHP should be considered since it demonstrates the typical nationalist position in a crystallized form. Nationalism is the main basis on which MHP built its political identity and the Cyprus question has taken too much room within this identity as one of the most popular themes of Turkish nationalism since mid 1950s. Thus, MHP demonstrates the most sensitive position and the sharpest opposition in the view of any compromise in Cyprus representing the apex point of Turkish nationalism.

CHP and MHP, like other opposing parties such as ANAP, DSP and DYP, countered the Annan Plan and severely criticized the Cyprus policy of the government. The common starting point of both parties was the nationalist discourse. However, in relation with the reactionary nature of the nationalist ideology and discourse, their opposition did not go beyond a reaction. Neither CHP nor MHP are able to develop an alternative social-political project on which they could base their opposition about the Cyprus question.

CHP, with adopting the social-liberal synthesis before the 2002 elections, completely retreated from any leftist social-political project which could be an alternative to the neo-liberal project (Kaya, 2002-03: 172). Since it adopts the neo-liberal programme in its economic and social aspects and necessities, the necessities that have forced the political power to settle the Cyprus question within the framework drawn by the UN,

CHP could not have a chance to develop a fundamental critic of the Cyprus policy of the government targeting the very basis of it. CHP do (and can) not direct a criticism against the basic economic and social policies as well as the basic tendencies of the government.

For instance, CHP supports the EU membership project of Turkey as well as the fulfilment of the membership requirements. Indeed, CHP perceives the EU membership as an important step in its ideal of modernization (to reach the level of the contemporary civilization) which was projected by Kemal Atatürk. Furthermore, CHP argues that the EU membership objective has become a national cause which has been accepted by the majority of Turkish people (CHP, 2005: 1). CHP has given support to the legal adjustment process by giving positive vote to the EU adjustment laws in parliament. Supporting the EU membership project, CHP could only oppose the way in which the government conduct the relations with the EU. It criticizes the EU policy of the government of being unstable and inconsistent.

CHP reacts also against the double standard of the EU authorities who formulate additional membership conditions for Turkey different from other candidate countries. In this context, CHP claims that Turkey should repudiate the conditions which are not comprised by the Copenhagen Criteria but take place in the official documents such as Regular Progress Reports, Accession Partnership and Negotiations Framework Documents. Cyprus question is one of those un-official conditions which should be repudiated by Turkey. CHP insists that Cyprus question should not be considered as an agenda item in discussions on Turkey's EU membership just like the Aegean question, conciliation with Armenia, re-opening of the Heybeliada Clergy School, acceptance of the Ecumenical status of the Patriarchate, recognition of the minority status of the Kurdish and Alevi people, etc. (CHP, 2005: 5-6).

For CHP, it is possible for Turkey to access the EU on an equal footing with other candidate countries with a resolute and consistent foreign policy line protecting the national interests of Turkey against unjust impositions (CHP, 2005: 9). CHP maintains that Turkey should protect its national interests with a resolute attitude in

its relations with the EU and the EU should satisfy its obligations and commitments in turn (Baykal, 28/06/2005). Leading figures of the party such as Onur Öymen (2005: 468) conceives the EU membership not as a status which should be reached with certain efforts but a right of Turkey which emanates from international treaties and which cannot be prevented by any authority unless Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen Criteria. On the other hand, certain warnings CHP has made against the tendency of the EU to suspend the membership process of Turkey and to propose a special status under the name of privileged partnership (Baykal, 28/06/2005).

In this sense, CHP argues to access the EU in a way despite the EU itself! Just like the westernization ideal against the west, CHP tries to prove that it is possible to enter a club on the one hand while resisting to it on the other. Since CHP could not develop a coherent program other than the neo-liberal program and the EU membership project which is linked to it, a coherent alternative vision containing economic, social, political and cultural aspects which could be a response to the continuous social, political and economic crises occurred in Turkey, the opposition of the party to the Cyprus policy of the government and the Annan Plan has remained rhetorical.

CHP has developed various arguments against the Cyprus policy of AKP and the Annan Plan. As mentioned, CHP evaluates the demands of the EU on the settlement of the problem in Cyprus in the context of the "unjust" impositions which should be repudiated by Turkey. CHP has declared its opposition to the Annan Plan since the very first days of its submission. By the year 2004, CHP toughened its opposition. Deniz Baykal, the chairman of the party, argues that the Annan plan disregards the realities of Cyprus (claiming that the Greek and Turkish people cannot live together safely and the only way for both societies to live peacefully in a safe, secure and stable environment is the recognition of two separate sovereignties in the island which would ensure for them to live separately (in separate geographies) and thus it could not settle the problem at all (Baykal, 17/02/2004).

Annan Plan appears to be the document of submission which would make Cyprus a Greek territory (Baykal, 13/04/2004). Onur Öymen, the vice-chairman of CHP who

is mainly specialized in foreign policy issues as a former ambassador and ex-undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, demonstrates the negative aspects of the plan in detail. He underlines that Annan Plan would cause nearly 60,000 Turkish Cypriots to become homeless as a result of regulations about the property issue. Furthermore, the Greek population would constitute 33% of the Turkish side in a twenty years time which would finally destroy the two sidedness of the Republic. Besides these, as long as the Annan Plan would not be considered as the primary legislation of the EU and derogations could not be guaranteed, it is not certain that Turkish side would preserve its advantages and rights won through the Plan (Öymen, 06/04/2004).

In fact, all the criticism oriented to the Annan Plan indicates one main idea: the impossibility for Greek and Turkish Cypriots to live together. CHP conceives the strict social and political borders between the Greek and Turkish side of Cyprus as the only guarantee of peace and security in the island. Distrust in the possibility of a partnership among two societies directs CHP to defend a settlement based on a strict form of two-sidedness which is closer to a confederation rather than a federation. For Onur Öymen, there lies the abandonment of the two-sidedness policy, which had been the essence of Turkey's Cyprus policy since 1974, in the centre of the deviation of the Cyprus policy in the last few years (Öymen, 2006). Öymen insistently underlines that the Turkish policy had based itself on the idea that Greek and Turkish Cypriots should live side by side, but not together, and adds that a possible attempt of Turkish and Greek Cypriots to live together under one political structure would cause a disaster as in the pre-1974 period (Öymen, 06/04/2004).

Beyond the concrete criticisms, CHP perceives the Cyprus policy of the AKP government as the symbol of a break from the traditional foreign policy line continued since the Lausanne Treaty. This break indicates a dramatic transition in the foreign policy understanding from an approach based on the protection of national interests and national honour to another one which is desirous to make concessions and give submissions (Baykal, 17/02/2004):

> It is necessary to determine a dramatic deviation in the Cyprus policy of Turkey. The policies about certain national causes do not change

with the change of governments. However, the AKP government dramatically deviated from the Cyprus policy of Turkey which was based on the protection of the strategic interests and the security of the lives and properties of the Turkish Cypriots and which had not changed since the 1960s (Öymen, 2006).

CHP tends to associate this new foreign policy approach of the AKP government, which is crystallized in the Cyprus policy, with the foreign policy understanding of the regression period of Ottoman Empire on the basis of the idea that in both cases the political power tends to follow the advices of external powers, to collaborate and accord at all costs and to abandon its own rights and interests (Baykal, 17/02/2004).

For CHP, the initiative of Annan in the determination of the Plan's final version indicates such an approach of obedience and submission. CHP opposes this role of Annan on the basis of the argument that it is impossible to find any example of this method in the whole world history. It is unacceptable for Turkey to accept a plan determined by external powers which was not even translated to Turkish on a regular basis, under the influence and impression of the foreign countries. Such a plan could not solve any problems, on the contrary could dissolve Turkey in turn (Öymen, 06/04/2004).

One of the main arguments of CHP about the Cyprus problem is that the Cyprus problem and the EU membership of Turkey are two separate issues which should not be associated with each other at all (Baykal, 17/02/2004). After all, the Cyprus question could not be formulated as a precondition on Turkey's EU membership as the Copenhagen Criteria did not contain such a condition. In addition, claiming Cyprus question as a national cause and integration with the contemporary world are not conflicting objectives (Öymen, 22/06/2005). Furthermore, Cyprus problem is not the only obstacle that impedes the EU membership of Turkey as argued. On the contrary, Öymen argues, any possible settlement of the Cyprus problem would not change the negative attitudes of certain countries and authorities within the EU such as Australia, German Christian Democrats and French Conservatives (Öymen, 2006).

However, it was insistently underlining by the EU documents and authorities that the Cyprus problem appears, maybe not as the only but primary obstacle in front of Turkey's membership to the EU. Thus, CHP's argument on separation of the EU

membership process and the Cyprus question becomes invalid in practice at least for a country which wants to access the EU. Having no serious alternative other than the EU membership project, it becomes impossible for CHP to develop a consistent alternative to the Cyprus policy of AKP and the Annan Plan. Thus, it criticizes the way in which AKP handled the Cyprus question accusing the government of ineptitude, inexperience and ignorance:

> This government has very limited political experience as well as very limited experience in the foreign policy. That is why it made a lot of mistakes in the area of foreign policy, especially about the Cyprus question. Moreover, the government consulted neither with the expert bureaucrats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor with the members of the parliament and chose to work with certain advisors in critical foreign policy issues. Thus, it became impossible for such an inexperienced government not to make critical mistakes (Öymen, 2006).

CHP also realises the role of the media and the big capital in the process of the transformation of the Cyprus policy:

> The business circles and the media have continuously given the message that Turkey's claim of Cyprus as a national cause harms Turkey's future, specifically the EU membership objective of Turkey. This propaganda has been effective over the Turkish public opinion to some extent as long as the majority of the main channels of the media that shapes the public opinion are controlled and directed by business circles. Those media circles, unfortunately, use the power of the capital and the power of the press not for an objective journalism but for the imposition of certain ideas to the public.

> There are certain organizations which pursue the interests of certain professions in other countries, too. But they determine their approaches considering the national interests of their own countries, not the foreign powers. However, in Turkey, the foreign countries use the influence of certain business circles and certain organs of the national press to affect the public opinion and political decision making process. Looking closely, you will see that the main arguments of a section of the media and certain business circles and the foreign powers that force Turkey to give concessions in Cyprus are the same in essence. Indeed, those sections of media and business circles have driven this process in close cooperation with foreign powers (Öymen, 2006).

As seen, CHP reacts against the attitude of the big business and media. However, it does not have the political courage to venture to be in a serious conflict with the big business and the mainstream media being as an essential part of the capitalist system in which the choices of the big business and the strong influence of the mainstream media are the fundamental determiners in the formation of the political arena. Thus, CHP expresses its reaction to these circles with a very careful language abstaining to accuse the entire big business or the entire mainstream media (as seen in the statements of Öymen: a section of the media, certain business circles, etc.).

All the above-mentioned arguments demonstrate the approach of the central authority at CHP represented by the party officers. However, there are some elements in CHP thinking differently from these officers such as Deniz Baykal and Onur Öymen about Cyprus question. Those sections reacts the nationalistic tone of the party leaders and demand a more leftist approach on the Cyprus problem. For instance, certain CHP deputies complain about Öymen's approach which draws CHP to a right wing line. Those deputies feel themselves indisposed in the view of the picture which adjoins CHP and MHP in terms of their approaches on the Cyprus problem (*Radikal*, 14/02/2004). Nevertheless, those deputies are not effective in determination of the party's policy on Cyprus, indeed, certain figures who thinks differently from the ruling cadre of the party has been put out of action. For instance, İnal Batu who is another ex-ambassador and known with more liberal approach in comparison with Onur Öymen, evidently receded from being the speaker of CHP on foreign affairs issues in the last period. Thus we consider the mainstream line reflected by leading figures such as Baykal and Öymen as the standpoint of CHP with regard to Cyprus.

MHP's arguments about the Cyprus problem have many things in common with the ones of CHP. What mainly differs the approaches of MHP and CHP is that MHP adopts a much more sharp and aggressive version of Turkish nationalism and uses a more critical tone against the EU in comparison with CHP. For instance, MHP, despite not maintaining an attitude against the EU membership of Turkey, states that the EU membership is not the only choice for Turkey. Thus to accept every imposition of the EU at the expense of its own national interests is disgraceful and

means disregarding the Turkish nation (Canefe and Bora, 2003: 134-137). In other words, MHP claims that it has no enmity against Europe (Canefe and Bora, 2003: 135) but it is against the unilateral relationship of conviction between Turkey and the EU and the dominant understanding which accepts each and every condition, no matter what, for the sake of this relationship (MHP, 2003: 1).

However, despite its aggressive and radical tone in comparison with CHP, MHP is not immune from the impasses of CHP. Like CHP, MHP is also lacking an alternative social-political vision, an alternative economic program on which it could base an alternative Cyprus policy. Moreover, MHP could not introduce an alternative policy making practice in both internal and external affairs when it was in power between 1999 and 2002. MHP abided by the "orders" of the EU in its main lines in its period of power despite certain reservations. For instance, the Helsinki decision which put the settlement of the Cyprus problem as a *sine qua non* for the EU membership of Turkey was signed by Turkey in the time of the coalition government.

MHP has maintained a sharp opposition against the Annan Plan and the Cyprus policy of the AKP government defining this policy with the word "submission". Indeed, the president of the party, Devlet Bahçeli, denominates Annan Plan as the document of betrayal, the betrayal of the government who disregards the concepts such as national interest or national cause and who sacrifice Cyprus for the EU membership (*Radikal*, 04/04/2004). MHP argues that the implementation of Annan Plan would endanger the Turkish existence in Cyprus in the long run (MHP, 2003: 18). MHP argues that the provisions of the plan about the property issues and also the land transfer are unacceptable since it would bring a huge problem of homelessness and unemployment for Turkish Cypriot Community (MHP, 2003: 19). Moreover, the existing balance relying on the assumption of the political equality of the constituent states would *de facto* become invalid by the existence of Greek emigrants who would settle in the North and gain the citizenship of the Turkish Constituent State (MHP, 2003: 20).

In addition, restriction of the Turkish military existence in Cyprus and dilution of the rights of Turkey on the island as a guarantor country are the unacceptable provisions of the plan since they would neutralize the effect of Turkey on the island and leave Turkish Cypriots unsheltered (MHP, 2003: 21-23). MHP opposes the idea that the Turkish and Greek Cypriots could leave together peacefully with a claim that the Greek racism makes such an alternative impossible. Thus, it would be a tragic mistake for Turkey to leave Turkish Cypriots unprotected in the lap of Greek racism and aggressiveness (MHP, 2003: 23-24).

MHP is also troubled about the possibility that the balance between Greece and Turkey could be broken and the rights of Turkish Cypriots could be neutralized by the mechanisms of the EU without any effect of Turkey. For instance the Treaty of Rome (which is one of the central documents of the EU law) rejects every restriction on the freedom of travel, settlement and work. Thus, the annulment of certain provisions of the Annan Plan, which restricts the Greek population to settle and work in the north and ensures the political equality of the constituent states, would become possible (MHP, 2003: 25).

MHP argues that the EU was exerting pressure on Turkey towards settlement of the Cyprus problem before May 2004, with the carrot of the EU membership. For MHP, Turkey should not capitulate to this unjust calendar syndrome and should defend its national interests against the EU with resolution (MHP, 2003: 35). The strategic importance of Cyprus has not lost its significance; on the contrary it has gained importance after certain developments such as the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipe line. MHP perceives an insistent claim on the independent status of KKTC or the integration of the Northern Cyprus with Turkey as realistic options. If Turkey would choose to compromise with the Greek side, it should maintain a solid position about certain issues such as the sovereignty rights of the Turkish constituent state, guarantor status and military existence of Turkey, provisions about property and land transfer, etc. (MHP, 2003: 37-38).

MHP designates that any possible settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan would turn a Greek domination which is masked under the EU (MHP,

2003: 39). In fact, MHP claims that the unjust attitude of the EU, which brings Greece and Greek Cypriots forward and disregards the legitimate position of Turkey in front of the international law, impedes a settlement in Cyprus. For MHP, the formulation of the Cyprus problem as a problem between Turkey and the EU should be perceived as a Greek strategy which aims to put pressure on Turkey through the objective of the EU membership (MHP, 2003: 8-13). In this sense, the timing of the Annan Plan should not be seen as coincidental. On the contrary, this timing indicates a careful plan which aims to catch Turkey from its weak point namely from its excessive will towards the EU membership, especially after the Helsinki Summit.

MHP accuses those who argue to give Cyprus and get rid of it, of being the fire tongs of the foreign powers. These circles (including the government), who prioritize to receive the approval of the EU and the USA at the expense of national interests, are trying to present Cyprus which is an important national cause as a national burden (MHP, 2003: 27). The media, certain columnists and non-governmental organisations, which are directed from outside by the great powers, have played a crucial role in this presentation. The objective of this huge propaganda machine that starts a psychological war was to convince the Turkish public opinion that Turkey would miss the EU train if the Cyprus problem is not settled (MHP, 2003: 32).

Beyond all these arguments, MHP argues that any failure in the maintenance of a national and self-respecting position on Cyprus question would cause a serious weakness in the general position of Turkey in the international arena and damage its image as an effectual and esteemed country. In other words, any concessions in Cyprus would act as a starting point in the renouncement of the regional vision and claims of Turkey (MHP, 2003: 36). Thus, the tendency of the current government to perceive the Cyprus question not as a national cause but as a national burden would lead to chained results affecting the national esteem of Turkey (MHP, 2003: 40).

MHP has publicized its opinions with declarations and press announcements frequently especially between 2001 and 2004. President of the party, Devlet Bahçeli, accused certain circles of media and politics of being submissionist and called TÜSİAD to show its solicitude about the EU membership process, about issues such

as protection of national integrity and interests (*Radikal*, 04/06/2002). Bahçeli toughened his language before the referendum. He accused the government of serving the enosis ideal in return for getting a negotiation date for the EU accession (*Radikal*, 14/03/2004). Delineating Annan Plan as a document of betrayal, Bahçeli also accused the AKP government of acting against the national interests and sacrificing Cyprus (*Radikal*, 04/04/2004).

Looking all these arguments of CHP and MHP, it becomes visible that they have developed tones of arguments to oppose the government policy and the Annan Plan but those arguments do not form a coherent alternative vision about the Cyprus policy since they do not lean against an alternative social-political vision. Thus, lacking the ability to establish a social, political and economic ground on which they develop their alternative policies, CHP and MHP, has convicted to establish their positions as the opposition of the liberal consensus, as the counter-position against the hegemonic position acting on the same political ground. So, those arguments they have developed could not act as the indicators of an alternative social-political understanding but by using simple propaganda tools of political opposition to address the nationalist sensitivities of the Turkish people.

As mentioned many times before, the determining factor of transformation in the Cyprus policy is the EU membership process of Turkey. Since none of those parties could introduce a reliable future perspective for the country apart from the EU membership objective and since the close connection between the settlement of the Cyprus problem and Turkey's EU membership has become obvious through the official documents of the EU as well as the statements of EU authorities, their oppositions to the Cyprus policy of the AKP government has remained at a rhetorical level. In other words, none of the opposing parties could sustain their objection to AKP's Cyprus policy and the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan with a valid and reasonable alternative vision.

They all claim that they advocate the EU membership of Turkey although they usually pass over the questions about the future of the EU-Turkey relations in the event of the continuation of the deadlock in Cyprus. Thus, it is possible to claim the

difficulty of opposing the Cyprus policy of the AKP government and Annan Plan without leaning against an alternative social-political vision which would promise Turkey a future perspective other than the EU membership. The opposing parties within the mainstream political arena of Turkey could not able to develop an effective opposition beyond the limits of the nationalist reaction to the Cyprus policy of the government or the Annan Plan as they all lacked an alternative social-political vision except from the EU membership.

3.4.2. Nationalist Media, Intellectuals and Organizations

In the process of transformation in the Cyprus policy, especially after the submission of the Annan Plan, certain intellectuals have elevated their voices against the changing Cyprus policy of Turkish government and the content of the Annan Plan. The most prominent and well known names among these intellectuals are Erol Manisalı, Mümtaz Soysal and Şükrü Sina Gürel. These figures have committed themselves to Cyprus case for years and have stood out with their objections against the Annan Plan and the Cyprus policy of the government in the last period. The common characteristic of these intellectuals is their nationalist-leftist approaches despite certain differences.

The central theme of this approach is the national independence. This approach interprets the 1974 intervention as an important turning point in the foreign relations of Turkey which symbolizes a break from a dependent understanding of foreign policy to an independent one (Manisalı, 2000: 114). Nationalist intellectuals underline the vitality of continuing Turkish existence in Cyprus for the national security of Turkey. For them, Cyprus Island, being an important gate to the international waters alongside Turkey, is a very critical strategic point. Indeed, its strategic importance has been increased with recent developments in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Asia such as the construction of the Baku-Ceyhan Pipe Line (Manisalı, 2000: 108-110).

Those intellectuals perceive the Cyprus question through the themes like the national independence or national/strategic interests of Turkey. Thus, the conditions or choices of the Turkish Cypriots remain of secondary importance most of the time. Indeed, they sometimes openly state that Turkish Cypriots could and should not decide about their future, alone: "Who will give the final decision about the Cyprus question? 140 thousands of Turkish Cypriot electorates or Turkey?" (Çölaşan, 26/12/2003)

This hint about the absolute authority of Turkey on the decisions concerning the future of the Cyprus Island contradicts with the official claim of Turkish Republic on the independence of the TRNC as well as Turkey's presentation of the Cyprus issue as the problem of Cypriots to be settled among themselves independent of Turkey, Greece, the UN or the EU. Furthermore, to perceive Northern Cyprus as a homeland territory as the conquest which has carried the Turkish existence out of the Anatolian geography after hundreds years of recession (Soysal, 1995: 119, 152; Manisalı, 2002: 53), does not comply with the Turkish thesis claiming that Turkey has intervened to the Northern Cyprus to protect the security of Northern Cypriots, not to annex the island to its the homeland (*Cumhuriyet*, 26/07/1974).

Turkey has claimed for years that Turkish military existence in Northern Cyprus is temporary and would withdraw in the event of the establishment of the constitutional order which would ensure the protection of lives and rights of Turkish Cypriots. Thus, to conceive and present Cyprus as a homeland territory endangers the credibility of Turkey's official arguments and legitimizes the approach that accuses Turkey of occupying Cyprus (Güven, 14/11/2003). In this sense, the argument of the nationalist camp accusing the liberals of giving up Cyprus and getting rid of it is not binding since Turkey has already accepted to give the Cyprus Island with the Lausanne Treaty (Oran, 03/02/2004).

Nationalist intellectuals maintain that the only way for the settlement of Cyprus problem is the recognition of the sovereignty rights of TRNC and the admission of the need for Turkish and Greek peoples to live not together but side by side, separately (Gürel, 1993: 124; Manisalı, 2003: 138). Thus, they strongly oppose the

Annan Plan on the basis of the argument that the definition of constituent states does not contain the recognition of Northern Cyprus as a separate and independent political entity. Indeed, they perceive the Annan Plan as the concrete form of defeat and retreat (Soysal, 12/04/2004). They argue that in the medium term, the prospective settlement of the Greek Cypriots to the North and the prospective entitlement of them to vote would make Cyprus a Greek Island (Manisalı, 2003: 138; 2000: 137).

Furthermore they also maintain that it is unacceptable to submit a text on the final format of which the sides of the problem did not have initiative to referendum in the island and that it is neither legal nor legitimate to force two societies to accept a plan on which they have not reached an agreement (Soysal, 02/04/2004). In fact, the obsession about the settlement of Cyprus problem indicates to a "Cyprus complex" for them (Soysal, 1995: 110-112). Since they perceive Cyprus question not as a hunchback but a cause of national honour which should be defended at any costs, they claim that Turkey should learn to live with the Cyprus problem despite certain difficulties it brings within the international arena (Soysal, 1995: 132-134).

Those intellectuals usually conceive the foreign countries and powers (including the EU) as enemies that desire to divide and share the Turkish Republic. They evaluate the role of the EU about the Cyprus question within this framework. For them, the EU membership process of Turkey should be conceived as a tool of Greek policy used for breaking down Turkey's resistance in certain issues which are pertaining to national interest, such as Cyprus (Manisalı, 2000: 140). Furthermore, they maintain that the candidacy status of Turkey given in the Helsinki Summit (1999) should be evaluated as a trick which aims at putting pressure on Turkey through the objective of the EU membership as to obtain certain concessions in vital policy issues like Cyprus (Manisalı, 2000: 130).

But, most of them do not oppose the EU membership objective of Turkey openly. They accuse the government of obeying the impositions of the EU and the USA betraying the foreign policy tradition of Turkey based on the solid defence of the national interests and rights (Gürel, 2005: 33-35), but they generally could not

propose a reasonable alternative foreign policy line or an alternative social-political programme. Indeed, despite claiming that the aim of EU is to use Turkey and benefit from it without admitting Turkey as a full member (Manisalı, 2003: 41), they continue to base their concrete suggestions on the basis of the EU membership project such as the simultaneous EU membership of Cyprus and Turkey (Manisalı, 2003: 145-146). Thus, there appears incoherence about the opinion of the nationalist intellectuals about the EU-Turkey relations.

Like liberals, nationalists also attribute a symbolic meaning to the Cyprus issue maintaining that the debate on Cyprus is not only about the Cyprus Island but also about the future of Turkey, about the choice of Turkey between being a colony of imperialism or an independent country (Manisalı, 2002: 19, 53; Soysal, 1995: 148). They argue that any recession of Turkey in Cyprus in the face of external pressures would start a process of recession which would arrive at the Treaty of Sevres (Soysal, 1995: 119; Manisalı, 2002: 54). Indeed, they believe that any retreat of Turkey from its claims about the Cyprus question would bring various concessions about Aegean, South-eastern and Armenian questions (Soysal, 1995: 148; Gürel, 21/04/2004). They maintain that it would be ridiculous for a country that could not preserve a nine thousand square kilometres territory to maintain macro claims in the global or regional scale (Soysal, 1995: 149; Gürel, 1993: 126).

They conceive AKP as a threat on the basis of its collaboration with both imperialists and Islamic forces. Indeed, they maintain that the government, with the help of the big capital, the mainstream media, the separationists and Islamists (Manisalı, 2002: 17), and aim to dissolve the republican institutions and the Kemalist basis of the Turkish Republic by betraying the basic principles of the country in various fields including the Cyprus question (Gürel, 2005: 34, 10/04/2004; Manisalı, 26/04/ 2004).

They realise the significant role of the big capital and the media in the process of transformation in Cyprus policy but they do not able to evaluate the roles and approaches of these actors considering their positions within the Turkish social formation, within the social relations of production. Instead they tend to interpret these actors as collaborators, even the instruments of foreign powers who have "evil"

desires about Turkey. They analyse the transformation process of the Cyprus policy through those evil desires of foreign powers. Indeed, they argue that the transformation of the Cyprus policy has been directed by the foreign powers with the help of the big capital and the mainstream media.

One of the most prominent nationalist intellectuals, Erol Manisalı argues that certain circles of big capital began to pursue a political line that aims to bind Turkey to the EU unilaterally. Thus, those circles began to perceive the Cyprus question as a problem to be solved at any costs since it prevents Turkey to establish closer relationships with the EU. Indeed, they began to advocate the settlement of the Greek's claims about not only Cyprus but also Aegean and Fener Patriarchate which are against the national interests of Turkey as to ensure the execution of the unilateral binding of Turkey to the EU (Manisalı, 2002: 1999). For this reason, big capital gave a great support to AKP which has committed itself to the settlement of problems on the way to the EU giving a priority to the Cyprus question (Manisalı, 2003: 16-17).

Manisalı determines that the political processes began to be directed by the big capital especially after the 1980 turn. But, instead of analysing this transformation with a historical approach in parallel with the structural transformation of Turkish social formation, class relations and the dynamics of this transformation, he chooses to analyse this process through the criterion of national dependence. For him, since Turkish big capital is dependent to the foreign capital groups, this power and influence of the big capital in Turkey turns to the dominance of the international capital. Manisalı claims that the foreign capital directly commands Turkish big capital (Manisalı, 2002: 77) and thus, the international powers direct the political and economic decision making process in Turkey through Turkish big capital (Manisalı, 2003: 64-66).

However, he does not see the fact that this relationship between the international and Turkish capital is not unilateral but a mutual relationship established on the basis of shared class interests going beyond the national borders. Since he does not consider the class relationships, he could not able to comprehend the complexity of the relationship between international capital and Turkish big capital mediated through

various variables including internal social relations and reduces it to an instrumentalist relationship. Such approaches which put the "external world" in the centre of the analysis necessarily ignores the internal capital accumulation process (Ercan and Tuna, 2006: 142), and thus, misses the opportunity to analyse the social formation holistically.

For Manisalı, big capital uses certain tools like the mainstream media to influence the political decision making process and shape the public opinion in favour of its own interests which are the refection of interests of the international capital. Since the main media groups are directly owned by the big capital, media has become the primary instrument of the domination of the big capital (Manisalı, 2002: 65). Manisalı underlines the use of media in the concealment of the "truths" from Turkish public opinion to prevent the reaction of the public opinion against the changing Cyprus policy and the Annan Plan (Manisalı, 2003: 193). He accuses the mainstream media of acting as an agent of Greece (Manisalı, 2000: 129). Indeed, Manisalı associates this attitude of the mainstream media serving the interests of foreign powers such as Greece and the EU, with the attitude of the Istanbul media of the occupation period (Manisalı, 2000: 103). As seen, he presents the media, as well as the big capital, as the instruments of foreign powers.

The common point of all those above-mentioned intellectuals, besides their nationalist origin, is the newspaper they are writing for. *Cumhuriyet* has acted as the intellectual base of the oppositional side throughout the 2000s. Representing a leftist-nationalist political line, *Cumhuriyet* has been the most prominent centre on the pages of which there formed important arguments to oppose the Cyprus policy of AKP government as well as the Annan Plan. *Cumhuriyet*, being the leading advocate of the Kemalist foundations of Turkish Republic, especially the principle of laicism, has also appeared as the focus of the laic opposition against the Islamic roots and tendencies of the AKP government beginning from the first days of its power.

Thus, *Cumhuriyet* opposes the Cyprus policy of AKP government in two senses. Besides its objection on the basis of the traditional nationalist arguments, *Cumhuriyet* also perceives the transformation of the Cyprus policy as a symbol and indicator of a

general transformation which aims to dissolve the Kemalist foundations and principles of the Republic.

Looking back to 1970s, it is possible to observe the consistent attitude of *Cumhuriyet* about the Cyprus question. During the 1974 intervention, *Cumhuriyet* was one of the most prominent supporters of the Ecevit government. *Cumhuriyet*, different from other newspapers such as *Hürriyet* which were full of hollow heroism, formulated and publicized the arguments that legitimized the intervention thanks to the intellectual efforts of its writers. The writers of the newspaper drew attention to the issues beyond the Greek outrages and tried to analyse the Cyprus question with reference to the international political dynamics.

To illustrate, the military coup that overthrew the Makarios administration was interpreted as a plan by the US to get rid of the non-aligned government of Cyprus. In other words, using the fascist inspired EOKA-B junta, USA was aiming to make Cyprus wholly dependent by itself (Akbal, 22/07/1974; Selçuk, 24/07/1974). Also, the Turkish intervention was evaluated as the victory of democracy against fascism since it overthrew the fascist juntas of Cyprus and Greece (Akbal, 23/07/1974). Indeed, Ecevit was presented as the leader who brings democracy to both Cyprus and Greece with the 1974 intervention (*Cumhuriyet*, 25-26/7/1974). The 1974 intervention was also interpreted as the declaration of an independent and self-respecting foreign policy understanding against the impositions of imperialism (Erginsoy, 29/07/1974).

As seen, *Cumhuriyet* of 1970s was pursuing a line which supported 1974 intervention and Turkish claims of Cyprus with a leftist-nationalist line like today's *Cumhuriyet*. However, *Cumhuriyet* of 1970s was highlighting the leftist thought of the time while today's *Cumhuriyet* is stressing nationalist arguments predominantly. For example, the chief editor of the newspaper İlhan Selçuk, who has become one of the prominent speakers of the nationalist argumentation today, was objecting the idea of *taksim* (division of the island between Turkey and Greece) on the grounds of the idea that such a division of the island was against the visions of the Socialist Bloc and the Third World (Selçuk, 18/08/1974).

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The writers of today's *Cumhuriyet* has strived to demonstrate why the Annan Plan consists certain threats against the Turkish existence in Cyprus –the plan do not recognize the sovereignty rights of Turkish state and would result in the homelessness of thousands of Turkish Cypriots, etc.- (Çetinkaya, 02/04/2004), and why even the positive items of it are not reliable –since the plan do not cover permanent derogations and do not have the EU primary law status- (Arcayürek, 02/04/2004; Balbay 02/04/2004; Sirmen 08/04/2004). They perceive Annan Plan as an imposition of the EU and the USA which has been presented to Turkish public opinion as the only means for Turkey to become an EU member through the agency of the mainstream media (Selçuk, 07/04/2004; Sirmen 08/04/2004). Through an association between the questions of Crete and Cyprus, the government is accused of obeying the impositions of external powers (Balbay, 22/04/2004).

As seen, *Cumhuriyet* has acted as the primary agent of the intellectual circle which opposes AKP's Cyprus policy and Annan Plan. All writers of the newspaper have formulated various arguments to object the run of the process in chorus. The only exception who declared his support to the settlement of Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan for the sake of peace in the island was Orhan Bursalı (Bursalı, 04/04/2004). Another columnist of *Cumhuriyet*, Oral Çalışlar, implied his support to the Annan Plan despite not making an open declaration like Orhan Bursalı (Çalışlar, 07/04/2004 and 26/04/2004).

Besides mainstream parties, nationalist media, nationalist and leftist-nationalist intellectuals, certain political organisations and NGOs have also raised their voices against the Cyprus policy of the government and the Annan Plan during 2000s. Especially certain Kemalist-nationalist NGOs such as ADD, centres such as ASAM (Eurasia Strategic Research Centre), small parties and organisations such as İP (Workers Party) and Türk Solu (Turkish Left) and even certain exceptional capital organisations such as ATO have declared their sharp opposition against the Cyprus policy of the government and Annan Plan. Indeed, 102 NGOs, including chambers such as ATO, trade-unions such as TÜRK-İŞ (The Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions) and KAMU-SEN (Turkish Public Workers' Labour Union) and various associations and foundations declared that they opposed the imposition of Annan

Plan and provided their supports to Rauf Denktaş and his claims about the sovereignty and security of Turkish Cypriots (*Cumhuriyet*, 20/01/2003).

Those circles tend to use a tough language full of accusations such as betrayal and servility. They perceive Cyprus as the territory of the Turkish Republic which is gained with the blood of Turkish soldiers (Fırat, 2004: 12, 15). Cyprus is also perceived as the front line of the Turkish defence against the Megalo Idea of Greeks and as the symbol of national resistance (Fırat, 2004: 15, 22). For them, Greek people are the historical enemy of the Turkish people and these two societies could not live together under any circumstances. In this sense, the discourse of peace and brotherhood should be conceived as a means to assimilate the Turkish Cypriots (Fırat, 2004: 18).

3.5. General Assessment

All the positions and ideas of certain social and political actors about the Cyprus question which have been demonstrated here in detail are indicating certain results. Reading those positions and ideas together in relation with each other and also with the historical context, it becomes possible to make certain assessments.

Firstly, it should be stated that positions and ideas of certain actors maintained about the Cyprus question could not be understood and analyzed with an atomistic view. On the contrary, those ideas and positions should be read as a part of general world views and macro social-political visions of those actors established within a specific historical context. For this reason, the views, opinions and positions of those actors about the Cyprus question have been denoted in relation with their social positions, political visions and economic interests throughout the chapter to demonstrate the internal relationship between them.

Thus, to understand the deep motive which has encountered two camps about the Cyprus question and the Annan Plan, it is essential to look beyond the Cyprus dispute. This confrontation could be interpreted as the reflection of a general confrontation about the future of the country which is currently crystallized within

the EU membership issue. Thus, this confrontation about the Cyprus question could be read through the configuration of social and political actors of the country about the EU membership of Turkey.

The components of the consensus established towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem, namely the big capital, the government, liberal intellectuals, the mainstream media circles and certain NGOs, share the liberal view in general and base their reasoning on Cyprus question on this liberal understanding. For them, the EU membership is not only desirable but also necessary for Turkey to become a modern, democratic and wealthy country since it needs a reference point to lay down and implement certain social, political and economic norms (Dülger, 2006) and since the EU membership is the vehicle which would make Turkey (and Turkish capital) an essential part of the global world (Duna, 2006).

Perceiving the Cyprus question as an obstacle on the way to the EU membership, the members of this camp demands an immediate solution of the problem on the basis of an internationally valid formula, such as the Annan Plan. In their opinions, Turkey has advocated the deadlock as the solution for years by insisting on the independence of KKTC, which has not been recognized by any country but Turkey and would not be recognized in future, either. They maintain that those who claim the *status-quo* in Cyprus are impeding the EU membership of Turkey, thus attainment of the country to the level of the contemporary civilizations which was the initial aim of Turkish Republic. In addition, those who oppose the settlement of the Cyprus problem are also preventing the EU membership of the Northern Cyprus as part of the island and convicting both Northern Cyprus and Turkey (which would fall into the state of occupier in the EU soil in the event of the EU membership of the Republic of Cyprus) to a deep isolation (Güven, 2003; Ülsever, 2004; Hakkı, 2004).

On the other hand, members of the opposing camp, namely the mainstream political parties, nationalist intellectuals and media circles as well as certain organizations, share the basic premises of nationalism, though in different forms, and base their argumentation about the Cyprus question on those premises. Except certain marginal groups, none of them openly objects the EU membership of Turkey but they all

oppose the way in which the EU-Turkey relations run currently. They argue that the EU is prejudiced against Turkey and imposes certain unjust conditions which are not contained in the Copenhagen Criteria.

They think that Turkey should not admit those impositions which would endanger the national sovereignty and independence of Turkish Republic. Issues such as the status of the religious and ethnic minorities, Armenian, Aegean and Cyprus questions, the status of the Patriarchate, etc. are not subject matters of Turkey-EU relations. The only way for the EU-Turkey relations to progress regularly is the acceptance of the EU not to interfere in the internal affairs of Turkey and adoption of the principle of reciprocally and mutual respect.

This camp perceives the approach of the EU about the Cyprus question as a *par excellence* example of the unjust and biased attitude against Turkey. For them, the Cyprus question is by no means a subject matter of the EU-Turkey relations and it would be submission, even betrayal, to sacrifice Cyprus to be an EU member irrespective of its costs. They maintain that the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan would serve to the enosis ideal in the long run which would be a suicide both for Turkish Cypriots and for the political and geo-strategic interests of Turkey. Indeed, Annan Plan should be seen as a reflection of the historical "evil ambitions" of foreign powers and its adoption would bring other impositions which would carry the country back to the days of dependence and occupation. In this sense, they argue that sacrificing Cyprus should be evaluated as the first step of a process on the way to the reanimation of the Treaty of Sevres. Thus, supporters of this policy as well as the Annan plan, such as the government, the big business, the mainstream media, certain organizations and liberal intellectuals, should be seen as the collaborators of the external powers who wants to colonize Turkey just like the collaborators of the occupation period (Soysal, 2004; Manisalı, 2004; Mümtaz, 2004; Öymen, 06/04/2004; Selçuk, 03/12/2002; Arcayürek, 18/04/2003; Kırca, 10/03/2003).

As seen, this confrontation between the liberals and nationalists on the Cyprus question reflects a general confrontation between the two camps which is crystallized

in the argument about the EU membership process. The liberal camp feverishly supports the EU membership of Turkey at any costs since they perceive this membership as the only way to the integration with the global world. On the other hand, the nationalist camp, however not opposing the EU membership directly, maintains a sceptical approach against the EU and the membership process relying on the risks and threats that the process contains, directed against the national sovereignty, dignity and independence of Turkish Republic. In fact, the positions maintained about the EU membership project symbolize this general confrontation which is about general world views and conceptions, political opinions and future visions of those camps. This confrontation is defined between the isolationists and democrat integrationists by the liberal camp (Belge, 04/11/2001) and between the Kemalist and laic powers defending the national independence and those circles which are dependent to external powers and counter-revolutionists (Soysal, 12/04/2004).

These positions maintained about the EU membership process are closely related to their approaches of those camps about the process of globalization and its repercussions. The liberal camp perceives the phenomena of globalization as an opportunity which should be adjusted and utilized. For liberals, economic, social and political repercussions of globalization such as the diminishing importance of the national borders in the view of the movements of goods, capital and people, rising degree of integration in economic, social and political senses, the turnover of certain national sovereignty rights to certain supra-national organizations, etc. should be welcomed as the guidelines of the new era without any resistance. Nationalists, on the other hand, are apprehensive of those repercussions because of the risks and threats they would cause on the national sovereignty and independence. In short, the process of globalization arouses the feeling of participation for one side and the feeling of protection for the other.

Those claims on participating the globalization process demanded an immediate settlement of the Cyprus problem while the aims to protect the country from the effects of the same process strived to "protect" Cyprus from foreign impositions. Thus, Cyprus has become the arena in which the general positions and arguments are

re-formulated on a specific basis. In other words, the Cyprus debate has become the symbol of a general confrontation reflecting the general positions and opinions to a specific issue. Indeed, both sides base their arguments about the Cyprus question directly on the EU membership debate.

The liberal camp claims Cyprus as the arena in which the sincerity of all the actors about the EU membership process, is tested (Berkan, 02/12/2004). Furthermore, it accuses certain nationalist circles which could not oppose the EU membership project directly, of manipulating the Cyprus question to interrupt the membership process (TÜSİAD, 16/11/2001; Berkan 22/11/2001). On the other hand, the nationalist camp accuses liberals in turn of submitting Cyprus with an understanding of subservience since they aim to join the EU at any costs, including national interests, sovereignty and independence, with a blind desire (Aktan, 04/06/2005; Soysal, 2004).

Thus, confrontation about the Cyprus question should be seen as a dimension of a general hegemonic struggle continued between those two camps and approaches. In other words, Cyprus debate has become one of the arenas of this general hegemonic struggle in which the arguments of those camps collide in full view of the public opinion. The central concept of this hegemonic struggle has been the national interest. Both sides have referred to the concept of national interest while communicating their arguments to the public. Defining the national interest in different ways on the basis of completely different understandings and visions, both sides have tried to legitimize their opinions in the eyes of the public opinion by presenting their views as the requirements of "the" national interest of Turkey. While the nationalist camp has been defining the national interests on the basis security (Öymen, 2006) in line with the national interest definition of the realist school of international relations (Uzgel, 2004: 56), the liberal camp has questioned this old definition and associated the national interest with the economic growth and social welfare which would be realized through the EU membership (TÜSİAD, 16/11/2001; 11/03/2003).

In line with the national interest definition of the liberal camp, the settlement of the Cyprus problem has been associated with the national interest of the country since it is believed to open up the EU membership way for Turkey (Yetkin, 12/02/2004; Berkan, 26/02/2004). This attempt of the liberal camp to define the national interest in line with the EU membership project and associate the settlement of Cyprus with the long-run interest of the country which is crystallized with the EU membership, prevailed. The opponents of the compromising Cyprus policy and the Annan Plan have been successfully presented as isolationists who aim to interrupt the EU membership process and convict Turkey to a dark future (Yetkin, 19/10/2003).

The defeat of the nationalist camp in the hegemonic struggle driven in the area of Cyprus is closely related with their defeat in the general hegemonic struggle which is about the future of the country. As long as the nationalist camp did not succeed in developing an alternative vision against the EU membership project and was obliged to partake in this project even timidly; it lost the struggles driven in specific areas which are linked to the EU membership process such as the Cyprus question, from the start.

Through the arguments that present the status-quo in Cyprus as the major obstacle in front of Turkey on the way to the EU membership, Turkish society, which had perceived Cyprus question as a national cause since 1950s, has been convinced of the settlement of this problem on the basis of the Annan Plan, in general. This rapid transformation of the public opinion in an issue which had been one of the fundamental themes of Turkish political life for nearly fifty years should be regarded as an interesting sociological phenomenon. To explain this phenomenon some could refer to the poor historical memory of the Turkish society or to the manipulation power of the ideological instruments. However, it is not persuasive to explain this process just with the receptiveness of Turkish people to the ideological manipulation. As underlined by Gramsci (2000: 196-200) ideological forms are not mere illusions or arbitrary deceptions free from material forces; on the contrary, they have their ground in material realities (Hall, Lumley and McLennan, 1977: 53). Thus, receptiveness of the society to the ideological arguments about the necessity of the settlement of the Cyprus problem should have a material basis.

In this case, this basis is the support of Turkish society to the EU membership project. That is to say, Turkish society supports the settlement of the Cyprus problem at any costs as long as it perceives this problem as a constraint on the EU membership of Turkey. Since the connection between the Cyprus problem and the EU membership process of Turkey has been successfully established in the eyes of Turkish society by the help of EU authorities and documents as well as the statements of Turkish businessmen and intellectuals, and then -after 2002- government authorities, it became possible for Turkish public opinion to be convinced about the settlement of Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan despite some certain concessions.

Thus, it is possible to state that the key element of the consent of the Turkish society given to the settlement of Cyprus question on the basis of the Annan Plan is the construction of the EU membership objective as a hegemonic project in the eyes of the society. The objective of EU membership has successfully been illustrated as the only way to raise the living standards, to solve the huge problem of unemployment and poverty, and to reach a certain level of social welfare and development, especially from the end of 1990s onwards. People in the streets believe that the EU membership would bring a decent life without having any solid information about how that would be possible. As underlined by Bora (2002: 18), the EU image of the society is a vague but a strong one and constitutes the social and socio-psychological basis of the legitimacy of the EU membership process. In other words, beliefs and images of the people in the streets, whether based on the facts or not, are the primary factors that makes it possible for the EU membership project to gain a hegemonic position.

This popular support emanates from the popular image of Europe in the eyes of the Turkish people which indicates welfare and development in its simplest sense. According to a research made by Boğaziçi University and TESEV, Turkish people expect from the EU membership to develop economy, improve democracy, decrease corruption and lead to free circulation of labour. But the same research showed that the expectations of Turkish people are not based on sufficient information about the

EU and the membership process, on the contrary Turkey ranks lowest in knowledge of the EU among the candidate countries (Güneş-Ayata: 2003: 206-7).

Thus, through certain socio-economical expectations of the ordinary people, whether based on the facts or not, EU membership has become a national objective which would be able to serve the interests of the nation as a whole in the eyes of Turkish people. The working class and the poor began to see their future in the EU. The name of EU has become the name of hope towards a better and decent life. The EU membership project has emerged as the expression of the collective will, a "national-popular" outlook, a common world-view through which the general interest is linked to the interest of the fundamental class, from the end of the 1990s onwards.

Besides the public opinion, the consensus established towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem has achieved to gain the consent of certain important institutions or establishments of Turkish Republic such as the General Staff and the Presidency. Turkish General Staff and the National Security Council supported the settlement on the basis of the Annan Plan in its main lines despite the expectations of the nationalist camp. Nationalists presented the General Staff as the primary source of power which would not let Cyprus to be given by hindering the admission of the Annan Plan (Manisalı, 2004: 189). However that was not the case. A detailed examination of the press releases of the MGK meetings between 1999 and 2004 will display the change of the attitude and language about the Cyprus issue:

> It is decided in the meeting to strengthen the welfare as well as the unity of the Turkish Cypriot people around the national cause and to put the measures which are necessary to procure the economic and political stability in practice as an action plan, immediately (MGK, 23/08/2000).

> The developments about Cyprus are evaluated in the meeting and it is agreed on the benefit and necessity of the revitalization of the negotiation process in Cyprus. As declared to the public opinion before, Turkey maintains its support to the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and reiterates its political will and resolution to reach a settlement, which considers the realities of the island, rapidly with reference to the Annan Plan (MGK, 23/08/2004).

As seen, in the four years time, the language of MGK has transformed from the "national cause" discourse to the promotion of the settlement on the basis of the Annan Plan. Though this transformation, MGK as well as the General Staff has come to a position which sustains the liberal consensus despite not being an essential part of it. The chief of the General Staff, Hilmi Özkök, made a declaration just before the Referendum and stated that the last version of the Annan plan met the "musts" of Turkey to a large extent and that the final decision would be given by the Turkish Cypriots and the TBMM, not by the General Staff. Özkök implied that the General Staff would prefer the admission of the Plan with a significant statement:

> The concepts such as "give" or "get" are not essentially diplomatic or legal terms. We should always follow the advises of our reason when our reasons and hearts conflict in certain issues such as the Cyprus question (*Radikal*, 14/04/2004).

The General Staff has considered certain critical points and certain sensitive issues during the transformation process of the Cyprus policy. But, it has never acted as an uncompromising, hard core oppositional attitude as expected. On the contrary, the General Staff maintained its attitude alongside the settlement of Cyprus problem on the basis of Annan Plan despite certain reservations. It is known that Denktaş was convinced to sit the negotiation table by the top officers of the General Staff (Tank, 2002: 161). Thus, it should be accepted that the General Staff has sustained the settlement process in the last analysis. With the words of the Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül, neither the realization of the EU adjustment reforms nor the transformation of the Cyprus policy would be possible without the support of the Turkish General Staff (Yetkin, 15/06/2006).

This compromising attitude of the General Staff let the nationalist circles down:

> Is it justifiable for the National Security Council to transfer its own responsibility to the government? (Soysal, 07/04/2004).

> Will the soldiers in Ankara remain unresponsive as the "army of the parliament" in the event of the last developments which has made the conditions of the Annan Plan heavier? (Soysal, 21/04/2004).

Indeed, certain nationalist intellectuals accused the Chief of the General Staff, Hilmi Özkök, for his neutral attitude of getting on well with the government considering his political future (Çölaşan, 14/04/2004).

In spite of those demands and accusations the military rejected to intervene in the settlement process contrary to the expectations of nationalists:

> Despite being attacked by some members of the opposition party and the conservative voices in the media for not adopting a stance on the issue, the military made it very clear that this (the developments in Cyprus – ÖY) was a political matter that would be handled by the government parties in Turkey and Northern Cyprus. The fact that the military did not try to reverse these decisions underlines the process of change in the modalities of governance in the country (Aydın and Keyman: 2004: 22).

This attitude of the General Staff has surprised also certain liberal circles and intellectuals who perceive the Armed Forces as the symbol of the Jacobin characteristics of the Turkish Republic that reacts against the liberal-democratic development of Turkey (Duna, 2006). Despite such arguments that reduce the General Staff to the guardianship of certain "archaic" visions and ideas, this case demonstrates that it is not possible for any institution of the state to exist as exempted from the general atmosphere and the hegemonic ideas/visions/projects of the country. Specifically in the case of Cyprus, the General Staff has been convinced on the settlement of Cyprus question on the basis of Annan Plan as long as it realises that the EU membership process appears as the only reasonable future vision for Turkey, for the sake of the established order the protection of which is the essential duty of the Armed Forces. With the words of Gül, the Turkish General Staff is able to recognize the direction of the future and interests of Turkey with its own "strategic" vision (Yetkin, 15/06/2006).

Like the General Staff, the President of Turkish Republic Ahmet Necdet Sezer who is perceived as the defender of the republican-Kemalist values against the government declared his will towards the settlement of Cyprus problem within the context of the Annan Plan despite underlining certain concerns and reservations (*Radikal*, 31/01/2004 and 14/04/2004).

Moving from this picture, it is possible to state the liberal camp has won the hegemonic struggle both in general sense by constructing the EU membership of Turkey as a hegemonic project and in particular area of Cyprus by presenting the Cyprus problem as an obstacle which should be jumped over immediately for the sake of the whole country. The consensus established towards the settlements of the Cyprus problem, has achieved to convince both the public opinion and certain significant institutions of the state such as the General Staff and the Presidency. As mentioned before, the big capital and its representative TÜSİAD should be seen as the primary agent of the process but the role of liberal intellectuals and the widespread media instruments should not be underestimated.

However, Turkey could not achieve to get rid of the Cyprus problem in the proper sense since the Annan Plan has been rejected by the Greek Cypriots. After the referendum, the EU, the USA and the UN, as well as the other components of the international community, declared their pleasure about the decision of Turkish Cypriots as well as the compromising attitude of Turkey. Both the Turkish political power and Turkish Cypriots maintained their compromising attitude in the post-referendum period. The victory of Mehmet Ali Talat in the presidency elections which put an end to the unquestionable rule of Denktaş after nearly fifty years should be seen as the symbol of change in the attitudes of both Turkey and Turkish Cypriots.

Nevertheless, the Cyprus question continues to act as an obstacle for the EU membership of Turkey. Since the "Greek Cypriot Administration" has become an EU member under the name Republic of Cyprus, the EU is demanding from Turkey to recognize the Republic of Cyprus and to normalize the relationships including the opening of the ports and airports (EC, 2006). Turkey signed the Additional Protocol adapting the EC Turkey Association Agreement to the accession of 10 new countries including the Republic of Cyprus, on 29 July 2005. However, Turkish government rejected to recognize the Republic of Cyprus diplomatically maintaining that the EU has not kept its promises about eliminating the isolation on the TRNC.

Considering the fact that the attitude and demands of the EU began to cause a reaction within the Turkish public opinion especially within the last year, it is possible to understand the current discourse of the government criticizing the EU for its unjust attitude which continues to punish the Northern Cyprus despite its positive attitude. It seems obvious for the Cyprus question to remain as a problem in the EU-Turkey relations and as a sore spot for Turkish politics, especially for AKP government at least rhetorically (Duna, 1996) since it continues to be a symbol for certain sections of the society defining themselves through nationalist ideology and discourse. Nevertheless, there appears no serious change in the tendencies of the AKP government and the TRNC administration, as well as the other components of the consensus, yet.

In this connection, the latest statements of the Prime Minister Erdoğan maintaining that Turkey would not recognize the Republic of Cyprus and open its ports and airports unless the EU take a step towards the elimination of the isolation of the TRNC even at the expense of the negotiations to stop (*Radikal*, 17/06/2006), should not be evaluated as the indicators of the return to the traditional uncompromising Cyprus policy but as the cyclical moves to address the public opinion as well as to rise its bargaining power against the EU. As long as the EU membership process maintains its position as a hegemonic project it is not likely for Turkey to transform its attitude about the Cyprus problem and return to the traditional uncompromising policy.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

> It has started a campaign to protect the interests of the Greek Cypriots in Turkey, in a country which came these days with writing and telling about the Greek aggressiveness and vindictiveness with its press, political parties and people that had shouted "Cyprus is Turkish and will remain Turkish" for a half century (Soysal, 17/04/2004).

It is normal for an intellectual who witnessed the half century long story of the Cyprus question to be surprised in the view of the current picture. There has been realized an obvious transformation in the way in which Cyprus policy is perceived and handled both in the areas of the state policy and public opinion in the last few years. It is really amazing for such a fundamental transformation to be materialized rapidly in such a short period of time.

It has been demonstrated in the historical background section that the history of Cyprus problem has been written through the national and international political agenda. Looking closely, it would be seen that the turning points in the history of Cyprus question are the turning points of Turkish social-political life, as well. Hence, it could be said that the Cyprus question has never been perceived and handled through its "own" dynamics, free from the social and political atmosphere of Turkey. In this sense, the Cyprus policy of Turkey, as well as the public opinion on Cyprus question, is not defined through certain fixed geo-political/security interests or constant political/ethical principles but through the changing social and political programme to which Turkey is engaged at the national and international level. Fluctuations in the Cyprus policy of Turkey from federation to confederation, from *taksim* to independence, could be seen as the indications of the internal relationship between the Cyprus policy and the general social-political tendencies of the period. In other words, the hegemonic visions/opinions/projects of the period determine the public opinion on Cyprus as well as the Cyprus policy in that period. Indeed, the

Cyprus question could be read as a symbolic element of Turkish politics as long as it reflects the hegemonic political vision of the time.

In this sense, it is not possible to understand and analyze the current transformation of Cyprus policy apart from the current social and political agenda of Turkey. The primary motive of transformation in the perception of Cyprus problem both in the governmental and popular area, specifically in 2000s, is the EU membership process of Turkey. In this sense, the Helsinki Summit (12/1999) should be taken as a turning point in the history of Cyprus question as well as the EU-Turkey relations. Actually, it could be said that the settlement process of the Cyprus problem[30] has started with the Helsinki Summit (Yetkin, 23/03/2004).

With the Helsinki Summit, Turkey entered in a new phase in its relations with the EU in which the EU accession of Turkey turned from an old dream to a concrete possibility. The candidate country status animated the hope and enthusiasm towards the EU membership within Turkey while this hope and enthusiasm have acted as powerful drives throughout the 2000s to fulfil the membership criteria in various fields. However, it was not sufficient to fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria alone for Turkey to become an EU member. There were certain other issues emphasized both in the official documents of the EU as well as in the statements of the EU bureaucrats which should be handled by Turkey during the membership process. The Cyprus question was the most prominent and significant one among others. Thus, it could be said that the settlement of Cyprus question, despite not being formulated as a precondition, has appeared as a *sine qua non* for the EU membership of Turkey in the post-Helsinki period.

The EU membership had already been perceived by certain sections of society, especially by the big capital, as the means to realize both economic integration and structural transformation in line with the neo-liberal adjustment process since 1980s.

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[30] The expression of "the settlement of the Cyprus problem/question" is used to indicate not the final settlement of the problem in the island but the process which had started with the Helsinki Summit and ended with the April 2004 referendum in Cyprus, in which Turkey has transformed its approach and maintained an affirmative attitude towards the settlement of the problem. In short, what is indicated with the expression of "the settlement of the Cyprus problem/question" is not the settlement of the actual problem of dividedness of the Cyprus Island, but the settlement of "Turkey's Cyprus problem" which has been crossed its path in the international arena.

However, only after the Helsinki turn, the light at the end of the tunnel became to be seen. With the appearance of the EU membership as an attainable objective, the obstacles which impede the membership process began to be evaluated more seriously. Those sections of society who visualize their future in the EU committed themselves to advertise and socialize the EU membership objective while also removing the obstacles impeding this objective.

The EU membership project has become the central theme of Turkey's political agenda in 2000s. All the main political actors have articulated the EU membership objective into their discourses in different tones. Different sections of society (like the liberals, Islamist and Kurdish movements, certain leftist groups and intellectuals) have endorsed the EU membership objective with different expectations. For some, the EU membership would mean further integration of Turkey to the global world while the others expect democratisation, elimination of the human rights violations, expansion of freedom of thought and belief, recognition of the minority rights, transformation of the state structure and elimination of the military weight over the political system, etc.

Besides those sections, the EU membership objective has been supported by the ordinary people as the symbol of a decent life. The majority of Turkish people have been convinced that the EU membership would raise the living standards, solve the problems such as unemployment and poverty and bring better living conditions for ordinary people in general. Thus, the EU membership appeared as a national objective which promises something for nearly to all sections of society. In other words, the EU membership began to act as the symbol of the hope towards a better life, towards welfare and development, towards a democratic country in 2000s.

Moving from this picture, it is possible to claim that the EU membership of Turkey began to gain the features of a hegemonic project embracing wide sections of society (Kaya, 2002-03: 175). That is to say, the EU membership project has articulated the interests, demands and expectations of the subordinate classes/sections/groups to that of the hegemonic one in the specific context of the 2000s. Thus, the EU membership

appeared as the expression of the collective will, the "national-popular" outlook which is expected to serve the interests of the whole nation.

After the EU membership objective has been placed in the centre of the social and political life in the country as a hegemonic project, all social and political matters began to be evaluated through the EU membership vision. Cyprus question was one of those issues which have been re-evaluated considering the EU-Turkey relations. The close connection between the Cyprus question and the EU membership process forced the traditional Cyprus policy and public opinion to change; and the engagement of the majority of Turkish people as well as the main actors in Turkish social and political life to the EU membership project made it easier for them to change their attitudes and opinions about the Cyprus question[31]. In this respect, it could be observed a positive correlation between the magnitude of the hope and enthusiasm of Turkish society towards the EU membership and political/social will towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of an internationally acceptable solution.

Thus, what made possible this transformation of the Cyprus policy in Turkey radically in such a short time is the impact and impulse of the EU membership project which have gained a hegemonic position through the active consent in the majority of the population, including various different social groups and political positions. This project has not gained that hegemonic position separate from the social actors and relations of the period. On the contrary, certain social actors strived to construct the EU membership objective as a hegemonic project using all the possible means.

The primary actor of the construction of the EU membership as a hegemonic project is the big capital and its representative TÜSİAD. As underlined by Kışlalı (12/08/2003), TÜSİAD has appeared as the most effective focus of power in determination of the terms and conditions of the period we live in. And it has used all its influence and power to socialize and materialize the EU membership objective.

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[31] A research made by the Boğaziçi University demonstrates the affirmative attitude of the majority of Turkish people towards the settlement of the Cyprus question through a compromise between two sides and the significance of the EU membership factor as the primary cause of the formation of that affirmative attitude (Çarkoğlu and Kirişçi: 2002).

TÜSİAD has presented the EU membership as an indispensable objective to reach a certain level of economic development and stability, social welfare and political democracy (Kayhan, 2003: 11) and worked for the progress of the membership process in various fields.

TÜSİAD not only lead the public opinion during the EU membership process (Eczacıbaşı, 2002b: 3), but also directed the governments, made certain lobbying activities within the EU countries and institutions, intervened in the moments of crises to mediate the parties, etc. It has mobilized its huge materials and human resources to conduct such activities and duties about the EU membership project. Executives at TÜSİAD proudly underline their role in the construction of the EU membership project as a social project adopted and supported by different sections of society (Kayhan, 2003: 10; Özilhan, 2003: 6).

The Cyprus question came to the agenda of TÜSİAD to the extent that it becomes related to the EU membership process (Duna, 2006). TÜSİAD, perceiving the Cyprus problem as the primary impediment to Turkey's EU membership and claiming the settlement of the Cyprus problem is mandatory for the development of the EU-Turkey relations (TÜSİAD, 04/05/2002), maintained a clear position demanding an internationally valid and approvable settlement of the Cyprus problem in 2000s and began to impose it both to the political power and the public opinion. In other words, its commitment to the EU membership objective directed TÜSİAD to strive for the settlement of Cyprus problem.

Being the pioneer of the construction of the EU membership objective as a hegemonic project, TÜSİAD has undertaken the leading role in the process of the promotion of a settlement in Cyprus. TÜSİAD took the primary initiative in the conduct of the settlement process of the Cyprus problem in both the social and political arenas. In addition to the development of various arguments to legitimize an internationally valid solution, specifically the Annan Plan, and the use of all the means of mass communication to convince the public opinion to these arguments, TÜSİAD intervened in the political process by directing, pushing even treating the political power. It acted as a political agent interfering at the times of crisis, mediated

the parties, formulated solutions and gave necessary reactions and responses when necessary.

The statements made by Mehmet Ali Talat, the president of TRNC, demonstrate the role of TÜSİAD in the process of the settlement of the Cyprus problem openly:

> TÜSİAD has played a significant role about Cyprus and the historical transformation of the Cyprus history. The signals indicating the defect of Turkey's Cyprus policy and the need of change first came from TÜSİAD. The coming of such a reaction from Turkey against the existing Cyprus policy and a demand towards democratisation and EU membership was important, especially when we were in opposition in TRNC. TÜSİAD has made a great contribution to the process, in which Turkey and TRNC have adapted a foreign policy approach and Cyprus policy, which is understandable for the external world (Kıbrıs, 14/02/2006).

Representatives of the capital other than TÜSİAD such as TSP and TOBB have also expressed their wills towards the settlement of Cyprus problem through various means. Certain NGOs which are directly conducted or supported by the big capital such as İKV, TESEV and EDP have been quite active in promoting the settlement of Cyprus problem on the way to the EU membership. The mainstream media, which is structurally linked to the big capital, has supported and publicize its demand towards the settlement of Cyprus problem by presenting it as the primary impediment to the future objectives of Turkey. The liberal (and liberal-leftist) intellectuals who perceive the EU membership as the only chance for Turkey to become a modern, democratic country and the Cyprus question as the primary impediment to the EU membership process, and thus, democratisation of the country, have also supported the settlement process.

The missing element in this picture was the political will. After 2002 elections, the missing political will has emerged with the establishment of the AKP government. AKP government has resolutely worked for the settlement of Cyprus problem parallel to its promises before the elections, despite certain periods of withdrawal. Thus, with the establishment of the AKP government, there appeared a picture in the first half of the 2000s in which the big capital, the government, certain NGOs, mainstream media circles and liberal (and liberal-leftist) intellectuals work together

to settle the Cyprus problem as well as to convince the public opinion on the necessity of the settlement in Cyprus at any price for the sake of the country. In other words, a consensus was established among those sections with an aim to get rid of the Cyprus problem which has begun to be perceived as a constraint on the future of Turkey in 2000s.

The existence of such a consensus was openly stated by the members involved. The president of the TBMM Foreign Affairs Commission, AKP Deputy Mehmet Dülger, indicated the formation of such a consensus especially among big business circles and the government and he maintained that the new Cyprus policy has gained legitimacy through this consensus (Duna, 2006). The military and civilian bureaucracy, especially the General Staff, the foreign affairs bureaucracy and the Presidency, should also be evaluated within the borders of this consensus not as an active member but as a silent supporter approving the settlement process. A detailed examination of MGK Press Releases and the statements of the top authorities at the General Staff within the last few years would reveal the moderate attitude of the military in view of the settlement of Cyprus question on the basis of Annan Plan, with certain concerns and reservations. The civilian bureaucracy, especially the Foreign Affairs bureaucracy, abondoned its traditional language, attitudes and habits about the Cyprus question to a large extent.

This consensus succeeded to gain the consent and even the active support of the majority of population through the use of mass media and other ideological instruments. Turkish people have been convinced on the settlement of Cyprus question on the basis of Annan Plan to a large extent, despite being conditioned with an uncompromising understanding and nationalist slogans about Cyprus for nearly fifty years provided that they have convinced the idea that the settlement of the Cyprus problem is indispensable for realization of the EU membership objective.

Even though this consensus was very effective in the process of settlement of Cyprus problem, the content of the compromise among the elements of this alliance was not limited with the Cyprus problem. Since that problem has been perceived through the mediation of the EU membership project, the real base of this alliance has been

constituted by the EU membership project. In other words, the process of the settlement of Cyprus problem should be seen as a dimension of a general process towards the EU membership on which the rulers of Turkey has reached a consensus.

Connectedly, the debate about the Cyprus question reflects a general debate going far beyond the limits of the Cyprus dispute. In this sense, the Cyprus debate could be seen as an arena of the general hegemonic struggle between two camps having fundamentally different global views and future visions: liberals and nationalists. Turkey witnessed a hegemonic struggle between those two camps in various areas including the Cyprus questioning last few years. What lies in the centre of this struggle was the conflicting conceptions of liberal globalization. While the liberals develop a favourable approach in the view of the liberal globalization and strive to be an essential part of the global world through the projects of further integration such as the EU membership, the nationalists maintains a sceptical attitude against the liberal globalization with certain concerns related with the protection of the national sovereignty and independence.

The only commonality of the nationalists and liberals is that both of them handle the Cyprus case instrumentally, to the extent that the Cyprus question becomes related with their general concerns and objectives. Looking closely, it would be seen that the Cyprus debate has almost no connection with the own dynamics of Cyprus, the conditions and demands of the Cypriots, etc. The Cyprus debate was, is and will be related essentially to the future of Turkey. In this sense, Cyprus should be seen as a symbolic element marking certain visions, opinions and tendencies on the future of the country. Liberals and nationalists attribute Cyprus a symbolic meaning (impediment to the EU membership or the front line of the national struggle) which make the destiny of the Cyprus question extremely significant for the realization of their future visions and political projects.

Statements of certain liberal intellectuals that openly express that the mission was accomplished by Turkey with the approval of the Annan Plan by Turkish government in Switzerland independent from the results of the referendum (Uluengin, 03/04/2004) should be read as the manifestations of the instrumentalist

understanding. The main premise of those statements was that: The actual conditions of the Cypriots or the destiny of Cyprus is no longer important provided that the Cyprus obstacle is removed on the way to the EU membership. Even the Foreign Minister of Turkey, Abdullah Gül stated just before the referendum that Turkey had strived for the settlement in Cyprus implying that the international community should consider the efforts of Turkey, independent from the results of the referendum (*Radikal*, 22/04/2004). As seen, the Cyprus question has been handled even by the political power with an instrumentalist understanding to ensure the future objectives of Turkey crystallized in the EU membership project.

The central concept of the hegemonic struggle between the liberals and nationalists was the national interest. Defining the national interest of Turkey based on different views and visions, both sides tried to present their opinions and arguments about the Cyprus question as the vital outlook to the advantage of "the" national interest of the country. While liberals argue that the Cyprus question should be settled on the basis of Annan Plan for the national interest of Turkey (which is defined in line with the global integration specifically the EU membership) nationalists maintains that Annan Plan should be rejected since it endangers the national interest defined on concepts such as security, geo-politics, national sovereignty and independence.

Thus, hegemonic struggle could in a way be seen as the struggle of different national interest definitions. Thus, it could be argued that there was no single, objective definition of the national interest (Uzgel, 2004: 64). On the contrary, different social classes/sections/groups defined national interest of the country in accordance with their own interests. Indeed, the very concept of hegemony refers to the success of one specific social class or group to constitute and reproduce a national-popular outlook, which is adopted and supported by the majority of society, in accordance with their own interests, thus to universalize such interests (Jessop, 1982: 148; Buci-Glucksmann, 1982: 120).

In this case, the consensus under the leadership of big capital achieved to define the national interest in line with the EU membership project (thus, in accordance with its own interest) and relate the settlement of the Cyprus question to this definition which

is generally adopted. In other words, Turkish people began to see their future and their particular interests in the objective of the EU membership and perceive the settlement of Cyprus question as a necessary step to reach this objective.

Of course, this case shows, besides other things, the impetus of the big capital not only in economic but also in social and political areas, in determining both the political decision making process and the public opinion. In other words, it could be determined that Turkish big capital has the hegemonic capacity since it is able to lead the society in intellectual, moral and political sense by the use of the political and ideological practices through the mass media, political parties, NGOs and intellectual products as well as its own organisations.

Another important conclusion which could be derived from this study is that foreign policy could not be defined as an area separate from the internal political and social processes. Foreign policy is not conducted on the basis of certain constant values and principles in accordance with "the" national interest, immune from the political positions and conflicts. On the contrary it is not impossible to detach the foreign policy from the internal political process (Uzgel, 2004: 53). This study maintains that the politics should be comprehended as a holistic process with its national and international dimensions and should be analysed within the context of the specific historical period and the specific hegemonic projects of the period.

In accordance with the historical conditions and hegemonic projects of the period, the so called constant principles and premises of the foreign policy could be changed easily since all the basic concepts of the foreign policy such as national interest, geo-strategic importance, security, etc. are re-defined in line with the hegemonic understanding of the period. Thus, there are no fixed red lines as argued. Those "red lines" are continuously erased and re-drawn as seen in Cyprus Issue.

Lastly, it should be underlined that it would not be possible for his study to put the recent transformation of the Cyprus policy and the public opinion on Cyprus in a framework without using the concept of hegemony. The Gramscian theoretical perspective of hegemony enables us to comprehend and analyze different dimensions of the social formation within the totality of the social relations, helps us to go beyond

the atomistic understanding of social reality and establish internal relations between the appearances of it. In this sense, the concept of hegemony enables us to analyze economic and political, state and society, foreign policy and internal political processes in a historical and holistic approach within the framework of the hegemonic practices. In addition, the notion of hegemonic struggle prevents the analysis from being mechanical, static and instrumental by opening it to the dynamism of social relations and social struggle.

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