The Representation(s) of Turkey's EU Journey in Islamic Newspaper

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Abstract: This paper argues that relations between the EU and Turkey over the last fifty years have caused serious cracks in the Islamist media's perspectives towards Europe. Based on the actual data, I demonstrate and discuss that while traditional political, cultural and ideological references in Islamic newspapers remain the same, the dominant discourses through which they respond to Europe and the political strategies of the Islamic-rooted, conservative *Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party, AKP) towards EU accession, show significant differences. To demonstrate this, I first offer a brief overview of the history of relations between the EU and Turkey, dealing with the major turning points of Turkey's journey towards admission into the EU. Following this is the section focusing on shifting discourses in Turkish Islamists' perceptions of Europe and the European Union (EU), particularly over the last two decades. This paper will then deal with actual information gathered from the four Islamic dailies (i.e., *Zaman, Yeni Safak, Anadolu'da Vakit,* and *Milli Gazete*). I utilize the techniques widely used in critical discourse analysis (CDA) in order to analyze the dominant discourses embedded in news stories which have appeared before, during, and after the release of the progress and strategy reports given by the EU in 2006.

Keywords: Turkey; the EU; Islamic Newspapers; Discourse Analysis.

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1. Prelude

Hardly a day passes without a media reference to Turkey's longstanding ambition to join the European Union (EU). This is a major political issue, as well as a never-ending conflict, which elucidates social, cultural, and political dichotomies, such as secular vs. religious, modern vs. traditional, progressive vs. conservative, West(ern) vs. East(ern), Islam vs. Christianity, and finally *us* vs. *them* (Spencer, 1993). In other words, to be for or against the European way of modernization and to take a clear stand on the idea of EU membership is a major criterion of the political sphere, taking the places of being a devoted member to the strict political camps, such as right vs. left or socialist vs. capitalist that often engulf politics.

As has been true for the mainstream media in Europe and Turkey (see Koenig *et al*, 2006; De Vreese, 2002; Gencel-Bek, 2001), the country's EU accession has long been debated in Turkey's Islamic press, delineating and reproducing a strong polarization between supporters and critics of EU membership. To the surprise of many commentators, the new Islamic *Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party, AKP) won a landslide victory in the November 3, 2002, general elections, obtaining a decisive majority in Parliament **2**. I argue that this major change in the political atmosphere has brought about a serious breakup in the Islamic press and has caused a significant shift in political discourses through which Islamic newspapers construct their EU-related news stories. Following the traditional position of Islamic-rooted parties, some Islamic dailies have remained skeptical and have expressed their opposition to the government's consistent commitment to joining the EU, while others, who are basically supportive of those who are positioning themselves as "conservative democrats" (Turunc, 2007, p. 80), conceive the idea as a way to diminish the strong effects of the *Kemalist* (modernist and secular) nation-state in the political system and "a path toward 'de-Kemalization' and thus greater religious freedom" (Smith, 2005, p. 319).

Based on the actual data, I demonstrate that while traditional references (whether political, cultural and ideological) of Islamic newspapers (e.g., resisting secular institutions and [the European way of] modernism and modernist values, promoting a return to the essence of Islam, etc.) remain the same, the ways in which they define AKP's foreign policies toward EU accession show significant differences. To show this, I utilize the techniques widely used in critical discourse analysis (CDA) to interpret the news stories on the front and proceeding pages of the Islamic dailies (i.e., *Zaman*, *Yeni ᵍafak*, *Anadolu'da Vakit*, and *Milli Gazete*), which have appeared before, during, and after the release of the progress and strategy reports given by the EU in 2006.

I do not provide a systematic and comparative overview of the discussions focusing on Turkey's modernization/Westernization process during the past 150 years, which have been extensively analyzed (for a few comprehensive accounts, particularly see Keyder, 1997; Mardin, 1971; Berkes, 1964), nor do I investigate the variety of discourses (see Sakallioglu, 1996), which have emerged during different stages of the Islamist movement in Turkey, although these topics are crucial patterns (see Kilicbay & Binark, 2002; Göle, 1996). Instead, my focus is limited to the dominant discourses prevalent and embedded in the ways in which Turkey's national Islamic dailies represent news stories concerning the relationship between Turkey and the EU in the year 2006. The data enable me to argue that on the issue of integration with the EU, the Islamist media of Turkey seem to be divided into at least three basic positions: support, denial, and hesitation. Before arriving at these conclusions, however, a little background.

2. Destination Europe: Where is the (EU) *train* heading for?

"The EU-train" metaphor, widely utilized by high-level EU officials to signify Turkey's journey towards Europe **3**, gained further popularity after the "Progress Report" was published in 2006, and has become a key concept used by many politicians, scholars (Kayador, 2005), and media outlets to define Turkey's current position in the accession process (see figure 7) **4**. "Turkey must catch the train," argue many from both parties, as "missing the train", whose final destination is Europe or a major "crash" on the way, would come to mean missing the possibility of becoming "civilized". Before we analyze and interpret the ways in which Islamic dailies respond to the idea that the EU train has arrived at the last station, it would be helpful to take a quick look at some of the historical turning points concerning the relationship between Turkey and the EU.

Although perpetual debates on Turkey's integration into the EU seem to have become more heated, particularly over the last decade, Turkey has always been a passenger on the *train* heading for the West. Turkey's journey into Western civilization accelerated during the *Tanzimat* (Reorganization) period, which occurred 150 years ago. The reforms required by the Western model of modernization (Europeanization) were introduced by Ottoman bureaucrats well before the modern nation-state was formed in 1923 and the Kemalist program was applied (for further discussions, see Mardin, 1997, 1981; Berkes, 1964). Although the new Turkish Republic and its founding philosophy represented a sharp break from the cultural and political heritage of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey's Westernization process has grown stronger. Radical reforms, such as secularizing and monopolizing education, replacing Islamic law with the adaptation of the Swiss civil code and Arabic alphabets with Latin scripts and abolishing religious dress are only a few of the major political changes which, in turn, have accelerated Turkey's journey towards Europe in this new era.

"These reforms and ideologies," Kili (1980, p. 383) underlines, "comprised the first concerted and full commitment to modernization since Turkey commenced its reform movements in the 18th century." The nationalist and secular Kemalist ideology, formulated by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Turkish Republic, and Republican elites, aim at creating a homogenous nation and a supra-identity under which all ethnic, religious and cultural minorities can come together in a metaphorical melting pot in order to built a "nation" from the remnants of the Ottoman Empire. There is no doubt that one of the basic components of this alloy of modernization and Westernization is secularism, rooted in the nation-state ideology of the European way of modernity. Therefore, it is safe to argue that the project of Westernization has always been an official state ideology and has remained a main target for the Turkish politically elite since the beginning of the Turkish Republic in 1923 **5** (Öniº, 2003, p. 16; 2000, p. 466; Keyman, 1995).

Turkey applied for associate membership in 1959 and, four years later (1963), signed the Ankara Agreement, an association agreement securing Turkey's associate membership into the EEC (European Economic Community) (Arikan, 2003). This envisaged Turkey's eventual accession with the EU Turkey has shown a keen interest in the integration of process in Europe and, indeed, has considered as becoming a member of the EU to be a logical consequence of its modernization and Westernization process which dates back 150 years ago. Consequently, it came as no surprise when. By beginning of 1996, Turkey was accepted into a custom union with Europe, which encouraged the idea of increasing economic relations and trade flows with European countries. This custom union would also strengthen the integration process of Turkey. This positive atmosphere, however,

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3 Ringmar (1998: 52-53) states us that the metaphor is also popular in other European countries: "

The most common metaphor was... that of the EU as a 'vehicle' moving towards a destination, typically a 'train' moving along a 'track'. The train was passing Sweden's 'station' and it was important to 'get on' before it left, or at least to get out of the way before 'the train runs us over.' Like all trains, the EU train had a "timetable" and the day of the referendum was the day of Departure."

4 A few examples from popular Turkish newspapers: European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso says "If France is aiming to stop the negotitations (between EU and Turkey), she can do that. A single 'no' from a member-country would be enough to stop the train. But the one who pulls the emergency breaks must face the conclusions" (Hürriyet, 22 May 2007). "The EU-train is still moving ahead", (Radikal, 30 Mach 2007), "The EU-train starts moving again", (Ismet Berkan, Radikal, 30 Mart 2007).

5 The modernist Kemalist ideology is still a dominant trajectory of the political discourse for the military, secular political parties, state bureaucracy, and education in contemporary Turkey.

dramatically changed after the Luxemburg Summit held in 1997, which excluded Turkey from the enlargement process and caused major damage in political relations between Turkey and the EU (Rumford, 2000, p. 333). To the disappointment of the Turkish politically elite, the EU's enlargement policies towards former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe were comparatively positive which provided "a certain degree of justification for the view that the European is ultimately a civilization project with clear-defined boundaries and no space for a country with a predominantly Muslim population" (Öniº, 2000, p. 464). The Helsinki Summit, which confirmed Turkey a candidate for full EU membership in 1999, was a major turning point. This summit revitalized optimism among the political elite, as well as Turkish society, towards Turkey's accession to the EU. The Helsinki decision required Turkey to continue its political and economic reforms, including the improvement of human rights standards, and satisfy the Copenhagen criteria (1993). The summit also announced that resolution of the Cyprus dispute would not be a pre-condition for Greek Cypriot membership in the EU (Oguzlu, 2002; Rumford, 2000).

As Öniº (2002, p. 3) correctly pointes out, during 2000-2002, civil society and non-governmental organizations, such as TÜSIAD, which represents large-scale businesses and strong lobby groups, created a "pro-EU coalition". He continues,

> (T)he pro-EU coalition increasingly challenged the powerful nationalistic sentiments prevailing in Turkey, particularly within the military-security establishment.... Nonetheless, the signals provided by the EU provided a powerful impetus for reform which became particularly evident during the summer of 2002. Path-breaking changes involving the extension of cultural rights for the Kurdish segments of the population and the elimination of the death penalty altogether among others, reforms which would have been unimaginable a few years ago, had been accomplished by August 2002.

The reform process gained greater momentum after AKP's landslide victory during the general elections of November 2002. The AKP government devoted a vast amount of energy in implementing major political and economic reforms. On the other hand, some of these political reforms and successful economic packages, as Müftüler Bac (2005, p. 25) restates, were left over from the previous government. In 2002, the Copenhagen Summit declared that, without delay, accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey would start after December 2004, if Turkey would fulfil Copenhagen political criteria, including continuing ongoing reforms and the full recognition of the Republic of Cyprus (European Comission, 2005).

Cyprus has always been one of the most complicated and central issues in the EU accession process. To show its willingness to cooperate and solve the problem between the two states on the island, the Turkish Cypriot State accepted the UN's "Annan" reunification plan for Cyprus [6] in 2004 (Sözen & Özersay, 2007). The Greek Cypriot State, however, neither accepted the plan nor ended the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot population (Linden, 2007). The EU insisted that Turkey must recognize the EU member Republic of Cyprus (Ker-Lindsay, 2007).

In October of 2005, the European Council decided to begin accession negotiations with Turkey (Öniº & Bakr 2007). Before proceeding, the reader should note that there have been many other dimensions that shaped the relationship between Turkey and the EU, which are not covered in this study. Kemalist Turkish military, who considers itself as the "armed guardians" of the secular Turkish Republic and democratic regime (Güney & Karatekelioglu, 2005, p. 441), for instance, has always been one of the leading actors in domestic political arena and the Turkey's Europeanization project (Göle, 2006, p. 257; Tessler & Altinoglu, 2004). "(T)he strongly secular military", as Sarigil (2007, p.

[6] The UN offered a reunification plan for the island, known as "Annan plan", to solve the never-ending Cyprus conflict between the Greek Cypriot State and the Turkish Cypriot State as well as Greece, Turkey, and the EU. According to the plan, the

48) argues, "has always been concerned about political Islam and kept a distance from Islamic-oriented political parties and societal groups," thus, "Islamic political groups considered the Europeanization process a great opportunity to reduce the political powers of the military." One of the most crucial requirements of the EU in the Regular Reports was therefore related to this fact: the removal of the dominancy of the army in political system (Öniş, 2000: 16). Turkey's failure to fulfill the basic reforms such as the lack of improvement in human rights was another significant factor increased the tension between the EU and Turkey (Arikan, 2003).

The list continues, however, elaboration of all the political dimensions of the EU-Turkey relations would occupy more space than that devoted to this paper. Therefore, I limit the study to the major themes that would hopefully assist the reader in better understanding of my analysis of the news stories. Following this logic, the next section addresses how and in what ways the Islamic movement and Islamic-rooted political parties in Turkey conceived and responded the Europeanization idea and positioned themselves on the map of the Turkey-EU relations.

3. Shifting discourses: The EU-Turkey relations and Islamic movement in Turkey

The Islamist movement has long been critical of Turkey's Westernization process, seeing Turkey's journey toward the European Union (EU) as part of a secular, modernist agenda to assimilate Islamic identity culturally and politically into the "Christian club" (i.e., EU and European civilization) (Öniş, 2003, p. 22). This traditional position of Turkish Islamists, constructed on the "otherization" of European culture for decades, must be considered together with state-centric Kemalist ideology's top-down, radical applications of modernization which resulted in a strictly secular state (see Keyman, 2007, p. 216). Kemalism's perception of Western/European civilization has created strong conflicts with the Islamist movement (see Gökalp & Cangöz, 2000) which became "a project that tries to deal with challenges posed by Western modernist and its Turkish adaptation by Kemalism" (Duran, 2004, p. 125). Therefore, Turkish Islamists have publicly opposed Turkey's long-standing ambition towards the EU. In his work on the Islamic (re)definitions of Europe, Duran argues that: in Islamist eyes, "Europe" tends to suggest a monolithic reality, viewed as morally decadent in spite of its technological domination over nature... In Europe/the West, the institutions of religion and family, regarded in Islam as the very foundation of society, are seen as being in ruins... EU membership has been considered as Kemalist plot to convert Turkey to Western and as a solution that would prevent the growing influence of political Islam.

The historical position of Turkish Islamists mentioned above has undergone dramatic change over time, particularly after the 1980 *coup d'état* (Keyman, 2007; Turunc, 2007; Göle, 1996) where Islamists, "who have traditionally looked towards the Middle East and the Islamic world as the natural point of Turkish foreign policy interests, appear to have shifted their position in favor of an active pro-EU stand in recent years" (Öniş, 2003, p. 17). During the last twenty-five years, -especially in the 1990s-, the power of Islam has gradually increased in political, cultural and economic spheres (Göle, 2006) to the extend that it "has dictated the changing nature of Turkish modernity" (Keyman, 2007, p. 223). Dursun (2006, p. 162-163) also underlines this point as she argues "[t]he increasing complexity of the antagonistic positions over the last 25 years cannot cover the fact that Islamism has become a powerful political movement and ideology whose content has changed over time, although Islam remains its frame of reference." This argument is of particular importance for this study. During the

analysis of the cases covered in this study, it became apparent that, while the basic frame of reference of the Islamic newspapers appeared to be the same (i.e., essence of Islam and Islamic way of life), the ways in which they conceived and responded the Islamic rooted conservative party, AKP's political strategies toward EU accession varies from complete denial to pure support. This clearly shows that the encompassing, blanket categories such as "Islamic sect/media" are inaccurate; in fact, they refer to plural, conflicting political discourses. This point will be discussed further in later in this essay.

The 1990s witnessed a new process in which Turkish Islamist intellectuals have gradually joined the group of Westernists who support EU membership, as it would accelerate the democratization process and offer opportunities for expanded rights and liberties. This, in turn, would open a larger and freer place for the Islamic way of life in society. Pointing out the diminishing of the conventional, strict boarders between pro- and anti-Westernists, Göle (2006, p. 257) underlines the fact that, starting in the 1990s, "the frontiers between the two publics became more porous and leading spokespersons of Muslim, leftist, and liberal movements engage[d] in public debates, participate[d] in round-tables, but also cross[ed] the borders and address[ed] each others' publics."

A brief examination of the Islam(ic)-rooted parties' responds to the Turkey-EU relations, particularly during the last two decades, would better crystallize the dramatic shift in Islamic political discourses mentioned at the outset of the study. The Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP), formed in 1987, promised before the elections that it would reject the Turkey's entry into the Customs Union and would create an Islamic Union instead. The party voiced "a powerful criticism of European civilization, redefining Turkish national identity not with reference to Islamic civilization but also in opposition to its European counterpart" (Duran, 2004, p. 128). The RP was banned by the Turkish Constitutional Court in 1998 on the grounds of becoming the focal point of anti-secular activities. The Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi*, FP), the successor of RP, was founded in 1997. Although the FP met the same fate in 2001, the party strongly supported Turkey's EU membership, opposed by political Islamic tradition since the early 1970s, because it hoped an EU-member Turkey would mean a freer, stronger Islamic movement and less army involvement in politics (Kuru, 2005). After the Turkish Constitutional Court's decision to ban the party, the Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi*, SP) was found in 2001 by the members of Virtue Party. The leader of the SP, Recai Kutan, stated that they strongly support the accession process since the EU was no longer a Christian club but "a multicultural, equal, individualist political contract and union" (Duman, 2004, p. 133). The Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, formed the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkina Partisi*, AKP) in 2001, defining itself as a center-right conservative party (Öniº, 2003, p. 30). The AKP's foreign policy represents a major departure from the *Milli Görüs Hareketi* (National Outlook Movement), which has been against the European way of life and Turkey's foreign policies towards the EU. To the surprise of many, Islamic-rooted AKP won a landslide victory in the general election in November 2002, and has begun making necessary reforms for EU accession. The AKP has become an enthusiastic proponent of the EU, undertaking significant reforms in the legal and political systems toward the EU accession, some of which are mentioned above. The AKP's reforms seem to exceed those of any party in the previous era, including those defining themselves modernist, secular, or liberal.

The following section addresses the data collected from four Islamic dailies of Turkey. I utilized common techniques employed in critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1995) to interpret the Islamic newspapers' news coverage of EU-Turkey relations and of "those in power, those who are

responsible, those who have the means and the opportunity to solve" the prevailing social problems. This is also defined by van Dijk (1986, p. 4) as the primary goal of "critical science". In the same line with the CDA scholars, I particularly focus on the dominant voices and actors (i.e., who is speaking in the news and how?) and the prevailing ways through which the Islamic dailies (re)define the EU and the idea of European-ness in their news stories.

4 Method

The data The news items covered in this study appeared on the front and proceeding pages of the Islamic dailies between November 1 and November 15, 2006, a week before and after the key-report (the annual "Progress Report" and "Strategy Document" about Turkey's EU accession process) was published by the EU Commission. The report has provoked controversy among the Turkish politically elite and society at large and has become a major topic of hot debates in the Turkish media.

The Progress Report The EU Commission's report was "highly critical of the slow-down in reforms and lack of progress on human, civil and minority rights and urge[d] judicial reform to ensure freedom of expression, as well as a solution to the outstanding Cyprus problem" (EurActiv, 2007). Although Turkey did not fully recognize Cyprus, on December 7, 2006, the AKP made a surprising diplomatic maneuver and agreed to grant Greek Cypriot State access to a major seaport and airport in order to give the EU a positive signal. Greek Cypriot State, however, opposed Ankara's offer of granting port access. The EU commission recommended that the EU Council freeze negotiations with Turkey on 8 of 35 chapters until Turkey fulfilled its commitments. The freeze was undertaken by additional protocol stated in the Ankara Agreement. The AKP government strongly reacted to the decision, which has caused strong conflicts, disappointments and disagreements among the Turkish political elite and society. Brussels's idea to persuade both sides to submit the case to the European Court of Justice was accepted by Turkey. However, Cyprus refused the option (Linden, 2007).

The Newspapers I look at four national dailies *Zaman*, *Yeni ªafak*, *Anadolu'da Vakit*, and *Milli Gazete* often labeled as "Islamic press" or "Islamist-newspapers." *Zaman (Time*, with circulation of 600.000*)* newspaper, the third best selling newspaper and the highest selling Islamist daily in Turkey, is considered moderate Islamist. *Zaman* is in line with and was funded by one of the largest and most influential Islamist movements in Turkey. *Yeni ªafak* (*New Dawn*, with circulation of 190.000), is recognized as the semi-official organ of the ruling party (Justice and Development Party, *Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi, AKP*), is a moderate/mainstream forum of the Islamic wing. *Anadolu'da Vakit* (*Anatolian Time*, with circulation of 66.000) is considered the most outspoken, radical Islamist daily and is supportive of the ruling party. *Milli Gazete* (*The National Newspaper*, with circulation of 55.000) is a conservative, Islamist daily and is known to be a semi-official party organ (former *Welfare Party-Virtue Party* and current *Felicity Party*).

Table 1 The number of the EU-related news items on the front page of the newspapers (November 1-15, 2006)

The number of news items shown in Table 1 is limited to stories appearing on the front pages of the Islamic dailies selected for this study. Thus, news items in inner pages were not included, although there were cases where newspapers entirely devoted one or two pages to EU-Turkey relations. As can be seen in the

table, the number of news items concerning EU issues is considerably higher in the *Zaman* and *Yeni ªafak* newspapers, which are supportive of the government's strategies concerning the EU accession process versus *Milli Gazete* and *Anadolu'da Vakit*, which are critical of Turkey's desire to gain EU membership.

The dominant actors in the news stories

Table 2 The dominant actors in the news stories of *Zaman* newspaper.

Table 3 The dominant actors in the news stories of *Yeni ªafak* newspaper.

Table 4 The dominant actors in the news stories of *Milli Gazete* newspaper.

Table 5 The dominant actors in the news stories of *Anadolu'da Vakit* newspaper.

The news items collected for this study demonstrated that (see table 2,3,4 and 5) the sources of the news stories are usually "primary definers" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 230) such as the politicians/bureaucrats in power from the EU and Turkey. The voices of European politicians are heard more often than Turkish politicians in *Zaman* and *Yeni ªafak* newspapers, which are close to the government and represent neo-conservative Islamic line. On the other hand, radical Islamist and anti-Westernist *Milli Gazete* balance the number of Turkish politicians. The number of Turkish politicians/bureaucrats is slightly more than European counterparts in *Anadolu'da Vakit*.

5. Success... or Failure?: The news coverage of the Progress Report

Figure 1. "Brussels has a persistent demand on freedom of speech and Cyprus." (*Zaman*, November 8)

Zaman newspaper released the publication of The Progress Report and the Strategy Report by the EU in the headline as "Brussels has a persistent demand on freedom of speech and Cyprus" (November 8). The newspaper also reported that "It was determined that Turkey fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria in 'satisfactory' level" and it was also highlighted that some respite was granted to the government for the solution of Cyprus dispute. We see through the number of the news –as well as the space devoted- that "The Cyprus dispute" which has been the conflict between Greece and Turkey since 1970's is one of the emphasized topics.

Another foregrounded topic about EU–Turkey relations is the political debates related with the article 301 of the Turkish Criminal Code which regulates the freedom of opinion and expression and the reflection of these debates into the negotiation process. In the news about the article 301, which creates a strain between the suggestions of EU and the inner politics dynamics of Turkey, the struggles of the government and NGOs are stressed. The voices of the NGOs which think that this article should be changed completely as opposed to the approach of the government were given a very limited place in the inner pages and at the end of the news texts. Those whose voices are heard quite often are the politicians and leaders representatives of the Islamic wing.

Figure 2. "Resuming the journey without any accident" (*Yeni ªafak*, November 9)

Yeni ªafak newspaper which released the news of The Progress Report and the Strategy Report in the headline as "Resuming the journey without any accident" (November 9) also stressed that "EU granted Ankara respite until December", "the weather is generally positive". Especially the criticisms about the relations between the army and the government in the report were particularly emphasized in *Yeni ªafak*. This newspaper which is known to be close to the government reports the positive developments related with membership process from the declarations of the prime minister and the bureaucrat from the government. The data shows that the criticisms for EU policies were not reported from the government authorities but from the politicians of EU member countries and it was avoided diligently to draw a picture which shows a conflict between the government and the EU. Other foregrounded topics are "the opinions of the prime minister and the related bureaucrats from the government" about the developments in membership process, "the criticisms come from the politicians and the bureaucrats from the EU for the warnings and suggestions of the EU related with Turkey", "a call from a EU member for justice of the EU" and the importance of Turkey for the future of the EU take attention.

In *Anadolu'da Vakit* newspaper, while the opinions of those who are in favor of the EU are very restricted, the government and the government policies which criticize the EU were widely included in the news. The newspaper released the news related with the publication of The Progress Report in the headline as "Carrying on distraction" (November 9). In the news texts the topics such as "the distraction policy of EU by granting Ankara some respite until December for the solution of Cyprus dispute" were given a place. During the examined period, the chief of a secular modern NGO, which always in conflict with the Islamic segment, got financial support from the EU for a project. This financial support and the news such as "Choosing Istanbul the cultural capital of Europe in 2010 with a project supported by EU" stand in the forefront.

Milli Gazete also released the news related with the publication of The Progress Report and the Strategy Report in the headline as "The European Union dropped the hint: Be a slave and lead a miserable existence!" (November 9). The suggestions for Turkish Cypriot community in the report", "EU attempt to broaden the description of minority and its wish to define Romans and Alevis as minorities" "The declaration of Algerian prime minister who asserted that Turkey does not need the EU" were the emphasized topics. During the examined period, the following news also takes attention: "It shouldn't be made any concessions that EU demands on Cyprus dispute" "The suggestions insisted by EU about cultural rights are not applied by Greece", "Copenhagen political criteria include religious manipulations" The report enslaves Turkey", "The EU manipulates a group of intellectuals in Turkey"

The headlines in *Zaman* newspaper which were turned into the voice of the newspaper by writing them without a quotation mark such as: "Turkey, which did not produce any project, ended up a loser from the EU funds" (November 1), "Cyprus meeting in Helsinki stranded" (November 2) frame the EU as a political and economical chance for Turkey which should not be lost. By doing this, the argument of the political power (the government) which points out that Turkey would be advantageous with the membership of the EU is reinforced with the news discourse. The newspaper, that used the word "stranded" for the meeting on the front page, makes an impression that there is still a hope for the meeting to be held but in the rest of the news in inner pages the expressions such as "the meeting fizzled out" shows that the meeting is very little likelihood. This is a common strategy for *Zaman* newspaper: While the positive expressions are used in the headlines on the front page such as "Finland is still hopeful" "It sees a chance for conciliation in Cyprus" (November 4) the negative expressions such as the "hopeless developments" were given in the inner pages in the rest of the news texts or they were not mentioned at all. The EU commissioners' criticisms of the government were usually trivialized by giving them in the inner pages and at the end of the news text; the political position of the power is reproduced by hiding the criticisms. In the news about The Progress Report, the actors were the EU commission or the EU in the comments which support the membership negotiations of Turkey. However the actor of the negative views was usually reported as the "Report" (November 9). Thus, while the positive views refer to the stronger political power, negative views are reduced to a simple and neutral text.

One of the significant examples which show the images of the newspaper about the EU and Europeanism concepts is the lead which was published 6 days after the publication of the Report: "Going back to the 12th century in Europe where the family ties weakened" (November 14). The lead underlines that the values of the dark ages started to rise in modern Europe. By making the lexical choices such as "Europe in which the family values have started to disappear", "Europe in which the extramarital relations have became widespread"; extramarital relations which conflict with Islamic tradition presented as a kind of epidemic disease.

Using the expression "abandoned babies", "guilty (European) parent-innocent baby" image was constructed and the argument of the newspaper was strengthened by stressing this is "only the visible part of the iceberg". The news was constructed over a homogenous, all-inclusive metaphor like Europe, which has not borders. The lead news nearly covered the whole page crystallizes how the newspaper sees Europe in terms of the Islamic conservative values upon which its unique political base leans.

When the lexical choices in *Yeni ªafak* newspaper were examined, it takes attention that the opinions of the EU about the relations between the army and the government in Turkey were summarized in the quotation marks as "the troops should be under the authority and the control of civilian power" (November 2). When the intensive tension between the secular and Westernizer army and the Islamic paradigm is considered, it is thought that the view shared by the newspaper and the Islamist government was emphasized by reproducing it and referencing the EU authorities. "Call for justice to the EU" "Olli Rehn counted the sins of the EU" (November 2) are other conspicuous lexical choices. By this way the myth was produced that the "EU has a potential to act unfairly" and "it is sinful". About the Cyprus dispute Turkish government is presented as justifiable and determinant/strong using the expressions such as "Erdogan set forth his final

opinion in scathing terms: Cyprus summit is cancelled" "If Athens won't be there we won't be there either" (November 3).

Greece and Greek Cypriot community is represented with a discourse that "difficult to persuade and self assertive" using the expressions "Finland is looking for the recipe in order to persuade the Greek" (November 4), "The Greek veto annoyed" (November 12). "The train" and "the railway"/Turkey and membership process metaphor was used related with The Progress Report. The same metaphor had been used by the government. The lead was "Resuming the journey without any accident" (November 9). For the developments, which disappointed many people and which increased the criticisms of the government, it was implied that the government did its best by using the expressions such as "There is not any surprise in the Report", "The EU should also take a step" (November 9). In the news following the disappointment crated by the Progress Report Turkey was constructed using a discourse as it's a required and strong country. On the other hand the EU was structured in a "suspicious", "needed Turkey" (November 13) and looking for a concession position.

The discourse of *Anadolu'da Vakit* newspaper is dramatically different from the previous two newspapers, which used affirmative discourse for the EU process such as "Erdogan lashed out at the EU" (November 3). As a result, we witness that the EU is belittled by an odd and belittling vocalization. This newspaper released the news about The Progress Report by defining it "Carrying on distraction" (November 9) and it created a meaning that the EU has distracted Turkey for the membership up till now and it will continue to do that. By this way, the news discourse was structured in the common line of radical, nationalist, anti secular, and anti Western discourse paradigms followed by the newspaper. In the news about The Progress Report, Islamic sensibility was emphasized by giving the headline as "the sermons were also defamed" (November 9). The opinions of the Commission were presented as "defaming of the Islam". Using the word which means "also" in Turkish, the meaning was produced that this defaming is *also* valid for the other issues. For German Prime Minister Angela Merkel's suggestions related with Turkey, the title "Merkel threatened again" (November 9) was preferred and one of the strong members of the EU was represented in an injustice and aggressive discourse.

One of the news items which clarify how the newspaper defines the EU is that "Following the EU decision for Istanbul to be the cultural capital of Europe in 2010, a lot of historical artifacts will be restored" (November 15). The news was released by titling it "A plan for recreating Byzantium". In the news text, it was often emphasized that many of the buildings which will be restored are from Byzantium period. For the list, in which the buildings to be restored is specified, *Anadolu'da Vakit* newspaper made a lexical choice as "Vakit attained that list" "Here is the list", "the mosques are not included in the list" "we decipher the plans for turning Istanbul into Constantinople again". By means of the language and lexical choice, the news was built on the discourse that "an illegitimate and dangerous development was revealed by the patriotic and Muslim *Anadolu'da Vakit* newspaper. In the titles and entries negative values such as "belonging to Byzantium", "Christianity" are alienated by putting them opposite the "superior" values such as "being Turk and Muslim".

The data collected from *Milli Gazete* revealed that the EU was presented in a hegemonic position in front of Turkey using the expressions such as "the law demanded by the EU", " The regulations required by the European Union" (November 2) related with the suggestions of the EU for the rights of ethnic and religious minorities. And Turkey is represented as a weak political actor who acts in compliance with an order. In the news texts it was emphasized that the cultural rights that EU requires are not available "even" in the EU member Greece. The

expressions such as: "AKP will give what the Greek could not give", "Unbelievable authority of Christian governor (in Greece)," "administrative and financial control is between the lips of Christian governor", "nearly all of the practices (in Greece) are inconsistent with the law, human rights and freedom" (November 2) are stressed.

By this way, while the EU was alienated religiously and culturally, Greece- the opponent figure of the nationalist and fundamentalist discourse was reproduced over the EU. Instead of "Greece" choosing the word "the Greek", the criticism in the news items was pointed at an "ethnic and racial category" rather than the government of a country. In many of the news items, the advice of the EU for Turkey were defined as "the concessions that the EU wants to pull away by force" (November 5) "not Copenhagen but the criteria of the Crusades" (November 6). The developments related with the publication of the Progress Report were reported as "The European Union dropped the hint: Be a slave and lead a miserable existence!" (November 9) in the headline. This expression was given in the quotation marks, although the actor of the news story was the newspaper itself. In the news texts "the lord and the slave" dichotomy was created using the expressions such as the EU is insistent on "breaking down the country, Turkey should stop the negligence", "lulling the public with false hopes" (November 10).

7. Conclusion

Data collected for this paper show that EU–Turkey relations over the last fifty years caused serious cracks in the Islamic sect. This case is reflected in newspapers named as "Islamist media." While *Zaman* and *Yeni ªafak* newspapers support the struggles of the government towards EU membership, they do not devote enough space or give voice to the actors who are critical or against the process or government policies. These papers seem to either sanitize or trivialize discourses in news texts. This, however, might not be surprising for those who have met members of the Turkish media, where sensationalism and tabloidization have virtually become the prevailing news-making strategies over the past two decades (see Ergül, 2007; 2000; Gencel-Bek, 2004). In her work on press coverage of Turkey's EU membership process[1], Gencel-Bek (2001) shows that this is the case in popular, liberal newspapers in Turkey. This clearly relates to the dramatic political-economic transformations of Turkish media towards commercialization.

Zaman and *Yeni ªafak* newspapers fully support EU accession as a project which will pave the way for additional freedoms and improve human rights standards. This will consequently pave the way for a better Islamic way of life in Turkey. Prima facie, there seems no obvious reason to be skeptical of or oppose the Islamist media's perceptions of the probable benefits of EU accession. This process simply prioritizes the means for which Turkish Islamists have struggled for decades. However, Dursun (2006, p. 178) correctly points out what is problematic and narrows perceptions of EU-Turkey relations:

Unless the Islamist press uses a logic of difference instead of a logic of equivalance, the democratic features of a discursive space will continue to be weak. Thus, their claims for democracy, freedom and human rights appear a demand, not for all people in Turkey, but only for religious people, who suffer from secularist law according to the Islamist press.

Zaman and *Yeni ªafak* support EU membership in some ways and define the EU as an organization whose values have started to degenerate, which tends to go back to the Middle Ages. They believe that no concessions for the organization should be made, which cannot exist without Turkey. This attitude embodies contradictions among Islamists.

For *Anadolu'da Vakit* and *Milli Gazete,* the EU is the cultural, political and religious "other" which harbors Greece, who is defined as an enemy by Turkish official state ideology. In this sense, the EU is viewed as an intriguing, unjust, crusading Christian, illegitimate political organization that will never accept Turkey as a member. According to these newspapers, the Turkish government acts in compliance to orders of a "Christian club" which, in turn, puts Turkey in a slave position. In news related to the EU, the voices of fundamental Islamists, opponents of the EU and the West are heard more often than other sects mentioned in these newspapers, as they are inline with radical Turkish Islamists.

Koenig et al.'s (2006) study is of particular significance as it clearly demonstrates that Islamic newspapers covered in this study are not alone in their exclusivist approaches; "otherizing" and isolationist perspectives do exist in Europe and have been playing crucial roles in the European media milieu. Koenig et al. (151) underline the fact that "Turks may be acknowledged as being in Europe, but as long as they are Muslims, they are not accepted as being of Europe". Another interesting finding reported by the same study is that while the number of news items referring to Samuel Huntington's well-known "clash of civilization" thesis reaches 40 % among the six selected European countries, it finds quite limited support in Turkey (11%), "whose Europeanness was disputed" (p.158).

Another point which requires attention is that "symbolic elites", such as scientists, artists, independent intellectuals (Bourdieu, 1991) and ordinary people, are not given a "voice" in the selected Islamic dailies. Gencel-Bek (2001) found similar results; the main actors of news stories appearing in mainstream media are usually Turkish/European bureaucrats and politicians and Turkish businessmen. It would then be fair to argue that the rules, strategies and dominant discourses of relations between the EU and Turkey have been developing among power/political elites (primary definers) who represent leading figures in Turkey's EU accession game and are disconnected from other actors in society.

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9. Tables

Table 1 The number of the EU-related news reports on the front page of four newspapers (November 1-15, 2006)

Newspapers	Headlines	Others	Total
Zaman	4	12	16
Yeni ªafak	4	10	14
Milli Gazete	3	6	9
Anadolu'da Vakit	2	3	5
Total	13	31	43

Table 2 The dominant actors in the news stories of *Zaman* newspaper.

Dominant actors	EU	Turkey	Other
Politicians/bureaucrats	13	6	1
Scientist / experts	-	-	-
Journalists	-	-	-
NGO	-	6	-
Ordinary people			
Business people	-	-	-
Artist, writers, etc.	-	-	-
Others	-	-	-

Table 3 The dominant actors in the news stories of *Yeni ªafak* newspaper

Dominant actors	EU	Turkey	Other
Politicians/bureaucrats	11	6	-
Scientist /experts	-	-	-
Journalists	-	-	-
NGO	-	1	-
Ordinary people			
Business people	-	-	-
Artist, writers, etc.	-	-	-
Others	-	-	-

Tables. Gencel-Bek analyzed the news stories appeared on three newspapers with the highest circulations between November 9 and November 15, 1999.

Table 4 The dominant actors in the news stories of *Milli Gazete* newspaper

Dominant actors	EU	Turkey	Other
Politicians/bureaucrats	2	3	
Scientist /experts	-	1	
Journalists	-	1	
NGO	-	4	-
Ordinary people			
Business people		-	-
Artist, writers, etc.	-	-	-
Others	-	-	-

Table 5 The dominant actors in the news stories of *Anadolu'da Vakit*

Dominant actors	EU	Turkey	Other
Politicians/bureaucrats	7	5	1
Scientist /experts	-	-	-
Journalists	-	-	-
NGO	-	1	-
Ordinary people			
Business people	-	-	-
Artist, writers, etc.	-	-	-
Others	-	-	-