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Department of Political Science

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Tutor: Magnus Jerneck

A Federal Vision of Europe – Or Just Xenophobia?

An Analysis of the Motives Behind the French No to Turkish
EU-accession

Abstract

This essay contains an analysis of the motives behind the French no to Turkish membership in the EU. By examining different analytical approaches to European integration and by establishing motives, the study seeks to explain why France is against the membership. Two categories of motives are explored, the first relating to domestic constraints, and the second dealing with structural ideational constraints. In analyzing French conceptions of the European project, European integration, and national and European identity, the conclusion of this study is that the French objection to Turkish EU-membership primarily has its background in historically founded perceptions of national and European collective identity. France sees the European Union as a lever for French interests and continuing power, at the same time as it is reluctant to accept transfers of sovereignty to European institutions. This essay also shows that Turkish membership in the EU conflicts with French views of a federal State as the final product of the European project, and against the French notion of itself as a leading voice in the EU.

Key words: French foreign politics, EU-enlargement, Turkey, European integration, identity

Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Statement of Purpose and Question at Issue	2
1.2	Theoretical Approach.....	2
1.3	Method and Material	2
1.4	Disposition and Delimitations.....	4
2	A Conceptual Framework to French European Politics.....	5
2.1	Theories of European Integration.....	5
2.1.1	Realism and Liberal Intergovernmentalism	6
2.1.2	Neofunctionalism and Institutionalism	7
2.1.3	Partial Conclusion	7
2.2	An Ideational Dimension of Foreign Policy	8
2.2.1	Co-operative Hegemony	8
2.2.2	Ideas of Sovereignty and Nation-Identity in a European Context	9
2.2.3	Partial Conclusion	11
3	France and Europe – A Background to a Complex Relationship	12
3.1	French Choices in European Integration.....	12
3.2	French Nation-Identity in a European Context	14
4	Explaining the French View on Turkish Accession – An Analysis	16
4.1	France and Turkish EU-membership	16
4.2	Domestic Constraints on French European Policy.....	17
4.3	Ideational Constraints on French European Policy	19
5	Summarizing Conclusions.....	23
5.1	Evaluation of Motives	23
5.1.1	Domestic Constraints	23
5.1.2	Ideational Constraints.....	24
5.2	Final Conclusion	24
	References.....	26

1 Introduction

France has been a forceful promoter of European integration for more than 50 years. But it has also been the fiercest of defenders of national interests and sovereignty in its mission to safeguard the role of the nation-state. This contradiction in French European policy has caused acute tensions in the European Union (EU) over the years. President Charles De Gaulle's blockage of the British candidature to the European Community (EC) in the 1960s (Demker, 1996: 59) is one example, the French no-vote to the new EU constitutional treaty in 2005 another (Marthaler, 2008: 389). One of the more recent examples is the French view on the prospective of a future Turkish EU-membership. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France since May 2007, has made clear that Turkey must never become a member of the EU. In his speech on election night May 6th 2007, Sarkozy stated that Turkey "*is not a European country and consequently has no place in the European Union*" (www.acturca.wordpress.com). On the same day, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, expressed his wish that President Sarkozy would not hinder the ongoing membership negotiations. In spite of the fact that the majority of the EU-countries are in favor of Turkish membership, including Germany¹ and Great Britain, and in spite of a general view in the EU that Turkish membership is inevitable and only a matter of time, Sarkozy has stayed firm in his opinion that the EU should cease all ongoing membership negotiations, and instead start discussing the possibility of granting Turkey a "privileged partnership²".

The focus for the present study will be France's views on Turkish EU-membership, and the motives for its objections in this matter. France and President Sarkozy know that when they object to Turkish EU-membership, they are going against the general EU-view, and that they are also obstructing an already ongoing negotiating process. In mapping out the motives for the French skepticism in this question, I therefore aim to explain why France chooses, in spite of these facts, to say no to full Turkish membership.

¹ The opposition to Turkey could however be strengthened if Angela Merkel, the present Chancellor of Germany, wins next years elections in Germany, and forms a government without the Social Democratic Party (SPD) that today supports Turkish accession. In that case Merkel could openly join Sarkozy in favouring the option of a privileged partnership (Economist, 230208).

² This privileged partnership is to be established within the framework of the recently launched Mediterranean Union, a project uniting the EU with the countries bordering the Mediterranean. The project has been accused of being an excuse for not having to accept Turkey as full member in the EU (Economist, 120507).

1.1 Statement of Purpose and Question at Issue

This essay has two different aims. First it sets out the background for French views on the European project and European integration. This includes historical and recent developments in French policy regarding the question of European integration in general, and Turkish EU-membership in specific. Secondly, the essay seeks to explain why France has made this decision by identifying the motives that have shaped and constrained the conduct and stance of Nicolas Sarkozy and his government in this matter. In examining the different possible motives, I aim to establish the reasons for the French present views on Turkish EU-membership. My question at issue, constituting the focus of this essay, is consequently the following:

What are the motives behind the French no to Turkish EU-membership?

1.2 Theoretical Approach

In order to contextualize the French no to Turkish EU-membership, an overview of the theories relevant for the study of French European policy is presented. Since this essay, in the larger scope, relates to French views on the European project and European integration, I intend to account for the different possible interpretations of European integration found in the literature. I have chosen to focus on two explanatory categories in establishing the motives behind the French objection to Turkish membership: domestic constraints and ideational constraints on French European policy (the two categories will be accounted for further in the following chapter). The theoretical accounts presented therefore relate to these two different approaches to explaining strategies in European integration.

However, in general this essay has an integrative approach to theory, meaning it does not draw on one single theory. Rather this essay is steered by its choice of method, motive analysis, and the fact that the study has an inductive approach, meaning that it seeks to explain a specific phenomenon empirically observed, in this case the French no to Turkish EU-membership.

1.3 Method and Material

Since my intention is to examine the reasons for France's objection to Turkish EU-membership, and my ambition is qualitative rather than quantitative, I have decided to perform an in-depth case study. The qualitative method is sometimes criticized for its limitations when it comes to the possibility to generalize using the results provided, but since I do not aspire, as my primary goal, to draw any

general conclusions from my case, I find the method to be appropriate (Devine, 2002: 199). I have more specifically chosen *motive analysis* (Esaïasson et al 2004: 317) as a method since the purpose of my study is to establish the motives behind the French no to Turkish accession. A motive analysis is made with the purpose of mapping out the *conscious considerations* that an actor makes in taking a decision. What a conscious consideration is differs from situation to situation, but the goal of the research is always the same; when one has mapped out the conscious considerations, one has also explained why the actor (in this case France) behaved in a certain way.

Putting oneself in an actor's shoes and establishing its conscious considerations may sound impossible. A motive analysis can, however, very well be done by taking into consideration the "objective" prerequisites in society that precede the decision, such as structural changes in society that effect the possibility of action. These objective prerequisites then define the actor's (i.e. a state or a political party) maneuvering space (Ibid: 317). A motive analysis is complicated since motives cannot be observed empirically. The way that an actor motivates its choices, its *motivations*, is not always the same as what the actor's motives are. The actual motives may not even be mentioned explicitly in the debate (Ibid: 319). Consequently according to the method, I will attempt to establish the underlying motives behind the French objection to Turkish EU-membership, rather than examining how the actors motivate the objection.

After having defined whom the actors are, a motive analysis consists in establishing possible motives (Ibid: 320). I have defined two categories of motives for France's objection to Turkish accession, and I will test these motives in empirical analyses. Consequently, in using motive analysis as a method, I will be mapping out the background of an empirical result (as an inductive approach also implies), in my case the French objection to Turkish membership in the EU. This will help in identifying the factors that influenced the actors in making their decision, and the impact these factors can be said to have had on the final outcome.

Once having defined possible categories of motives, the next step is to find what the method calls relevant *motive indicators*. This can be done through the establishment of implications of these motive indicators. The motive indicators can often be found by looking at the actor's actual *motivations*, but they can also be established by examining factors not explicitly connected to the action that one aims to explain. Doctrines of foreign policy could be one such indicator, ideological assumptions in a society another (Ibid: 324ff). When evaluating the motives, and when comparing different motives in order to establish which motive has been the most important one, the researcher is confronted with the hardest challenge, and in most cases he or she has to base the conclusions on assumptions of reasonability (Ibid: 330f).

Throughout the essay I use terms such as "France's stance", "French views", "French opinions", etc. These terms can of course be very broadly interpreted, however, in this case the meaning intended is the French official political view, in other words, national elite views. Consequently, this essay deals with the French official political view that Turkey is not to be included in the EU. As I will

discuss more thoroughly later on in this essay, French national elite opinions are closely linked to the French President's opinions. Of course, where terms such as "French public views", "French public opinion", etc. are used, it is the general public's beliefs that are intended. There are exceptions, of course, to both these categories, as there is no such thing as a single French view (or a single EU-view for that matter) on Turkish EU-membership. However, this operationalization of France and French views has been made in order to simplify the present study and the possibility to draw conclusions.

As to the empirical material chosen for this essay, it consists mainly of secondary material related to French European policy, European integration and the Turkish membership from a French perspective. I have included texts from scholars and researchers as well as journalists, analysts, and government officials. Of course there is always the problem of biases and neutrality when it comes to secondary literature. However I have tried to solve this problem by using as varied literature as possible from a large array of sources to strengthen the validity of the study.

1.4 Disposition and Delimitations

This essay has five parts. In this first part of the essay the area of research and the question at issue are presented. The chosen topic is related to its contextual background and placement in a theoretical discussion, and the question at issue is connected to the methodological considerations and reasoning. The following chapter, chapter two, accounts for the theoretical context of the research question, by relating it to the research that has already been done within this field of study. This will permit me to outline the framework that will then provide the theoretical approach and analytical tool needed in order to perform this case study. Chapter three then provides an empirical account of French European policy, both in a historical and a current context. Chapter four provides an analysis of the Turkish EU-membership from a French perspective. Finally, chapter five summarizes the findings and establishes conclusions.

The aim of this study is to establish the motives behind the French no to Turkish EU-membership. However owing to given space constraints and limitations in material, the results provided cannot be considered to provide a thorough account for all possible motives underlying this decision. French European policy is of a complicated nature. The focus of the study will therefore provide a general insight, and it will further focus on the aspects relevant to the study and question at issue. It should be noted that this essay is not normative in its nature, as it advocates either for or against Turkish EU-membership, neither should it be interpreted as a critique of French foreign policy. It is simply an attempt to explain *why* France says no to Turkish EU-membership.

2 A Conceptual Framework to French European Politics

This chapter aims to contextualize France's opposition to Turkish EU-membership and French views on European integration in general, by mapping out the different established theoretical perspectives on European integration found in the literature. It will also discuss foreign politics in relation to questions of national and European identity. As already mentioned, the theoretical framework for this essay should be regarded as a conceptual framework as it is not founded on any single specific theory (Aggestam, 2004: 28). It should be noted however that many empirical studies of the EU-member state relations do not explicitly attach themselves to a precise theoretical school or even a conceptual framework (Drake, 2005: 3).

2.1 Theories of European Integration

There is no single definition of European integration. Should it for example be interpreted as an economic phenomenon or a political phenomenon? What criteria need to be fulfilled for the European integration process to be regarded as complete? The answers given in the literature are ample. I have, however, chosen to in this essay to use the definition of Ernst Haas (1968), a well-known theorist in the field of European integration. He defines (European) integration as

...the process whereby political actors in several national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new center, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over pre-existing national states. The end result of a process of political integration is a new political community, superimposed over the pre-existing ones (Haas, as cited in Rosamond, 2000: 12).

The complexity of the European integration process is reflected in the way that scholars and theorists have interpreted the process over the years. These different academic interpretations are, however, most often divided into two camps: those who regard Europe as an arena where nation states compete, or the realist and liberal intergovernmentalist account, and those that view Europe as a polity with its own government and politics, or the neo-functional and institutional account (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 17).

2.1.1 Realism and Liberal Intergovernmentalism

Realist interpretations of European integration regard nation-states as actors that possess different levels of strength and are competing for hegemony or for a privileged relationship with another leading power (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 18). International relations are built up of actors, in the form of states in an anarchic system, which act purely out of self-interest (Rosamond, 2000: 131). The foundations for this account are to be located in classical realism, where international organizations simply are viewed by the states involved as instruments (Rittberger&Zangl, 2006: 15). The EU consequently provides an arena where states play out alliances, conflicts and rivalries. European integration, interpreted by realists, therefore is the product of “inter-state bargaining” (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 18). In this approach the EU has very little autonomy and EU-policy is simply the outcome of balance of forces.

The process of European integration is of an ever-ongoing nature, and for realists it is hard to explain the forward motion that has taken place (Ibid: 19). Surrenders of sovereignty unimaginable under General de Gaulle³ became realities under François Mitterrand⁴ and Jacques Chirac⁵. Also the change and growth in European institutions account for a deepening of European integration.

Liberal intergovernmentalists are not completely different from realists in their perceptions of European integration. Intergovernmentalists are also dubious of the importance and autonomy of supranational institutions. They see Europe as an arena for inter-state bargains as well (Parsons, 2000: 46). However, intergovernmentalists bring “low politics” into these bargains, meaning that they also take into account the importance of interest groups and business groups, both national and transnational, in shaping the politics of different governments (Knapp & Wright, 2006: 19). President Charles de Gaulle’s relationship with the French farm lobby is one example of such a group shaping the politics of a country (Ibid: 20). This implies that the span of explanation is larger for the intergovernmental than for the realist account, as change in the international economic context can be considered, as well as change in balances of forces within member states. Nevertheless, for intergovernmentalists, states remain the principals. Other European actors are only agents possessing limited freedoms.

Liberal intergovernmentalism focuses on the big bargains as the motor in accelerating the integration process and also points to those stalemates that continually block the process. In this account it is the national players led by the heads of government, (although in the French case it is the president) that are

³ De Gaulle was a general in the French army during WWII, then President of France during two separate periods: 1945-1946, and 1958-1969 (Demker, 1999: 38ff).

⁴ François Mitterrand was President of France 1981-1995, elected as a representative of the Socialist Party, PS (Demker, 1999: 68f).

⁵ President of France between 1995-2007, founder of the Gaullist Party Rassemblement pour la République, RPR (Demker, 1999: 67ff).

responsible for the politics. European institutions constitute, in this model, only secondary actors (Ibid: 23).

2.1.2 Neofunctionalism and Institutionalism

Neofunctionalists, with Ernst Haas as their central scholar (Rittberger&Zangl, 2006: 17) break with the realist and intergovernmental “international relations” perspectives of the EU. Neofunctionalism stresses the interdependence of politics and economics. The core of the functionalist approach is the prioritization of human needs, rather than the safeguarding of the nation-state. Flexibility is important, since human needs change over time, and consequently, so should international organizations, hence the functionalist mantra; ‘form follows function’ (Rosamond, 2000: 33f). As a main theory in international relations, neofunctionalism can be regarded as having been inspired by the European integration process in specific. In creating an international organization, in this case the EU, one enables problems that arise in one area, as a result of interdependence, to be solved. This in turn starts a process of dynamic political integration. This process is called spillover (Rittberger&Zangl, 2006: 17). Spillover implies that integration in one economic sector pushes for economic integration within and beyond that sector, and thereby increases the authority at the European level (Rosamond, 2000: 60).

The process of European integration has proven to be of a steady and incremental nature. The problem for neofunctionalists is however to explain why the process in some cases has been stalled, for example during the de Gaulle period (www.eurosduvillage.com). During these periods the Commission has been unable to affect the situation and restart the integration process (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 21).

Institutionalists, like neo-functionalists, focus on internal processes as the motor of the European integration process. The institutions of the EU play a vital role, and any analysis of the EU must also include an analysis of the European institutions. States cannot act alone in the EU. Although the EU is not identical with the nation-state, it is a polity that shares enough characteristics to be able to be compared with one (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 22f). Institutional views on international relations in general, however, are similar to realist views in that they share belief in an anarchic international system. However, they regard cooperation through international organizations as completely rational (Rittberger&Zangl, 2006: 16).

2.1.3 Partial Conclusion

These approaches of course account for only a small part of the very complicated polity of the EU, and they can to some extent even be seen as complementary. However, both major approaches to European integration described above explain

the integration process as reflecting the demands of domestic interest groups, what is called the *interest-group model* (Parsons, 2000: 99). Actors have created the EU because it was in their interest. This view also reflects broader theories in international relations. The motor of the integration process is consequently the objective needs of domestic interest groups. In an intergovernmentalist view for example, national leaders will pursue the politics of European integration that best reflect interest-group support, or “its indirect electoral manifestations in their domestic arena” (Parsons, 2000: 46). The interest-group model is presented in for example Andrew Moravcsik’s liberal intergovernmentalist approach to European integration (Parsons, 2000: 47) and says that “groups articulate preferences; governments aggregate them”. Functionalist approaches are based on the same assumptions as liberal intergovernmentalists make in this respect (Ibid: 48).

There is, however, an alternative account to the interest-group model, becoming more and more common in explaining causal factors in foreign politics, which I aim to discuss in the next section.

2.2 An Ideational Dimension of Foreign Policy

Taking into account questions of identity when analyzing foreign policy decisions is a rather recent phenomenon (Aggestam 2004, Parsons 2000). In Lisbeth Aggestam’s study “A European Foreign Policy?” the complex relationship connecting foreign policy and notions of national and supranational identities is closely scrutinized with the aim of finding out how collective identities provide “a system of orientation for self-definition and political action” (Aggestam, 2004: 39f). I have decided to use the same approach in exploring the French stance on the Turkey question by using theories of European integration that include *ideational factors* in explaining different state strategies. The theory of co-operative hegemony (accounted for in the next section) has been chosen since it specifically discusses the importance of ideas in a nation’s choice of strategies in European integration. The theory is interesting and appropriate in this case since it provides an alternative, ideationally based, explanation of European integration, without completely stepping away from realist core presumptions. The theory of co-operative hegemony is seen as particularly useful in explaining the formative stage of regional cooperation; I intend, however, to use it as an alternative means of explaining French obstructive behavior in the EU.

2.2.1 Co-operative Hegemony

Thomas Pedersen’s theory of co-operative hegemony (1998, 2002) sets out to explain cooperation in the European integration process. It has always been hard for realists to explain regional cooperation, and Pedersen’s theory therefore offers an alternative account. His theory is focused on explaining the formative stage of a regionalist project, and basically states that the main determinants behind such a

project are political and made up of power and security concerns (Pedersen, 2002: 678). The main argument is that the most important aspect of regionalist cooperation is best explained in examining the interests and strategies of the biggest state (or states). Motives and strategies are emphasized in the theory. Theoretical accounts of regionalism, according to Pedersen, most often neglect geopolitical and security factors, and when it comes to realism and the study of institutions, it is clear the theory of international hegemony gives institutions too little a role. There is therefore a need, according to Pedersen, to integrate “the factor of ideas” in realist theory (Pedersen, 2002: 679). Co-operative hegemony consequently has what Pedersen calls a “soft-realist” perspective on institutions. He adds an ideational element to the theories of realist institutionalists, in order to account for “State learning and grand strategy”. States differ from one another because of differences in ideational factors and because of differences in “domestic institutional set-up” (Ibid: 681f).

Co-operative hegemony implies soft rule “within and through co-operative arrangements based on a long-term strategy” (Ibid: 683). The theory is attentive to geopolitical constraints and the international system, but it also sees ideas as elementary factors in international relations. This implies that State leaders are given a great deal of freedom in devising strategies for European integration (Ibid: 683). Regional institutionalization can, in Pedersen’s view, aid big powers in obtaining their goals, i.e. in preventing balancing, and in a subtle way, in gaining influence over the external and internal affairs of neighboring States.

In conclusion, it can be said that Pedersen’s theory offers an alternative account of why big States would enter a regionalist project like the EU with its neighbors, when this would lead to constraints of the country’s maneuvering space (Pedersen, 2002: 696). He explains strategies in foreign policy, focusing not as much on external constraints as on what he calls ideational factors. This ideational variety of realism focuses on “coherent sets of ideas shaped by historical learning and constrained by systematic factors” (Pedersen, 1998: 16). Consequently in Pedersen’s theory, history and ideas matter in making foreign policy in that they determine State interests. The following section will therefore focus on the ideational elements of French European policy.

2.2.2 Ideas of Sovereignty and Nation-Identity in a European Context

Some conceptual clarifications are needed in order to explain the ideational elements of French European policy. *Sovereignty* can be defined as a “set of practices, ideas, beliefs, and norms” (Holsti, 2004: 113) that constitute an international institution. Holsti further divides sovereignty into two components: the rules and norms that make up the States, and the rules and norms that regulate the comportment between States (Ibid: 113). *States* remain the primary agents in international relations and are the only polities that retain the status and characteristics of sovereignty (Ibid: 68). States are also the primary creators of international institutions, such as trade and international diplomacy. Although

altered since the Westphalian era in function and legitimacy, States on the whole, withhold their normative and ideological roots.

However, the EU constitutes an exception to this notion of change in *statehood*. In pooling sovereignty to Brussels institutions, the notion of statehood in an EU context indeed has changed, however more in terms of creating a unique form of federalism or “multilevel governance” than in a “true hollowing out” of the state (Holsti, 2004: 69). The whole process of European integration has, in many respects, challenged the traditional idea of the sovereign nation-state. Forces of globalization, regionalism and transnationalism are today undermining the role of the traditional nation-state (Aggestam, 2004: 47). The countries of the EU retain their sovereignty, but in specific areas sovereignty has been delegated to European institutions. The scholar Daniel Philpott, quoted in Holsti (2004: 138), argues on this note:

...The European Union does not replace states, but rather “pools” their sovereignty into a common “supranational” institution in which they no longer make decisions independently.

National identity is not a one-dimensional concept. Moreover, different definitions stress different characteristics. However, ideas of the nation-state draw on theories of *collective identity*. A collective identity is built up by a set of ideas that define a social group as an entity. According to theories of social psychology, these social and collective identities are unlikely to change often; this is true for nation-State identities as well (Marcussen et al, 1999: 3f). In some views, a precondition for a politically integrated Europe is the existence of a European collective identity. This identity can, according to certain voices, only develop within a framework of Christian-western values (Wimmel, 2006: 18), while others are of the opinion that it is rather the embracing of human rights and universal freedom that constitutes the basis for a European collective identity (Ibid: 19). Research on this matter has shown that collective identities in the EU often are of both national and European character, but that the national identity in most cases is the predominant one. Only a very small fraction of the EU population identifies itself primarily as European (Ibid: 107).

The central paradox of the European political system...is that governance is becoming increasingly a multi-level, intricately institutionalized activity, while representation, loyalty and identity remain stubbornly rooted in traditional institutions of the nation state. Much of the substance of European state sovereignty has now fallen away; the symbols, the sense of national solidarity, the focus for political representation and accountability nevertheless remain (Wallace, William, 1999: 99).

The substance of the nation-State has fallen away but national identity remains. This is one way of interpreting the above quote from one of the primary theorists of European integration, William Wallace. The “paradox of the European political system” becomes more evident as issues of European integration have shifted from relatively uncomplicated domains, to domains that entail threats to national sovereignty, such as immigration and defense questions (Knapp&Wright, 2006:

18). To France, the question of Turkish EU-membership constitutes such a question.

Related to different notions of national and European collective identities, are also different visions within the EU regarding the *finality* of the European integration project. The different views complicate the continuation of the integration process. The term “Europe’s finality” implies “particular ideas or preferences concerning the final state of the European integration process” (Wimmel, 2006: 3). Member States perceive differently what kind of an actor the EU should be, and what the final product of the Union should look like. The issue of finality is something often discussed in reference to the future of the European project. The preamble to the 1957 Treaty of Rome uses the phrase “an ever closer union”, however what this in reality implies has not been specified. The dominant view has however been state-centric, meaning that Europe should in its final stage become a federation, “a United States of Europe” as the former French president Valéry Giscard d’Estaing⁶ once suggested (Zielonka, 2004: 27). With recent enlargements, according to some voices, this vision is in peril, as the EU will become too heterogeneous for such a State to function.

2.2.3 Partial Conclusion

This section has explored ideas as the causal factors in strategies of European integration. Pedersen, however, does this without stepping away from the core realist assumptions of international relations. In stepping beyond the domain of domestic constraints as the only source of explanation for the EU-member’s different strategies, this view relates the politics of European integration to ideological and structural prerequisites. Scholars of international politics more and more argue that actors very seldom read clear interests directly from their objective environment, since most political situations are too complex and uncertain. Instead actors interpret their interests through subjective filters, ideas, which form the actor’s strategies (Parsons, 2000: 50). In this study’s attempt to examine the French objections to Turkish EU-membership, both these (interest-group based and ideationally based) approaches to explaining strategies of European integration will be tested.

⁶ Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, French President between 1974 and 1981, and an active promoter of European integration (Demker, 1999: 66ff).

3 France and Europe – A Background to a Complex Relationship

This chapter provides the background to French European policy, both in a historical context as well as in a current. In outlining French views on European integration and the European project, and in exploring the relationship between French notions of identity and French European policy, I aim to provide a thorough context for the analysis of Turkish EU-membership.

3.1 French Choices in European Integration

French views on the future of Western Europe in a post-Cold War context were, at least to a great extent, positive. A vision of a peaceful Europe was slowly beginning to crystallize. Questions of security were nevertheless still of highest priority, and for France, security and defense were also the two most important aspects when initiating the European project. Three core issues were put in focus: collective security, multipolarity, and defense integration. The EU was central to French thinking on both European defense and security. The defense agreement with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was to be preserved, and collective security was to be pursued on a pan-European basis, with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as the central institution (Irondele, 2008: 155ff). A European confederation could be regarded at the time, from a French perspective, as a way of ensuring that Europe would evolve as a society of States, and not return to the previous state of anarchy.

French policy-makers, at that time, were also worried about the future of a unipolar world, with the US as the only great power. In order to prevent this, a powerful EU was perceived as the answer. The concept of a “*Defense Europe*” was therefore a central ingredient in the French vision of the goal of the European integration project. The EU would constitute a balance in a unipolar world but also constitute a factor of stability (Hubert Védrine, cited in Aggestam, 2006: 97).

In a post-Cold War context, the EU was consequently, first and foremost, regarded as a crucial element in establishing stability and acting as a counter-balance to post-Cold War threats. A deepening of European integration in general, and a deepening of French and German relations in specific, were perceived as the necessary foundations for stable European cooperation. The close relationship between the two countries would constitute a counter-balance to the disorder in the eastern parts of Europe. However, the French government already then, in contrast to the German and British governments, to a larger extent sought to

promote a deepening of integration in the already existing Union, rather than its enlargement (Aggestam, 2004: 97f). France was worried about the dilution of the EU that they feared would diminish the Unions defense and stabilization capacities (De la Serre, 200X: 506-507).

The ambiguous French attitude to the European project can be explained in terms of benefits and costs, in what some would describe as typical realist account. The motives behind France's support for the European integration project can, according to this view, be found in two geopolitical benefits and two economic benefits (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 25f). *France's relationship with Germany* is the first geopolitical factor to be considered. The Franco-German axis has been an important power of integration as well as an obstacle to European reforms. The second geopolitical motive is the way in which Europe has been used as a *diplomatic lever* for France. France has a history of being perceived as a great power, in terms of size, population and army. But in the 1960's this was no longer the case and France remained a big power only thanks to the legacy of its past (Irondelle, 2008: 154). In taking the leadership of Europe and the EU, France could live on as a great power. In this view, one can say that France considers European integration as a springboard for French influence in the world and a possibility to hang on to their legacy as a great power (Ibid: 156). Of course, economic gains also influence the French view on the European project, the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) being the main case in point. The other economic gain for France is free-trade and the opening up of a European common market (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 27). In summary, the EU has provided France with a strong relationship to Germany, a strengthened role as a great power, a subsidized market for farm exports, and a framework for economic modernization.

However, transfers of sovereignty have been painful from a French point of view, and France's dominant State tradition doesn't always fit well with giving increased power to European institutions. The same factors that have given advantages to French economic development have also been viewed as a powerful threat to French economic traditions of protectionism and dirigisme. The free-trade message of the EU has many opponents in France (Ibid: 29f). Nevertheless, as discussed in the previous chapter, France, in general, regards the EU as a tool for pooling sovereignty with other European States, which will enable them to act as a counterbalance to the United States, in particular through the strengthening of Franco-German alliance (Wimmel, 2006: 7f).

France desires a strong Europe with ambitious policies both in internal and international respects, however it also wants weak institutions in order to be able to safeguard French national sovereignty. However, as Knapp and Wright state, this ambiguity in French European policy doesn't imply that French leaders over time have had the same visions of what the EU should be. French views on the European integration project are influenced by several factors. Among them are the ever-changing international context, shifting domestic constraints and constituencies (reflecting a more critical view of the EU and of reduced sovereignty) as well as the fact that French Presidents, when not constrained by

cohabitation, have a larger margin to maneuver than most of all other West European executives in influencing foreign policy⁷ (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 30f).

France has the ability to speak with a unified voice in the EU. Its advantages reside in the fact that the French Republic remains “one and indivisible” (Ibid: 54). Sub-national authorities play a marginal role in European affairs; insight into the executives’ foreign policy is negligible, including both parliamentary and press insight. When the presidency stands behind a policy proposal, there are very few voices of opposition heard. This implies that the French have a strong talent and skill for initiating large-scale European initiatives. The French President’s space for maneuvering and freedom of action therefore is much greater than in most other parliamentary democracies (Ibid: 50). However, as the French aim is to speak with one voice, observers have noticed that the French well-coordinated system of representation in the EU, which focuses on the issues at hand, has led them to, in some respects, adopt inflexible positions that make it hard for the French to create coalitions with other member states. One example of this is the French historically negative view on further enlargement of the EU (Ibid: 54).

The view of an intergovernmental Europe where European institutions play only administrative and technical roles is a view generally preferred by nation-states skeptical of a supranational body ruling Europe. France can be regarded as such a State. However, despite its ambivalence, France’s role in the EU is important, as it is most likely to remain one of the shaping forces in the evolution of the Union.

3.2 French Nation-Identity in a European Context

French conceptions of statehood and national identity are deeply founded in the country’s history, but conceptions of French nation-state identity have also evolved over time. After World War II, the French nation-identity was in a deep crisis and different conflicting views on the future of France were evident among the political elite. General de Gaulle, however, managed to re-construct French nation-state identity by reuniting a divided nation in a common vision of the role of France as a great power. In relating French nation-identity to myths about Frenchness, de Gaulle combined the notion of the French *état-nation* with the values of enlightenment and democracy. A sense of uniqueness and *grandeur* as well as strong notions of sovereignty would come to make up the French self-image. De Gaulle also re-introduced a French *mission civilisatrice* that would spread universal messages of enlightenment and the French revolution over the world (Marcussen et al, 1999: 8f). However this view on the identity of the French nation-State would change again as new challenges arose in the international

⁷ This is also one of the reasons for why I find it appropriate to place the French President’s and French national elite views under the same label, *French views*.

arena. In the 1970s, French conceptions of national identity became more and more connected to the question of the European project. It became evident that in time the French nation-state identity would become incompatible with the process of European integration, and that a Europeanization of French nation-state identity was necessary (Marcussen, 1999: 9f).

As a founding member of the European Economic Community (EEC), France was perceived as an especially important carrier of the responsibility of constructing a European project, and in the development of a collective European identity. In moving beyond the view of Europe as a commercial arena, Europe would carry a political identity as well as a defense identity. For French politicians there was no contradiction in being pro-European and patriotic at the same time. In embracing a European identity, one would rather than eliminate the French identity, strengthen it. French ideas about Europe were, as Aggestam puts it, conceived in “both a broader and more narrow sense”. These two views would collide when the question of an enlargement of the already existing Union became an issue. At the same time as France pushed for enlargement that would include the members of the post-Cold War world, it was hard for them to hide their negative view on losing hold of the original European project that they themselves had contributed to initiating (2004: 162ff).

The French conceptions of European identity are based on two elements, both culturally and strategically anchored. European identity is a cultural idea about what Europe is and what it should become, a human community (*l'Europe humaine*) where the basic values are liberty and humanism (Aggestam, 2004: 164). Geography and history define Europe, and in applying the principles, of democracy and humanity, Europe would become a living body (Dumas in Aggestam, 2004: 164). It is not enough then for the French to regard Europe as only an economic common market, a collective history and identity is necessary for a real Europe to develop. Secondly, for France, underpinning a European identity is also the reconciliation between France and Germany after the war. The Franco-German relationship is an essential ingredient in the construction of the European project. In proceeding with the European integration project, one was fortifying peace and preventing history from repeating itself. Germany and France were perceived as the two countries that would keep the integration process moving forward (Ibid: 166).

4 Explaining the French View on Turkish Accession – An Analysis

This chapter analyzes the Turkish EU-membership from a French perspective through an exploration of the arguments and motivations used in the French debate. It also contains an analysis of the motives behind the French objection to Turkish EU-membership. In dividing the motives into two separate categories, and exploring both motives related to ‘traditional’ views on European integration and motives relating to more ‘ideational’ views as explained in previous chapters, I aim to trace the motives for the French opposition. The division made is the following:

- 1) the extent to which the French views on Turkish EU-membership are a function of political competition and public opinion (*domestic constraints*).
- 2) the extent to which the French views on Turkish EU-membership are a function of specific ideas of French and European identity and notions of the French nation-state (*ideational constraints*).

4.1 France and Turkish EU-membership

Turkey first applied for EC-membership in 1987, but was to be granted the status of a membership candidate only in 1999 (Karlsson, 2008: 84f). In October 2005, membership negotiations could begin, in spite of strong objections from certain member-countries. (Ibid: 89). Negotiations have, however, been slow and only six chapters out of the 35 chapters of the EU-acquis have so far been opened (Economist, 130208).

The arguments and motivations used in the French debate against Turkish accession are manifold and not always very coherent from the observer’s point of view. Turkey does not geographically belong to Europe, allowing Turkey into the EU would threaten the completion of the integration project, Turkish culture and history are not compatible with European culture, etc. The former French President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing even put it this way in an interview in *Le Monde* in November 2002: including Turkey in the EU would be ”the end of the European Union”. D’Estaing argued in the interview that due to its culture and history as well as its geographical location, Turkey does not qualify as a European country. Including Turkey would moreover cause Morocco to want to renew its, already once refused, application to join the EU, and in supporting Turkish

membership one would also be supporting a vision of Europe as a trading area rather than a federal State. Supporters of Turkish membership, in the view of Giscard d'Estaing, were the real opponents of the EU (d'Estaing cited in Wimmel, 2006: 9f).

President Sarkozy has cited both threats to European identity and threats to security, basing his arguments both on political and cultural grounds, when arguing against Turkish membership. One argument has been that, in addition to the country's own "integration problem with Muslims", Europe would be confronted with "a Hezbollah problem, a Hamas problem, and a Kurdish problem as well" (Nicolas Sarkozy cited in Bowen, 2007: 11). In September 2006, however, Sarkozy gave a speech to the Friends of Europe Foundation in Brussels, an EU-think tank, in which he cited only political reasons for his opposition to Turkey's ascension to EU membership. He, at that time, gave reference to the fact that Turkey had not been able to ratify and implement the Ankara Protocol, a protocol that does not discuss matters of civilization and identity, but talks of travel and customs issues (Ibid: 12).

One of President Sarkozy's election pledges, cited in the introduction of this essay, is to keep Turkey out of the EU. At present date, more than a year later, the French Government is still voting against Turkish accession (Barysch, 2007: 1), and more than three quarters of the French population are opposed to a membership according to the polls⁸. The French view appears steadfast and not likely to change anytime soon. President Sarkozy says that he is willing to let negotiations with Ankara continue, as long as they are restricted to only the chapters that would enable the privileged partnership, not a full membership. This implies that France will most probably go on hindering "talks on economic and monetary union, regional policy, agriculture, EU budgetary provisions and institutions" (Economist, 230208).

The image is clear; objections in France to Turkish EU-membership are to be found in every layer of French society, with the president, the government, the media and the public. Then why is this? Why is France's view contradictory to the general view in the EU on Turkish membership? In using the *motivations* in the French Turkey-debate presented in this section, I will now trace the underlying *motives*.

4.2 Domestic Constraints on French European Policy

⁸ The share of the EU-population that opposes Turkish EU membership has exceeded 50 percent since 2005. In France, Germany and Austria, three quarters of the population say that they are against the admission. Only 16 percent of French voters in June 2007 said that they backed Turkish accession (Barysch, 2007: 1).

As explained in the theory chapter, both ‘traditional’ interpretations of the process of European integration described in this essay, liberal intergovernmentalism and neo-functionalism, regard the interests of domestic groups as the main forces that push the integration process forward and form the strategies of the member-countries. In this view, domestic constraints and constituencies, which have become more and more critical of the European integration project, matter when French presidents are making European foreign policy. The dilemma of balancing domestic policy concerns with foreign policy objectives, and sovereignty with increased regional cooperation, can also in this view be regarded as prevalent with respect to the future shape of the EU and future enlargements. To what extent is the French view on the Turkey question then a function of political competition or a response to public opinion?

Domestic constraints on French policy when it comes to the question of Turkish EU-membership are, in this study, primarily connected to public policy and party political considerations in relation to questions of immigration and integration. Normally when speaking about domestic interests and the interest-group model, it is the economic interests (Parsons, 2000: 47) that are being referred to.

The politicization of the immigration question in France is to a great extent tied to the advances of the far-right political party National Front (FN) that was first created in 1972. Since 1986 FN has been winning between 10 and 15 per cent of the votes in the presidential elections, and the increased presence of the far-right has had visible effect on French politics. The centre right’s, Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) strategy was to compete with the far-right in terms of discourse and policy, but without being associated with Le Pen and right-extremist immigration policy. The UMP has therefore, since then, in their discourse linked problems of cultural decline and rising crime levels with the immigration question (Marthaler, 2008: 383ff). To be able to compete with the FN and win back votes a shift in French nationality and asylum laws was necessary (Ibid: 385). Nicolas Sarkozy’s discourse on these issues hardened in the period leading up to the 2007 presidential election, and in this he succeeded in winning back a section of the far-right voters (Ibid: 392).

The French no-vote to the EU constitution in 2005 is one example that explains the influence of public opinion and domestic constraints on French foreign policy. Why did the French vote no to the new constitutional treaty? One answer is, according to some analysts, the issue of Turkish EU-membership. Illegal immigration was one of the main concerns of the no-voters (Marthaler, 2008: 389) and in voting no to the new constitutional treaty the French were to a certain extent also voting no to Turkey (Knapp&Wright, 2006: 112). The debate in France regarding the treaty was at the time very much influenced by the parallel ongoing debate on the prospective admission of Turkey. Turkey started its process of admission in 2004 knowing that a full membership would not become a reality for at least 10 years. Voting yes to the constitutional treaty was, however, confused by the French with voting yes to full Turkish membership. In reality there was no correlation between these two questions. But since the President at the time, Jacques Chirac, was aware of the public’s opposition to Turkish

membership, he promised that from now on memberships would be conditional of a national referendum. Chirac's decision immediately caused a debate in the National Assembly and objections from the public. The debate stirred by the decision was unique, since not only traditional party boundaries were blurred but the normal French divisions over the question of the future of Europe as well. Jacques Chirac was one of Turkey's strongest advocates at the time, however, the UDF party, normally the most pro-European party but also the party that very strongly held onto Europe's Christian legacy, was a firm objector to Turkish entry. Party divisions were not of great importance, however; as between two-thirds and three-quarters of the French voters were saying at the time that they were ready to vote no to Turkish EU-membership (Ibid: 112f).

In the article "What Europeans think about Turkey and why" (2007), Katinka Barysch, chief economist at the Centre for European Reform (CER), argues that for France, objection to Turkish membership is a question related primarily to the integration of the country's large Muslim immigrant community. Only 400 000 out of France's total Muslim population of 4 million come from Turkey. However, in the view of "the average Frenchman a Turk is an Arab" (Dominique Moïsi, cited in Barysch, 2007: 4). Therefore, for many French voters, riots and violence in French suburbs are reason enough to keep Turkey out of the EU (Barysch, 2008: 4). The French public's opinions on Turkish membership can, in this view, be traced back to concerns about illegal immigration and problems of integration of already existing immigrant groups in France. The French public consequently welcomed the stricter laws of immigration initiated in 2005 and 2006, by then interior minister Nicolas Sarkozy (Marthaler, 2008: 389).

Sarkozy's foreign policy, according to Sally Marthaler, researcher at Sussex University, entails a strategy that demands shifts in policy in order to meet political competition and public opinion (2008: 382). Therefore, according to her, it is most probable that conscious political calculations lay behind Sarkozy's decision to make a rightward shift in the policies and discourse of the UMP in 2005. This included strengthening of the French objection to Turkish membership (Ibid: 389).

The integration process in this view, as I interpret it, reflects the demands of domestic interest groups. Strategies are outlined based on the, by the government, aggregated needs of interest-groups. Functionalist and liberal intergovernmentalist approaches fit well with this view on how the European integration is steered, and member-country strategies outlined.

4.3 Ideational Constraints on French European Policy

As discussed in the theory chapter, in relation to the theory of co-operative hegemony (Pedersen) and the theories of Aggestam and Parsons, not only national interests and State power matter in the field of international politics, but also beliefs, rules and norms play a role when it comes to the morality or legitimacy of political decisions and institutions (Wimmel, 2006: 2). As also mentioned in the

previous chapter, there seems to be a strong relationship between French notions of identity and French foreign policy, especially European policy. Pedersen's theory of co-operative hegemony, as previously explained, departs from realist core assumptions of States as the only actors in the international arena that matter. In explaining the behavior of France in the EU, the theory is appropriate since it explains why a big state like France at all would opt for regional co-operation.

French perceptions of European integration and national collective identity seemed at the beginning of the European project, in the eyes of the French, to fit well with the safeguarding of national sovereignty (Aggestam, 2004: 155). France was, as already discussed in previous chapters, to remain strong and develop its own national identity, but it was to be accomplished through a strong Europe (Bowen, 2007: 8). French embracement of the EU and insistence on continuing the process of European integration can therefore be explained by the fact that in the eyes of the French, their country has become too small and therefore "its mission must be taken over by Europe" (Wæver, 1998: 7). Questions of European integration and enlargement are therefore controversial issues in France, since they include questions about the French role in world politics in a larger perspective.

The end of the cold war was a turning point for France when it came to its views on Europe (Marcussen, et al, 1999: 11). France's awareness of its geopolitical position shifted, and the prospects of future enlargements of the EU, with a larger EU population as consequence, were perceived as worrying. In building Europe as a power, future enlargements would have implications, and the eastward enlargements were making the French cautious of how they would be able to safeguard French interests in the future (Aggestam, 2004: 179). From a realist point of view, the French saw Europe as a multiplier of French national influence in politics on a global scale, but with France transferring more and more sovereignty to European institutions, the French were beginning to worry about their role in the EU. The former Prime Minister under Mitterand, Edouard Balladur, said the following in an article in the newspaper *Le Monde* in 1994:

...the European Union's shift towards northern and eastern Europe, is a development which would make France lose her central geographical position in the European Union. She is today the crossing point and point of equilibrium between the other major States of the Union: Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Spain (citation in Aggestam, 2004: 160).

The successive enlargements of the EU have confronted France with dilution of the European Foreign Policy (EFP). European enlargement in the eyes of French policy makers is not a positive factor for their closest to heart project, the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) as enlargement increases the spectra of diplomatic interests, and the diversity of strategic cultures between the now 27 member-states. The necessity to attain unanimity and consensus increases the risk of paralysis at a European level (Irondelle, 2008: 157). The French vision of the future of the European integration project has in general been one that envisages a strengthening and deepening of the institutions and politics in the EU, not enlargement of the Union. The French therefore fear that making Turkey a

member would put an end to the federalist's dream of a political union. Additionally, the weakening of the French-German axis has decreased France's ability to form and control developments in European integration and the French perceive it as having lost their leadership in the EU. France's ability to continue influence Europe is therefore also seen as reduced with every further enlargement.

Nicolas Véron from the Brussels based think tank Bruegel, is of the opinion that exactly this aspect, the future balance of power in Europe and France's identity as a leading power in the EU, are factors that are not being explicitly mentioned in the French debate, but in reality are very prevalent. Véron believes that French national elite views are that previous enlargements already have weakened the country's role in the EU. Turkey is a country with more than 60 million people, and when the time for enlargement comes it is possible that the Turkish population might have exceeded 90 million (Barysch, 2007: 3). This increase in population implies that Turkey will play a very influential role in the EU. Not only will the center of power in the EU shift east-ward, France's role as a veto-player in the Union will also be marginalized. All these events could pose threats to French conceptions of their nation-identity.

Helen Drake, in her article "France: an EU-member cut down to size", argues that France's appraisal of the German-Franco relationship, EU-institutions etc. are first and foremost the product and reflection of domestic political consensus. However, the question of a prospective Turkish membership is not, according to her. Even the most pro-European advocates in France are generally opposed to Turkish membership. Drake is therefore of the opinion that it is not the question of EU's size alone, referring to the future size of Turkey's population, which is the issue in the French objections to Turkish membership. It is rather the implications for the identity of the EU, and thereby also French national-identity that matter (Drake, 2006: 25f). Different visions of the finality of the European project and the process of European integration, as discussed in the conceptual framework of this essay, play a defining role in shaping France's objection to Turkish membership.

As I interpret it, this more ideational account inspired by the theory of co-operative hegemony, sees the ambiguity in French notions of national and European identity, and the ambiguity in French views on the finality of the European project, as reflecting on French views on further EU-enlargement and the question of Turkey. A vision of an ever-stronger EU, and a federal state as the ultimate goal of the integration process is conflictive with the French reluctance to give up more sovereignty. The country's view on Turkish accession, explained in this way, has its foundations in France's historically based, ambiguous relation to the European project. French perceptions of their role in the EU matter when creating strategies for European integration, and since France to some extent perceives itself as a great power acting out its influence and legacy through the EU, one also perceives including Turkey in the Union as having negative consequences on that influence.

Finally, Marcussen et al. argues that French political elites can, with legitimacy, only promote a European idea that corresponds with notions of French exclusiveness, and does not conflict with France's particular concept of state-

centered republicanism, including the “Europeanization of French exceptionalism” (1999: 20). In having analyzed the French no to Turkish EU-membership in relation to theories discussing the possibility of ideas as the shaping elements of the European integration process, it is clear that Turkish accession can be regarded as an idea that does not correspond with these particular notions of French exclusiveness.

5 Summarizing Conclusions

The final chapter of this essay contains a brief summary and evaluation of the two categories of motives explored in the previous chapter: domestic and ideational constraints on French European policy. Having applied the previously outlined conceptual framework, I will now discuss and draw conclusions concerning what impact these respective motives have had on the French no to Turkish EU-membership.

5.1 Evaluation of Motives

The two categories of motives explored in the previous section both provide explanatory models for why France objects to Turkish membership in the EU. In analyzing these motives in line with the method chosen for this essay, I have tried to evaluate their explanation capacity. A motive analysis is not an altogether simple method to use since motives cannot be observed empirically. Furthermore, as discussed in the method section of this essay, an actor's *motivations* are not necessarily the same as the actor's actual *motives*. Therefore, the previous chapter tried to establish the underlying motives using the motivations as motive indicators, and the conceptual framework as an analytical tool.

5.1.1 Domestic Constraints

In exploring those domestic constraints that influence the French European policy regarding Turkish EU-membership, I have mainly focused on public opinion and political competition, and the connection between a no to Turkish entry and a more hard-line debate on immigration in France. Are strategies of European policy in this matter a response to political competition and public opinion? Is it primarily a question of winning votes from electoral groups supportive of stricter immigration and asylum laws, groups that connect increased problems of immigration and integration with opening up the European borders to Turkey? It is possible that French people relate Turkish accession to their own private fears, such as loss of jobs, increases in international terrorism, increases in crime rates, and threats to national culture, and therefore also support a French policy that is more restrictive to Turkish EU-membership. I have come to the conclusion, after having explored this category of motives, that domestic constraints definitely matter, and interest-group support plays an important role when French politicians are creating European strategy in the question of Turkish accession. The question

at issue is rather whether it is domestic constraints or ideational constraints that matter the most.

5.1.2 Ideational Constraints

In exploring this more structural and ideological category of motives, I have focused on elite perceptions and strategies when it comes to creating French European integration policy. I have come to the conclusion that elite ideas on French and European identity, and views on the finality of the European project matter when France decides to say no to Turkish accession. The study implies that it is possible that the opposition to Turkish membership does not reflect clear domestic demands, and that the opposition instead cuts across regular political divisions and interest-groups, leading to a fragmentation of the domestic pressures at hand. French political leaders have a broad maneuvering-space when creating and pursuing European strategies. I am therefore of the opinion that it is possible that national elites in France have stepped beyond domestic demands, mobilizing support from interest groups only after having chosen a strategy. French national elites decided on objecting to Turkish membership based on a set of historically founded ideas and conceptions on French and European identity. It seems that a specific notion of a collective European identity, in the eyes of the French, lies very close to notions of a French national identity. A threat to the French views of a European identity, as described in the theory chapter, would therefore also pose a threat to the French conceptions of a national identity.

The paradox of the European political system becomes more evident as issues of European integration shift from relatively uncomplicated domains to domains that entail threats to national sovereignty and identity. To France, the question of Turkish EU-membership seems to be such a question. This view implies that the actual motives for a French no to Turkish EU-membership are to be found in the perception of the EU as a tool for French global influence, as well as in French visions of the EU as a fully federal project. Prejudices against Muslims, and fears of increased immigration problems within the French nation, in this account, are not the main factors influencing French policy-making.

5.2 Final Conclusion

The chosen method's weakest point, in my opinion is its inability to generate general conclusions. As discussed in the method section, a motive analysis implies establishing conclusions based on assumptions of reasonability, rather than the establishment of absolute truths or answers. I have, however, tried to establish my conclusions based on the prerequisites that the method prescribes.

As discussed throughout this essay, France has been a forceful promoter of European integration and a supporter of a full federal union for more than 50 years at the same time as it has been the fiercest of defenders of national interests.

On the one hand, the French conception of what Europe is supposed to be is very ambitious in political, social and economic terms. On the other hand, there is a strong French reluctance to accepting the transfers of sovereignty needed if the desired level of European integration is to be obtained. The role that France has played in the EU has been one of initiation and acceleration, but also obstruction. France, as a leading European power, wants to be able to act *through Europe* but not at the expense of reduced national sovereignty. In the French point of view, reduced sovereignty would definitely be one of the consequences of Turkish EU-membership. Once again, is the EU heading towards becoming a European federal State or just a mechanism for trade cooperation? France could probably consider the first option if it would be guaranteed a large scope of influence. This influence could, however, be threatened if the EU becomes too big in terms of member-states. A federation demands a greater cultural and historical similarity amongst its members. So if it is the creation of a United States of Europe that is the final goal for France, the EU must remain relatively homogenous.

My conclusion is therefore, after having examined the two categories of motives, that French pursuits of deepening European integration and, in this case, the no to Turkish EU-membership, are not clear reflections of domestic constraints and interest-group pressure. The motives go beyond domestic demands and are instead representative of the broader historical definition of French interests in the EU of today. The conclusions of this essay therefore suggest a more ideational view on the motives behind European integration in general, and French objections to Turkish membership in specific.

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