

Levon Hovsepyan

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# THE FEARS OF TURKEY: THE SÈVRES SYNDROME



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Manifestations of the "Sèvres Syndrome" in Turkey's  
Socio-Political Discourse

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*Manifestations of the “Sèvres Syndrome” in Turkey’s  
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On the basis of factual material the book attempts to present the manifestations of the “Sèvres syndrome” in Turkey’s socio-political, military and scientific contemporary discourses. In this context the issues relating to psychological stereotypes existing in the social, political environments of that country and theoretical assessments are being touched upon. The book is intended for Turkologists, political scientists and wider circles of readers.

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## Preface

Discussions over challenges facing Turkey, the country's domestic and foreign policy, vision of the state are taking place in Turkey's different socio-political, scientific and analytical circles within the framework of which the fears and phobic perceptions of the Turkish public and political circles are being manifested. In that context the discussions over possible dismemberment of Turkey, violation of integrity and existence of such initiatives by external forces have intensified in different spheres. This phenomenon is referred to as the "*Sèvres syndrome*", "*Sèvres-phobia*"<sup>1</sup> or "*fear of dismemberment*". Such discussions on the state and social levels of Turkey are the result of complex perception of a number of existing issues which, in turn, give birth to conclusions based on worries and phobias and form psychological stereotypes.

What are such assumptions and discussion in the domestic environment of Turkey agreed with? First, the socio-political developments inside the country and the existing issues, like, for instance, the Kurdish issue, secularism-Islam confrontation, crisis of identity, Turkey's development perspective, became a reason of new perceptions and comments. Besides, the unfavorable changes for Turkey noticed in the foreign policy in this or that

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<sup>1</sup> Though the "*Sèvres syndrome*", "*Sèvres-phobia*" terms have received their names from the Treaty of Sèvres, these terms express wider meaning, including the fear of territorial dismemberment, mistrust toward the outside world, worldview based on conspiracy theories and other phobias. Some political circles in Turkey view a number of issues existing in the country in the context of the "*Sèvres syndrome*", like for instance democratization process, issue of fulfillment of rights of ethnic minorities, conduction of reforms in social-political sphere, etc.

way form public mood within the framework of which hostility or manifestations of suspicions toward outside world are becoming apparent.

The discussions about the dismemberment or possible division have two sides – internal and external.

The first one relates to events emerging from domestic situation, agreed with critical developments like the Kurdish issue, secularism-Islam confrontation, crisis of identity. The second side relates to external forces, the policy of which toward Turkey does not coincide to Turkey's interests, is perceived as conspiracy toward the state. The so-called "*conspiracy theories*" have been widely spread which very often explain both domestic and foreign political issues in Turkey.

Such perceptions are influenced by the Kurdish issue and possible creation of the Kurdish state, as well as the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian Question. We may say that the "Sèvres syndrome" mainly has Kurdish and Armenian direction. Though in many cases this phenomenon first of all is being associated with these issues it has deeper nature linked with the policy carried out by the outer role-makers and a number of inner issues in Turkey.

Western and some Turkish specialists have made surveys related mainly to sociological, psychological theoretical sides of the "Sèvres syndrome". The goal of this work is to show the manifestations of the "Sèvres syndrome" in the contemporary discussions ongoing in social-political, scientific and military environments in Turkey, raise the approaches of different circles of Turkey over a number of sensitive issues for the country's security in the light of "Sèvres-phobia". This research has been made on the basis of studying the contemporary Turkish press,

different analytical and scientific surveys, thanks to which it has become possible to present the existence of the “Sèvres syndrome” in different circles of Turkey.

## **Manifestations of the “Sèvres syndrome” in Turkey’s Scientific and Political Discourse**

For having a right idea of the contemporary manifestations of the “Sèvres syndrome”, it is important to refer to the events that took place in the period of downfall of the Ottoman Empire and creation of Turkey’s Republic which in this or that way exist in the core of contemporary discussions over the security of Turkey.

After the declaration of the Republic of Turkey, the so-called “*instinct of self-defense*” initially dominated among the military-political leadership where the security of the country was accomplished mainly in the circle of issues of the territorial integrity and preservation of sovereignty. And these perceptions had their objective reasons, as the Republic of Turkey was founded on the territories “saved” at the cost of wars after the collapse and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. And for a long time Turkey’s political culture was influenced by the issue of “*maintaining the rest*”. In future as well such perceptions continued playing serious role for the country’s political and military authorities, accommodating Turkey’s foreign policy to that must.

The events of Turkey’s past that have maintained their impact on the contemporary discussions and worldview till today dominate among the social-political circles. It first of all relates to the 1916 secret agreement Sykes–Picot between the governments of the United Kingdom and France on territorial dismemberment of the Ottoman Turkey, the Treaty of Sèvres signed on August 10,



1920 and Arbitral Award signed by the President of the United States of America Woodrow Wilson November 22, 1920<sup>2</sup> .

Still during the years of World War I when the downfall of the Ottoman Empire and territorial dismemberment became evident, the Young Turks' leaders were already realizing such outcome and were trying to fight against it by all means, find alternative ways for saving the Ottoman Empire. Member of "İttihat ve Terakki", the Young Turks' Party, Mevlanzade Rifat explained the entrance of Turkey to the Triple Entente with the existence of the program of dismemberment of the Ottoman Turkey by the Entente. According to Rifat's testimonies, on the threshold of the war, during the secret consultations of the Young Turks' committee, the provision that the Entente states had already planned dismemberment of the Ottoman Turkey and the only ally might be Germany was brought forward<sup>3</sup>.

During the years of World Word I Britain and France signed a secret agreement in 1916 on dismemberment of the Ottoman Turkey and division to areas of influence. With the Sykes–Picot secret agreement the Ottoman Turkey was being

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<sup>2</sup> The Arbitral Award of Woodrow Wilson is still a valid and legally obligatory document. It does not have time limitation and its status does not depend on the further fate of the award. International law, particularly Article 81 of the Hague Convention (1907) that summarized and registered the status of arbitral decisions does not intend annulment of the award. According to international law, the parties, by agreeing to submit the dispute to arbitration agree to accept the decision. If one of the parties refuses to implement the decision, it does not affect the validity of the decision. Thus, as far as the arbitration was not submitted only by Armenia and Turkey but other 18 countries, thus the decision is obligatory for all claimants. It is obligatory for the arbitrator – the United States as each official position of the President of the USA is the country's position and the steps emerging from the arbitral award are obligatory for the implementation. See Papian A., Woodrow Wilson's Arbitral Award on the borders between Armenia and Turkey, Azg, 28 December 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Sahakyan T., Painful Treaties, Yerevan 2007, p. 8-21.

deprived of its Asian territories which were passing under the control of Britain and France. The latter presented their plan to Russia which too was to participate in dismemberment. By the way, the notation of Russian Emperor Nicholas II exists on the Sykes-Picot Agreement<sup>4</sup>.

As to the Treaty of Sèvres, which was not brought to life, today it is being perceived in Turkey as a “hidden tool” which may be pulled out by foreign forces at any convenient moment. Such perceptions exist among social as well as political, scientific and military circles.

Turkey that “escaped” from the Treaty of Sèvres faced the danger of losing territories after World War II when the USSR forwarded territorial demands to Turkey. In particular, in March 1945 the USSR abolished the treaty on Soviet-Turkish friendship signed in 1925 demanding solution of the Black Sea Straits issue as well as regulation of the Soviet-Turkish border. The USSR Ambassador to Ankara Vinogradov noted that Kars and Ardahan were necessary not for the Soviet Russia but the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic as the latter’s territory was very small. In 1945-1946 the Armenian Question, the territorial demands presented by the USSR were transferred from the political agenda of the two countries to the international arena – to the negotiation process of Great powers<sup>5</sup>.

In 1975 Turkish “Hürriyet” newspaper, referring to the situation created during that period, came to the opinion that the Turkish government realized the senselessness of disputes with the USSR, and the inevitability of territorial concessions.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 22-35.

<sup>5</sup> Melkonyan K., Soviet-Turkish Relations in 1945-1947, the issue of the Black Sea Straits and the Armenian Question, Yerevan 2009, p. 4-9.

According to the newspaper, in conditions of absence of assistance from the USA and Britain, Turkey had been forced to lose its eastern – historic Armenian territories<sup>6</sup>. The Turkish newspapers of that period were writing about the issue of Turkey’s territorial integrity, expressing anti-Armenian, anti-Soviet ideas.

Turkey was realizing the seriousness of the situation and relying on Britain and USA’s assistance managed to neutralize the territorial demands forwarded by the USSR. The USSR seemed to be resolute in its steps and the historic justice seemed to be going to be restored, but the soviet government yielded to Turkey which was cooperating with the western forces.

In their studies still in 1960-70s Turkish historians and political analysts were denying the existence of the Armenian Question, trying to ground that it is not the issue of Armenians but had been “made up” by the diplomacy of the great European powers to interfere and influence on the affairs of the Ottoman Empire. For instance, Turkish authors M. Hocaoglu and H. Gursel were tying the creation of the Armenian Question with the diplomatic efforts of Britain and Russia, who had territorial ambitions toward the Ottoman Empire<sup>7</sup>.

In contemporary Turkish social-political and scientific discussions the stereotype approaches of discussing and commenting state and social, foreign political issues in the context of conspiracies are being more evidently manifested.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>7</sup> Новая история Армении в трудах современных зарубежных авторов. НАН Армении. Ин-т востоковедения, Редкол.: Р. Саакян и др., Ер. 1993, с.14, 53.

According to one of the 2005 publications of professor at the Department of Economics of Istanbul University Erol Manisali, the USA and the EU were making efforts to violate the territorial integrity of Turkey, establish federal type of state, eliminate the whole philosophy and values of the establishment of the Turkish Republic, and the Armenian Question and the Kurdish issue “serve” that purpose. The West supports the Kurdish terrorism in Turkey aimed at reviewing the Treaty of Lausanne which divides the South-Eastern Anatolia from Turkey<sup>8</sup> (*Anatolia concept was artificially spread in the Armenian Highland as well within the framework of Turkification, nationalist policy. In geographical respect the Armenian Highland does not correspond to the main territory of Anatolia. The Anatolian plateau is the central part of Asia Minor peninsula wedged between the Pontic and Tauros mountain ranges from the Armenian Highland to west. Artificially circulated territory of Western Anatolia engages the Armenian Highland. Starting from 1920 the territory of Western Armenia started to be called Eastern Anatolia*)<sup>9</sup>.

In another publication Manisali, reminding about the dismemberment map of Turkey by the Treaty of Sèvres, noted that if previously Europe had tried to do it with the usage of force, currently the principles of implementation have changed, and Turkey is gradually appearing in “secret occupation”<sup>10</sup>. Another Turkish professor Çetin Yetkin in his “Sèvres Revives Again”

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<sup>8</sup> Manisalı Erol, Neden Lozan?, 25.07.2005, <http://www.acikistihbarat.com/Haberler.asp?haber=3438>. To note, E. Manisali was arrested April 2009 connected with “Ergenekon” terrorist organization case. Erol Manisalı tutuklandı, Cumhuriyet, 17 Nisan 2009

<sup>9</sup> Ayvazyan A., Western Armenia vs Eastern Anatolia, <http://www.hayq.org/upload/files/aa-EO4.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Manisalı Erol, AB Muhipleri’nin Sevr Rüyası mı?, Cumhuriyet, 10.01.2003.

article writes that after the Treaty of Sèvres had become a reality Kurdish and Armenian states would have been created in the Ottoman territory, and Izmir with its nearby territory would have been given to Greece. “The imperialists are waiting for a convenient moment to bring into life the Sèvres provisions and will do what they want as they have not forgotten about the plans of dividing Turkey. In short, the doors of Sèvres opened again”<sup>11</sup>.

In 2006 at the discussion dedicated to the 125<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary of Atatürk Turkish Professor Ahmet Saltık, speaking about the issues Turkey was facing, referred to the Treaty of Sèvres, noting that within the framework of the “Greater Middle East” program the USA reshapes the political map of the region and in this case Turkey cannot avoid such fate. According to him, “Sèvres is gradually becoming more viable and is being directed toward the country’s dismemberment and division”<sup>12</sup>. Professor of Tunceli University, doctor of political science Ali Kemal Ozcan says the USA is not interested in peace-loving Kurdistan Worker’s Party, known as PKK, but it strives to keep viable the fighting PKK and by isolating its leader Öcalan wishes to form a closer line reaching dismemberment of Turkey through it<sup>13</sup>.

Head of the Chair of Economics of Turkey’s Erciyes University, doctor, professor Cihan Dura in his 2003 publication expressed conviction that Turkey again stands in front of the

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<sup>11</sup> Tarih Bilmenin Önemi ve Çetin Yetkin’in Yazısı, “SEVR YENİDEN YAŞANIYOR”, <http://cahitalptekin.wordpress.com/2009/09/22/tarih-bilmenin-onemi-ve-cetin-yetkinin-yazisi-%e2%80%9csevr-yeniden-yasaniyor%e2%80%9d/>

<sup>12</sup> Prof. Dr. Ahmet Saltık, Sevr Taksit Taksit Uygulanıyor, <http://www.corluhaber.com>, 11.12.2006.

<sup>13</sup> “ABD, Türkiye’yi Iraklaştırma çabasında”, [http://www.tempodergisi.com.tr/toplum\\_politika/08687/](http://www.tempodergisi.com.tr/toplum_politika/08687/), 09.08.2005.

threat of dismemberment and territorial division. The dismemberment program consists of 3 steps supposing creation of Armenian, Kurdish and Pontic states. According to him, the USA, considered “strategic ally” of Turkey, stands behind these initiatives and programs. In their publications the Turkish professor and other authors bring forward the Treaty of Sèvres, W. Wilson’s Arbitral Award and Europe’s demand of reforms in the Ottoman Turkey as historic proof of initiatives of the West<sup>14</sup>. Ibrahim Demir, who came forth with a speech at Antalya’s center of intellectuals, referring to the Turkish-American relations, noted, “The USA is playing games on Turkey and the West has not rejected the Treaty of Sèvres at all”<sup>15</sup>.

Such statements have also been made by Turkish political figures who accused western countries of assisting the Kurdish terrorism. In particular, in one of his speeches in February 2008 leader of the “Felicity Party” (“*Saadet*”) Recai Kutan, commenting on the rise of the PKK and the armament they acquired, noted that for many years the USA, the EU and Israel assisted this Kurdish organization<sup>16</sup>. In this context, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan too did not stand aside and without clearly specifying voiced accusations in the address of German benevolent funds operating in the territory of Turkey,

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<sup>14</sup> ABD Türkiye’yi bölmeye hazırlanıyor,  
<http://www.turksolu.org/35/dura35.htm>, 21.07.2003.

<sup>15</sup> Batı'nın gönlü hala Sevr'de',  
<http://www.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2005/02/23/akdeniz/akdeniz2.html>.

<sup>16</sup> Batılı ülkeler PKK'ya destek veriyor, 25 Şubat 2008,  
<http://www.saadet.org.tr/haber/batili-ulkeler-pkky-a-destek-veriyor>.

noting that they indirectly finance the PKK<sup>17</sup>. The official Ankara very often accused the European countries for allowing free movement of members of the PKK in their territories and existence of different funds assisting them<sup>18</sup>. For many years the Turkish authorities have been voicing accusations addressed to both a number of European countries and its neighbors, without clear facts and grounds. Such accusations were particularly addressed to those European countries where Kurdish communities exist. Any proposal connected with the rights of the Kurdish population in Turkey forwarded by the European countries and different organizations, voicing of the Kurdish issue especially by nationalists is viewed as encroachment on Turkey's security and territorial integrity, considering it as a "source in the hands of Europe for territorial dismemberment of Turkey."

According to some political circles of Turkey, when the EU voiced the necessity of making reforms in the country or a document was adopted which did not correspond to the political interests of that country, it was being associated and compared with the Treaty of Sèvres. For instance, during the criticism of the Turkey's EU membership document in 2000 speaker of the Turkish parliament, representative of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) Omer Izgi compared that document with the Treaty of Sèvres, noting that "if the Treaty of Sèvres viewed only Hakkâri and Northern Iraq as Kurdistan, this document views the

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<sup>17</sup> Erdoğan targets two German funds in PKK support remarks, report says, [http://www.todayzaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?load=detay&newsId=258695&link=258695](http://www.todayzaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&newsId=258695&link=258695).

<sup>18</sup> Erdogan: German charity helps PKK, [http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/Special/2011/10/04/Erdogan-German-charity-helps-PKK/UPI-65411317724740/](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2011/10/04/Erdogan-German-charity-helps-PKK/UPI-65411317724740/).

whole Southeastern Anatolia”<sup>19</sup>. In 2004 when the main negotiations over Turkey’s membership to the EU did not start yet, rector of the Turkish “Republic” (*Cumhuriyet*) University Mehmet Bakır stated that in the last steps of accession to the EU Turkey is being forwarded demands that are harmful from the point of view of territorial integrity of the country and national state, in other words, “Turkey is being compelled a new Sèvres”<sup>20</sup>. Deputy chairman of the Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi*) Şevket Kazan in one of his press conferences in 2004 noted that Sèvres “revives”, the EU takes Turkey toward the Treaty of Sèvres and will not accept Turkey, as the EU is just a Christian club and Turkey is a Muslim country<sup>21</sup>. Another representative of the same party, criticizing the activity of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the increase of Turkey’s state debt, noted that some well-known forces, particularly the USA and the EU want to bring into life Sèvres subjecting Turkey to territorial dismemberment. According to him, it is being done not only against Turkey but all Muslim countries<sup>22</sup>. Being representatives of pro-Muslim political forces, of course, the accent was being made on the religious factor showing the confrontation of Christianity and Islam which is considered the main obstacle to Turkey’s membership to the EU. In different social-political circles of Turkey, where the impact of religious factor is big, the

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<sup>19</sup> Sevr'den beter,

<http://www.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2000/11/10/guncel/guncel1.html>.

<sup>20</sup> CÜ Senatosu: Sevr dayatılıyor, <http://www.haberpan.com/cu-senatosu-sevr-dayatiliyor-haberi/>, 16.12.2004.

<sup>21</sup> Şevket Kazan'a göre Sevr diriliyor, <http://www.haber7.com>, 18.12.2004.

<sup>22</sup> SP'li Karamollaoğlu'ndan Sevr uyarısı, <http://www.haberpan.com/mhp-referandumda-sevri-de-gordu/>, 22.05.2005.



existing process in the EU-Turkey relations is viewed from that standpoint.

In February 2005 in Strasburg at the Turkey-EU joint parliamentary sitting French parliamentarian Jacques Toubon stated that Turkey should recognize the Treaty of Sèvres. This statement gave birth to new discussions in Turkey. The Turkish “Cumhuriyet” newspaper started publishing comments and discussions over the Treaty of Sèvres. In particular, in the March 23 2005 issue the article of Meriç Velidedeoğlu was published entitled “Newly Inflaming Sèvres” (“*Yeniden Ateşlenen Sevr*”) which referred to the existence of the “Sèvres syndrome”<sup>23</sup>. In the August 10 issue of the same newspaper the author of the article wrote that though 85 years passed from signing of the Treaty of Sèvres its place is still being maintained in the vision of the West over Turkey<sup>24</sup>.

Still in 1987 when the European Parliament adopted “*Resolution on a political solution to the Armenian question*”<sup>25</sup> it caused serious turmoil in the political system of Turkey. Even the ruling circles made sharp speeches and discussions. President of Turkey Kenan Evren accepted this Resolution as “conspiracy against Turkish state”. With his statement in Sivas (*Sebastia*) he accused Europe, noting that “The expectations of external forces are to eliminate Turkey, divide and dismember it, and these

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<sup>23</sup> Velidedeoğlu Meriç, *Yeniden Ateşlenen Sevr...*, Cumhuriyet, 25.03.2005.

<sup>24</sup> Velidedeoğlu Meriç, 85 yıldır dayatılmaya çalışılan anlaşma, Cumhuriyet, 10.08.2005.

<sup>25</sup> Resolution on a political solution to the Armenian question, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/euro/pcc/aag/pcc\\_meeting/resolutions/1987\\_07\\_20.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/euro/pcc/aag/pcc_meeting/resolutions/1987_07_20.pdf).

intentions continued for centuries and continue now as well”<sup>26</sup>. Accusing Europe and NATO of betrayal, he noted, “Other demands will follow this decision, after a while they will say Armenia was located in Eastern regions and demand returning these territories to Armenians.” The inner-Turkish discussions were of quite sharp nature and for the first time Turkish President asked the public to review Turkey’s membership to NATO. Enver particularly stated the following, “It is regrettable, that those consolidated in the alliance for maintaining own territories, strive to take Turkey’s territories and give them to others. What an alliance is it and is it the reason why we have become NATO’s member? We have not received such demand even from Warsaw Pact .., but we receive it from our ally. There cannot be such an ally”<sup>27</sup>.

Former diplomat and Minister of State in early 1990s Kamran Inan in an interview to “Cumhuriyet” newspaper, commenting on the Turkey’s policy of membership to the EU and the position of Europe in this issue, noted, “There are two legally important documents for Turkey. The first one is the Treaty of Lausanne that relates to the creation of Turkey’s Republic, and the other is the Montreux Convention that supplements the former. Currently the issue of making changes in them is on the agenda of Europe. Changing the Montreux Convention restricts Turkey’s influence in Straits and with the changes in the Treaty of Lausanne Turkey will be divided with the principle of ethnic

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<sup>26</sup> Laçiner Sedat, Türkiye-Avrupa İlişkilerinde Ermeni Sorunun Etkisi (1980ler), 12 Haziran 2009, <http://www.usakgundem.com/ders-notu/4/t%C3%BCrkiye-avrupa-%C4%B0li%C5%9Fkilerinde-ermeni-sorunun-etkisi-1980ler-.html>.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

division becoming a federal state. Today Sèvres is being slowly applied and it is the goal of Europe”<sup>28</sup>.

Within the framework of normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations, very often in the discussions in Turkey questions were brought forward relating to the issues of territorial integrity of Turkey, possibility of territorial demands by Armenia or the necessity of forwarding a condition by Turkey to Armenia of officially rejecting them. Very often many issues over Armenian thematic in Turkey are being commented from the point of view of “Sèvres syndrome” bringing to the forefront the territorial issues and Turkey’s challenges. In this context we might view the statement of the head of “Organization for Fighting Against Baseless Armenian Allegations” (ASIMED) Savaş Eğilmez that, “The Armenians are trying to always keep the issue of territorial demands toward Turkey on scientific, political and public agenda and take territories stretching from eastern regions of Anatolia to Adana and with that aim start undertaking measures for acquiring Turkish citizenship.” According to him, it is one of the core points of strategy of Armenia and Armenian Diaspora for which the PKK is being used<sup>29</sup>. On October 22, 2009 while presenting the protocols on the normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations at the Turkish parliament, Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoğlu referred also to the issue of territorial demands, noting that “Neither Armenia, nor any other country will dare to present territorial demands to Turkey”<sup>30</sup>. The

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<sup>28</sup> Sarıoğlu Bülent, “Sevr taksit taksit uygulamaya sokuldu”, Cumhuriyet, 14.12.2004.

<sup>29</sup> Ermeniler Anadolu’ya dönüş planı yapıyor, <http://haber.mynet.com/detay/guncel/ermeniler-anadoluya-donus-planı-yapıyor/550547>.

<sup>30</sup> Kimse Türkiye’den toprak talep etmeye cüret edemez, Star, 22.10.2009.

issue of territorial claims has become a subject of discussion at the highest political arena in connection with which the Foreign Minister of Turkey made such statement. In reality, in some ruling circles of Turkey the discussions of territorial claims were partially connected with the syndrome of phobia that is summed up in the psychological complex of continuous conspiracy against the Turkish state in general.

Chairwoman of the Kemalist Thought Association (ADD) Tansel Çölaşan at an event organized in April 2011 in the Turkish province of Bilecik urged the Turkish community to get prepared for the “second liberation war” to save the country from oncoming danger – territorial dismemberment. Drawing parallels with the historical past, she likened the present period with the period of downfall of the Ottoman Empire alarming about the dismemberment and dividing of the Turkish state. According to her, Turkey is facing the issues of the Armenian Question and the Kurdish issue, and the Turkish state moves to territorial dismemberment, thus it is necessary to start new liberation war<sup>31</sup>. In July 2011 Mehmet Siyam Kesimođlu, parliamentarian of the oppositional Republican People's Party (CHP), stated in his speech that now too Turkey faces the danger of dismemberment. According to him, “after throwing the Treaty of Sèvres – death decree of Turkish nation – into the garbage can of history,” after 88 years of signing of the Treaty of Lausanne that recognized Turkey’s independence and borders, Turkey still faces the challenge of dismemberment. This challenge clearly comes from the so-called policy of reforms implemented by the Justice and

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<sup>31</sup> Çölaşan'dan 'savařa hazırlanın' çağırısı,  
<http://www.haber7.com/haber/20110404/Colasandan-savasa-hazirlanin-cagrisi.php>.

Development Party (AKP), negotiations with the PKK leader Öcalan, growing terrorism and statements of the Kurdish democratic autonomy<sup>32</sup>.

Actually, the manifestations of the “Sèvres syndrome” exist in political and scientific circles and though such perceptions are mostly spread in the pro-nationalistic political and scientific circles, such approaches are becoming more widespread engaging specialists and circles belonging to different political streams. Very often issues on Armenian thematic in Turkey like for instance the process of international recognition of the Armenian Genocide, claims, are being commented from the viewpoint of “Sèvres syndrome” pushing the conspiracy argumentations to the forefront. As a rooted psychological complex, “Sèvres syndrome” very often turns into policy outlining both real beliefs of some political circles and manipulations over them.

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<sup>32</sup> 88’inci yılda bölünme tehlikesi, 25.07.2011,  
<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/18330649.asp?gid=386>.

## **Manifestations of the “Sèvres syndrome” Among Military**

The concept of national security in Turkey traditionally referred to the combating of dangers to state sovereignty and territorial integrity and national unity, preservation of ideological system of values. The security in Turkey has been set from military positions and had a “military-focused” approach. The security was set up by the military elite and it was implementing the security policy and the civilian authorities were just forced to accept the “agenda” set by the military. And the existence and circulation of the “Sèvres syndrome” as a component of security discourse was agreed with the establishment of “agenda” by the military authorities. According to a Turkish researcher Pinar Bilgin, the security perceptions of Turkish military were traditionally established on the “fear of loss of territories and abandonment of the country,” and such perception became more vivid particularly after the end of the Cold War<sup>33</sup>.

In 1990s the developments and the situation in Turkey deepened the worry of dismemberment and territorial division. The ruling circles of Turkey were deeply convinced that both the western countries and the direct neighbors of Turkey were making steps for the territorial dismemberment and bringing the Treaty of Sèvres on the agenda again, and in this pre-context started voicing

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<sup>33</sup> Bilgin Pinar, Turkey’s changing security discourses: The challenge of globalisation, *European Journal of Political Research* 44, 2005, p. 185.

speeches and statements. Such approaches were widely circulated in press and public discussions<sup>34</sup>.

The collapse of the USSR and the geopolitical developments brought forward by the Cold War caused radical changes of perceptions of challenges in Turkey. After the end of the Cold War Turkey's military-political circles faced the necessity of reviewing and clarifying the strategy of the foreign, security and defense policies. The geopolitical changes and developments that launched with the end of the Cold War made Turkey carefully and consecutively clarify the priorities of international and regional, security and defense policies and the new challenges. The challenges and threats to Turkey's security changed<sup>35</sup>. The Turkey's political and military circles worried that with the end of the Cold War Turkey would lose its strategic significance for the West and the USA and would appear in front of the threat of territorial isolation. Turkey's concern was that its direct neighbors might perceive it with suspicious or even hostility. Together with assessments and perceptions of challenges and risks coming from the region, Turkey's General Staff of the Armed Forces was viewing the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the country, security task in the multi-front defense<sup>36</sup>. Not being "strategic barricade" between two force systems after the end of the Cold War any more, Turkey instead "got tension hearths and hot points immediately near its border that were viewed as challenges directed toward the security of that

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<sup>34</sup> Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt 2 (1980-2001), Ed. B. Oran, 2001, s. 235-236.

<sup>35</sup> Larrabee F. Stephen, Turkey as a US Security Partner, RAND Corporation 2008, p. 3.

<sup>36</sup> Hickok Robert Michael, Hegemon Rising: The Gap Between Turkish Strategy and Military Modernization, The Eurasian Politician-Issue 3 (February 2001).

country.” During the post-Cold war period, until the end of 1990s the traditional “fear of loss of territories and Turkey’s refusal” was dominating in the country which was the inseparable part of republican Turkey’s security discourse<sup>37</sup>. In 1990s Turkish military authorities were viewing Russia, Greece, Iraq, Iran and Syria as main threats to Turkey stemming from the territorial ambitions of these countries and their military abilities to focus military forces on the Turkish border<sup>38</sup>. Former assistant secretary of the Turkish Foreign Affairs Ministry and Ambassador of that country to Washington Şükrü Elekdağ, more probably, voicing the approaches of the military, classified Turkey’s neighbors - Greece and Syria - as countries presenting threat and having territorial claims toward Turkey. The intensive activity of the PKK, the assistance of Greece and Syria to it, the historic legacy of the Ottoman Turkey’s dismemberment deepened more the fear of loss of territories among the Turkish military who were viewing their relations with different countries especially with the West in the light of the “Sèvres syndrome”. The highest military authority viewed the different social disputes from the standpoint of external challenges<sup>39</sup>.

Though in future Turkey took steps toward normalization of relations with neighbors, like with Greece, Syria, Russia, nonetheless, different political, military and social circles still consider these countries “risky” for Turkey’s security. Turkey

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<sup>37</sup> Bilgin, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

<sup>38</sup> Hickok, *op.cit.*

<sup>39</sup> Sandrin Paula, *Turkish Foreign Policy after the End of Cold War: From Securitising to Desecuritising Actor*, <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/research/ContemporaryTurkishStudies/Paper%20PS.pdf>.



first of all views the developments taking place in the neighboring region from the point of view of possible challenge toward it.

The military as well discussed the intention and initiatives of external forces to dismember the Turkish state. In this context in 2007 the words of former Chief of the Turkey's General Staff Doğan Güreş (1990-1994) were very characterizing, "Turkey faces the danger of dismemberment desired by the USA and the EU. Their goal is make Turkey smaller"<sup>40</sup>. In his speech in 2006 on the occasion of assuming post of the Chief of the General Staff of the Republic of Turkey Yaşar Büyükanıt, referring to the existing challenges and issues of Turkey noted, "Though it is argued that Turkey will have to face the Treaty of Sèvres and some circles probably have such hopes and expectations, there is no force and there can be no force in the world that will make Turkey face a new Sèvres"<sup>41</sup>. Almost the same expressions were voiced in February 2007 during his visit to Washington.

Another Turkish military, retired Army General Hurşit Tolon in his "The Dismemberment Treaties during the World War I and Route taking to Sèvres" published in 2004 notes that after losing in the fight for Turkey's independence, the European states temporarily put the Treaty of Sèvres in the "bookcase". Like in past, now and in future too Turkey will have enemies who will seek for an appropriate reason to bring the Treaty of Sèvres to

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<sup>40</sup> Güreş; Hakkari bir gün Barzani'nin olursa, <http://www.haber7.com>, 04.11.2007; ABD-AB, Türkiye'nin bölünmesini istiyor, Milliyet, 04.11.2007.

<sup>41</sup> Büyükanıt görevi devraldı, Sabah, 28.08.2006, Uslu Emrullah, Aytaç Önder, War of Paradigms: The PKK, Europe, and Turkey, Understanding and responding to the terrorism phenomenon: a multi-dimensional perspective, NATO Science for Peace and Security Series E: Human and Societal Dynamics-vol. 21, 2007, IOS press, p.131.

forefront. “Thus, Sèvres is being accommodated to our days”<sup>42</sup>. In 2007 in “Cumhuriyet” University in Sivas at the conference entitled “The Besieged Turkey in Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (Turk. *21 Yüzyılın Başlarında Kuşatılmış Türkiye*) H. Tolon insisted that Turkey is in a crisis situation and in this context the external forces are competing with each other for collapsing Turkey. “Today Turkey is under political, economic and psychological attacks of external forces who want to revive Lausanne and revive Sèvres. To express more clearly – the second Sèvres is being presented”<sup>43</sup>.

In the publications of a number of Turkish high ranking militaries the threats existing over Turkey were being completed in the fear of territorial dismemberment and loss of territories. Turkish General N. Şenoğlu considered that Turkey has the greatest number of external enemies wishing to take “revenge” on Turkey, and General Doğan Bayazıt (1992-1995 Secretary General of Turkey’s National Security Council) noted that the external forces in many cases perceive the existence of strong and powerful Turkey in the region as a challenge and adopted a secret policy of creation of a Kurdish state. In this context the retired General Suat İlhan expressed more sharply, saying that the West wants to reach “what it failed to reach in World War I, i.e. dismemberment of Turkey”<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Insel Ahmet, Milli hassasiyet tercümanları, Radikal, 19.02.2006. The book was published on the basis of his own doctoral thesis. In 2001-2006 H. Tolon was Aegean Army and First Army Commander. In 2008 he was arrested with “Ergenekon” case.

<sup>43</sup> “21 Yüzyılın Başlarında Kuşatılmış Türkiye” konferansı, <http://www.bizimsivas.net/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=3470>, 14.03.2007.

<sup>44</sup> Bilgin, op. cit., p. 183-185.

At the conference organized in Bursa in 2011 the retired Colonel Erdal Sarızeybek noted that “imperialistic games” of the external forces over Turkey for dismembering the country continue. Accusing the western “imperialistic camp’s crusaders” and France, in particular, in its intention to take Anatolia from Turkey, the Turkish military said they did not manage it for thousand of years and now they are trying to reach this result through money and that their only goal is taking Anatolia. “After 90 years these external forces again are bringing forward the myths of creating Armenia and Kurdistan. Those who did not manage to take Anatolia through weapon, now are using terrorism against it”<sup>45</sup>.

Some military circles of Turkey perceived the Treaty of Sèvres as a special trump the external forces are using for getting concessions from Turkey. Furthermore, the periodical mentioning by Turkish military about the threats toward country’s territorial integrity, making them public’s “property” gave an opportunity to the highest commandership of the country by warning about existing challenges maintain their stable role and influence in the social-political processes. We may say that the military is also interested in sowing such perceptions with which it was solving “the issue of ensuring national unity for confronting external enemy.” According to Turkish researcher Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkish military has a determining role in eternalizing “Sèvres-phobia”. The culture of Turkish national security greatly influenced by the military, stresses the mentality and analyses based on “Sèvres

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<sup>45</sup> Emekli Albay Sarızeybek: Kardeş Kavgasından Uzak Durun, <http://www.sondakika.com/haber-emekli-albay-sarizeybek-kardes-kavgasindan-uzak-2669686/>.

syndrome”<sup>46</sup>. Professor of Turkish descent from the U.S. Michigan University Fatma Göcek, studying the existence and viability of the “Sèvres syndrome” notes, “The Republican elite and first of all the militaries developed this idea for the creation of national state and in future turned it to the national security component”<sup>47</sup>.

Viewing the manifestations of the “Sèvres syndrome” among the military, it may be noted that in some way it is being linked with the process of Turkey’s accession to the EU. In particular, as a pre-condition of membership, the EU demanded implementation of reforms which were not unanimously accepted by the Turkish military, and the highest officer staff started viewing the conditions forwarded by the EU as a challenge to the ideological basis and identity of the country. Many times the military has stated that the conditions forwarded by the EU in relation to the human and minority rights hamper the integrity of the country<sup>48</sup>. The military leadership of Turkey treated rather painfully the reforms in the countries that particularly related to minorities, ideological field, etc. In 2006 the Commander of the Turkish Navy Yener Karahanoğlu stated, “Turkish Armed Forces playing a special role in the upgrading of the country will never make concessions for the EU”<sup>49</sup>. In his speeches of the same year Commander of the Turkish Land Forces İlker Başbuğ noted,

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<sup>46</sup> Kirişçi Kemal, Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times, Chaillot Paper, No 92, September 2006, Institute for Security Studies, p. 33, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp092.pdf>.

<sup>47</sup> Gocek Muge Fatma, The Transformation of Turkey: Redefining State and Society from the Ottoman Empire to the Modern Era, 2011, p.99, Sevr Sendromu` nedir ve neden azar?, *Zaman*, 07.07.2009.

<sup>48</sup> Martin Lenore G., Keridis Dimitris, The future of Turkish foreign policy, MIT Press, 2004, p. 120.

<sup>49</sup> Turkish General Challenged the EU, <http://turkishweekly.net>, 03.10.2006.

“There are external and internal threats and projects for creation of tensed situation in the country”<sup>50</sup>. In this context the article published in June 2008 by the Turkish “Taraf” newspaper was quite remarkable: it related to the secret plan of the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces, according to which, a plan had been worked out over the initiatives of the army in the social and political lives. Its goal was formation and orientation of the public opinion in a number of issues which were rather sensitive for the commandship of the army<sup>51</sup>. According to some sources, there was even a “black list” that included a number of well-known people of the country, including President of the country Abdullah Gul and a number of non-governmental organizations. They were accused of getting financial means from different European and American funds wishing territorial dismemberment of Turkey and implementation of their plans inside the country.

Danish professor D. Jung said that many representatives of the Turkish political elite (including the highest officer staff-*auth.*) viewed the problems inside the country from the standpoint of foreign conspiracy, commenting them as steps directed toward the elimination of integrity of the Turkish state<sup>52</sup>. The above mentioned formulation is being more complete with the words of retired General of the Army Edip Başer at the international conference on the Armenian-Turkish relations conducted within the framework of the events dedicated to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of “Atatürk” University in June 2007 in Erzurum. He stated that “the

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<sup>50</sup> Командующий сухопутными ВС: Турция столкнулась с угрозами светским принципам, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/710842.html>.

<sup>51</sup> Genelkurmay`ın Türkiye`yi sarsacak gizli planı... Bugün, 20.06.2008.

<sup>52</sup> Jung Dietrich, The Sèvres Syndrome: Turkish Foreign Policy and its Historical Legacies, [http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives\\_roll/2003\\_07-09/jung\\_sevres/jung\\_sevres.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives_roll/2003_07-09/jung_sevres/jung_sevres.html).

issues in the Armenian-Turkish relations are agreed with the foreign interference and are being used like a pressure against Turkey. No matter what we call it “Sèvres syndrome” or manifestation of vigilance some neighbors, including Armenia, continue being guided with the intention of dismemberment of Turkey”<sup>53</sup>. According to Turkish researchers, though the manifestations of “Sèvres-phobia” are not so contemporary among the whole public, nonetheless the political and in particular, the military elite believes that Europe has a secret agenda on making Turkey face the Treaty of Sèvres. Such like fears come forth especially when Armenian, Kurdish and Cyprian topics are being discussed at negotiations with the EU<sup>54</sup>.

The secret diplomatic telegrams of the U.S. Embassy to Ankara disclosed by Wikileaks examined the situation and orientations in the highest officer staff of Turkey in 2003 and noted that the highest officer staff of Turkey and the General Staff are not homogeneous with their ideological, worldview and geopolitical orientations. Moreover, there were three confronting groups in the Turkish General Staff one of which is being represented by “nationalists” who put under question the necessity of military-political relations with the USA, oppose Turkey’s membership to the EU, distrust the external world and everyone and insist on the necessity of maintenance of Kemalism system<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Chakryan H., “international” conference in Erzurum on Armenian-Turkish relations, Azg, 28.06.2007. From late 1990s till 2002 E. Baser was Commander of the NATO’s Southeastern Allied Land Forces, Deputy Head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Commander of the Second Army.

<sup>54</sup> Uslu, Aytaç, op. cit., p.131.

<sup>55</sup> Genelkurmay’ı üçe ayırmışlar!, <http://www.haberturk.com/gundem/haber/615002-genelkurmayi-uce-ayirmislar>,

In the recent period, the Turkish highest military is not homogeneous any more either in value-ideological or foreign policy orientations. Opposite “camps” have already appeared in the chief officer staff, and the group having extremely negative attitude toward the USA, the EU and the West in general, found place there. The worldview based on the theory of conspiracies among the highest military, and the manifestations of “Sèvres syndrome” are agreed with the circumstance that traditionally in the republican Turkey the military was guiding the social-political processes being more sensitive from the point of view of ensuring security, territorial integrity and national unity. Besides, “psychology of continuous conspiracies” against Turkey was fixed and exaggerated in the social-political life of Turkey by the very military.

## War of Maps

The article of an American Colonel Ralph Peters in “Armed Forces Journal” in June 2006 about the forecasts of the future of the Middle East raised a big noise in Turkey. The article claimed that the current borders of the Middle East are mapped with blood and only their reformations may restore the justice. According to this article and the attached map, Turkey too faces the prospect of dismemberment and an independent Kurdish state will be established on part of its territory<sup>56</sup>.



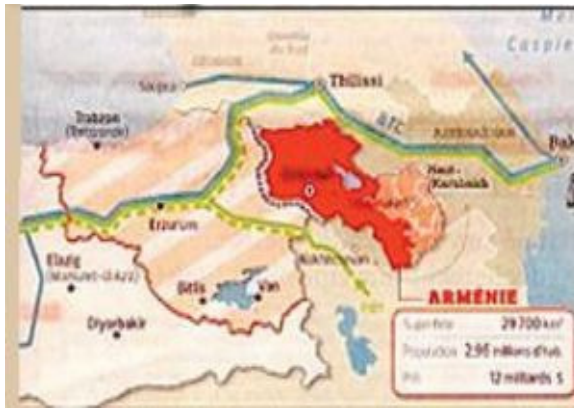
This publication of the American Colonel and the presented map was perceived by some Turkish political and analytical circles as presentation of geopolitical intentions of America in a non-official way. According to one of the publications of “Yeni Şafak”, “even if the publication in the American

<sup>56</sup> Peters Ralph, Blood borders, How a better Middle East would look, <http://www.afji.com/2006/06/1833899>.



military journal does not express the official viewpoint of the U.S. Army, the thoughts of a number of representatives of the U.S. political and military circles that found place in the article are perceived seriously”<sup>57</sup>. After a while, even Turkey’s Worker’s Party organized a special exhibition in Istanbul presenting the maps published by state and non-state establishments of different countries starting from the period of signing the Treaty of Sèvres and the above mentioned publication<sup>58</sup>.

The publication of French “Le Figaro” in October 2009 also received wide response in Turkey. It presented the map of Turkey’s energy corridors formed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and Department of Energy. The borderline of Armenia and Turkey was decided in accordance with the Treaty of Sèvres<sup>59</sup>. The Turkish press and analysts described it as a premeditated step where the border of Big Armenia is outlined.



<sup>57</sup> Aktürk Şener, 'Yeni Ortadoğu' Projesi, Ortadoğu'yu paramparça edecek, Yeni Şafak, 12.08.2006; BİR HARİTADAN ÇIKARTILAN DERSLER, [http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/haber\\_oku.asp?id=2835](http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/haber_oku.asp?id=2835).

<sup>58</sup> 'Türkiye`yi Bölen Haritalar` sergisi, Sabah, 30.08.2006.

<sup>59</sup> Azg, 17.10.2009.

In 2008 in a book prepared as a support manual for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade pupils of Turkish secondary schools, map with the borders of the Treaty of Sèvres was published instead of the geographical map of Turkey evoking a new scandal. It was found out, that in one of such manuals the Treaty of Sèvres and the map were presented, and the printing house reprinted it mistakenly as a geographical map. Turkish “Yeni Çağ” newspaper published the map that found place in the manual<sup>60</sup>.



Even the commandership of the Turkish army came forth in 2009 with a special legislative initiative relating to the publication and printing of maps. It was an attempt to suspend the publication and printing of different maps presenting Turkey’s dismemberment and disintegration. According to Turkish publication, this initiative of the highest commandership of the army was a response step to the frequent appearance of maps showing dismemberment of Turkey, the existence of Armenian

<sup>60</sup> Bakanlıktan Sevr'e onay, Yeniçağ, 11.01.2008.

and Kurdish states in its territory because of which the Armed Forces will conduct oversight<sup>61</sup>.

A “war of maps” launched in Turkey. Turkish political, scientific and analytical societies were engaged in this war. The appearing of the maps picturing possible dismemberment of Turkey created a sharp confrontation reflected in the publication of maps showing its own geopolitical ambitions and nationalist-volume-worshiping ambitions. In particular, in November 2007 Turkish “Güneş” newspaper published a map named “*Broadened Turkey*” which pictured added territories of that country on the account of its neighbor countries. The borders of Turkey outlined in red included not only Iraqi Mosul, Kirkuk regions but all the Aegean Greek Islands, Cyprus, Crete, Rhodes Island, north-eastern regions of Greece and Armenia completely<sup>62</sup>. Such like maps were published on separate pages of press, in different articles and publications.



<sup>61</sup> Türkiye'yi Bölen Haritalara Ordu El Koydu, 07.01.2009, [http://www.kitlecizgisi.com/haber\\_detay.asp?id=100016&uyeyid=0](http://www.kitlecizgisi.com/haber_detay.asp?id=100016&uyeyid=0).

<sup>62</sup> Al sana harita, Güneş, 21.11.2007.

Another such like map was published in the same year by Turkish “Internet Haber” news agency to oppose the appearing of different maps of “dismembered Turkey”<sup>63</sup>.



This map pictures the words that Atatürk told to the Chief of Staff of the United States Army Douglas MacArthur; “With the help of Allah, I will return Mosul, Kirkuk, Aegean islands and Cyprus, Thessaloniki including the whole Western Thrace and include it in the borders of Turkey”<sup>64</sup>. Now too these words are contemporary in some political, military as well as analytical discussions. Kirkuk was included in the “National Pledge” adopted in 1920 which means that it had been planned to be

<sup>63</sup> Bu da yeni Türkiye haritası, <http://www.internethaber.com/bu-da-yeni-turkiye-haritasi--5703y.htm>.

<sup>64</sup> Ekekon Özkan, Atatürk'ün 77 Yıl Önce Antalya'mıza Geliş Nedeni, [http://www.marmarisbulten.com/Haber/ATATURKUN\\_\\_77\\_YIL\\_\\_ONCE\\_\\_ANTALYAMIZA\\_\\_GELIS\\_\\_NEDENI/](http://www.marmarisbulten.com/Haber/ATATURKUN__77_YIL__ONCE__ANTALYAMIZA__GELIS__NEDENI/) 11.03.2008; Genişletilmiş Türkiye" haritası, [www.ihlas.net.tr/Haber/Files/29071843hs7.png](http://www.ihlas.net.tr/Haber/Files/29071843hs7.png).

included in the territory of new Turkey. Like Turkologist A. Shakaryan correctly notes, not having serious military possibilities and favorable geopolitical conditions, Turkish volume-worshipping ambitions toward the Middle East and other directions were temporarily suspended waiting for a convenient time and occasion<sup>65</sup>. In reality, Turkish military-political leadership never stepped back from its aggressive ambitions, just the period and developments did not allow it come true. M. Kemal and other state and military figures of republican Turkey did not reject the Turkish imperialistic programs and were cherishing hopes to carry out programs on restoring the borders of the Ottoman Empire if not completely, at least partially. In these programs they gave a special room to the invasion of Transcaucasian and East Arab countries<sup>66</sup>. For instance, during the years of World War II, Turkish volume-worshipping ambitions were practically applied, another issue is that with Germany's defeat these ambitions vanished. The invasion of the northern part of Cyprus in 1974 by the Turkish forces was the bright prove of it. The military intrusion to Northern Iraq, the invasion of Kirkuk region were in the military plans of Turkey too but the restricting factor – the USA – suspended such opportunity. In early 1990s Turkey's military-political leadership was developing clear plans for military intrusion to Armenia and Georgia and prepared for it on the highest level. In March 1992 during the war in Artsakh, President of Turkey T. Ozal threatened that the Turkish side

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<sup>65</sup> Шакарян А., Турция между Востоком и Западом. Свободный выбор или временный маневр?. Регион и мир, научно-аналитический журнал ИПИ, N. 1, 2010, с. 85.

<sup>66</sup> Hovhannisyan N., Turkey's territorial ambitions toward Arab countries in the new period, Countries and Peoples of the Near and Middle East, Issue 23, Yerevan 2004, p. 160.

would carry out military activities against Armenia and the Commander of the Turkish Land Forces M. Fisunoglu stated that the Turkish forces were ready to invade Armenia. In August 1993 Prime Minister of Turkey T. Çiller applied to the Turkish parliament for mobilizing Armed Forces across the border with Armenia and defend Nakhijevan from “Armenian aggression”. The issue of invasion of Armenia was discussed even at the sitting of the National Security Council of Turkey in October 1993. The Turkey’s explanation of doing it was to be the existence of the Kurdish terrorists in Armenia or the defense of Nakhijevan<sup>67</sup>. In this context the formulation that the foreign policy of the contemporary Turkey starts from the level of maintenance of the country’s territorial integrity and non-dismemberment and in case of possibility reaches to the level of territorial ambitions and adopting a supremacy, that is to say from the priority of self-preservation to general supremacy<sup>68</sup>.

The circulation of different maps picturing Turkey’s dismemberment was perceived by the political, social and analytical circles quite painfully, and they were always commented in the context of external conspiracies against Turkey showing more clearly the manifestations of “Sèvres syndrome”. And as an official instinct different maps showing volume-worshipping ambitions of Turkey were coming to oppose them.

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<sup>67</sup>Chrysanthopolous Leonidas, *Caucasian Chronicles, Nation Building and Diplomacy in Armenia 1993-1994*, USA, 2002, pp. 76-78.

<sup>68</sup>Shakaryan A., *From the Other Side of Ararat: Decoding Turkey*, Yerevan 2011, p. 11.

## **“Sèvres-phobia” in Public Consciousness and Anti-Westernism**

Together with the strengthening of nationalist moods among the Turkish public, the factor of backing the EU membership is becoming weaker, which in general is fitting in the formation of anti-Westernism moods. It is not a coincidence that during the past few years anti-American tendencies have been intensified in Turkey. According to the December 2006 studies of the American “International Republican Institute” (IRI), the Turkish society considered the USA (45%) and France (9%) the worst enemies of the country. Such negative position toward France is first of all agreed with the adoption of bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide by the French parliament as well as with negative position of France toward Turkey’s membership to the EU<sup>69</sup>. The survey of the “Pew Global Center” close to the U.S. Government implemented in summer 2007 found out that the 64% of the Turkish population found that the biggest danger for Turkey in future is the USA. The public opinion in Turkey toward the USA in 2007 was registered as rather unfavorable – 83%, in 2002 it made 54%<sup>70</sup>.

The attitude toward NATO, as essential military-political institute of Turkey’s security, has also changed. In 2006 only the

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<sup>69</sup> Survey of Turkish Public Opinion

November 18, 2006 – December 5, 2006, The International Republican Institute,

<http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2007%20April%2018%20Survey%20of%20Turkish%20Public%20Opinion,%20November%2018--December%205,%202006.pdf>.

<sup>70</sup> Turks Feel Threatened by the US, September 05, 2007, World Public Opinion, <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org>.

44% of the Turkish people found that NATO is essential for Turkey's security unlike the 54% in 2004. Such anti-American tendencies among the people were agreed with the military activities the USA started in Iraq, and neutralization of Turkey in them, "non-constructive" attitude over the Kurdish armed men in the territory of Turkey, as well as with the initiatives of the Congress directed toward the recognition of the Armenian Genocide. In this respect quite characterizing was the speech of Chief of the General Staff of the Republic of Turkey Yaşar Büyükanıt in which he stated that Turkey had national interests in northern Cyprus, that accusations in Armenian Genocide were groundless, that the Americans were not pursuing Kurdish armed men tough enough in Northern Iraq.

Anti-western and anti-imperialistic tendencies are getting serious influence among the youth as well, who at the same time are promoting the development of nationalism. It may be witnessed by the mass events organized by different youth organizations and movements that were mainly of anti-imperialistic nature first of all "targeting" the USA and NATO. According to their understanding, NATO is presenting American imperialism. The feeling of fear of territorial dismemberment exists among them as well<sup>71</sup>. Turkish political analyst M. Perinçek considers that Turkey will live as a state in case it comes out of NATO and refuses from the EU membership and develop

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<sup>71</sup> During the visit of the Secretary General of NATO A.F. Rasmussen in October 2010 Turkish "Youth Unity" movement organized a rally with anti-imperialistic slogans. According to the leader of the movement I. Yuksel, "NATO is a harmful organization. Hasn't it dismembered Yugoslavia, isn't it doing the same in Afghanistan and other regions. This is NATO's mission." See "Долой американский империализм": в Турции протестуют против визита генсека НАТО, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/turkey/1331977.html>.



relations with the Eurasian countries. He too views NATO and first of all the USA as imperialistic force the goal of which is conducting “dirty affairs” in the region, in particular, dismemberment of a number of countries, including Turkey. And the reunification of Cyprus and Big Kurdistan are the steps toward it<sup>72</sup>.

During the recent years part of the highest officer staff of Turkey has formed views and approaches over alternative ways of foreign policy of traditional western direction the basis of which was as counterbalance to the West through developing cooperation with the Eurasian states. In this context, like Turkish researcher I. Dağı correctly notes, the anti-Westernism and anti-Americanism tendencies are becoming more obvious not only in wide circles of the Turkish public but among the military as well. “Anti-Western, anti-imperialistic and anti-globalist ideological flows, at the same time linking with the accentuation of full independence of the country, reached success among the Turkish military”<sup>73</sup>.

It already means that not few think so among the leadership of the Turkish army. And this tendency has become more obvious during the recent years agreed with the developments taking place inside Turkey and outside of it. The negative attitude of the Turkish social-political circles toward the West found its reflection on the highest military of the country,

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<sup>72</sup> M. Perinçek is son of the leader of the Turkey’s Workers’ Party, notorious Doğu Perinçek. He was charged with the denial of the Armenian Genocide in Switzerland. Currently he is engaged in the trial connected with “Ergenekon” terrorist group. Политолог: Турция сохранит государство, если уйдет из НАТО и откажется от ЕС, ИА REGNUM, 24.06.2010.

<sup>73</sup> Dağı İhsan, Understanding anti-Americanism in Turkey, Today’s Zaman, 02 July 2007.

and the approach that traditionally the highest officer staff of Turkey was the bearer of military-politically approaches of the USA and NATO were not so any more. Among the highest commandship, the West, the USA and NATO, in particular, are not viewed as guarantors of Turkey's security, especially in case when they have quite opposite positions over a number of issues. In this case Turkish military started somehow reassessing the existing realities and come forth with own geopolitical and military-political approaches and working style. Furthermore, in conditions of opposite approaches of the West and the USA, in particular, over a number of important issues of Turkey's national security, the Turkish military circles automatically feel distrust and insecurity and have to re-edit geopolitical views and concepts with own approaches, mostly stemming from the interests of the country's national security and their geopolitical ambitions. Thus, in this respect the Turkish military elite as well, unlike the previous times when it had to take into account the strategic interests of the USA or NATO, started thinking and acting more independently. In this respect an essential step has been made when in March 2003 Turkey did not allow NATO to use its territory for the war against Iraq. Though it was a political decision, it was approved in the General Staff which was even a surprise for the U.S. Administration and other establishments. This event was a turning point in the Turkish-American relations and in respect of adopting new concept and new approaches by the Turkish military leadership.

Starting from 2006 the number of EU membership advocates started gradually decreasing reaching 30% in January 2008. It was the lowest figure ever registered in Turkey. Such tendency was agreed with the logic of both foreign and domestic

policies. The statements of the leaders of the EU influential states that Turkey was not yet ready, that it might get a status of privileged partner instead of membership as well as forwarding of preconditions related to the Northern Cyprus and a number of national issues, not tough position toward the Kurdish separatism etc., raised deep disappointment among the Turkish public and created moods and ideas that the EU did not assess it “deservedly”. Besides, the forwarding and adopting bills establishing punishment for the denial of the Armenian Genocide in France and Switzerland faced strict confrontation by the social-political circles of Turkey viewing them as activities humiliating Turkish identity and dignity, that is to say once again proving the incompatibility of the Turkish system of value in the European system. The inclination that Europe does not want fully see Turkey as its part strengthen more among the Turkish public that is why such despair was being compensated by growing nationalism. Together with these factors the reinforcement of Islamist values among the public also has its influence which already makes Europe not attractive.

Growing distrust and suspicion toward Europe and the West in general from time to time is being more brightly manifested in the contemporary social-political mentality and discussions. The stereotype that the West hides programs of dismemberment of the state exists in the social-political life of that country. Essentially, the perception exists that the Treaty of Sèvres may again revive, and the West will be part of it.

According to the polls conducted in December 2006 by the American “International Republican Institute” (IRI) on “*Measurements of Sèvres Syndrome*” the 68% of the people agreed that the West wants to dismember and divide Turkey and

the 57% said the EU's demands are the same as the ones of the Treaty of Sèvres. About 71% said the West helps separatist trends, including the PKK<sup>74</sup>. The surveys of the Turkish public opinion within the framework of the Turkish A&G public research center's "*Conservatism in Turkey*" program showed that the 62% of the people believe in the western programs of Turkey's dismemberment and 52% believe that the reforms implemented for the membership to the EU do not differ from capitulation.

According to the report published by the American research centers in April 2010, about 70% of the Turkish public has negative attitude toward the USA. Director of German Marshall Fund of the United States' office in Ankara Özgür Ünlühisarcıklı explains such moods among the Turkish public with the trends of distrust and suspicion toward foreign countries coming from past. According to him, the security instinct is the priority in the formation of the Turkish public opinion in the foreign policy and in relations with other states. "Turkey saw occupation in World War I. Its territories were occupied, and, moreover, it became a country dismembered among a number of states with the Treaty of Sèvres. And in this context a peculiar Sèvres or Tanzimat syndrome has been formed"<sup>75</sup>.

In January 2011 the American the "Wall Street Journal" published the results of the sociological survey conducted by

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<sup>74</sup> Survey of Turkish Public Opinion November 18, 2006 – December 5, 2006, The International Republican Institute, <http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2007%20April%2018%20Survey%20of%20Turkish%20Public%20Opinion,%20November%2018--December%205,%202006.pdf>.

<sup>75</sup> Ornarlı Barış, 'Türkler Çoğu Ülkeye Olumsuz Bakıyor', 27.04.2010, <http://www1.voanews.com/turkish/news/Turkler-Cogu-Ulkeye-Olumsuz-Bakiyor-92239264.html>.

“Metropol” strategic and public researches center in 31 Turkish vilayets in December 2010. According to them, the 43% of the people mentioned the USA as the greatest threat to Turkey. Head of the same center O. Sancay said this index is the highest they have ever fixed and this continuous tendency is mostly agreed with the Iraqi war and the U.S. policy in that direction, the appearing of resolutions in the U.S. Congress on recognizing the Armenian Genocide and not positive statements made by the Turkish leadership in the address of the USA<sup>76</sup>. According to the polls, the Kurdish issue was viewed as number one issue. According to the 53% of the participants of the polls, Turkey now faces the danger of dismemberment, 52,1% said Kurds will succeed to eventually create a separate state, 59,9% said the PKK is the biggest domestic threat to the security of the country<sup>77</sup>.

According to another public survey published in January 2011 conducted by “Kadir-Has” University in 26 vilayets in Turkey, the 67% of the people mentioned the USA as the main threat to Turkey. And as factors presenting threat to Turkey they noted the PKK and separatism<sup>78</sup>. According to 59,9% of the people the threat of dismemberment still exists for Turkey mainly connected with the Kurdish issue<sup>79</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> Türkler için en büyük tehdit, <http://www.bugun.com.tr/haber-detay/137245-turklerin-en-buyuk-tehdit-algisi-haberi.aspx>, 07.01.2011; Köni Hasan, Turk-Amerikan İlişkileri, Ortak Vizyonlar, Fırsatlar ve Farklılıklar, Stratejik Düşünce, Sayı 1, Aralık 2009, s. 32-33.

<sup>77</sup> Gabrielyan H., Turkey in 2011: Outlines of Prospects, 25.01.2011 [http://noravank.am/arm/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=5323](http://noravank.am/arm/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=5323).

<sup>78</sup> En Büyük Tehdit ABD, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/16736131.asp>, 11.01.2011.

<sup>79</sup> Eser Kürşat, BUNLAR PARANOYA MI?, <http://www.ortadogugazetesi.net/makale.php?id=8280>.

The anti-American tendencies among the Turkish public essentially bear the influence of the psychological complex that the American political approach is not frank toward the Turkish state and at the convenient moment the USA may use such sources which may directly threaten the national security and territorial integrity of the country.

One of the manifestations of the tendencies of growing anti-Americanism among the Turkish public was the “Metal Fırtına” (Metal Storm) novel published by two Turkish authors in 2004. It had an unprecedented success with the volume of sales. Turkish sources say that this book was attentively read in Foreign Affairs Ministry of Turkey and General Staff<sup>80</sup>. It was discussed within the framework of “national security” subject in some educational establishments of Eskişehir. And the students of military and police educational establishments conducted discussions with the authors<sup>81</sup>. According to that book, the developments take to starting military activities by the USA against Turkey and intrusion to Turkey’s territory. After it the USA is trying to bring to life the Treaty of Sèvres – divide Turkey into Armenian and Greek parts. In response to it Turkey signs military treaty with Russia, China and Germany and becomes the winner in the end<sup>82</sup>.

The appearing of the book, in general, may be viewed in the context of deepening anti-American moods. It coincided with

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<sup>80</sup> Sure it's fiction. But many Turks see fact in anti-US novel, The Christian Science Monitor / February 15, 2005, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0215/p01s04-woeu.html>.

<sup>81</sup> "Kitabımız hayal ürünü değil, gerçeğin ta kendisi", Vatan Gazetesi, 17.02.2005 ; Kabine, `Türk- Amerikan Savaşını` okuyor, Sabah, 16.01.2005.

<sup>82</sup> Grigoriadis Ioannis, Friends No More? The Rise of Anti-American Nationalism in Turkey, Middle East Journal, Winter 2010.

the process of mutual distrust in the American-Turkish relations when the Turkish side refused to provide its territory to the USA for intruding into Iraq, and when the American forces arrested militaries of special forces of Turkey, etc.

American expert Z. Baran said this book has “essential significance for understanding the current Turkish mentality”<sup>83</sup>.

The surveys conducted in 2005 by Turkish “ARI” NGO and “Infakto” research organization for finding out anti-American tendencies showed that the anti-Armenian moods are agreed with the policy conducted by the U.S. Government. Founder member of the organization E. Erdogan noted that the USA and the EU have to take into consideration the paranoiac fears and concerns in the security issues. “These are the weakest sides of the Turkish public and if someone plays with these feelings a confrontation and sharp criticism comes forth”<sup>84</sup>.

The study conducted in May 2009 headed by the Professor of Bahçeşehir University Yılmaz Esmer on “Political and Religious Extremism” showed that about 80% of the people in Turkey considered the main aim of the USA and the EU’s policy the weakening of the Turkish state and its dismemberment. With this the deep distrust and feeling of insecurity toward the West and the USA, in particular, is being displayed<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>83</sup> Widmer Ted, Death to the Crusade, September 18, 2005, The New York Times,  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/18/books/review/18widmer.html?pagewanted=1&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/18/books/review/18widmer.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1).

<sup>84</sup> Laughnan Emily, Poll results on 'Anti-American sentiment' in Turkey, 16.02.2006.,  
[http://www.mediabistro.com/portfolios/samples\\_files/yfYOzvAYecAYwF5eYxdMV1wEk.doc](http://www.mediabistro.com/portfolios/samples_files/yfYOzvAYecAYwF5eYxdMV1wEk.doc).

<sup>85</sup> Alpay Ş., ABD ve AB'ye güvensizlik neden?, Zaman, 09.06.2009.

The statements made by the members of the U.S. Administration and different experts that the future of Iraq is creation of three autonomous units - Kurdish autonomy in north, Sunnis' in central regions and Shiites' in southern territories - with the central power in Baghdad was viewed as a direct threat to Turkey's territorial integrity not only by Turkish public circles but by the military-political leadership as well. The statement of representative of the U.S. Administration Joe Biden over the issue found serious confrontation in political circles of Turkey. Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey Egemen Bağış opposing to the statement of Biden noted, "The division with the ethnic, religious or geographical principle in Iraq will be the beginning of the far going division"<sup>86</sup>.

Of course the Turkish military-political leadership has deep concerns that the existence of Kurdish state unit in Iraq threatens with the Kurdish disobedience in its Kurdish-populated south-eastern territories and dismemberment of these territories.

Such ideas are often met in the statements and publications of nationalist parties, retired top militaries and analysts. Leader of Turkey's oppositional Nationalist Movement Party Devlet Bahçeli strictly criticized the "tolerant" policy of the ruling party in the Kurdish issue and stated that Turkey faces the threat of dismemberment. According to the Turkish press, at the meeting with the members of the parliamentary faction Devlet Bahçeli said, "The appearance of foreigners in the national capital, the surrendering in economic structures, absence of

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<sup>86</sup> Eisele Albert, Anti-Americanism growing in Turkey partly because of Iraq war, official says, September 26, 2006, <http://acturca.wordpress.com/2006/09/27/anti-americanism-growing-in-turkey-partly-because-of-iraq-war-official-says/>.



security in social structure and the mess, the lack of adherence to own principles and exploitation in political structure, the rotting of the moral structure and worsening, blackmailing and confrontation in international relations are standing in front of Turkey with all its severity.” “This development displays spiral similarities to the last Ottoman governments that cranked neck to the Treaty of Sèvres and signed Montreux Convention. The current situation is becoming similar to the threats existing in the beginning of past century during the national fight period,” he said. Bahçeli demanded “inquire again” the process of Turkish membership to the EU. “The game we face have been clarified. Through division of inner identities and cultures for the massacre of the national resistance together with the collapse of the social and political structure coming closer to world unions, Turkey, at the same time undergoes process of division of sovereignty inside it. After reaching this unimaginable degree, Turkey, that has not become the reason of much greater destructions and that has not turned to darkness in the end, must immediately question its relations with the EU,” Bahçeli stated<sup>87</sup>. He likened the situation in contemporary Turkey with 1920-1923, noting that Turkey was under provocation, it was standing face to face to the threat of dismemberment and the truth is that “Sèvres is roaring”<sup>88</sup>.

In an interview to Turkish “Vatan” newspaper leader of the Democratic Party of Turkey Hüsametdin Cindoruk, considering the threat of dismemberment as the biggest problem of Turkey, noted that “may be the country for the first time in its

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<sup>87</sup> Akşam, 23.04.2006.

<sup>88</sup> Bahçeli de Sevr Hortluyor Dedi, <http://www.haberpan.com/bahceli-de-sevr-hortluyor-dedi-haberi/>, 22.04.2006.

history is standing in front of the danger of disintegration, territorial division,” which is connected with the Kurdish issue<sup>89</sup>.

In some social and public circles of Turkey the anti-Western moods, distrust toward foreign forces are in their turn, bringing manifestations of growth of nationalism that are even reflected in the demands of reviewing the priorities of the foreign policy of the country and new musts of alternative policy are brought forward. So, with such logic the process of the EU membership was doubted by the late leader of Grand Unity Party, Sivas parliamentarian, Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, considering the Turkic civilization direction more consonant with Turkey’s national interests. And the Turkish former National Security Council Secretary General Tuncer Kılınç was suggesting for the Turkish foreign policy new alternative, eastern direction, according to which Russia, Iran and China might become the core of Turkey’s Eurasian strategy<sup>90</sup>. He called the EU “Christian Club” which as neocolonial force intended to dismember Turkey<sup>91</sup>.

The negative attitude in Turkey toward EU’s membership in the recent period is the result of interior value crisis in the country on one hand, and the deepening suspicion and distrust toward the West on the other, the bright manifestation of which

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<sup>89</sup> Şenocaklı Mine, Türkiye’nin en büyük meselesi bölünme tehdididir!, 25.05.2009, <http://haber.gazetevatan.com/haberprint.asp?Newsid=240027&tarih=&Categoryid=1>.

<sup>90</sup> Kilic Tuncer , Commander of the Third Army of Turkish Armed Forces from 1999-2001 and from 2001-2003 Secretary General of the National Security Council.

<sup>91</sup> Kirişçi, op.cit., p. 36.

was the “Sèvres syndrome” stereotype in social-political discussions.

The Treaty of Sèvres which relates to the territorial issue is perceived by Turkey very painfully. It continues being a certain threat to the territorial integrity of the country. U.S. expert of Turkish descent Ali Reza Bulent said Turkish diplomatic representatives have concrete assignments for decades which relate to the issues connected with the Treaty of Sèvres<sup>92</sup>.

Leader of Islamic Welfare Party (*Refah*) and Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan was defending the necessity of active cooperation of Turkey with Islamic countries, which, according to him, would have given an opportunity to Turkey implement its goal of becoming leader instead of becoming the EU’s servant after membership to the European community. “Becoming member of the EU, abandoning the Islamic countries, means that Turkey will lose its identity and will accept the second Sèvres”<sup>93</sup>. And in future, when the decision of the European parliament was adopted, according to which from January 1996 Turkey was to become member of the European Customs Union, the official newspaper of the Welfare Party likened the essence of the agreement with the consequences of the Treaty of Sèvres and Tanzimat reforms, and the leader of the party Erbakan was urging to start liberation war which had taken place after the Treaty of

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<sup>92</sup> Muradyan I., The Treaty of Sevres: National Issue or International Project, *Iravunk De-Facto*, 11.12.2008.

<sup>93</sup> Bozdağlıoğlu Yücel, *Modernity, Identity and Turkey’s Foreign Policy*, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.10, No. 1, 2008, p. 66.

Sèvres<sup>94</sup>. Erbakan was insisting that the foreign states, supporting Kurds, in reality wanted to re-erect Big Hayk<sup>95</sup>.

Many of the Turkish analysts and political figures were likening the Kurdish issue with the Armenian Question, trying to find an Armenian trace in the Kurdish issue. Still in April 1995 the article in the Turkish newspaper “Zaman” related to the formation of Kurdistan outcast parliament in Hague said that the goal of the gathering was the fight for creation of Big Armenia, the PKK is an organization created from the Armenian springs. There was no Kurdish issue in Turkey, it was the same Armenian Question<sup>96</sup>. An article of Murat Çabas published in Turkish “Giresun Postası” electronic newspaper in 2009 said that there is and there was no Kurdish issue for Turkey as such. It only existed for the USA, the EU and Israel. The Armenian Question for them serves a means “to demand compensation and land from Turkey”<sup>97</sup>. Any discussion over the Armenian Question and Kurdish issue in the EU was raising the question among the Turkish public whether the EU did not want to bring back the Treaty of Sèvres and firstly viewed under the shadow of Sèvres<sup>98</sup>.

The reduction of the public support for the EU membership in general points out the deepening negative perception and problems. Neo-nationalism which has anti-Western and anti-European manifestation, was widely spread in

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<sup>94</sup> Ter-Matevosyan V., *Islam in the Social-Political Life of Turkey (1970-2001)*, Yerevan 2008, p. 149.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p. 144.

<sup>96</sup> Manukyan T., *the PKK Activity (1980-1990)*, Turkic and Ottoman researches, Yerevan 2011, p. 192.

<sup>97</sup> Çabas Murat, KÜRT SORUNU TÜRKİYE'NİN SORUNU DEĞİL, 30 Ağustos 2009 [http://www.giresunpostasi.net/haber.php?haber\\_id=2340](http://www.giresunpostasi.net/haber.php?haber_id=2340).

<sup>98</sup> Uslu, Aytaç, *op. cit.*, p.130.

Turkey and left dangerous tendencies in its relations with the West. The relatively positive character toward the West hampered when the policy of the western countries toward Turkey “did not coincide with their notions.” That is to say, the anti-Western moods among the Turkish public were mainly agreed with political and not so religious, cultural or civilization factor. According to the polls conducted in Turkey, the Turkish society immediately stressed its anti-Western policy when it was spoken about the policy of governments of the West toward Turkey and other Islamic countries. The people mainly perceived them as imperialistic, unconstructive, destabilizing and negative<sup>99</sup>. Certain forces, though, in Turkey are trying to give religious or cultural nature to anti-Western moods. In this context, among wider circle of the public stereotypes toward the West are being formed which in many cases are being associated with the manifestations of distrust and western imperialism.

According to one of the 2007 publications of the “Turkish Daily News”, there was a group in the Turkish state system which viewed non-Muslims, be they those who lived in the country for centuries, or the new-comers, as sources of threat through which the external forces were trying to dismember Turkey. “In other words the “Sèvres-phobia” or the hegemony of fear dominates in Turkey that also passed to the young generation as well”<sup>100</sup>.

In this context the Turkey’s Internal Security Strategic Document<sup>101</sup> (*İç Güvenlik Strateji Belgesi*) was interesting. It was

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<sup>99</sup> Bülbül Kudret, Özipek Bekir Berat, Kalın İbrahim, Turkish Perception of the West, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.10, No. 1, 2008, p. 129-147.

<sup>100</sup> Yinanç Barçın, Tear down these walls of fear and bigotry, *Turkish Daily News*, 21.04.2007.

<sup>101</sup> The document was revealed connected with a criminal case in 2005 and it was even spoken that by it a ground was to be laid for the implementation of

worked out on the basis of National Security Concept and presented all the existing and possible challenges, direct threat to the security of the country. They mainly were separative movements, Kurdish issue, Islamic regress and extremism etc. The last part was particularly interesting as it discussed the Armenian, Greek communities, Assyrian movements, the situation and developments around Alevis, missioner activities, international and public organizations, etc. The document also considered “the activities of extreme leftists, extreme rightists, separative subjects and *minorities taking to dismemberment of the country*” as domestic threat. According to this document, the Armenian community did not take steps against the security of the country and the Assyrians living in the United States and European countries were creating different movements and organizations against the Turkish state demanding independence or autonomy. And during the recent years on the initiative and sponsorship of a number of sources the activities of funds operating in Greece and other countries intensified in the Black Sea region wishing to awaken the Greco-Pontus spirit. With this document Turkey’s ethnic-demographic situation is a serious arena for the activity of external forces which presets a threat to the country’s national unity and integrity.

In 2007 one of the Turkish newspapers published an article entitled “*Why Turks love conspiracy theories so much*” in which the author noted that conspiracy theories enjoy widely spread “popularity” in Turkey, many including political figures believe that a plot is being implemented by the external forces

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coupe. It was published by several websites. İç Güvenlik Strateji Belgesi (MGSB)-1, 31-10-2005, <http://www.savaskarsitlari.org/arsiv.asp?ArsivTipID=6&ArsivAnaID=29284>.

against their country aimed at weakening and dismembering the country. The writer of the article said the springs of it date back to history as during its last years the Ottoman Empire tasted defeats and was finally dismembered, the Treaty of Sèvres was signed and other such like things happened. And the stereotype that the foreign forces keep vital on the agenda the secret program of dismemberment of the Turkish state which may become the very Treaty of Sèvres existed among all. According to the author, such fears and existence of stereotypes is agreed with state ideology. “The thing is that since the early years of the Republic the memory of Sèvres was sealed in the minds of the citizens. The educational system and the state propaganda have always told us that the country is surrounded by enemies who do not want our country to develop, be secure and prosper,” the author noted<sup>102</sup>. According to a lecturer of Istanbul University, political scientist Behlul Ozkan, the Treaty of Sèvres became Turkey’s paranoia, it is being used by a number of political forces for gathering dividends. The Turkish society knows well the Treaty of Sèvres and many political figures keep the public watchful thanks to permanent quotation of Sèvres. The provision that the Treaty of Sèvres is vital and that is why the public must always be consolidated and vigilant was brought to forefront<sup>103</sup>. Of course, this approach of the Turkish propaganda has almost always been applied pursuing the developments taking place inside the public, the social-economic issues and even compensate the failures of the government, divert the public from domestic political issues,

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<sup>102</sup> Akyol Mustafa, Why Turks Love Conspiracy Theories (I), Turkish Daily News, 15.12.2007.

<sup>103</sup> The Treaty of Sèvres became Turkey’s paranoia and thong <http://news.am/arm/news/29582.html>, 02.09.2010.

creating an artificial must of consolidating against external enemy. In spite of artificial sharpening of this phenomenon, the stereotypes of fear were dominating in social and political circles. Another issue is that it is being used for inner goals to consolidate the public.

Lecturer of Izmir University, expert Zafer Yörük described the Treaty of Sèvres as historic nightmare. According to him, though it has not been ratified, it still presents threat to Turkey, and it is being periodically reminded to Turkey<sup>104</sup>.

Turkish researcher İhsan Dağı in his article in “Today’s Zaman” newspaper correctly noted that the neo-Kemalists were treating with suspicion any foreigner, external forces. Predispositions based on conspiracy theories were dominating among them, according to which, the West and particularly the USA were doing everything to revive the Treaty of Sèvres. The development of Kurdish ethnic identity in Northern Iraq and state formation under the patronage of the USA was viewed by them as “preamble” of Turkey’s dismemberment through ethnic principle<sup>105</sup>. Here too contradiction comes forth. The fact that Turkey’s westernization-upgrading and European integration guidelines were traditionally forwarded and defended by Kemalist forces, including the military, currently the colors of anti-western moods are being manifested in the same forces.

Leader of Turkish nationalist Grand Unity Party (*Büyük Birlik Partisi*) Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu at one of the party events in 2006 stated that the U.S. “Greater Middle East” projects

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<sup>104</sup> Turkish expert: the Treaty of Sèvres is threat to Turkey  
<http://news.am/arm/print/29824.html>, 04.09.2010.

<sup>105</sup> Dağı İhsan, Understanding anti-Americanism in Turkey, Today’s Zaman, 02 July 2007.



threatened with Tukey's dismemberment and in this respect Turkey undergoes difficult times. "What will we have? Of course, a small piece of land in central Anatolia and the basis for it will, of course, be Sèvres. Has the USA signed Sèvres? No. But Sèvres is in the "head" of the USA and currently they are bringing it to forefront openly"<sup>106</sup>.

Publicist-analyst Yusuf Kanlı in one of his articles in 2007 noted that Turkey driven to the West and the western system of values at the same times suffers from phobias, like the "Sèvres-phobia", through which the West aims to dismember Turkey. It happened so that together with slogans and perceptions that "Turkey must be member of the EU; Turkey's future is the West", the concern that the final goal of the West is to reach Turkey's territorial dismemberment exists, and the Turkish public is guided by it<sup>107</sup>.

The "Tanzimat syndrome" and "Sèvres syndrome" form the heart of contemporary Turkish nationalist discourse toward Europe. They were mainly consolidated by Kemalism and became part of public consciousness through Kemalist education, press and literature. Though the two syndromes reflect the relations between external forces and Turkey, the policy and intentions of the West have some differences.

The "Sèvres syndrome" is mainly focused on the foreign relations and policy of Turkey, strategy of external forces toward Turkey and explains their encroachments and ambitions. "Tanzimat syndrome" mainly comments the foreign interferences in the inner life of Turkey in the context of democratization,

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<sup>106</sup> ABD hala Sevr'in peşinde, <http://www.haberpan.com/abd-hala-sevrin-pesinde-haberi/>, 17.10.2006.

<sup>107</sup> Kanlı Yusuf, Turkey's problems, Turkish Daily News, 26.12.2007.

human rights and freedoms. And the basis of their existence is deep historic memory. According to a Turkish researcher Hakan Yılmaz, these two syndromes, rooted in the Turkish public make the pillars of nationalist denial and distrust toward the West and particularly Europe which have been reflected on the contemporary worldview from deep historic memory<sup>108</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup> Yılmaz Hakan, Two Pillars of Nationalist Euroskepticism in Turkey: The Tanzimat and Sevres Syndromes”, [http://hakanyilmaz.info/yahoo\\_site\\_admin/assets/docs/HakanYilmaz-2006-TanzimatSevresSyndromes-English-SIEPS.28455418.pdf](http://hakanyilmaz.info/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/HakanYilmaz-2006-TanzimatSevresSyndromes-English-SIEPS.28455418.pdf); Two Pillars of Nationalist Euroskepticism in Turkey: The Tanzimat and Sevres Syndromes. In *Turkey, Sweden and the European Union: Experiences and Expectations*, ed. Ingmar Karlsson and Annika Strom Melin, Stockholm: SIEPS (Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies), 2006, pp.29-40.

## **“Sèvres-phobia” as a Component of National Security Discourse**

“Sèvres-phobia” phenomenon is being related to that country’s security culture, more rightly to say, is one of the elements of this culture. Still during the Cold War Turkey’s traditional security culture rooted in the Turkish identity was considered Western, homogenous and secular, and the geographical determinism, the “Sèvres syndrome” and different kinds of fears like loss of territory, isolation, encirclement, etc. are typical of them<sup>109</sup>. The worldview and ideas based on phobias in Turkey toward any foreigner are somehow connected with the identity crisis. National identity crisis and state identity crisis exist in Turkey. Not being able to confirm their definition of identity and being in incessant searches social-political groundings are coming forth which try in this or that way set approaches which in their turn create sharp conflict. The domestic, national identity issue first of all relates to the ethnic-demographic situation, collective mentality and system of values where confrontations and clashes are coming forth like for instance, “national, homogenous state-multiethnic, federal state”, “conservatism-progressiveness”, “secularism-Islamism”, “westernism-traditionalism” conflicts. As to the state identity, Turkey till today wants to establish its place in the world’s civilization, cultural and political map. The process that started from 1990s is still in a searching phase and an attempt is being made to somehow adopt

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<sup>109</sup> Sandrin Paula, Turkey’s Competing Security Cultures and Their Impact on Foreign Policy, <http://changingturkey.com/2010/05/09/turkey%E2%80%99s-competing-security-cultures-and-their-impact-on-foreign-policy/>, May 9, 2010.

such expedient model which will somehow correspond to the country's security interests. Some specialists see in this "unconfirmed identity" some risks which will in some extent determine the country's future inner-political, foreign political developments and processes.

Turkish researcher Birgöl Demirtaş-Coşkun, speaking about Turkey's "cultural uncertainty" in his survey, noted, "In cultural respect Turks are on the way to Europe, though they have not reached their goal but they are not eastern any more. In short, they are situated in a special transition phase"<sup>110</sup>. The most typical here for Turkey, we think, is the meaning of "cultural uncertainty" to which we would have add also "civilization uncertainty" term. And in political, why not in civilization respect, Turkey is trying to come into terms with the historic failure of becoming part of the West trying to put for discussion its new role of being "bridge of civilizations" between the West and the East<sup>111</sup>.

Turkish commentator and publicist Barçın Yinanç said the generations in Turkey grew together with complexes that the Western states have never stepped back from the idea of dividing Turkey into Armenian, Kurdish and Greek territories and this perception exists on political and social levels<sup>112</sup>. More typical were the words of Turkish intellectual, writer Elif Şafak that all in Turkey grew in conditions of the "Sèvres syndrome", that the country "is surrounded by three seas and four enemies" and this psychological pressure was of continuous nature. And journalist

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<sup>110</sup> Demirtaş-Coşkun Birgöl, Systemic Changes and State Identity: Turkish and German Responses, *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2008, p. 34.

<sup>111</sup> Kösebalaban Hasan, Torn Identities and Foreign Policy: The Case of Turkey and Japan, *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2008, p. 21.

<sup>112</sup> Yinanç Barçın, Obama's choice as envoy to Ankara: Is Ricciardone a friend of Turkey?, *Hürriyet Daily News*, 18.08.2010.

Mustafa Akyol in his article published in “Star” newspaper noted that each Turk lives in fear and shadow of Sèvres, sleeps and wakens with this fear<sup>113</sup>. Turkish analyst Sedat Laçiner believes that the Armenian Question was viewed by some circles and applied as means to isolate Turkey from the West or other countries. The Turkish nationalists were continuously and on purpose disseminating the fear of Sèvres and territorial dismemberment<sup>114</sup>.

Professor from the U.S. Michigan University of Turkish descent Fatma Muge Göçek, studying the existence and viability of the “Sèvres syndrome”, notes that “The Republican elite and first of all the military developed this idea for the creation of national state and in future turned them to national security paradigm”<sup>115</sup>. The understanding of the national security in Turkey related to the combating dangers to state sovereignty and territorial integration, preservation of national values. Traditionally, the security in Turkey was established from the military position and had a “military-focused” approach. The military elite was setting the security and implementing the security policy, and the civilian authorities were just forced to adopt the “agenda” set by the military. And the existence and circulation of the “Sèvres syndrome” as a component of security discourse was mostly agreed with the “setting of agenda” by the military authorities. Periodically reminding about the threats directed toward the country’s territorial integrity, making them “the property” of the Turkish people by Turkish military was

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<sup>113</sup> Akyol Mustafa, Türk ırkçılarının inandığı yalanlar- III, Star, 28.09.2009.

<sup>114</sup> Laçiner Sedat, Ermeni sorunu, diaspora ve Türk dış politikası, Ermeni iddiaları Türkiye'nin dünya ile ilişkilerini nasıl etkiliyor?, USAK, 2008, s. 579.

<sup>115</sup> ‘Sevr Sendromu’ nedir ve neden azar?, Zaman, 07.07.2009.

giving the highest commandship of the country preserve their stable role and impact on social-political processes. It may be said that the military were also interested in disseminating such perceptions inside the country with which they were solving “their issue of ensuring national unity through combating the external enemy.”

Danish Oriental Studies specialist Dietrich Jung noted that though the Treaty of Lausanne abolished the Treaty of Sèvres and recognized the sovereignty of the Turkish Republic the Sèvres experience was not forgotten by the Kemalist elite. The founder mythology of the Turkish Republic and contemporary political culture are the result of permanent fight against domestic and external enemies, conspiracy theories which have become the comprising part of social habitués of the republican elite. More clearly, with the Turkey’s military bureaucracy’s perceptions the state is facing permanent danger<sup>116</sup>.

In the post-Cold War period Turkish political elite and many others were trying to explain the issues of the country through the conspiracy theories. During this period the approach that Turkey is surrounded by enemies and like Turkish diplomat Şükrü Elekdağ noted, “Turkey is besieged with real Satanist chain” was dominating.

And the Nationalist Movement Party was stating, “The PKK is being used by foreign forces with conspiracy goals – elimination the unity of the Turkish state.” President of Turkey S. Demirel was accusing the West that with the inclusion of the Treaty of Sèvres they were trying to establish Kurdish state in the

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<sup>116</sup> Jung Dietrich, Turkey at the Crossroads, pp. 31-32, [http://www.diis.dk/graphics/COPRI\\_publications/COPRI\\_publications/publications/16-1999.do](http://www.diis.dk/graphics/COPRI_publications/COPRI_publications/publications/16-1999.do).

region. A standpoint that was also supported by the Turkish Prime Minister B. Ecevit. According to him, there was no Kurdish issue, but only Kurdish terrorism supported from outside in order to divide Turkey. It is remarkable that Kemalist-secular circles were too explaining upraise of Islam within the framework of conspiracy theory by foreign forces<sup>117</sup>. Turkish “Türksolu” left-nationalist newspaper in one of its issues in 2009 in the article of K. Ataberk strictly criticized the contemporary foreign policy of Turkey known as neo-Ottomanism. According to the author, under the name of the same neo-Ottomanism Turkey becomes the victim of imperialism, and the grounds of the national state had been endangered moving toward becoming a federal state based on religious and ethnic grounds. That is to say Turkey is being guided toward territorial dismemberment. “Under the name of neo-Ottomanism Turkey is being taken to a new Sèvres”<sup>118</sup>.

In the article published by the Turkish “21<sup>st</sup> Century: Turkey Institute” research center a question is being raised whether Turkey’s fear of dismemberment is a paranoia. According to the article, sayings are being applied against people concerned with the issue of the country’s dismemberment, among them are “Turkey will not be dismembered,” “Time has come to get rid of Turkey’s dismemberment fear”, etc., and that it is more self-delusion and may be considered anachronism. With such claims, in a country like Turkey, an attempt is being made to weaken the vigilance of the people concerned with the territorial dismemberment of the country. “Who can guarantee after the

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<sup>117</sup> Jung , op. cit., pp. 26-27.

<sup>118</sup> Ataberk Kaya, Amerikancı-Şeriatçı strateji Türkiye’yi Sevr’e götürecektir, TURKSOLU, Sayı 240, 15.06.2009, <http://www.turksolu.org/240/ataberk240.htm>.

collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the USSR, Yugoslavia, that one day the same will not happen with Turkey? When all the developments in Turkey are taking toward one direction – dismemberment, what facts may be opposed to suchlike developments calling the fear of dismemberment a “paranoia”<sup>119</sup>.

According to Turkologist A. Shakaryan, together with the establishment of the Turkish Republic a number of phobias have come forth which till today are viable in the state and among the social circles of that country. The fear of territorial dismemberment is a factor uniting Turkish public and creates a must of consolidation and unity against the external forces wishing to dismember and divide Turkey<sup>120</sup>.

According to 2011 article of “Yeni Çağ” newspaper belonging to Turkish nationalist circles, after 90 years of signing of the Treaty of Sèvres, the USA focused its forces toward the implementation of “Great Kurdistan” plan. The USA has started from dismemberment of Iraq, and now time has come for dismemberment of Syria. The USA has started pressure for overthrow of Damascus Administration. The other victims will be Turkey and Iran. After ending its accounts with Syria, the USA will direct its glance on Turkey and Iran<sup>121</sup>. October 26, 2009 in an article published by Hasan Demir in the same newspaper, the conviction that the West does not refuse and undertakes step for “reviving” the Treaty of Sèvres was brought forward. “The same

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<sup>119</sup> Vurucu İktbal, Bölünme Korkusu Bir Paranoya mıdır?,  
[http://www.21yyte.org/tr/yazi5846-  
Bolunme\\_Korkusu\\_Bir\\_Paranoya\\_midir\\_.html](http://www.21yyte.org/tr/yazi5846-Bolunme_Korkusu_Bir_Paranoya_midir_.html).

<sup>120</sup> Shakaryan A., On the Other side of Ararat, p.35-36.

<sup>121</sup> After 90 years of the Treaty of Sevres the USA is implementing “Great Kurdistan” plan: Turkish nationalists,  
[http://1in.am/arm/press\\_pturkeyiran\\_18099.html](http://1in.am/arm/press_pturkeyiran_18099.html).



games played over Iraq are being played on Turkey as well for instigating interior war. And it is being implemented not only by the USA but by Europe too. In European capitals Sèvres meetings are conducted, Sèvres maps are circulated”<sup>122</sup>.

Referring to the revolutionary movements and developments in the Arab world in early 2011, Turkish Yusuf Kanlı in his “New Sykes-Picot Deal” article wrote that different specialists and analysts agree that connected with these developments, reformations of borders and maps outlined almost hundred years ago may take place. The secret Sykes-Picot Agreement over the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire became the basis of the Treaty of Sèvres signed August 10, 1920, according to which Armenian state was to be created in the east of Turkey and Kurdish state in the south-east. “And now after almost 100 years, the Middle East is again in fire and it is quite strange that Great Britain and France were heading the air-bombings of Lybia. The resolution of the UN Security Council gave Great Britain and France a formal opportunity to divert the process of events toward the direction necessary for them, like we witness it today.” The writer of the article says that this time new factor has come forth against the USA. “Weren’t they participating in 1916 agreement? For instance, why the USA with Wilson’s doctrine signed the 1916 agreement and till now does not recognize the Lausanne Treaty of July 24, 1923. There is no confusion here. The old game is being played again. We will be informed about these secret negotiations only in case when one of the parties is ignored by the others while dividing trophies”<sup>123</sup>. By the way, in

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<sup>122</sup> Demir Hasan, 2011’de iç savaş hazırlığı!,  
<http://www.yg.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr>, 26 Ekim 2009.

<sup>123</sup> Kanlı Yusuf, New Sykes-Picot deal?, Hürriyet Daily News, 27.03.2011.

spring 2011 the revolutionary movements that started in Arab countries became subjects of serious discussion in the Turkish press and analytical circles, in which concern was expressed that Turkey would not bypass it. Some analysts even were speaking about the possibility of “Kurdish autumn”, noting that first of all these developments would raise inspiration among Kurds in case of uprising of who the very Turkey would become the target. During the unrest in Syria in 2011, Turkish political leadership publicly expressed its concern, saying that the intensification of Kurdish factor in Syria is directed against Turkey’s security.

Not referring to the possible developments relating to Turkey as a result of these developments, we think that the author and the official circles clearly realize and understand the seriousness that may threat Turkish state. And in case of change and reformation of political map and borders in the Middle East region a country like Turkey cannot stay aside and with its ethnic, geopolitical, historic elements it will appear “under serious blow”.

## Epilogue

Summing up all this, we may say that “Sèvres-phobia” phenomenon has seriously been fixed in the social and political life of Turkey. The contemporary discussions show that the conspiracy theories, the fear of territorial dismemberment exist not only among social but state and military circles. In particular, after the end of the Cold War the “Sèvres syndrome” has become up-to-dated in Turkey and in different discussions it was getting serious weight. And it had its explanation, as during the post-Cold War period, in 1990s, Turkey was perceiving itself as a country surrounded by hostile countries the goal of which was reaching territorial dismemberment of Turkey at any cost. The perception that both the countries of the West and the immediate neighbors of Turkey were taking steps toward its dismemberment was rooted in the circles of Turkish military-political authorities.

The existence of the “Sèvres syndrome” in the social-political circles of Turkey is agreed with two factors: first is its subjective contribution to the social and political consciousness of Turkey. This “fear was fixed” thanks to the continuous presentation by the Turkish military-political authorities which was giving an opportunity to keep the threat of dismemberment and elimination of the Turkish state viable with it making the social consciousness more oriented, ensure necessary consolidation. With it, it was becoming easier to ensure the public orientation in the necessary inner-political and foreign political processes through the formation of collective character of external enemy. The existence of a number of issues in Turkey in this case was explained through the conspiracy theories. Secondly, in spite

of the in some way artificial usage of “Sèvres-phobia” or the “threat of territorial dismemberment”, in both political and social environments of Turkey, there exists the imagination of permanent threat of dismemberment which as a complex stemming from a number of issues of the country and as a historic past is rooted in the social and political worldview.

The fear of territorial dismemberment of Turkey presents from itself an alarm that may become a reality at any moment. The phenomenon of alarm exists in the Turkish political circles over Armenia and Diaspora, in particular, which fits in the “Sèvres syndrome”. The existing and deepened alarm in its turn gives birth to reactive aggressiveness. As consequence of the alarm the behavior of Turkey may become irrational in some situations and periods. The reason of the existing alarm in Turkey is the realization of being subjected to punishment for the committed crime. In this social-political consciousness there exists the perception that the Republic of Turkey has been created “thanks” to the Armenian Genocide and depriving of homeland, elimination of inhabitants and ethnic minorities, state policy of alienation, and the grounds of the state with territorial, historic, moral and legal components are dilapidated, thus they may shake in any situation.

