

The Influence of Europeanization on Religious Discourses in Framing Gender Equality Policies in Turkey

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Abstract

*The aim of this paper is to analyze **strategic** and **discursive framing** of gender equality policies by religious actors and institutions with a religious background in Turkey and to see if EU enlargement and Europeanization influence religious actors' discourses and frames. The research therefore aims to assess differences/similarities in framing gender equality policies by different religious actors and to see if, how and why changes occur over time as a result of contextual changes, among which Europeanization is paid most attention.*

Introduction

Some researches (Yavuz 2006, Kanra 2009) have shown that Turkish parties with Islamic background like the Justice and Development Party (AKP) have shown great adaptation to Europeanization process. AKP is displaying pro-European politics with reform oriented approaches, thus it could be labelled as euroenthusiast (Korkut 2009), while the leading oppositional Republican People's Party (CHP) or the Kemalist elite (Schimmelfenning et al. 2003) and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) display a eurosceptical discourse (Başkan 2009, 105). Surprisingly the Kemalist elite, which was always following modernization and westernization according to European standards as a necessity for change and development, displays conflict with democratic and human rights norms – e.g. the army, which is self-proclaimed as the “guardian” of Kemalist principles in Turkish politics, has great political influence (Schimmelfenning et al. 2003, 506). An eventual entry of Turkey into EU would be a threat for Kemalists and the army, who enjoy many privileges and who have a sceptical and threatening stance towards the Islamic AKP government. For this reason AKP sees in EU membership a possibility of democratization that would allow them a continuation of political activities and expression in a more pluralistic political environment.

In my research I will analyze religious discourses in framing gender equality (GE) policies and within this intimate citizenship (IC) policies (policies dealing with intimate issues like family, marriage, divorce, children custody, homosexuality etc.), and gender-based violence (GBV) policies (dealing with prevention of violence against women, domestic violence, rape etc.) because of the following reasons: these are policies, which deal with contested issues that are closely connected to social and religious values (family, relationship between sexes, homosexuality, violence against women etc.). Another reason is that these policies are not a formal hard-law demand of adaptation to the EU, i.e. for fulfilment of Copenhagen criteria (*acquis communautaire*) for EU membership. While on the other hand GE (except from GE in employment policy issues as the following analysis will show) and related IC and GBV issues represent a policy area left to the discretion of internal domestic affairs. So it is exactly in this area that we can see the soft-law effects and influence (if any) of Europeanization and eventual change or persistence of conservative religious discourses, because actors can choose and learn from Europe also outside adaptational pressures (Jacques and Woll 2003, 3, Radaelli 2004, 9).

The question is how the process of Europeanization influences religious discourses and how in turn they articulate and transform their framing of policy issues in order to respond to EU membership negotiations. Since scepticism exists about AKP and its intentions (ESI 2007, 13) and a question persists: how would political Islam in Turkey develop if given political and social historical circumstances would not be the same (e.g. state control of religion), that triggered the caution of Islamic parties, which are aware that the army is prepared to curb and limit their activities at any time (e.g. threats of closure of AKP, military coups, etc.). Domestic and international speculations that Turkish Islamists might become authoritarian, and support radical political solutions with their justification in Islam, thus having re-traditionalistic effects, are widespread.¹ There are claims that AKP is actually non-European (e.g. Tibi 2006); or claims that the Turkish government and the leading AKP represent a “tactical Europeanization” (cf. Yavuz 2006, 238), or a “surface and selective democratization and Europeanization” (cf. Öniş 2007). Political Islam is understood therefore as europragmatic, where parties commit to Europeanization and EU integration only selectively, in order to avoid the label of being eurosceptic (cf. Korkut 2009).

However it needs to be reminded that although some scepticism about the role of AKP exists it is noteworthy to state that it represents a synthesis of religious reformism and conformism and that it was capable of paradigmatic shifts in reforms for the EU accession process. This marks a change not only for Turkey but also a change in perception of Islamists and Islamic groups (Keyman 2007, Karakaş 2007). No other Turkish party in almost 90 years old Republic proved so successful in reforming a country - except for initial Kemalist reforms at the beginning of 20th century, which were a paradigmatic shift towards political rights, but nonetheless did not manage to change much in GE policies that displayed an undemocratic and discriminatory nature. This was challenged only recently with grand efforts of women and civil society human rights NGOs who succeeded in influencing changes in GE issues. At a surprise to many AKP did participate in positive changes of GE policies (for example the Penal Code), where it displayed great efforts of cooperation with civil society and accepted many changes to prevent discrimination and change society’s understanding of human rights, especially women’s human rights (cf. ESI 2007, p. 18).

To understand better what lies behind these allegations and many times stereotypical perceptions of political actors, being it religious or otherwise, I decided to apply a discursive approach to analyse influence on policies by religious actors and to see if the EU membership process has any influence on their discourses and consequently the framing of GE policies.

Theoretical and methodological approach

My focus of interest are the ways religious actors and their discourses produce policy meanings – i.e. how they **interpret/frame** the meaning of “gender equality” and other related policy concepts, what changes occur in these policy meanings, and their respective discourses and discursive practices, according to different historical socio-political contexts. The partial results in this paper are based on QUING² project analysis results, which covered a period from 1995 to 2007.

¹ See authors that problematize such a view: Diez 2005; 2007; Casanova 2006; Yavuz 2006, and Spohn 2009.

² The QUING project: Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies, <http://www.quing.eu/>, looks into framing of gender+ equality policies in all EU member states and two candidate countries Croatia and Turkey, and the EU level in specific gender equality policy issues like Non-employment, Intimate citizenship, and Gender Based violence. The QUING analysis includes four types of documents: laws, governmental policy plans,

However the Quing project method of analyzing frames tells us what kind of frames are present but it does not tell us much on why and how a model of framing emerged (Verloo & Lombardo 2007, 40). Since the project aimed at comparison between states with a qualitative-quantitative approach, it might lack more detailed and in-deep contextual knowledge of a specific country. The aim of my research is to extend the analysis and analyze contextual longitudinal changes or shifts in policy framing, and include more material on religious discourses, since the project did include only small amount of religious voices/actors and missed completely religious NGOs.

To analyze this it is necessary to analyse the socio-historical and political context in which discourses emerged, how and why they have changed and how they have influenced institutions and actors in framing policy issues. With a longitudinal socio-historical discursive approach within the postmodern interpretive tradition, we can unravel not only specific ways of meaning-making of policy issues (policy framing) but also answer questions like WHY and HOW specific ways of policy framing emerge, how actors and networks of actors act, interact and change, processes of change of practices and meaning-making procedures, institutional and practical re-arrangements, and what is the role of Europeanization in it.

Longitudinal/historical internal changes in Turkey (the establishment of the Republic, military coups, radical secularization, rise of political Islam, civil society movements etc.) and external influences like the process of Europeanization (historical influence of Europe, official candidacy for EU membership in 1999), will represent the socio-historical context within which changes will be analyzed. Analyzing influences of Europeanization in Turkey, a country contested along different issues, in a historical and contextually sensitive discursive perspective, will promote a better understanding of contested issues such as religion (Islam), human rights and GE policies, and nonetheless contribute to the understanding of religious policy/political actors.

In these terms the approach and the results challenge conventional policy analytic approaches that would differentiate actors and their interests as given *a priori*, and would link (stable, fixed) categories of actors with stable identities, interests, aims, and beliefs. The focus on discursive change and agency in a socio-historical discursive perspective suggests that rigid categorization is problematic. Within gender policy issues, researches (Liebert 2003, Lombardo and Forest 2009, forthcoming) have shown that rigid country clusters as theorized by mainstream literature on Europeanization and policy actors do not make much sense for GE policies since “compliance” with the EU varies according to issue and not the “cluster countries” or “world of compliance” that a specific country, region or actors in this country may represent. This is often based on stereotypical representation of states (cf. Falkner & Treib 2008 in Lombardo & Forest forthcoming) and policy actors that “fix” their interests and identities. Challenging this approach in the field of religious actors is even more demanding, since religious actors are often perceived as being inextricably linked to

parliamentary debates and civil society texts. Sample texts were selected for analysis and they were analyzed in terms of how policy *problems* are defined, what solutions are offered, who is the voice expressing these solutions (state, civil society) and how and when EU is taken as a framework of reference. According to defined parameters, these dimensions were interpreted by researchers to form a *typology of frames*, which express discursive characteristics of policy framing. It is important to mention, that from all types of documents just few samples were selected, which means that results could vary depending on the selection of documents for analysis. Furthermore no religious (women’s) NGOs were analyzed in QUING, therefore this paper omits civil society voices’ analysis and focuses more on political parties.

seemingly fixed sets of strong (conservative and antiliberal) values, beliefs, and identities, who attribute fixed long-term meanings to policy issues.

Longitudinal analysis is still a work in progress and no results are available yet. However even such a short period of time that Quing project covers, reveals changes in framing by different actors and the influence that can be attributed to EU or Europeanization. The results are based on analysis of relevant texts. In this paper I am presenting the analysis of parliamentary debates by different members of parliament and some other data from interviews with party deputies on issues related to GE, IC, GBV and employment policies. I will present shortly the theoretical framework of sociological and discursive approaches to Europeanization, Critical frame analysis, contributions of discourse theory, and finally some preliminary results from Quing analysis.

The impact of Europeanization

The concept of Europeanization was first developed as referring to the impact of EU integration processes on national political systems by modification of national systems through transfer of competencies to the supranational level, the adaptive response of member countries to EU inputs and convergence of policies between member states and European Union. Therefore analysis of Europeanization has mainly focused on convergence of decision-making and policy outcomes between European Union and member states (Lombardo and Forest 2009). Although Europeanization is generally used to characterize transformation on national level, which adapts to European level logic, model or constraint, new approaches to Europeanization emerged in the last decade.

However, these top-down approaches do not seem to encompass adequately the effects of Europeanization, since it is not only a top-down process but also **bottom-up process**. **Sociological and discursive approaches** to Europeanization approach Europeanization beyond the top-down approach or "impact" of the EU on domestic systems and focus on the processes of domestic change, since adaptation processes can be more complex than a simple "reaction" to Europe (Radaelli 2004, 6). These approaches analyse new opportunities for "usage" of Europe, because domestic actors can use Europe in many ways. New approaches focus on diversity of policy response to EU incentives and pay emphasis on policy practices and discourses (Lombardo and Forest forthcoming). These approaches try to account for a cognitive dimension and "alteration of beliefs and expectations of domestic actors, which includes a change of preferences and strategies" (Caporaso et al. 1999, 3 in Featherstone 2003, 14). Based on Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier (2005a, 7 in Krizsan and Popa 2008) Krizsan and Popa define Europeanization as a process of adoption and internalization, including behaviour and discursive levels, of EU rules, shared norms and beliefs by states.

Radaelli (2003, 2004) and Börzel and Risse (2003) have focused on paradigms, ideas and good practices to understand the cognitive dimension of Europeanization and whether Europeanization necessarily means convergence or also contention, resistance to, and differentiation from EU policy framework. According to Radaelli Europeanization is not only convergence, and even in case of convergence, the pattern is not clustered convergence (according to understanding of countries as clusters) – since the same country may respond to Europeanization in different ways, depending on policy area, constellation of policy actors and resources available in policy areas (Radaelli 2004: 16).

Within GE, policy adaptation differs according to requirements of the *acquis communautaire*, since policies in the field of, e.g., employment are clear requirements to be adapted to EU

demands by candidate countries and are thus part of the European hard-law, while policies dealing with GBV and IC are still in the domain of national legislation and for these policy areas EU develops only soft-law recommendations. However it is precisely in these areas of soft-law recommendations that the influence of EU or Europeanization can be better assessed since according to new approaches Europeanization includes institutional, as well as cognitive and interactional aspects. Impact of soft-law measures and social learning as effects of Europeanization can be better achieved through historical and sociological framework of research with constructivist and discursive methodologies. This marks a shift to more pluralistic approaches to studies of Europeanization (Lombardo and Forest forthcoming).

Radaelli stresses the importance of study of Europeanization in context, this means within the domestic context of each country. This can be achieved with a longitudinal analysis by studying temporal sequences of policy development in a specific country, to see how, when and why in a specific way actors react and employ the influence of EU and more broadly Europeanization. Radaelli (2003, 50–52) calls this a research of Europeanization from *inside-out or bottom-up*. New approaches focus on new opportunities for "usage" of Europe, because domestic actors can "use" Europe in many ways. Actors can choose and learn from Europe also outside the adaptation pressures, i.e. outside the hard-law demands (Jacquot and Woll 2003, 3, Radaelli 2004, 9). This type of analysis pays attention to strategies of lobbying and networking of political practices through which state and civil society actors influence the process of decision-making (Lombardo and Forest 2009). Jacquot and Woll (2003) stress the underdevelopment of analysis of the role of political actors on adaptation, since according to them the actor can "choose" and learn outside institutional pressures.³

In their sociological approach to European integration Jacquot and Woll emphasize the role of actors in social interactions and their mediation in the integration process, which implies studying the mechanisms of re-appropriation and dis-engagement in the process of European integration. What is important in Jacquot and Woll's model is also the inclusion of interactions between actors and the consequences of this interaction, which differentiates between and includes strategic mobilisation and cognitive adaptation of actors. They developed the concept of "political usage". Usage is a process of transforming resources and constraints into political practices" Jacquot and Woll develop three forms of usage: cognitive – interpretation and persuasion; strategic – transformation of resources in political practices for pursuing a specific goal; and legitimizing – reference to Europe as a way of legitimising national public policies (Jacquot and Woll 2003).⁴ This approach seems to receive merit because of its insistence on discretionary action of individuals, which provides a means of studying the adaptation of public policy as carried out by individuals, which makes the concept of Europeanization a dynamic process (Jacquot and Woll 2003).

Power and participation in the policy making process is dispersed across actors who engage in policy networks of horizontal and vertical nature (Rhodes et al. 1996). Europeanization covers vertical (from EU to domestic politics) and horizontal dynamics (among actors). The EU may provide the context, the cognitive and normative "frame", the terms of reference, or the opportunities for socialisation of domestic actors who then produce "exchanges" (of ideas, power, policies etc.) between each other (Radaelli 2004: 7). This complex interpretation

³ Some theories of Europeanization, which focus on structural elements and institutional pressures (like fit-misfit theory), do not take into account the actors' potential to block or pursue for changes.

⁴ Usage includes 1. strategic mediations used by an actor to transform political resources of European integration into political action; 2. repetition of such acts, which acquire habitual practice and are thus less conscious than at first use, and become a customary practice.

between domestic and "European" level creates a variety of opportunities for actors to exploit. Thus Europeanization can be a process of exploiting the "*vincolo esterno – external tie*", which interprets EU as an external constraint to impose certain policy (Featherstone 2003, 9) or a process in which EU becomes a *political reference* for actors at the level of member states to justify policy claims (Hanf and Soetendorp 1998, 1 in Featherstone 2003, 11). Thus Europeanization can be both "pressure" and "usage" (Radaelli 2004, 13).⁵ The actor is therefore an independent and active negotiator within the institutional processes. However, the actor's performance may be autonomous to some extent; since the actor is still faced with institutions, which represent the "realm of possibilities" or "frame" for his/her behaviour (Jacquot and Woll 2003). Although actors may be acting to influence the policy process and policy outcome strategically, there is still a dimension, which is not taken into account while assuming that actors, although constrained by institutions, act consciously in strategically framing their demands according to a sociological approach or rational choice theory that Jacques and Woll develop. Individuals are not always autonomous in their decisions, since they are bound by external constraints, even more; they are not always strategically rational and aware that their cognitions and acts are shaped by structure, so that they may act unconsciously. By applying concepts of strategic and discursive framing (Critical Frame Analysis) on political usage, I would like to focus here besides "intentional/strategical political usage" on *unintentional/discursive* political "usage" and include the concept of discursive framing.

Critical Frame Analysis - strategic and discursive framing

Carol Bacchi (2009) differentiates between *intentional (strategic) framing* and *unintentional (discursive) framing* and points to the interaction between *agency and structure*. Frames are understood as *forms of explanation* or as *sense-making cognitive structures*, according to the disciplinary tradition using the term (Bacchi 2009). In social movement theory the "frames are understood as *intentional* shaping of political claims" (Benford and Snow 2000 in Bacchi 2009). Framing is therefore "concerned with the negotiation and (re)construction of reality by social/political actors" (Triandafyllidou and Fotiou 1998: 2 in Bacchi 2009), which is therefore presented as *strategic framing* (or strategic usage). However, Bacchi brings up the "*unconscious* influences on framing practices", where "actors need to pay particular /reflexive/ attention to the shaping impact of social and political contexts on their views and frames". This understanding of framing is connected to the understanding of the term *discourse* (Bacchi 2009). The understanding of discourse is many times different, according to the discipline where it is used. Bacchi points to the distinction between discourse as a social psychological focus on patterns of speech (*discourse analysis*), and a political theoretical focus on the ways in which issues are given a particular meaning within a specific social setting (*analysis of discourses*) (Potter & Wetherell 1990 in Bacchi 2009, Burr 1995, 164 in Bacchi 2009).

In the first tradition the term 'discourse' means something very close to language. There is a focus on the 'linguistic and rhetorical devices' used in the construction of a text (Burr 1995, 184 in Bacchi 2009).⁶ In the second tradition, discourse is understood as speaking, which sets the limits on what can be said – discourse is then different from language, it is larger category

⁵ This approach has actually its source in theories of agency and structure and their dialectical relationship. See below.

⁶ Some authors in policy science understand discourse as conscious and strategic action that actors "use" in their political activity (cf. Schmidt 2002, Schmidt & Radaelli 2004). However my understanding of discourse is connected to unconscious discursive influences that actors are not always aware of.

than language. It is also suggested to be useful to think of discourse as frames, since they provide frameworks or ways of viewing /framing/ issues (Bove 1990, Frank 1992, 110 in Bacchi 1999, 40). In frame analysis or the "discursive approach to politics" that I use in my research, the second tradition of understanding of discourse is applied. The goal in this research **"is to identify, within a text,⁷ institutionally supported and culturally influenced interpretive and conceptual schemas (discourses) that produce particular understandings /meanings/ of issues and events" (framing)** (Bacchi 2005, 199). Discourses are thus "an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given /by intentional and unintentional practices of actors/ to social and physical /policy/phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices" (Hajer 2005, 300). And framing is the process of this (policy) meaning-making, where frames are interpretive "constructions that give meaning to reality"/phenomena/, while a policy frame is "an organising principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful policy problem" (Verloo 2005, 20).

Intentional framing is made by actors (political subjects) who consciously and intentionally shape or *negotiate* political claims and therefore try to change the perception of a problem or concept. Jacquot and Woll's concept of "usage" can be defined as intentional, since according to their view actors consciously and pre-meditatively use (e.g. usage) resources⁸ to influence accordingly interpretation (of issues and concepts), problematization and diffusion of solutions in policy debate, decision making procedure, and justification (Jacquot and Woll 2003: 18). However, concepts are defined by Bacchi (2009) as "open signifiers" and by Lombardo et al. (2009) as "open or travelling" concepts, especially when referring to GE as a concept. Policies, like those dealing with intimacy, are instrumental and expressive at the same time, so they are much contested issues (Yanow 2000, 89). Bacchi (2009) and Lombardo et al. (2009) rely on the definition of concepts as "essentially contested" (Gallie 1955: 56 in Bacchi 2009), which means that concepts and categories have no fixed meaning but reflect specific historical contexts and contested uses (Bacchi 2009). According to Bacchi "concepts are so solidly grounded in history and culture that it is difficult to recognize their constructed nature". It is therefore "unsurprising that the concept of GE is consistently shaped and reshaped".

Thus GE is an »open or travelling concept« (Lombardo et. al. 2009), which can change its meaning according to its interpretation from different actors. It can be labelled in different ways depending on different contexts and on the meaning that actors attribute to it. Actors intentionally or unintentionally frame the concept. In a discursive construction of GE as a policy problem the concept undergoes a range of changes from stretching to bending, but whatever form it takes it is always intended to fit the existing context (Lombardo et al. 2009). For example GE can be »shrunked«, which means reduced to only equality in the labour market. Within EU this is often the case since the EU has tended to frame (interpret) GE in different ways (Lombardo et. al 2009), but mostly in terms of market as linked to competition and attempts to combat non-employment. This clearly reveals the market oriented inclination of definitions of GE within the EU. We can say that it is dominated by a *master frame* or *hegemonic discourse* of competitive market (cf. Rosilli 2000), which is also the case of Turkey as we will see below. This is accompanied by the perception that within

⁷ Text can be understood broadly as written, visual, oral, "practice" etc.

⁸ Jacques and Woll (2003, 8) define resources that actors use as of material and immaterial nature. Material resources are institutions, policy instruments (directives and recommendations etc.) and financing. Immaterial *discursive references* relates to ideas as rhetoric figures, which are employed to invoke positive or negative association – thus the understanding of discourse is again strategic.

the *employment area* women become equal to men when they have equal access to labour market. Within the *political representation area*, GE is reduced to a women's problem of political representation. Such framings leave other relevant issues, like structural obstacles to women's unequal representation in politics, untouched (Bacchi 1999 in Lombardo et al. 2009).

Thus **unintentional or discursive framing** explains the limits of actors' independent action constrained upon them by the structure, which constrains the agency of a political subject. The structure can be understood in Foucauldian terms as the *hegemonic discourse* or *master-frame* or "*normative assumptions of knowledge and history*" (Lombardo et al. 2009). To understand the processes of interpretation/framing of the meaning of GE, the discursive approach to politics of the **Critical Frame Analysis** is used. CFA in that sense, "aims at identifying the *cognitive schemata* that people use to interpret and give meanings to reality" (Lombardo et al. 2009), a cognitive schemata of which people are not always aware of and is discursive in nature. It helps us analyse »the processes by which different meanings are attributed to the concept of GE according to the intentional or unintentional intervention of policy actors who are involved in framing processes« (Lombardo and Forest forthcoming). The application of **Critical Frame Analysis** is also useful to identify the "dominant ways in which GE is understood and shaped in specific political sites" (Bacchi 2009), i.e. it helps to assess the framing of GE policies in terms of inclusion or exclusion of actors who are framing the concept of GE (e.g. state or institutional framing can be very persisting since institutions fix the concepts for long time (Lombardo et al. 2009)), thus paying attention to the VOICE or utterance of framing. It analyses not only how the problem of gender (in)equality is identified but also by whom - which discourse and frame is most powerful and influential, i.e. which hegemonic discourse or meta-frame influence policy framing.

The (intentional and unintentional) action of framing of problems and concepts in policy realm (policy framing) is therefore an outcome of many actors' (some included and some excluded from framing) negotiation over one problem or concept, thus the meaning of the concept of GE may change, which has concrete material consequences (in kinds of policies that are developed) especially for those actors who are not included in the policy framing process (Lombardo et al. 2009). The power that some voices (actors) have while framing a policy problem is reflected in the discourses produced (hegemonic discourse), which thereof influence the understanding and the meaning (framing) of a specific problem or concept.

If actors themselves are influenced by hegemonic discourses or meta-frames, these cannot be challenged if actors (re)producing them have appropriated the exclusive right in defining/framing policy problems (producing discourses) while excluding others from this activity. However, in practice, unexpected events can occur and even hegemonic discourses may change, leaving space for new, challenging and marginalised discourses to emerge. Analyzing the change of discourses and the production of meaning-making (framing), challenges dominant policy approaches that view actors and meaning-making as fixed according to homogeneous and fixed actors' interests thus not accounting for changes in practices and structural dislocations as well as changes in identities and meanings of concepts (cf. Laclau and Mouffe 1985).

Discourse theory concepts

With the contribution of discourse theory (Laclau and Mouffe 1985, Hajer 2003, 1995, Torfing 1999, Howarth 2000, Foucault 1969/2001) and concepts like *contingency*,

dislocations, and *discursive struggle*, we are able to analyze changes of discourses and thus link structures and actors/agency where both levels influence each other. To bridge the conceptual and empirical gaps between structure and agency I employ the concept of *social practice*, which in poststructuralist terms is defined as *discursive practice* (Brglez 2006, 164–165). Discursive practice is linked to a specific (time and place of a) context, while discourse is a chain of utterances in a specific context about a specific phenomenon (Foucault 1969/2001, 126–128). The practice is discursive because actors, although they are strategic and act intentionally according to their interests, besides the influence of material environment, institutions and interpersonal relations, are also under influences of discursive environment, which influences actors through symbols, ideas and meanings (Brglez 2008, 225). Actors are thus not completely conscious of their actions and meanings they give to phenomena since discourses are not only defined in terms of use of language, but as social practices that can be identified in institutions and actor's relations.⁹ And discursive social practices (actions) have also unexpected consequences.

Discursive approaches account for changes that are contingent and processual (Foucault 1969/2001, 182). *Contingency* is an outcome from the relation between agency and structure and discourses may change due to contingency of structure and because of mutual influence between structure and agents. Discourses are contingent and historical and thus vulnerable to struggles of political forces, which are excluded from their production, and events beyond their control (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 4). These moments of change are moments of *dislocation* of old structures (systems, discourses). Dislocation refers to an emergent event or events that cannot be domesticated by the dominant (hegemonic) discursive structure and during which *discursive struggles* take place (Torring 1999, 148, cf. Laclau and Mouffe 1985). In this struggles new discourses may emerge, old sedimented discourses (and meanings) may re-emerge, and present discourses may adapt (Hansen and Sørensen 2005, 96, Phillips and Jørgensen 2002, 36). For example hegemonic patriarchal discourses faced with unexpected civil society demands (cf. civil society campaigns for GE in Turkey) demanding GE, may lose their power during these unexpected events, i.e. moments of dislocations.

In this dislocating moments different discourses influence (struggle for) the meaning of events, phenomena or concepts, which may change – since concepts, like GE, are understood as *open signifiers*. The concept of *contingency* thus accounts for changes in meanings but also for changes and contingency of identities, relationship between individuals and political institutions (Ellison 2000, 154). Change of meaning and change of norms through time shows the interaction of agency and structure (Kajnc 2008, 90-91), thus structural (contextual) influences like EU and Europeanization, actors' conscious reactions (strategic usage) and unconscious discursive practices (unintentional usage) may account for changes in meaning-making of policy issues (policy framing).

CFA thus analyzes present FRAMES and VOICES related to frames.¹⁰ While to assess the influence of Europeanization on voices and their framing, CFA introduces a category of

⁹ *Discursive practice* is very compatible with the concept of *unintentional usage* and *discursive framing*.

¹⁰ One criticism over the concept of »frame« is voiced by Wagenaar (2011, 88). According to him frame analysis has a »meaning realist position«, a position that »meanings are fixed entities that can be discovered and that exist independent of the interpreter« (Schwandt 2000 in Wagenaar 2011, 88), i.e. frames are supposed to be enduring (2011, 89). However, as explained in the theoretical framework we can overcome this problem by introducing concepts of theory of discourse and discursive practice, as well as taking into account agency of actors; and by accepting, as social scientists do in social analytical work, that meanings are partially fixed but can change during moments of dislocation and struggles (cf. Laclau and Mouffe 1985), which is also what Wagenaar seems to suggest (2011, 88ff).

REFERENCE analysis. References take into account references (e.g. to EU) by different voices when framing a policy issue. I will assess the range of meanings of GE in Turkey by introducing some basic GE policies' contextual and historical development to then pass to GE policy document analysis of FRAMES, VOICES and REFERENCES as analyzed in the QUING project. To complement the CFA I use the above mentioned concepts of discourse theory to account also for longitudinal changes in frames, and analyse WHY and HOW specific (dominant vs. marginal) frames emerged according to different socio-historical contexts and how the changing (dominant vs. marginal) discourses influenced the framing process, i.e. to understand how the problems and concepts of GE are problematized and shaped in changing socio-historical contexts.

Defining religious discourses

For easier identification of VOICES I use the concept of “interpretive communities” or “communities of meaning” (Yanow 2000, 10, 20). I define religious actors by searching for actors who define themselves or are defined by a consensus in the society as actors with religious identity (for example in Turkey the so called “political Islam”), who focus (at least partly) on their identity as religious identity and who construct gender relations, gender values, and family values within a religious framework. I define the political and social activity (social/discursive practice) of religious actors as “**religious discourse**” in accordance with the definition of discourse as “systems of meaningful practices that form the identities of subject and objects” (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 3-4) or as “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak: they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention” (Foucault 1977 in Bacchi 1999, 40). Communities of meaning make problem statements as interpretations of policy issues. However it might be difficult to recognize relevant meanings, since they are most of the time known implicitly. Furthermore it is also a provisional knowledge, since meaning may change over time and place, as circumstances and individuals change (Yanow 2000, 15-17).

I will partially “fix” the identification of these communities for purposes of definition and analysis, since further in analysis I want to deconstruct this fixation by showing how fixed communities may have a very different range of beliefs and interpretations on issues – e.g. framing of issues. Some researches (cf. Paul 2009) have shown, that discourses and framing of issues can overlap, which means that different communities of meaning may employ similar discourses and framing of policy issues – or same communities of meaning might employ different discourses and framing over time. In fact “framing” as a verb suggests a more dynamic analysis of changes in issue framing over time, very possibly within a single community of meaning (Yanow 2000, 13). For example religious parties (and religious NGO voices) – although they might be members of the same community of belief, might represent different communities of practices (Yanow 2000, 29-30). Actors’ programs and activities are not static; they change as social values change under (internal and external) influences. Because of this the meanings the programs and activities carry have to be interpreted in the time and place contexts in which they were created and used (Yanow 2000, 71, cf. Paul 2009).

Europeanization of GE policies in Turkey

Initially global international obligations and protocols triggered important change albeit on a more declaratory level. Turkish parliament’s ratification of the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1986 and the ratification of the

Optional Protocol to CEDAW in 1999, accelerated civil society activities and encouraged women's NGO to translate their demands to the political arena and take active part in policy making. Some important steps forward in terms of GE were the establishment of the General Directorate for the Status and Problems of Women (KSSGM) already in 1990. However it is worth mentioning that Turkey expressed some reservations to the provisions of CEDAW in 1986, since Turkey was unable, according to existing legislation, to grant men and women equal rights and responsibilities in employment, marriage, divorce, and property ownership to be changed only in 1999 by the protocol. EU was an important generator of legislative reform (ESI 2007, 8). Especially women's NGO's used the EU accession process to accelerate already formulated demands.

Researches have shown a clear shift in Turkish reforms after the adoption of Turkey as candidate for formal membership in 1999 (ESI 2007, Schimmelfenning et al. 2003, 509, Yavuz 2006). After that time Turkey has witnessed a paradigmatic change in reforms of GE policies. The breakthrough were the amendments to the Turkish constitution (2004) (especially art. 10), which states that "women and men have equal rights" and "the state is responsible for taking all necessary measures to realize equality between men and women", a new Civil code (2001), establishment of family courts (2003), amendments to Labour Law (2003) and a completely reformed Penal Code (2004), which marks a new era in Turkish democratic change – these changes are defined by some researchers as post-patriarchal (Therborn 2004 in ESI 2007, 1). The fact that the Penal Code was changed during the rule of conservative AKP comes to astonishment of many observers and activists. Indeed the AKP was eager to collaborate transparently with NGOs (cf. ESI report) and their decade long efforts to change the very patriarchal and discriminatory nature of the Penal Code.¹¹ AKP is also a member of the Women's Platform for Peace (cf. Kanra 2009, cf. Human Rights Association <http://www.ihd.org.tr>) where as different as Islamic, secular, LGBT, Kurdish and other human rights activists participate.¹²

Within the Quing project, reports of Acar et al. (2007) and Altunok and Küçükalioglu (2009) state that in Turkey strong presence of patriarchal norms and some political attempts of re-traditionalization of society mark public debates and political tensions in terms of GE policies. According to the reports this is an issue in adultery, abortion, and matrimonial property rights, especially after the AKP has taken power in 2002. However, according to Acar et al. (2007) and Altunok and Küçükalioglu (2009) liberal modernist attitudes and women's NGO's succeeded in their demands and criticism of conservative politics, causing a government's step back.

To assess the influence of Europeanization on religious discourses in GE policy issues I will look at policy frames identified in QUING project research.¹³ Focus on FRAMES expressing *International obligations* and *Europeanization* will be strengthened by focus on which VOICES (religious conservative or secularist liberal) express which frames. Furthermore

¹¹ As writers of the ESI report remind, this should not divert our attention from the fact that gender gap and gender discrimination in Turkey remains vast (ESI 2007, 2).

¹² Except for the Kemalist feminist who withdrew from the action. Kemalist feminists as part of historical Kemalist elite have adopted a rejectionist stance towards any reconciliation. Although the Kemalist elites thought of themselves as being very pro-European, evidence shows that they oppose many EU-related reforms (Schimmelfenning et al. 2003).

¹³ Frame, voice and reference analysis is based on the Quing reports. The frames analysed in Turkish context are described in the Turkish comparative report: Altunok, Gülbanu and Elif Gözdaşoğlu Küçükalioglu (2009): Deliverable No. 36: Series of LARG comparative reports. To analyze voices and references I use the coded documents available online to project members.

attention will be paid to REFERENCES to *EU* in the documents. Since identified frames do not always differentiate between *international obligations* or *Europeanization*, I make use of references in specific documents to see which frame has more relevance and to assess if influence can be attributed more to Europeanization or/and to global influence.

IC and GBV reforms and change of framing

When looking at some issues of IC (discussions on the **New Civil Code**, and **assisted reproduction regulations**), it is evident that some religious parties represent a strong refusal for some of the reforms. The strongest opposition came from Islamic conservative Felicity Party (SP)¹⁴, who claimed, e.g., that the husband should remain the head of the family, and AP was against the introduction of equality of spouses in the Civil code. AKP on the other hand supported the change and repealed discriminatory law provisions of the old Civil Code (ESI 2007, 12-13). However AKP's objection was voiced against equal separation of assets after the divorce. Eventually they reached a conclusion that equal division of property after divorce is valid only for couples married after 2002. One AKP deputy did bring a speech of compromise to this demand, stating that if couples married before 2002 do not explicitly object, then the newly introduced property regime should also apply to them. According to Quing frame report both AKP and SP deputies display a frame named *classic marriage*¹⁵ since they were not eager to adopt major changes within this issue. However this seems a bit misleading since the report lacks some important information and it did not include speeches of AKP members who supported the changes of the Civil code, but included only the speech on objection to equal division of property (cf. ESI 2007, 13).

On the debate on assisted reproduction of couples and regulation of sperm and egg transfer, AKP and SP clearly opposed the option of reproduction with other than the couple's egg and sperm. Regarding assisted reproduction from sperm and egg banks, it is evident that couples go abroad (mostly to Cyprus) to use sperm and egg donations from banks, since it is forbidden in Turkey. In the year 2010 the reproduction of single women with sperm bank from abroad was also banned (Hurriyet 15. March 2010).¹⁶ However, an interesting opinion was voiced by a SP deputy, who proposed a legal solution for couples who cannot have children, to use a surrogate mother (although only with the couples' eggs and sperm) and regulate the parenthood by a contract. This proposal represents a more transformative frame -

¹⁴ AKP and SP are the result of a split of (Welfare Party) RP. The AKP understands itself to be moderately conservative Islamic party – analogically with Christian democrats in Europe, while the SP is radically conservative Islamic party. However in Turkish (especially Kemalist elite) imaginary as well as vast European/EU understanding, it is very common to fix the identity of especially »Islamic« religious parties as being highly conservative and especially incompatible with parliamentary democracy. See Karakaş (2007, 35) for explanation of development of Turkish Islamist parties within a parliamentary democracy. The paradox is that many stereotypical and “orientalistic” approaches tend to fix the identities not only of religious (political) actors but also the identities of the political “left” supposedly being libertarian *per se*. Analysis of different policy and political “issues” reveal the fallacy of such perceptions and the Turkey is a case *par excellence* to problematize such arguments.

¹⁵ The definition of this frame is based on notions of marriage as an important and special institution. Legislative proposals for change (like recognizing cohabitation, recognizing alternative forms of family, extending marriage to same sex couples, divorce, lack of reference to fidelity etc) are seen as breaking with the traditional definition of marriage, which is heterosexual, stable (preferably life long), and monogamous. Actions following this definition of marriage is a refusal of marriage reforms, codifying definition of marriage in higher authority legal documents (e.g. constitution, laws), and giving preference to married couples in governmental policies (Krizsan ed. 2009, p. 47). Each frame explained in this paper has a similar explanation (Krizsan ed. 2009, p. 47), but due to lack of space I will not explain all the frames.

¹⁶<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turks-are-banned-to-receive-sperm-or-egg-donations-abroad-2010-03-15>.

children for all, which stresses the importance of the individual level of people having right to have children.

It is already clear that to a limited extent different religious discourses frame policy solutions in slightly different ways and sometimes take a consensual position. Indeed SP was strongly opposing the changes of the Civil code, while AKP was supporting them, albeit with some objections. It is also interesting to note that conservative parties did never voice any reference to international organizations or EU/Europeanization when dealing with IC issues. The only reference was made to some European states, but in this case only to justify the non-adoption of equal separation of assets after the divorce, since according to the speaker similar arrangements are present in some European countries (exclusive strategy of political “usage” of EU). As Altunok and Küçükalioglu (2009) state the fact that policies in the domain of IC are still regulated mostly by national legislation and the fact that EU competences in these terms are minimal (amounting only to recommendations) has contributed to the persistence of local patriarchal and conservative views on IC issues in the Civil Code debate and even to a “non-existence” of legislation and debates on issues like same-sex partnership. Conservative, and nationalist attitudes have had an impact and influence in framing IC policies. This is especially true for debates on the Civil Code forms.

On the other hand the change of the **New Penal Code**, which deals mostly with GBV issues, was strongly monitored by the EU. Here references to EU and legitimization of change because of EU integration demands (inclusive strategy of political “usage”) did prove to be an influence and incentive for change, since reforms of the Penal code were also a condition for the start of EU membership negotiation. Thus in just a small time span from 2001 (debates on the Civil code) and 2004 (debates on the Penal code) a clear shift in conservative/religious framing is present. Just some of the main changes, which break with the patriarchal and conservative tradition of the old Penal Code are for example the following:

In the new Penal Code marital rape, virginity tests, forced and early marriages have been criminalised. The treatment of sexual crimes is understood as a crime against an individual dignity and not anymore as a crime against the honour of the family. Exempts for rapists who married with the victim (to save her and family’s honour) are dismissed and treatment of single or married women as victims of rape is dealt on equal basis (previously rape in marriage was decriminalised, and rape and abductment of a married woman was counted as a graver offence as abductment and rape of single women, which suggested that the real victim was the husband and not the raped married woman). Most importantly all references to patriarchal values such as (morality, chastity, shame and decency and public customs were eliminated from the civil code (cf. ESI 2007, 19).

Here religious discourses did change their attitude strikingly. Evidence shows that “conservative religious” voices, when debating the changes of the Penal code, display a shift in their understanding/framing. Unfortunately in the Quing project no conservative/religious party position on the debate for the new Penal code was coded,¹⁷ therefore no frames are available.¹⁸ However relying on the ESI report (2007, 14), which conducted interviews with

¹⁷ Only one AKP voice (in this case supporting the amendments of Law on protection of Family aimed at introducing effective protection for women victims of domestic violence) was coded, while three documents of CHP were coded. All voices are female.

¹⁸As mentioned at the beginning, the selection of documents for coding might influence the results and interpretation, due to the comparative nature of the project with no in-depth analysis of country’s context. This marks an important shortcoming in the data collection of the project.

AKP deputies, some AKP deputies stated for the New Penal Code reform that it is necessary in order to change the social mentality and not adapt to it; cf. ESI report 2007, p. 18, Hakki Koylu (AKP):

“the mandate of the law is not to alleviate the negative consequences of unacceptable social practices. It is to change them and prevent them with disincentives”

and Bekir Bozdag (AKP):

the new “Penal Code meant to change social customs, not adapt to them”.

However, it has been argued by the authors of the QUING Turkish reports (Acar et al. 2007, Altunok and Küçükalioglu 2009) that the emphasis on “family” and “protection of family” reveals the overwhelming influence of patriarchal social values (hegemonic discourse) on state decision-making. It is indeed very true that re-traditionalization attempts exist. A much contested case was the attempt of inclusion of criminalization of adultery. The AKP member and Prime Minister Erdogan wanted to introduce an amendment to the Penal code criminalizing adultery. However it is also meaningful to note that secularist CHP initially supported the amendment on adultery (Ilkcaracan 2007, 23)¹⁹. Both of them withdrew lately, due to outrage and pressure from civil society activists as well as EU. It might well be a result of the influence of EU and for strategic reasons that AKP follows, but what is meaningful is the fact that a conservative (and Islamic) party displays a change in framing of GE in contrast to the mainstream view that Islamist and Islamic parties are *a priori* and *per se* incompatible with GE.²⁰

The change might be slow and not overall but discourse and frame analysis goes beyond stereotypical understanding of liberal and secular “left” vs. traditionalist and religious “right” voices. This approach changes the paradigm of “fixed” identities, since we can see that different meaning communities (like political parties of “opposite” stance like religious conservative AKP and secular modernist CHP) might have similar discourses and framing of policy issues - both can display conservative views in GE terms, according to a hegemonic patriarchal discourse. Furthermore same meaning communities (if we compare religious discourses of Islamic SP and AKP) can have different framing of GE policy issues (debate on Civil Code and assisted reproduction), i.e. towards re-traditionalization or moderate liberalization.

When no strong pressure is present, hegemonic patriarchal discourses tend to persist. But moments of dislocations, like internal and external contingent changes (influences), can contribute to discourse struggles and change of discourses. The change for Civil code was initiated and pressured mostly by internal changes (civil society) and it did influence conservative views. Civil society has played an important role in initiating change and criticising traditional state and social structures. In Turkey the GBV issue has gained political and public importance already during the 80’s, when various women’s groups initiated

¹⁹ Thus not only religious conservatives of AKP, as authors of the Quing report suggest, can be conservative and traditional in their stance towards GE reforms.

²⁰ While it would be according to the religious doctrine to punish adultery (and the demand of AKP was to punish both male and female adultery), the political option of Islamist party in Turkey decided to step back in this demand. Religious social and political (discursive) practice is indeed more heterogeneous and adaptable as mainstream perceptions would admit. I am indebted to prof. D. Kandiyoti for this insight, calling it *strategic discourse resources* that religious actors employ.

different activities and played an important role in raising public awareness on the issue. The reason for such an outbreak are new feminist movements in the West and Turkey, as well as the military coup in 1980 during which the army liquidated (killed or imprisoned) many alternative movements, especially male activists. The vacuum was then filled in by women, who reacted against military rule, demanded freedom, political rights and especially more women's rights and change of the Civil and Penal Code (Erol 1992, 113–114, Sirman 1989, 19, Özkaya 1998, 66–70, see also Women for Women's Human Rights <http://www.wwhr.org/>).

However the importance of external influences, especially the EU is striking, since great shifts took place when EU monitoring and demands grew more intense. This can be contributed to a (historically) important place of Europe for Turkey. It can be concluded that in those issues which remain in the sole state domain, conservative/religious views tend not to change so quickly (changes were mostly demanded by civil society organizations internally). On the other hand issues demanded by the EU have had a great impact on changes, especially of religious discourses, since their expected gains from EU are greater than ones for secular Kemalists or nationalists. These are not favourable to EU democratization demands, since it would also mean concessions of power, especially regarding the power of army.

These influences can be noticed in the case of GBV issue and the debate on the Penal Code. As we have seen religious discourses have changed strikingly in just a few years span.²¹ According to QUING project results in framing of the problem of GBV there is a presence of *international obligations frame* and references to international obligations like conventions, and treaties (ex. CEDAW, Beijing, UN) are present, while no significant EU references were found. Minor EU and EU membership references are expressed only in parliamentary debates of CHP. However, other evidence (cf. ESI report, TV interviews, Ilkcaracan 2007 from WWHR) show that the EU as incentive for change of the Penal code was relevant for AKP change in framing. Thus Koksall Toptan (AKP, head of the parliamentary Justice Committee in charge of drafting the New Penal Code)²² stated:

“Turkey is in the process of EU membership. In this framework important laws and harmonisation packages have been passed. /.../ Now this Penal code draft seriously conflicts with the new harmonisation laws passed. No one should have any doubt that we will bring it to the highest level.”

Although Minister Erdogan complained about EU interference in internal affairs, he withdrew from this demand due to EU's sharp reaction and threat to stalemate the negotiations, as well as women's civil society pressure and outrage. And although Penal code remains in the domain of national state legislation, in Turkish case it was a necessary step for the beginning of negotiations. So EU influence was clearly present and it can be said that this triggered the change of framing of conservative/religious actors, especially AKP, since the Party is strongly committed to fulfil EU demands. It is however important to note that without internal (NGO demands, army influence) and external (EU) influences patriarchal hegemonic discourses seem not be eager to change their interpretation of GE.²³

²¹ Historical longitudinal analysis would give us even more insight on the span of changes (or continuity) of religious discourses.

²² NTV (News TV channel), 21 October 2003.

²³ An important contribution to the analysis of religious voices would be the comparative analysis of state and civil society (CS) voices, e.g. religious women CS. Since various civil society organizations (mostly women and

Employment policies

In Turkish case the EU influence is mostly recognizable in workplace regulations with clear economic driven interests in the employment and labour area. A turning point in GE employment policies in Turkey was the **Accession Partnership agreement** after which the Turkish Government adopted the National Programme for the Adoption of the *Acquis Communautaire* (NPAA) in 2001, which set Turkey's priorities for EU accession. Following this programme Turkey prepared a new Labour Law, which aimed at adapting to EU Directives and implement them into national legislation (Altunok and Küçükalioglu 2008). Besides EU, international influence had its stake in Turkish employment policies.

In Turkish case frames expressing the need of *inclusion of women* in the labour market are present in conservative/religious (AKP) and other voices (mainly CHP texts were analyzed). All governmental voices (no different framing is present between conservative/religious and liberal parties) frame the employment issue mainly in terms of *international obligations*. According to references in texts *international references* (UN, CEDAW, ILO) as well as *EU references* are present in most of the documents. The main difference is that conservative/religious voices express much more EU references in different shapes: *EU*, *Treaty of Rome*, *European Court of justice*, *EU employment Strategy*, *EU acquis communautaire*, *EU membership*, *EU council*, *EU social charter*, *maternity leave in EU states*, while other voices express only few of them (*EU social charter* and the *directive EC 92/85/EEC*). Another difference is that conservative/religious voices express *efficient capitalism* frame, while other voices do not. So the most striking difference is the high rate of referencing to EU in conservative/religious voices, which clearly shows the influence and impact of EU on religious actors and the importance they attribute to it, as well as their motivation for change.

Preferences of economic interests are also much present in Turkey. Such an economic inclination and convergence in adapting to EU requirements may be explained by clear-cut EU competence in the issue of employment (hard-law directives) and also by the nature of EU GE policies framed heavily within employment and capitalism frameworks. We can talk of a European "master discourse of market competitiveness" (Radaelli 2003, 7) in the domain of GE employment issue policies. In this case GE is seen as an instrumental means; it is "shrunk" (reduced) to equality in the labour market and "bended" to fit higher national goals and interests (EU membership, economic growth) (cf. Lombardo et al. 2009).

Conclusions

We can conclude that Europeanization has different influence in different policy areas (employment policies, IC, and GBV policies) and on voices expressing Europeanization, but also in the way Europe/Europeanization is used. We have examples of Europeanization (references to EU or specific EU countries), which is "used" in two ways, as a justification for adoption and change in legislation and as an excuse to avoid new legislation. In employment issue actors use Europe or Europeanness as normative and ideationally desirable aim, perceived as the direction of progress to push through their agenda. When defining GE

LGBT) were an important advocate of GE change, it would be interesting to see how the interaction of different actors influenced the process and the outcome of policies. Besides, analysing religious civil society organizations, and making a distinction between male and female voices would give a clearer picture on differences and similarities, contestations and agreements among religious voices participating in policy-making (policy framing) of GE.

policies actors are under influence of a hegemonic economic discourse. EU may be also used as an excuse for non-adoption of equality legislation, although EU recommendations may be clearly in favour of more equality policies. This is the case of some IC issues within the Civil code debate, which shows the persistence of patriarchal hegemonic discourse. So we can see that Europeanization does not work only as one-way impact on national political systems (only one-way adaptation), since it is a negotiable concept being "stretched and bended" along with the negotiations. The Penal code debates is an interesting case that shows how patriarchal hegemonic discourses may be challenged by external changes, which influence the identity and behaviour of actors that eventually change their framing. Europeanization has influenced conservative/religious discourses considerably, much more than international (global) influences, at least on a referential and normative level. Islamic actors understand the process of Europeanization in the light of human rights, democracy and market economy, politically articulated religious actors indeed see in this process the possibility of being politically and socially active (Yavuz 2006, 238–239, 246) even if this means concessions regarding the understanding of GE.

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