

SECURITIZATION AND DESECURITIZATION OF ENERGY RESOURCES: INSIGHTS FROM ALSACE-LORRAINE FOR CYPRUS ISLAND

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Abstract

Energy resources since the industrial revolution have been paramount for both developing and developed countries. Therefore, the urgent need for and control over energy resources in order to have an advantage against rivalries have become a significant part of national security. From the late 18th century to early 20th century, coal and gasoline were major energy resources to make machines operational but they have been gradually replaced by the fossil fuels, oil and gas. While transformation is happening, dependency on energy resources in the fields ranging from housewarming to jet fuels dramatically increased. Having adequate energy resources, in this sense, provides industrially and economically strategic advantages for a country, so military or political struggles over energy resources have been a salient issue in international relations. This paper seeks to examine the struggle over energy resources under the light of Alsace-Lorraine case and to compare the results with the Cyprus case. In doing so, securitization studies facilitate theoretical ground on how energy resources are securitized, which leads to a country to take extreme cautions, including armed conflict and on how energy resources are de-securitized, which leads to changes in foreign policies from conflict to cooperation.

Keywords

Securitization, De-securitization, Energy Resources, Alsace-Lorraine, Cyprus Issue, Germany-France, Turkey-Greece

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Introduction

Increasing energy demand and diversification of energy sources have led to natural gas gaining importance and priority in the last decades. The recent discoveries of a significant amount of natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean have diversified the source country options in the international gas market; three large fields have been discovered by offshore Israel and Cyprus between 2009 and 2011. These recent developments have raised discussions about the relationship between regional geopolitics and energy. Many analysts have expressed hopes that the Eastern Mediterranean might become a gas exporting region (Christou and Adamides, 2016). Moreover, this newly discovered gas sources could pave the way for a new era of cooperation which has the potential to solve conflicts in the region. However, history shows that disagreements over the sharing of energy resources more prone to conflict. The disagreements on Alsace-Lorraine can be taken as a striking example. Although there were amply reasons bringing the world at the edge of World War II, the disagreements between Germany and France about the sharing of energy resources in the region brought a global dimension to the conflict (Garloch, 1946: 268). Post-war political and military conditions enforced historical rivalries, German and France, to co-operate in terms of sharing energy resources, especially in Alsace-Lorraine. It is a fact that the energy resources in Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean have the same potential both for conflict and cooperation. Therefore, a comparison between the Cyprus Island and the Alsace-Lorraine regions can be important examples for the analysis of the conflict and cooperation potentials of energy resources.

An analytical framework of the paper bases on the securitization of the energy resources in the Alsace-Lorraine during both the First and the Second World Wars and desecuritization of energy resources after the Second World War. In case of Cyprus issue, this paper argues that securitization of the energy resources is now getting stronger and suggests that resemblances between the Alsace-Lorraine and the Cyprus issue might be taken as lessons before securitization of the energy resources leads to conflict. In order to do that, desecuritization process of Alsace-Lorraine case between Germany and France after WWII should be examined.



Such a huge argument has to be dealt with eloquently because of current disagreements in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea are getting furious. In order to subsidies the potential of energy resources bringing conflict (securitization) or cooperation (desecuritization) in the EMS region, the resemblances between the Alsace-Lorraine and Cyprus have to be presented. These two cases should be compared in order to increase the robustness of the main argument.

Following a section of the paper explains why these two cases are comparable. The next section provides a theoretical framework to comprehend how energy resources could lead to conflict and then cooperation in Alsace-Lorraine. Right after that, the paper depicts the case of Cyprus issue on which securitization process is in operation. In the concluding section, desecuritization process of the Alsace-Lorraine region is taken as a ground for the Cyprus issue.

What makes the Alsace-Lorraine and the Cyprus Issue Comparable?

The Alsace Lorraine region possessing coal mines and iron ores have had a strategic place during both World Wars. This is because in the early 20th-century coal and iron were important energy sources that were used in the wide range of sectors, including the war industry. On the other hand, hydrocarbon reserves recently discovered by the offshore of Cyprus have made the Island the center of energy conflict between the guarantor states: Turkey and Greece. The analogy between Alsace-Lorraine and Cyprus issues allows us to analyze the conflict and cooperation potentials of energy sources. It is going to be a bold argument that the Alsace-Lorraine and the Cyprus issue are similar to analyze and thus causes and results of both cases would be similar. Not to crash under such a huge burden, it is better to list similarities between the two cases. In this way, analyzing the Alsace-Lorraine case with securitization theory would make much more sense. Similarities are going to be categorized under three subtitles: historical background of remaining in-between two main actors, ethnic, language and cultural arguments of the actors claiming sovereignty over the regions, and possessing rich natural resources.

Historical Background: Changing Sovereignties between Two Main Actors over the Years

The Alsace-Lorraine region, attached to France in 1648 by the Treaty of Westphalia, was subsequently annexed by Germany in 1871 at the end of the Franco-Prussian War and returned to France after the First World War, thanks to the Treaty of Versailles. Excluding the de facto annexation of 1940-45, it had been French territory once again (Glenn, 1974). On the other hand, Cyprus Island was conquered by the Ottomans in the 16th century and became a center of sea trade. It stard under the Ottoman rule for almost four centuries, and Turkish residents settled there and lived together with the native Cypriots. The British Empire took sovereignty in the 19th century. After the decay of the Ottoman Empire, Island remained under the rule of the British Empire as a mandate. With the annexation of Island by the British Empire, the "Cyprus Dispute" was identified as the conflict between the people of Cyprus and Britain regarding the Cypriots' demand for self-determination. Several campaigns against Britain were organized by EOKA (Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston). In 1950 as a result of the propaganda of Greece,



the Greek Cypriot went for a referendum in which around 97% of the population voted for the 'enosis' (Union with Greece) (Yalçın, 2018). The referendum result was utilized by Greece to get international support for unification. Greece put the referendum results (around 97% vote for ENOSIS) to use for getting international support for unification. So that the international propaganda started to work, Turkey decided to support Turkish Cypriots claim of Taksim (partition of the Island between Greeks and Turks). As Greeks in Cyprus led by the EOKA attacked the British presence, started to organize attacks on the Turkish Cypriots. On these events, the Cyprus dispute shifted from a colonial to an ethnic dispute between the Turkish and the Greek Islanders (Erkem, 2016).

Decolonization process changed the sovereignty of the region, and the Island became an independent country with the agreement among the United Kingdom, Turkey and Greece which are still acting as guarantor states (Karakasis, 2017: 8). For Turkey, the significance of Cyprus increased during the cold war because of its geographical location along energy routes. Moreover, the recent discovery of hydrocarbon resources off the southern shores of Cyprus increased the strategic importance of the Island for Turkey and other parties (Soysal, 2004). Both regions have staged in the center of political and economic quarrels among the actors having national interests over the regions. While Germany and France were claiming their sovereignty over Alsace-Lorraine, Turkey and Greece are now main actors over the Cyprus question.

Both territories have historically been changing hands between two major actors. Therefore, whenever the control of the region changed, then the defeated party articulated linguistic, cultural and ethnic arguments in their efforts for taking it back.

Ethnic, Language and Cultural Arguments of the Actors over both Regions

The boundary between France and Germany was contested from the Middle Ages until the end of WWII. Much of this contestation involved the Alsace-Lorraine region which is located on the French side of the Rhine River and extends north-westward to the boundary between France and Luxembourg. Its population divided among French and German speakers. Alsace and Lorraine were subject to more intrusive assimilation attempts by first the German and then the French central governments. It took until the 1950s for tensions to calm down. With the returning of the region to France, the use of German dialects was suppressed, and people were mandated the use of French in schools and for government business (Glenn, 1974). At this point, it is necessary to address the distinctive approaches to the concept of the nation by Germany and France. It is because of that the differences in perception of the concept of nation reveal the way of how both actors affiliate their relations to the region and people living over there. As an initial example of nationalism in Europe, France took the path for a state-centred and territorial nationalism that includes assimilation of people living in the land under the French authority or claimed to be under French authority. In contrast, Germany mostly focuses on ethnocultural understanding in which linguistic and ethnic origin are key determinants (Brubaker, 2010). As a result, France tried to re-formulize the mind of people living in Alsace Lorraine for that they are French and Germans emphasized Deutsche speaking people lignin in the region.



For Cyprus, as a divided Island into two parts since 1974 similarly to Alsace-Lorraine it has long been viewed largely through the prism of the two ethnic communities, Greek and Turkish. With the decolonization process, the creation of the Republic of Cyprus and the acquisition of independence from Britain did not establish the peace and stability, but instead, the conflict escalated, and acts of violence in the 1960s put an end to the newly formed bi-communal state. The main issues of the dispute were; the organization of the army, proportional public procurement, tax law, and separate municipalities (Erkem, 2016). The emergence of both Greek and then Turkish nation-state and also the process of modernization had a great impact on traditionally co-existent Muslim and Christian societies. It is now a political reality that the era of modernity and nationalism in Cyprus has transformed pre-modern traditional communities into two separate political communities (Kızılyürek, 2002:223). The authority of the Republic of Cyprus extends over the Greek part in the south, whereas the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus rules over the Turkish part in the north, which is consisted of 36.2 per cent of the Island. As guarantor states, Greece and Turkey, their ethnic, linguistic, cultural and sometimes religious ties have been instrumentalized to claim their historical bounds, which serves their interests.

Rich Natural Resources Capacity of the Regions

The Alsace-Lorraine region was an interception point between France and Germany and is consequently of major strategic importance; it was also important because of its valuable resources. The region had important forests and valuable minerals. The salt deposits had been mined since the ancient times and between two wars, it was the basis for the important chemical industry. The Alsace-Lorraine region contained 46 per cent of the valuable iron ore reserves of Europe. Coal and Steel had provided both military capacity for occupation, as well as a cause for German and French territorial acquisition. The Alsace-Lorraine and its coal and iron ore deposit changed hands between France and Germany in 1871, 1918, 1940 and 1945. The iron deposits of Alsace-Lorraine were the second-largest discovered deposits in the world in 1918. During the First World War, Germany had 2,800 million tons of iron ore. Lorraine alone accounted for 2,000 million of these tons. After the dephosphorization process was discovered before the First World War, the value of these ore deposits became abundantly clear for both Germany and France. For the Rhine Basin, where Alsace, Lorraine and the German Saarland lay, there were iron and coal deposits that were critical strategic resources for the industry in the industrial era (as they were the basic requirements of steel production). Even today, Alsace and Lorraine are among the wealthiest regions of France, not a small part because of the steel and automotive industries involved in this area¹.

Around the mines have grown-up important industrial centres specializing in the production of iron and crude steel. Another mineral wealth of the region consists of potash mines and coal mines. Especially the potash mines were the second largest deposits of

¹ https://www.cvce.eu/en/recherche/unit-content/-/unit/5cc6b004-33b7-4e44-b6db-f5f9e6c01023/ee53b53d-cdfa-4b9f-a760-6339c851af9d/Resources#d27b6708-a15d-448a-891b-1158baf023a_en&overlay.



this mineral in the World (Garloch, 1946). The exploitation of petroleum on a commercial scale began in Alsace, which led to large-scale modern industries in the region.

The recent discovery of natural gas off the southern shores of Cyprus has added a new dimension to the debates on the "value" of the country. According to preliminary findings, the amount of natural gas found in the Glaucus-1 well (Cyprus' 10th block) is estimated to be between 5 trillion and 8 trillion cubic meters, meaning it could meet the Island's energy needs for up to 200 years. The discovery is the largest amount ever found in the Exclusive Economic Zone claimed by Cyprus. The discoveries have attracted the interest of European countries and Turkey, as well as energy companies, who are looking for supply alternatives outside of Russia (Özekin, 2020). Therefore, the geopolitical and economic importance of Cyprus radically changes and this inevitably impacts on the conflict as well as the terms of its resolution; it may deepen the divide, or it might become a factor pushing toward cooperation. It can be claimed that the strategic significance of Cyprus is redefined in different historical periods.

To sum up, the initial point of the paper begins with the historical experience both regions have gone through. They have been under the sovereignty of different actors overtimes, and by swapping between them, these regions have been under different political, social, and cultural dominance. This interchange of sovereignties turned out to be paramount due to the natural resources they had/have. For instance, at the beginning of the 20th century due to the strategically important coal mines that Alsace-Lorraine contained, the region had been a problem zone that triggered conflicts between the two neighbouring countries: France and Germany. On the other hand, by the early years of the 21st century, Cyprus has the potential to be Alsace-Lorraine of Turkey and Greece in the Eastern Mediterranean region because of the recent discovery of hydrocarbon reserves. These two critical similarities self-reflect another point which is that these regions are directly or indirectly claimed by the two main actors struggling to share the natural resources they had/have. The resemblance of being compressed between the two main actors also leads to another one. The main actors (France and Germany over Alsace Lorraine and Greece and Turkey over Cyprus) substantiate their claims over ethnic, linguistic, and cultural arguments which they had/have established over the centuries.

In general, the Alsace-Lorraine region and the Cyprus Island reflect quite similarities, which can be claimed that they can be compared in terms of energy capacities. The Alsace-Lorraine region changed the course of events then and the Cyprus issue might change now. To see that, the importance of Alsace-Lorraine during the two world wars as conflicting issues over energy resources and also during the formation of European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) as compromising issue over energy should be taken under close examinations in the light of securitization and desecuritization theories.

Theoretical Framework: Securitization and Desecuritization of the Alsace-Lorraine and the Cyprus Issues

The concept of security has been redefined by B. Buzan, as one of the founding members of the Copenhagen School of security studies in the 1990s. According to the school of thought, "security" is not considered to be a direct consequence of the threat but is rather defined as the result of the political interpretation of the threat, a process called



securitization. The authors of this school point out the need to construct a conceptualization of security that means something much more specific than just any threat or problem. Therefore, security is defined as a non-linear reaction to the threat. After the seminal work of Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde (1998), titled as 'Security: A New Framework for Analysis', securitization theory itself and its fundamental concepts have enormously been studied to criticize and so develop new dimensions. Most of the studies basically emphasize underdevelopedness of the securitization theory and thus in order to make the securitization theory more explanatory of current international issues, so they suggest developing basic concepts of the securitization theory (Stritzel, 2007; Wæver, 2011 and 2015, Vuori, 2008; Balzacq, Leonardo, and Ruzicka, 2015). Despite massive salient efforts to meet the deficit of the theory, this paper does not intend to delve into the weakness or strength of it. It is thought that the basic assumption of how an issue is securitized would provide a suitable ground to understand the cases of the Alsace-Lorraine region and the Cyprus issue.

The core argument of the securitization theory is that "it is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one" (Wæver, 2004: 13). In this way, every possible issue or subject can be turned into a security issue and there will be no limitation. To avoid such endless securitization, the theory suggests three steps which are defining threats, emergently required actions, and effects on inter-unit relations (Taureck, 2006: 55). Regarding the first step, an issue has to be explained by the security keywords. The utterances, including these security key words, prioritize a given issue and aim to present vital importance of it. This first step is actually called a speech act performed by politicians or those who are influential in the decision-making process (Shipoli, 2018: 72). The function of the speech act is to raise awareness of a critical issue which has to be dealt with immediately and extra-ordinary means.

To Buzan and Wæver (2003), for securitization, a speech act is essential, "through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object and to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat" (491). This definition of securitization theory opens the door for more debates on whether the security is objective (real threats) or (inter)-subjective (constructed) (Balzacq, 2019; Baele and Thomson, 2017; Stritzel, 2007), democratic and non-democratic regimes (Vuori, 2008; Wæver, 2011), and the concept of security itself (Šulović, 2010; Aradau, 2018; Baele and Thomson, 2017).

As this paper does not have an intention to test the theory's weakness and strength but focus on the case study of comparing securitization of energy resources between the Alsace-Lorraine and the Cyprus issues, fundamental assumptions of the theory will be applied both cases examined in the paper. In the securitization process, starting with the speech act, there has to be a securitizer and the audience whose approval is required. Once the equilibrium is reached among them, then extraordinary moves and policies can be applied for dealing with a securitized issue. Approval by the audience is also another debatable issue in the securitization theory literature as authority to act and to follow a certain policy is still at the hands of politicians or military officers who can try eliminated what is considered to be an existential security threat to the state or society (McDonald, 2008: 564; Roe, 2008: 632). This critic of securitization theory actually fits political



conditions during the two world wars, while France was not a fully-fledged democracy and Germany was ruled with a constitutional monarchy and then fascist regime led by Adolf Hitler. Therefore, the consent of the audience does not seem imperative for a successful securitization process.

Besides, the basic concepts of securitization (speech act, securitizer and audience), the context (McDonald, 2008: 564) or framework (Shipoli, 2018: 76) in which a securitizing speech act is delivered is also quite significant for securitization process. Both McDonald and Shipoli have emphasized, in separate works, the significance of the conditions in and momentum from which securitization process makes much more sense without mentioning referent object together with the security word. In both cases which the paper focuses on, there has been historical, social and cultural symbolism strengthening the securitization process. Thus, context or framework can be facilitator factors to reach a consensus between a securitizer and an audience. Agreeing with their critics, it is better to depict the context in which both cases was\has been securitized. In this way, a speech act employed by a securitizer would make more sense of the process of securitization.

Securitization Contexts of the Alsace-Lorraine and the Cyprus Issue

The need to maintain coal supplies (a primary energy source) had figured in both world wars. As well as energy supply, coal became a very political issue. Until the mid-1950s coal was still the world's foremost fuel, but after this time oil and gas quickly took over. It has been argued that energy is the key "to the advance of civilization," that the evolution of human capability is dependent on the conversion of energy for human use. Therefore, energy plays a fundamental role in shaping state relations.

A country's ability to access energy supplies and how it uses that energy determines the state of its economy, society and national security. A country's production mechanism, international affairs and lifestyle are all determined by fossil fuels. The energy that is so important for countries inevitably causes problems. In international law, many borders were delimited through treaties; however, upon the discovery of new energy sources closer to the border, that border becomes disputed. On the other hand, states have the right to extract resources within their territories. However, when a resource basin stretches across multiple countries' borders, it becomes difficult for a single country to assert its sovereignty over the field (Yergin, 2006).

Taking the theory as a ground point, the need to find, secure and diversified energy supplies have been construed as a leading security concern for actors or entities who see energy security as their national interests. By having a succinct critical framework for analysis, we are better able to understand the actions, reactions, and needs of states who consider their energy security to be threatened. By using cases of Alsace Lorraine and Cyprus, it has been found that certain regions where natural resources buried underneath have been a significant part of national interests. To secure national interests, regardless of constructed by audiences or securitizers, international actors determine a policy to deal with any issues. The importance of any possible issue within the national security framework reveals the level of securitization of the issue. The natural resources have been vital for survival and the development of a country. That is why coal and iron ore in Alsace Lorraine were subjected to the great struggle between



France and German. Relying on similarities between Alsace Lorraine region and Cyprus Island, this paper would argue that the Cyprus issue has a significant potential for being subjected to a great struggle through securitization. As the German and French securitized the issue of being in control over the natural resources, Greece and Turkey would seem to consider Cyprus issue as a security matter via securitizing energy resources in the offshores of the Island. Under these circumstances, securitization of energy resources opens up a new window for grasping the relations between Greece and Turkey towards energy resources in Cyprus Island.

Securitizers' Securitization of the Alsace-Lorraine and the Cyprus Issue through the Speech Act

The Alsace-Lorraine Case

Securitizing actors, to the Copenhagen School, are not limited to politicians but include intellectuals and officers and international actors (Stritzel, 2007). This section of the paper, there should have had archival research for obtaining both French and German documents and statements. Though the paper length is limited, secondary resources describing securitizing actors' understanding and statements seem adequate. To start with,

"As early as the autumn of 1914, members of the French government were defining war aims as the destruction of German industrial power through the occupation and even annexation of the Rhineland's coal regions. The Saar would be suitable for annexation, while the lower Rhine region of the Ruhr would be put under international protection administered by France, with troops present if need be. France could at one stroke destroy Germany economic and military hegemony while reestablishing itself as the greatest continental power. One French minister even suggested the removal of "the population of the Palatinate, who hate France, so as to create a vast area of expansion for the Latin race" (Henze, 2005).²

A prominent historian, Georges-Henri Soutou, who undertook various official positions in the French government suggested that in the First World War, France's major aim to destroy the industrial capacity of German to win the war and also stressed the significance of the Alsace- Lorraine's coal and iron ore resources for heavy industries. In this way, Germans' both economic and military capacities would be eliminated. This statement and the aim of the paper do not imply that the WWI was erupted because of struggle over energy resources but having, keeping, and controlling energy resources were\have been quite a survival in an anarchic world order to protect national interests. In the German side, Baron von Kiihlmann, the German Foreign Secretary, said in the Reichstag, October 9, 1917:

² <https://mandalaprojects.com/ice/ice-cases/saar.htm>.



"After a very thorough investigation of the whole situation, according to information derived from the most diverse sources, I am convinced that the great question around which the struggle of the nations centres, and for which they are shedding their blood, is not, in the first instance, the Belgian question. The question for which Europe is being turned more and more into a heap of ruins is the question of the future of Alsace-Lorraine" (Hazen, 1919: 154).

At the beginning of the First World War, the securitization level of the Alsace-Lorraine containing both coal and iron ores, which were paramount for the economy, military and industry, was also regarded as vital because of that Baron von Kiihlmann, the German Foreign Secretary, matched political and military struggles among European powers with the question of the Alsace-Lorraine. The keywords in his statement of 'more diverse sources' and 'the struggle of the nations' indicate the securitization level of energy resources in the region and thus the Germans were ready to dispose everything they had in order to get control of the region or prevent any other European states from controlling the region. Karl Marx also articulates another securitizing speech act by saying that "If Alsace and Lorraine are taken, then France will later make war on Germany in conjunction with Russia. It is unnecessary to go into the unholy consequences" (Marx, 2019:862). His expectation of France to go war against Germany in lining with another European power (Russia) indicates that securitization of energy resources was not constrained with the two rival states (France and Germany) but also include other European states.

Seeking control over energy resources between the two world wars was securitized by almost all states that were involved in the wars. By speech acts, each one of them stressed the importance of Alsace-Lorraine, if not the only reason but one of the significant factors which were critical to determining the results of the wars. At this level of securitization, as the theory suggests, all democratic norms could be left behind and taken extraordinary measure to achieve the control of the referent object, in this case, energy resources. Securitizing moves to get what the states wanted during the wars can be listed in too many pages, but wars itself show securitization level.

The Cyprus Case

As explained above, the energy dimension of the Cyprus question has been on the agenda of the parties since the early 2000s. Since the Island gained independence from the United Kingdom and emerged as a separate state as the Republic of Cyprus, the guarantor status of Greece and Turkey has given them the right to say something at the national and international level. In light of the fact that Greece and Turkey are directly or indirectly involved in the Cyprus question, the energy issue cannot be understood and analysed separately from the chronic problems of the Island. Sovereignty disputes, which Greece and Turkey have historically claimed on both Island and in the Eastern Mediterranean, have taken on a new dimension with natural gas discoveries.



Although the Cyprus question has many historical dimensions, the date of 2011 -in which parties began to raise dispute aloud with the discovery of natural gas- is taken to make a wholesome comparison with the Alsace-Lorraine region. This is because, in both, disagreements over energy sources have been centred on the conflict. As French and German acted in Alsace-Lorraine, today Turkish and Greek have made the energy a subject of sovereignty, in other words, a referent object in accordance with the securitization theory. In turn, this brings difficulties in solving the question and raising tension is proceeding. Due to the recent discovery of natural gas offshores of the Cyprus Island, the geopolitical and economic importance of Cyprus is radically changing and this inevitably impacts on the conflict potential as much as on the terms of its resolution. In other words, the recent discovery of natural gas can deepen the conflict or can enforce the parties toward cooperation.

Such massive discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean raised the appetite of the Greek Cypriots to search for energy resource in its economic zone. Thus, it decided to join these exploration activities. In this first period, although they have been negotiating with many US-based energy companies, they did not achieve starting exploration activities as a result of Turkey's pressure until the second half of the first decade of the 21st century. Greek Cyprus later was able to sign an agreement with Egypt, Lebanon and Israel, regarding the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Turkey claims that Cyprus has obtained unfair interests by ignoring the basic rules of maritime law through bilateral agreements. Cyprus first signed an agreement for delimitation of EEZ with Egypt on 17 February 2003 and reported the coordinates of the agreed region to the UN. Turkey declared that the agreement signed between Cyprus and Egypt was not made with the participation of all countries bordering the Eastern Mediterranean, that it would not be appropriate for Egypt to enter into an EEZ agreement with Cyprus without a limitation agreement with Turkey on the basis of the middle line, and that did not accept the disregard of the TRNC (Yaycı, 2012). Despite Turkey's objections to these agreements, Cyprus immediately declared 13 oil exploration license sites in the Eastern Mediterranean in 2007 to explore for hydrocarbon resources. However, 8 of these 13 announced sites coincide with the TRNC and 5 with the Turkish continental shelf.

In this way, they have delineated the parcels in the Eastern Mediterranean so that they would be in control of the entire energy resources in the offshore of the Island. Unilaterally signing contracts with international drilling and oil companies by the Republic of Cyprus is reacted by Turkey with signing a "Continental Shelf limitation agreement" with TRNC on September 21, 2011, and granting exploration licenses to TPAO (Turkish Petroleum Corporation) in its own economic region in the Eastern Mediterranean and the north and east of Northern Cyprus (Karakasis, 2017: 11). By agreement in the case that the hydrocarbon reserve is found in the region it will be shared between Turkey and the TRNC.

The commencement of the securitization point starts here since the Economic Exclusive Zone is an extension of national sovereignty. Violation of state sovereignty, regardless of the mainland or the sea is seen as *modus operandi* leading to conflict. The Greek side of the Island has been acting on behalf of the entire Island while signing agreements with the international companies and the other states and thus excluding Turkey and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). In summary, Turkish Cyprus's argument is that



Greek side is not the sole representative of the whole Island and Turkey argues that some of the parcels in which drilling activities are in operation fall into Turkey's Economic Exclusive Zones, which is around the north-west of the Island. In this case, the referent object is the same as the Alsace-Lorraine case, energy resources.

The most recent speech acts of both sides performed by the politicians and decision-makers provide securitization connotations in their statements. For instance, Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan articulated that "as we made the terrorists in Syria pay, we will not leave the scene to the bandits of the sea" (4 November 2018, *The Guardian*).³ He, by constructing similarities between terrorists in Syria and the drilling companies and the Greek Cyprus unilateral initiatives, emphasizes the importance of sharing energy resources in the region. Turkey's securitizing move has been military intervention into terrorist hedges in Syria implies that Turkey is ready for military involvement in case of any movements excluding Turkey or what is considered as survival in the region. In the same statement, he also stressed that there would be no resolution without excluding Turkey from the regional dynamics by saying that "Those who thought they could take steps in the Eastern Mediterranean or the Aegean in defiance of Turkey have now begun to understand what a big mistake they were making. It is *absolutely unacceptable* to usurp the natural resources of the eastern Mediterranean while excluding Turkey and the TRNC" (4 November 2018, *The Guardian*). In this regard, Turkey's policy over the energy resources in the offshore of the Island indicates securitization level and Turkey might thus take any precautions to keep its interests intact. Securitizing moves of Turkey is self-reflective for the securitization of the energy resources. Turkey has not only sent its own two drilling ships (named Fatih and Yavuz who were the Ottoman Sultans) but also, they have been accompanied by the warships, named with Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha who was a great admiral in the Ottoman Empire, to prevent possible interference by the third parties (Adamides and Christou, 2016: 90). Even once, one of the warships blocked Saipem 12000 which belonged to Italian International Drilling Company (ENI) from the parcels the Greek Cyprus declared.⁴ After Turkey's intervention, the Italian company halted its drilling activities; Greek Cyprus signed a deal with the US Company ExxonMobil and the Qatar Petroleum. After this agreement, the United States lifted the arms embargo it had imposed on Cyprus since 1974. Turkey argues that lifting the embargo would have a negative impact on efforts to resolve the Cyprus issue. So much so that the historic "Cyprus problem," which existed because of long-standing disputes between Turkey and Greece and Greek Cyprus, has been recharged to extend beyond the borders of the Island to a large area of sea. In fact, the consequences of this dispute directly affected other regional actors, such as Egypt, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon and Syria were also concerned with the political benefits of global actors such as Russia, the European Union (EU) and the United States. In just the same way as Alsace Lorraine, disagreements over Cyprus Island have moved away from being a regional problem and become a global problem.

On the other hand, Greece's argument on the Cyprus issue is mostly affiliated with the legal violations of Turkey and mostly complained Turkey to the international organizations, especially the EU and the UN and also NATO. As referent object remains the same, securitization of energy resources by Greece and the Greek side of Cyprus did

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/04/turkey-warns-oil-companies-against-drilling-near-cyprus>

⁴ <https://www.energy-reporters.com/opinion/turkeys-first-drilling-vessel-heads-to-mediterranean/>



not seem to be as much as Turkey at the beginning. By standing international law while articulating their argument implies that they considered the issue within the political realm and that did not suggest they would take military actions toward to the issue. One of the -statement of the Greek side, articulated by Foreign Ministry of Greece, criticized Turkey for violating sovereign rights of Cyprus by arguing that “a slew of violations” against the sovereignty and sovereign rights of Cyprus, international law and the European *acquis* and is in defiance of the calls by the EU and the international community to respect the rights of Cyprus and defuse tensions” (4 October 2019, Ekathimerini).⁵ However, as of late Greece and the Republic of Cyprus’s participation into several joint military exercises with the states such as Israel⁶ and Egypt⁷ in the region might be considered as securitizing move because they might imply and represent a regional coalition against Turkey. Although later than Turkey, Greece has now begun to articulate military options. In this context, Greece has armed 18 Islands in the Aegean Sea since the beginning of 2020 in violation of the Lausanne and Paris Agreements. Greece and Cyprus’s operating military exercises with France and signing air defence agreements could be considered as a securitizing move. Likewise, France's arrangement of joint military exercises with the Greek Cypriot Administration and the deployment of military aircraft on the Island in violation of the 1959-60 agreements indicate that the problem is heading towards internationalization and securitization of energy resources has increased by Greek sides as in the case of Turkish sides.

In general, the Cyprus issue is already securitized by Turkey and Greece. Not to fall into anachronism trap, it has to be admitted that socio-political conditions of the time periods when Alsace-Lorraine was securitized and two major rivals ended up with two subsequent great wars in the world history. In the equivalent of this in the Cyprus case, extraordinary moves which are above politics were not highly likely because of that Greek side -did not totally securitize the issue earlier. However, securitization of an issue by one side, energy resources, in this case, might accelerate the process of securitization of the referent object by the rival side. In practical terms, Turkey seems convinced to take military action to protect its sovereignty claims, with the last developments Greece and Greek Cyprus have begun to go down the same path. In order to avoid possible future conflicts over the energy resources, desecuritization process is urgently needed. After dramatically destructive wars, France and Germany agreed to share energy resources in their common benefits rather than fighting for full control over it. In other words, securitization and desecuritization of the Alsace-Lorraine case for the energy resources present both conflict and cooperation potentials, respectively.

Desecuritization of the Alsace-Lorraine and Its Implications for the Cyprus Case

Ole Wæver (1993: 53-54) brought securitization and securitization process under the light through providing four case studies and suggested that for desecuritization, security issues should be “normalized” by politicians and intellectuals via the speech act. As in

⁵ <http://www.ekathimerini.com/245180/article/ekathimerini/news/greece-turkeys-drilling-plan-in-cyprus-eez-contrary-to-any-notion-of-legality>

⁶ <https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Israel-Air-Force-in-Greece-as-part-of-Iniohos-2019-585993>

⁷ <https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/38302>



the securitization process, the speech act is not just words but connotes vital importance of referent objects, in desecuritization process, the speech act can be instrumentalized to reduce tensions on a specific issue. In this way, the securitization issue is leveled down to the political realm. This means that solving a given issue does not require extraordinary precautions and can be sorted out within democratic mechanisms. In other words, "Desecuritization political relations not only allow for collaboration but also increase the likelihood that energy-related developments will enhance their desecuritized status... They [the hydrocarbon and oil] are also used as political tools to enhance political foreign policy influence and empower the political position of state vis-à-vis adversaries, either by forming dependency relations or through alliance formation" (Adamides and Christou, 2016: 87).

In the case of Alsace-Lorraine, there are three striking points which have to be paid attention. That is the fact, the first one, that securitization brought Europe in massive devastation and then de-securitization was followed. It is because the major rival powers, France and Germany, disposed of all their power in the war. Therefore, it was imperative to agree for cooperation in terms of sharing energy resources. Secondly, there was external power enforcing cooperation in exchange for foreign aids, political and economic supports, the US. Thirdly, intellectuals and politicians are encouraging cooperation rather than revanchists policies between the two rivals.

In association with the first point, almost all European powers destroyed their rivals' infrastructure, which had to be rebuilt. To do that, they were all in need of energy resources to process raw materials such as iron and steel. In this regard, reasonable share from the natural resources was essential for all parties to revitalize their own infrastructures and industries. The second point is about external factors. The US needed a revitalized Europe as a market for American exports, and European continental security was also paramount for the post-war international system against the Soviet Union. It was also quite important for France and German to receive foreign aids under the Marshall Plan, initiated in 1948 by the United States (Petzina, Stolper and Hudson, 1981). Regarding to third point, attempts of intellectuals and politicians to convince both rivals that their national interest laid down in sharing the mines and energy resources. For instance, the French government overcame opposition from revanchists and proposed what is known as the Schuman Declaration on 9 May 1950. The Declaration was proposed by French foreign minister Robert Schuman, based on a plan developed by the French reconstruction planning minister Jean Monnet. Robert Schuman himself was from the disputed territory of Alsace-Lorraine. He fought in the German army in 1914-18, had German as his first language and became a French citizen in 1919. His plan offered a specific answer to the struggle for control of coal and iron: the formation of a supranational commission to regulate trade in the two vital war-making resources. Besides, steel was the major element in states' post-war economic reconstruction (needed for railways, buildings, ships, vehicles, machinery, etc.). These three points assisted in coming to an end to a struggle between Germany and France over Alsace-Lorraine and tuned out to be guarantors for stability and prosperity in Europe.

In the light of all these postwar developments, Robert Schuman's plan for the comprehensive organization of the "totality of Franco-German coal and steel productions under a common High Authority" led to establishing the ECSC. It was formally established



in 1951 by the Treaty of Paris, signed by Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany (Spierenburg and Poidevin, 1993). Via this ECSC, development and trade of coal and iron/steel would be determined by the market rather than the national interests (Gillingham, 1991). This would increase efficiency in an industry which was vital to Europe's reconstruction while defusing the tensions created by competition for control of the resources. The precedent of the ECSC can be considered as an example of how practical cooperation in the field of energy can address mutual needs, as well as building confidence and trade between neighbouring states (even adversaries) (Hassan and Duncan, 1994).

The ECSC was the outcome of the practical consideration of how to achieve security through economic cooperation. The transformation in Franco-German relations from conflict over natural resources to cooperative trade of coal and steel reflects a parallel transformation in the way natural resources were viewed. Sharing of natural resources as a cause of the war was replaced by the security of interdependent trade of these resources. While one of the primary causes of both world wars was a conflict between France and Germany over the Alsace-Lorraine, the solution lays in resolving the issue of controlling natural resources. The ECSC was thus the first step into a new world.

The experience of the French and German particularly in Alsace-Lorraine case cannot provide outright answers or an exact blueprint for the resolution or prevention of future conflicts, but it does provide insights what securitization of energy resources caused and how desecuritization of it could be achieved, of course, without launching a war.

Final Remarks and Conclusion

The fundamental aims of the paper are to restrain from the first point which is considered to be the reason of desecuritization process of energy resource in Alsace-Lorraine and to make salient the other two points for desecuritization of the energy resources in the Cyprus issue. As the case of Alsace-Lorraine, disputes over energy resources between two rivals gathered third parties involved in the war in accordance with their national interests. In this way, alliances were established and so turned out to be global level wars. The Cyprus case resembles the Alsace-Lorraine case because both actors, Greece and Turkey are in the process of making allies for how to use and deliver energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. In this way, possible conflict between the two main actors might extend and cause at least a regional level conflict, if not global level.

The second point of the Alsace-Lorraine case, enforcement of external power to comprise, seems crucial for desecuritization process. Power relations among the external power, encouraging an agreement between the two rivals is quite detrimental. In this way, an idea of transnational cooperation emerged, and this gave rise to the ECSC. Such an attempt was actually tried by the Turkish side, but the proposal was rejected by the Greek side.⁸ However, the proposal cannot be counted as made by external force because those who proposed it was actually part of the issue. The EU should be the first one coming to mind, but Greece and the Republic of Cyprus, which represents the whole Island are a full member of the organization and Turkey is still in adjustment process as

⁸ <https://cyprus-mail.com/2019/07/16/party-leaders-reject-akinci-proposal-in-joint-statement/>



a candidate. The EU's possible role as external power forcing two sides to make an agreement for sharing energy resources might be possible in case of that Turkey is granted with full membership. Otherwise, securitization of energy resources around the Island transcends the borders and might turn into the EU versus Turkey rivalry. Based on the recent developments, there is another option regarding the involvement of third parties into possible conflict as an external mediator, NATO. Both Greece and Turkey are the equal partner of this international organization might lead to a path for compromise, and it seems better working than the EU in which Greece and Turkey have a different status.

For the last point, having politicians and intellectuals, easing security level of energy issue in Cyprus among the both sides, is another absence for the de-securitization process. Especially in Turkish side, the sovereignty rights are taken as red-lines and do not open for discussion as it is mostly affiliated with national territorial integrity. The Greek side, including Greece and Greek Cyprus, developed a regional alliance with Egypt and Israel⁹ and now obtained military privileges from the United States and France. If it is argued that the politicians and intellectuals could get an opportunity to raise their voices is only possible after a destructive war, this third point might have been invalid. However, in order to prevent such a destructive war, politicians and intellectuals normalizing the issue and taking the issue back into the political realm (Zikos, Sorman, and Lau, 2015: 311) should take the ground and be influential in the decision-making process. That would be exact lessons should be taken from the Alsace-Lorraine case for the Cyprus issue.

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⁹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cyprus-turkey-ship/cyprus-greece-egypt-call-on-turkey-to-end-provocative-actions-idUSKBN1WN1R0>



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