# **NEO-OTTOMANIZATION VS.** EUROPEANIZATION?: TURKEY-EU RELATIONS\*

Nergiz ÖZKURAL KÖROĞLU\*\*

#### Abstract

This paper deals with Neo-Ottomanization and Europeanization as two different identity construction processes which intermingle. In that sense, the interaction of these different social structures is analyzed. According to a constructivist approach Neo-Ottomanization is conceptualized in the context of the impact of Europeanization on external countries. In the bottom-up process of the Europeanization in Turkey, the process of Neo-Ottomanization is the main variable. So, the internal and external dynamics of Neo-Ottomanization are focused and analyzed together. Therefore, the Davutoğlu era in Turkish foreign policy is considered with parallel to AKP's identity-(re)building efforts. So, the reflections of *Neo-Ottomanization on Turkey-EU relations re-interpreted.* 

**Key Words:** Neo-Ottomanization, Europeanization, Turkey-EU Relations, Turkish Foreign Policy, Davutoglu Period.

## Yeni-Osmanlılaşma ve Avrupalılaşma? Türkiye-AB İlişkileri

#### Özet

Bu makale Yeni-Osmanlılaşma ve Avrupalılaşmayı iki farklı kimlik inşaa süreci olarak ele almaktadır. Bu farklı sosyal yapıların birbiri ile etkileşimi incelenecektir. Konstrüktivist yaklaşım çerçevesinde Avrupalılaşmanın dış ülkelere etkisi bağlamında Türkiye örnek olay olarak ele alınacak ve Yeni-Osmanlılaşma kavramsallaştırılacaktır. Türkiye'de Avrupalılaşmanın aşağıdan-yukarıya süreçleri bağlamında Yeni-Osmanlılaşma temel değişkendir. Böylece Yeni-Osmanlılaşmanın iç ve dış dinamikleri birlikte odaklanılacak ve analiz edilecektir. Davutoğlu döneminde Türk Dış Politkası AKP'nin yeniden kimlik inşaa çabalarıyla paralel olarak ele alınacaktır. Bu çerçevede Yeni-Osmanlılaşmanın Türkiye-AB ilişkilerindeki etkisi veniden vorumlanacaktır.

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Asst.Prof.Dr. in the Department of International Relations, Trakya University, Edirne, Turkey.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yeni-Osmanlılaştırma, Avrupalılaştırma, Türkiye-AB İlişkileri, Türk Dış Politikası, Davutoğlu dönemi.

## Introduction

The paper will analyze Turkey-EU relations in constructivist perspective. These relations are interacted and complicated processes. Two different identity building processes in these agents will be analyzed to understand the relationship in a different way. Thus, Europeanization and Neo-Ottomanisation<sup>1</sup> as two different identity building processes will be analyzed and conceptualized.

Europeanization is a touchstone of Turkey-EU relations because Turkey-EU relations is mostly related to the transfer of Europeanization to Turkey. In that sense in relation to the internalization of Europeanization in Turkey, Neo-Ottomanisation has a vital role. Because Neo-Ottamanisation is a concept of re-construction process which has a big impact on internal and external politics. Therefore, Neo-Ottomanisation process has an impact on Europeanization indirectly.

First, the paper gives the answer to the question of how the internal and external impact of Europeanization is constructing conceptually. The conceptual map of Europeanization will perform an autopsy of this identity-building process. Thus, the place of Turkey will be determined in the process and also it will be a road-map for analysing Neo-Ottamanisation. Turkey's relation with the EU reinterpreted by analysing the internal and external impact of Neo-Ottomanisation.

When Ahmet Davutoğlu became minister of foreign affairs in May 2009, the concept of "Neo-Ottomanism" is re-started (it was first started to be discussed especially in Turgut Özal period) to be discussed by scholars.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The scholars who labels the vision of Ahmet Davutoglu as Neo-Ottomanism shows the following books and papers for his ideas; Ahmet Davutoglu, "Medeniyetler Arası Etkilesim ve Osmanlı Sentezi" in Osmanlı Medeniyeti: Siyaset, İktisat, Sanat, Ç. Çakır (Ed.), 2005.; A. Davutoğlu, Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu, İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001.; A. Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007", İnsight Turkey, Vol.10, No.1, January-March 2008.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The construction process of "Neo-Ottomanism" could be called as "neo-Ottamanisation" which effect both internal and external policies.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Soner Çağaptay, "The AKP's Foreign Policy: The Misnomer of 'Neo-Ottomanism', The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, April 24, 2009; Yılmaz Çolak, "Ottomanism vs. Kemalism: Collective Memory and Cultural Pluralism in 1990s Turkey", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol.42, No.4, July 2006, s.587-602; Sedat Laçiner, "Özalism (Neo-Ottomanism): An Alternative in Turkish Foreign Policy" Journal of Administrative Science, Vol.1, No.1-2,

Davutoğlu rejects that the new foreign policy vision is definitely not related to Neo-Ottomanism.<sup>4</sup> The probability of the shift of axis in Turkish foreign policy became one of the prominent issues for foreign policy analysts in the international relations field.<sup>5</sup> There are some articles associating the concept of Europeanization with the new turn in Turkish Foreign Policy.<sup>6</sup> However, there is not a specific paper which analyzes the concepts of Neo-Ottomanization and Europeanization as parallel processes.

In this paper Neo-Ottomanization and Europeanization are taken as two different identity construction processes. Just like Europeanization, Neo-Ottomanization could occur in a two-way fashion, from top-down and bottom-up. Through Neo-Ottomanization or Europeanization, an interaction between agents and structures are sought to be constructed through agents of foreign and external policy instruments. Therefore, in this paper the interaction of two different social structures will be analyzed.

2003, s.161-202; Ömer Taşpınar, "Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism", Carnegie Papers, No.10, September 2008, s.1-29; Şaban H. Çalış, Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler: Yeni-Osmanlıcılık, Özal ve Balkanlar, Konya: Çizgi Kitabevi. 2006

Ahmet Sözen, "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges", *Turkish Studies* 11, no.1 (2010): 103-123."; Tarık Oğuzlu, "Middle Easternization of Turkey's Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Dissociate from the West?", *Turkish Studies* 9, No.1, 2008, s.3-20.; Muhittin Ataman İnat and Burhanettin Duran (eds.), Ortadoğu Yıllığı 2009, İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2009.; Cengiz Çandar, "Türk Dış Politikasında 'Eksen' Tartışmaları: Çok Kutuplu Dünya İçin Yeni Bir Vizyon", Seta Analiz, No.10, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Mustafa Aydın and Sinem A. Açıkmeşe, "Europeanization Through EU conditionality: Understanding the New Era in Turkish Foreign Policy", Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans, Vol.9, No.3, December 2007, s.263-274; Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, Trials of Europeanization. Turkish Political Culture and the European Union, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009; Emiliano Alessandri, "The New Turkish Foreign Policy and the Future of Turkey-EU Relations", Istituto Affairi Internazionali, Documenti IAI 10, No. 3, February 2010, s.1-18; Ziya Önis and Şuhnaz Yilmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era", Turkish Studies, Vol.10, No.1, March 2009, s.7-24. Ayrıca bknz. Ziya Öniş, "Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate", Insight Turkey, Vol.10, No.4, October 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Bknz. Simon Bulmer, "Theorizing Europeanization", in Europeanization: New Research Agendas, edited by Paolo Graziano, Maarten P. Vink, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, s. 46–58; Frank Schimmelfennig, "Europeanization beyond Europe" Living Reviews in European Governance, Vol. 4, No. 3, 2009, s.5-28; Johan P. Olsen, "The Many Faces of Europeanization", Journal of Common Market Studies, No.40, 2002, s.921–952.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For his counter arguments; Davutoğlu's interview on Neo-Ottomanism: Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Yeni Osmanlılar sözü iyi niyetli değil", (Nur Batur ile Röportaj), Sabah, 4 December 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Şaban Kardaş, "Türk Dış Politikasında Eksen Kayması mı?", Akademik Ortadoğu, Vol.5, No. 2, 2011, s.19-42.

The processes of Europeanization and Neo-Ottomanization sometimes intersect however they may sometimes conflict as well and this could affect negatively the relations of Turkey and the EU. The interaction of these processes with the international social structure should also be taken under consideration to enlighten the interaction of the agents in these processes. One may state that every process is a structure and an agent, too.

## The Internal and External Impact of Europeanization

Identity is a dynamic phenomenon which changes in the course of history. In the framework of identity, some objective elements are vital, such as history, symbols, myths, language, religion, ethnic origin, geography, values etc. In every identity-building process, different objective elements are used. Constructivists believe that, "constitutive norms do not simply regulate behaviour; they also help to constitute the very actors whose conduct they seek to regulate." For constructivists, interests and identities of actors in international relations can be put into shape, since interests and identities of actors are closely connected to the context that they are found themselves in. 10

It could be claimed that Europeanization occurs internally or externally, as shown in Table 1 (see below). In the context of the internal impact of Europeanization, the EU aims to strengthen the integration process and construction of the common European identity inside through transferring norms, values and shared interests. Therefore, the governance, the institutions and the legal structure of the EU are reinforced in the top-down process. In other words, the agents of the EU (EU leaders, bureaucrats, EU institutions, EU legal system) interact with member states' social structures and agents (member states' political leaders, governments, state institutions, citizens, NGOs etc) on the basis of the EU *acquis*, treaties and supranational character of the EU. In the bottom-up process, on the other hand, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> John Hobson, The State and International Relations Cambridge University: Cambridge University Press, 2000. K. M. Fierke, "Constructivism", "Constructivism", in Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, Steve Smith (ed.), International Relations Theories, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Peter Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security, in Culture of National Security, edited by P.J.Katzenstein, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
<sup>10</sup> Bknz. Andrew Bradley Phillips, "Constructivism" in Martin Griffiths (ed.), International Relations Theory for the Twenty-First Century, London and New York: Routledge, 2007; Shaun Narine, "Economics and Security in the Asia Pacific: A Constructivist Analysis", 41st Annual International Studies Association Meeting, Los Angeles, United States, March 15-18, 2000.

internalization of values and norms (socialization) and norm-diffusion are crucial. This aims to strengthen the supranational structure so that the European identity would be internalized more easily by the EU members. Therefore, the interaction of the agents (European institutions, member states, member state's institutions, NGOs, EU citizens etc.) with the social structure and the process of internalization and socialization by these agents could be observed in the bottom-up process in the framework of internal Europeanization.

The internal and external dynamics affect each other, because the reflection of identity building processes on foreign policy obviously has an impact on domestic politics or vice versa. Table 1 (see below) focuses on the external impacts of Europeanization (transferring EU norms, values, shared interests with other countries). The case of Turkey is taken into consideration to see how the process of Europeanization could interact with the social structure of Turkey. In that context, the impact of Neo-Ottomanization on the internal and external policy of Turkey is vital for the internalization and socialization process of Europeanization in Turkey.

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Internal impact	Construction of an EU identity by strengthening supranational structure of the EU.  (E.g. Reconstruction of the EU governance, the EU institutions and EU legal structure)  The agents of the EU (e.g.EU leaders, bureaucrats, EU institutions, EU legal system) interacts with member state's social structures and agents (e.g. member state's political leaders, governments, state institutions, citizens, NGOs etc) on the basis of EU acquis, treaties and supranational character  of the EU.	The interaction of the agents (e.g. European institutions, member states, member state's institutions, NGOs, EU citizens etc.) with the social structure.  The process of internalization and socialization by these agents. (Their reactions)
External impact	The agents of EU social structure (EU leaders, bureaucrats, EU institutions, EU legal system, EU acquis communautaire, EU member states, NGOs, civil socity etc.) interacts with the other social structures and agents in the periphery of the EU through legal and institutional tools to transfer EU norms, values and shared interests.  (E.gEU membership conditionality, -Copenhagen Criteria, -Negotiation process (chapters), -Readmission agreements and visa facilitation; -European Neighbourhood Policy; -Stabilization and Association Agreements)	The interaction of the agents (e.g. candidate country's/ENP country's/ peripherical country's legal and political institutions, governments political leaders, NGOs, citizens, civil society etc.) with the agents of EU social structure and their reactions to legal and institutional tools. The process of internalization and socialization by these agents of candidate countries/ ENP countries/ peripherical countries. (Their reactions)  THE CASE OF TURKEY: -The reaction of agents in Turkey (e.g. political leaders, government, state institutions, citizens, NGOs etc.) Internalization of the socialization in Turkey. The internal and external impact of Neo-Ottomanization. (See TABLE 2)
	Top-down	Bottom-up

TABLE 2: The internal and external impact of Neo-Ottomanization

Internal Impact	Reconstruction of national identity on the basis of conservatist norms, values and beliefs. (Proposal for a new constitution, reconstruction of legal, institutional changes, reconstruction of the history, changing myths, symbols, life style values and traditions.)  How is Neo-Ottomanization constructing in Turkey? Some examples: Democratic solution to Kurdish problem, Çanakkale war became more important than Independence War, the Sultants became national heros rather than Ataturk and his friends, putting more courses on Islam into highschool's teaching plans, etc.  The agents of reconstructed social structure in Turkey (Turkish leaders, bureaucrats, institutions, legal system, NGOs, intellectuals etc.) interacts with the other agents (Turkish institutions, political leaders, civil society, citizens, intellectuals, NGOs) in the social structure of Turkey through legal, institutional and cultural tools.	The process of internalization and socialization in Turkey by the agents (Turkish institutions, political leaders, civil society, citizens, intellectuals, NGOs). The interaction of the agents.  ( E.g. The positive and negative feedbacks on social media, the articles of intellectuals, TV serials based on Ottoman history, the polarization between Kemalists and conservatists etc.)
External impact	The agents of Turkish social structure (e.g. Turkish leaders, bureaucrats, institutions, legal system, NGOs, intellectuals etc.) interacts with the other social structures and agents in the periphery of the Turkey through foreign policy instruments to transfer neo-Ottoman norms, values and shared interests.  Davutoglu's new foreign policy perspective. (e.g. "Zero problem with neighbours", -Multi-vectoral and proactive, -Pan-American)  How Neo-Ottomanization transfers to the periphery of Turkey? (Some examples: Erdogan's "One minute speech", reaction to Kaddaff parallel with MATO, US and give support to Muslim Brotherhood, the event of Mavi Marmara (Human Rights and Freedom and Humanitarian Relief), giving support to Palestinian Muslims, AKP's reaction to Esad, diplomatic relations with Mynmar and support to Burmese Muslims, good relations with Chechen Muslims in Russia.	The interaction of the agents (e.g. peripherical country's/Muslim country's legal and political institutions, governments political leaders, civil society, NGOs, citizens, etc.) with the agents of Turkish social structure. The process of internalization of the socialization process by these agents of these country's agents. (Their reactions)  -Internalization of the socialization by the peripherical country's/Muslim country's agents.  (E.g. Erdogan's positive image in Arabic public opinion. Erdogan's pro-American and Sunni-sided stance and contradictory relations with Iran and Russia and these country's support to PKK terrorists actions etc.)
	Top-down	Bottom-up

When the historical background of Neo-Ottomanization is taken into consideration, the change in the international structure became prominent. And in parallel with the change in the international social structure, the change and reconstruction in Turkey also become crucial. The embedded structure of external and internal impact of Neo-Ottomanization and its effect to Turkey-EU relations is asserted. The reconstruction of the identity building process in Turkey is different from the westernization process of the Tanzimat period. In that sense, the current situation of the Turkey-EU relations is closely related to the change of the identity reconstruction processes. In Table 1 (see below), there are several arrows indicating the interaction between agents. The analysis of the cross-arrows shows that even internal dynamics in the EU could affect the bottom-up process of the external impact of Europeanization. For example; the Euro crises or discussions on the future of the European integration may have an indirect affect over Turkey. The external impact of Europeanization has an impact on internal dynamics, too. For example, EU-Turkey relations are the most debatable issues in the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers.

In the context of the external impact of Europeanization, the EU creates a normative impact over peripheral countries by transferring European values, norms and interest. In the top-down process the so-called "the carrot and stick policy" is a fundamental policy of the EU. In that context, the membership conditionality<sup>11</sup> and Copenhagen criteria are used for the countries with an EU membership perspective as tools to transfer EU norms and values. For the countries without a membership perspective, the European norms and values are transferred by other policies, such as European Neighbourhood Policy. In other words, the agents of EU social structure (EU leaders, bureaucrats, EU institutions, EU legal system, EU acquis, EU member states, NGOs, civil society, etc.) interact with other social structures and agents in the periphery of the EU through legal and institutional tools to transfer EU norms, values and shared interests such as EU membership conditionality; Copenhagen Criteria; negotiation process (chapters); readmission agreements and visa facilitations; European Neighbourhood Policy; Stabilization and Association Process; Stabilization and Association Agreements, etc. The bottom-up process is related to the reaction of these countries to these norms and values. One may assert that, in the bottom-up process there are some problems in the process of internalization and socialization of the norms, values and interests by peripheral countries. These problems stem from "distrust and ambiguity" in

<sup>11</sup> Frank Schimmelfenning et. al., "Europeanization beyond Europe", Living Reviews in European Governance, Vol.4, No. 3, 2009, s. 29-50.

these countries, such as happened in Ukraine, which also stem from the double standards of the Union and different perspectives of member states on foreign and security issues. In that sense, Turkey is a good case which is observed to experience problems in the process of Europeanization. These problems could be categorized into two as follow:

- 1) EU's external and internal policy implementations and their impact on Turkey: In the context of the external policies of the EU which have an impact on Turkey in a negative way, there are some aspects to be considered. The EU membership of Cyprus as a whole island is a good example. Its veto power, blocking the negotiations of Turkey with the EU is one of the disappointments which decrease the motivation of Turkey to become an EU member state. The accession of Bulgaria and Romania (which are neighbours of Turkey and still experience serious economic and political problems) into the EU before Turkey is another disappointment for Turkey. Therefore, some agents in Turkey started to believe, that there is a double standard in EU enlargement process. If one takes a closer look at the EU's internal policies, he or she can see their negative impact on Turkey. It could also be said that the economic crises in the EU (especially in Italy, Spain and Greece) and the debate on a "multi-speed Europe" decreased the credibility of the EU. Yet, some of the EU member states' exclusionist discourses focussing on Turkey's non-European identity have another negative effect on Turkey's willingness to become a member.
- 2) Turkey's internal and external policies: The change of the identity formation of the Turkish identity by the policies of the ruling Justice and Development Party (JDP)have an impact on Turkey's internal policies, such as creating a new constitution, legal and institutional changes. These effects occur in parallel to the reconstruction of a new identity hinging on Neo-Ottomanism. In the context of Turkey's external policies, Ahmet Davutoğlu's new foreign policy perspective based on Neo-Ottomanism could also be taken into consideration (Table 2 see below).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Bknz. for details, Canan Atılgan and Deborah Klein, "EU Integration Models Beyond Full Membership", Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Working Paper, No.158, Berlin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2006, s.1-17.

## The Internal and External Impact of Neo-Ottomanization

In this section, the impact of Neo-Ottomanization on Turkey's internal and external policies will be analyzed. Therefore in the second table, the bottom-up process of Europeanization over Turkey is indicated.

As shown in Table 2 (see below), two different questions are asked in the context of the internal and external impact of Neo-Ottomanization: How is Neo-Ottomanization transferred to the periphery of Turkey? How is Neo-Ottomanization constructed in Turkey? It should be noted, that these two questions are answered at the same time because two processes are closely linked. In Table 2, the cross-arrows are drawn to show the interaction of agents in the context of internal and external impact of Neo-Ottomanization. The internal dynamics impact on Neo-Ottomanization (the bottom-up process) could have an impact on the external impact on Neo-Ottomanization (top-down process) or vice-versa.<sup>13</sup>

One strain of thought in the academic circles defines Neo-Ottomanism as a proactive foreign policy approach in the post-Cold war period. However, as it is mentioned above, Neo-Ottomanization could be occurred in a two-way fashion similar to the process of Europeanization. The first mode of Neo-Ottomanization is related to the reconstruction of national identity (top down and bottom-up processes) and the second mode is related to the reconstruction of the foreign policy and is effective in the former Ottoman territories by using historical, cultural and religious ties.

It is important to have a full grasp of the historical background to understand how Neo-Ottomanism is constructed in the changing international social structure. Changes in social structure have an impact on identity building processes in Turkey. In constructivist terms, the social world is not a given, it is constructed. In that sense, national identities are also constructed. These identities could be constructed on language, religion, founding myths, ethnic roots, geography, history, chosen triumph and trauma, customs and traditions. Economical systems could also shape the political and social structures. In this framework; norms, interests and values are also constructed.

<sup>14</sup> Bkz; Alexander Wendt, Social Theory of International Politics, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> As an example of these interactions; the polarization between Kemalists and conservatives would decrease the level of internalization and this would have a negative impact on the credibility of AKP government's act. Or Erdoğan's positive image in Arabic public opinion could have a positive impact on reconstruction of Turkish identity.

<sup>14</sup> Bkg: Alexander Wondt Section Times and Company Wondt Section Times are construction of Turkish identity.

Ottomanism is a concept which is one of four types of policies which are Ottomanism-Turkism-Islamism-Westernism in the end of Tanzimat period (reform period). However Ottomanism which had defined Turks as "others" in the Ottoman period lost its effect with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Social structure underwent an immediate change with the newly established Turkish Republic. The economic and political structure of the Empire is changed along with the new economic and political structure of the nation-state. In the construction of a new identity, the agents are reconstructed in the country. Therefore, most of the elites also changed, like the capital which changed hands. Atatürk and other political elites set out to construct a new common national identity in the newly established country. This French type of nation-building process was based on homogenous socialization process as opposed to the heterogonous and multicultural structure of the Ottoman Empire. 15 It was projected, that this socialization process would be completed in the long run. The values, norms and symbols of the Ottoman Empire are changed completely and the Ottoman system was othered. 16 However, one can also argue that the old values will not totally disappear, but be kept by the collective memory, harmonizing the old values with the new ones. <sup>17</sup> According to Calış, the collective memory of Turkey shows its ties with the Ottoman Empire. Novels by Ahmet Hamdi, Peyami Safa, poems by Yahya Kemal, Necip Fazil ve Arif Nihat etc., historical comics such as Malkoçoğlu, Battal Gazi, Fatih'in Fedaisi Kara Murat etc., folkloric songs such as Estergon Kalesi, Vardar Ovası, Plevne Marşı etc. and the culture of entertainment (Karagöz-hacivat, Keloğlan, Nasreddin Hoca etc.) all reveal these ties. 18 In that sense, one may conclude that socialization processes could be multi-layered and the new and old values could be harmonized.

After the Second World War, multi-party system was initiated in Turkish political life and the Democratic Party (DP) was founded. The identity building process started to transform with the political line of Democratic Party based on conservative values and liberal economic system. The DP is one of the cornerstones of Özalism and the Justice and Development Party's (JDP) policies.

The beginning of Cold War and the change in international social system had an impact on Turkey's socialization processes. The United States

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Bknz. Ayşe Kadıoğlu, "The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol.32, No.2, April 1996, s.177-193.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> I don't mean the Tanzimat period which westernization process was started in the last period of Ottoman Empire, but I mention the growth period of Ottoman Empire between 1453-1683. <sup>17</sup> Calış, s.44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Çalış, s.75-79.

supported conservative political movements to create a buffer zone for the communist threat. These conservative movements also increased in Turkey as a consequence of the bipolar social structure. In 1980s a new type of conservatism occurred in leading countries. Ronald Reagan, the President of the U.S. and Margaret Thatcher, the prime minister of United Kingdom are the important figures of this new wind of (neo-) conservatism. <sup>19</sup> In 1980, the military junta took power in Turkey, so shaping a new social parallel to the changed international social structure. The neo-liberal and conservative move in Turkey continued with Turgut Özal's political vision. Özal's vision is based on multiculturalism and inclusiveness.<sup>20</sup> He shared an American understanding of the right relations between religion and politics, and of secularism.<sup>21</sup> The reconciliation of Islamism and Turkish nationalism called as Turkish-Islam synthesis, exemplifies his point of view.<sup>22</sup> His main objective was to reconstruct a heterogeneous identity structure modeling the American "melting pot" system. In this structure, ethnic and religious identities would be on the foreground.

With the end of the Cold War, the international social structure was reconstructed. The Neo-liberal system and the "new world order" constructed a new social structure. In the post-cold war period, on the one hand Turkey designed to be proactive in the region of Turkic Republics by using pan-Turanist ideas.<sup>23</sup>

9/11 constructed a new international social structure. The thesis of the Clash of Civilizations<sup>24</sup> had an impact on the new social structure. In this social structure "western" and "eastern" values were polarized. The JDP took political power in 2002 and it could be interpreted as a reflection of these changes in the international social structure.

The JDP took the support of liberals when it came into power with the image of pro-European<sup>25</sup> party and the defender of liberties. The JDP

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> E. Zeynep Güler, "Kadim Geleneğin Savunusundan Faydacılığa", H.Birsen (eds.), Modern Siyasal İdeolojiler, İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010, s.36.

Nicholas Danforth, "Ideology and Pragmatisim in Turkish Foregin Policy From Ataturk to the AKP", Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol.7, No.3, Fall 2008, s.182-185.
 Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Binnaz Toprak, "The State, Politics and Religion in Turkey", State, Democracy and the Military, edited by Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1988, s.131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "11 Eylül Sonrası Türk Dış Politikasında Vizyon Arayışları ve 'Dört Tarz-ı Siyaset'', Gazi Akademik Bakış Dergisi, Vol.1, No.1, Winter 2007, s. 33-55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Bkz. Samuel P. Huntington, Medeniyetler Çatışması ve Dünya Düzeninin Yeniden Kurulması, Beşinci Baskı, Okuyan Us Yayınları, 2006.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Ziya Öniş and Suhnaz Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era", Turkish Studies, Vol.10, No.1, March 2009, s.7-24.

changed the institutional and judicial structure of Turkey to be eligible for the EU candidacy between the years 2002-2004.

In this period, one may claim that Europeanization influenced Turkish politics. In October 2005, the EU started negotiations with Turkey. "However, the democratization drive of JDP lost considerable momentum after Spring 2005." The trouble of the JDP in keeping its reform impetus resulted in a decrease in the liberal support to the JDP.

In January 2009, Barack Obama, who was elected as the U.S. President, reconstructed the U.S foreign policy which had a damaged reputation because of his predecessor Bush. So, Obama re-implemented the "public diplomacy" to balance military and civilian power of the U.S. In the framework of Obama's policies, the U.S. Would not be on the foreground in the Broader Middle East and North Africa Project (BMNA), while Turkey would both act as a catalyst for trust in the region and constitute a role model for the Arab countries in the region, hence strengthening Turkey-US relations after the parliamentary bill crisis in the failed Turkish vote for the engagement against Suddam Hussein.

Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan's foreign policy advisor from 2002 to 2009 and the minister of foreign affairs after May 2009, is one of the important agents for the reconstruction of Neo-Ottomanism. He followed the conservative political line which stemming from Democratic Party (DP) and Özalism. He holds the belief that Turkey should strengthen the historical, religious and cultural ties in the ex-Ottoman territories in the Balkans, in the Caucasus region, in Africa and in the Middle East and thus become a role model for the other Muslim countries. Davutoğlu aims to construct a multi-dimensional policy by using different facets of different identities of Turkey. This new proactive foreign policy is based on a Turkey-centered vision. "Combining pan-Islamist, post-colonial, and pragmatic geostrategic rationales, he argues that a Turkey unfettered by Eurocentrism could play a more constructive role in multiple regions."<sup>27</sup> In his view, Turkey would be a role model for the neighbouring countries and thus create an advantage for its relations with the Western world.<sup>28</sup> In that sense, one may assert that the policy construction of Obama has had an impact on Turkey since 2009 and the proactive foreign policy orientations of Davutoğlu have interacted with this newly constructed structure of the U.S.

Davutoğlu, Ahmet, "Medineyetler Arası Etkilesim ve Osmanlı Sentezi" in Osmanlı Medeniyeti: Siyaset, İktisat, Sanat, Ç. Çakır (Ed.), Klasik Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005.
Bid.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Hanz Kramer, "AKP's New Foreign Policy Between Vision and Pragmatism", Working Paper 01, FG2, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin, June 2010, s.9.

On January 30<sup>th</sup> 2009, Erdoğan made his "One Minute" speech and showed his reaction to Israel at the World Economic Forum. This event constructed a new social structure, took the support of public opinion in Arabic countries and thus became a part of Davutoğlu's neo-Ottomanist vision in Turkish foreign policy. In 2010, the Arab Spring started in Tunisia. Turkey supported the uprisings in these countries thus becoming a key player in the process of change in these regions. In February 2011, a widespread uprising in Libya started and France, U.K. and U.S. sent troops to Libya with NATO intervention. In the beginning of this process, Turkey was not necessarily supporting the NATO intervention in Libya, but changed its policies and developed a parallel foreign policy with countries supporting NATO intervention. Nevertheless, Davutoğlu had some trouble in adapting his "zero problem with neighbours" policy in coordinating with the United States. The civil war in Syria (2011-) became a turning point for Davutoğlu's foreign policy vision. Turkey supported the Sunni opposition against the Assad regime which was supported by Iran and Russia. The Syrian government responded Turkey with corroborating PKK and Kurdish independence in the east part of Turkey. PKK's terrorist actions have increased after the Turkish involment in the Syrian civil war. <sup>29</sup> As a reaction, Turkey recognized the Syrian National Coalition (SNC) in November 2012, while the close cooperation of SNC with the so-called "Kurdish High Council"30 can be interpreted as Turkey's answer to Assad who has brought the PKK card into play. Davutoğlu's foreign policy strategies are parallel to JDP's peacemaking effort with the PKK. In that sense, it is obvious that the domestic policy and the foreign policy are complementary. But there is another point that should be underlined is that the JDP's sectarian support of the Sunni opposition in Syria could polarize the Sunni and Shia both in the Middle East and also in Turkey. This risk would challenge the Neo-Ottoman vision, based on multiculturalism and multivectoral foreign policy. This Sunni-dominated foreign policy vision would not take the support of the Shia side in the Middle East. This could create a lack of interaction from bottom-up process of Neo-Ottomanization in the context of its external impact.

<sup>29</sup>Arda Akın, "Esad'dan 3 yeni PKK Kampı", Hürriyet Newspaper, 28 July, 2012. http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/21086011.asp

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Aydınlık Newspaper, "PKK'nın Suriye'deki kolu PYD AKP destekli SUKO'ya katılıyor" 20.02.2013; Uğur Ergan, "Türk Dışişleri: Yeni Muhalefette PYD Yok", Hürriyet Newspaper, 13.11.2012.

## The Re-Interpretation of reflections of Neo-Ottomanization on **Turkey-EU Relations**

Davutoğlu has changed the three fundamental motives of the traditional Turkish foreign policy. According to Baskın Oran, the fundamental and traditional foreign policy principles are "westernization", "status-quo orienation" and "legitimacy". Westernization became vital since the Tanzimat period of the Ottoman Empire and is one of the corner stone of the Kemalist ideology. According to him, Turkey has a crucial geostrategic location but it is also a risky position for a middle-size country. Therefore, Turkey should focus on the principle of "peace at home peace in the world". This principle has two dimensions. The first one is related to the protection of the borders of the country and avoidance of irredentism. The second one is related to principle of balance of power. Turkey has to protect the balance of power and be against any hegemonic power in its region. The third principle is about the maintenance of its legitimacy. Turkey needs the rules of international law as a middle-size country because only hegemonic powers could rule out the legitimacy of international law. However for Turkey international law is a guarantee for its security and stability.<sup>31</sup>

Davutoğlu changed all these traditional foreign policy principles.<sup>32</sup> With referring to the principle of westernization it could be said that as it is mentioned before the pro-European and reformist image of the JDP is changed rapidly after 2005. "Equally progress in Turkey's accession progress is hardly ever termed by the JDP leadership as further Europeanization but as a strengthening of Turkey's democracy (Bağış, 2010)". 33 In a similar way, the Erdoğan government never speaks of Turkey as a member of the "European family" whereas in relations with Middle Eastern countries and societies these are often defined as "Muslim brother countries"34 by the Turkish PM. Turkey is not identified as an European country by Davutoğlu as regarding to Turkey's multiple identities as an Muslim, Middle Eastern, Caucasian or Asian country.

With referring to the "zero problems with neighbours" policy Ahmet Davutoğlu claims that it is definitely based on the policy of "peace at home peace in the world"35 in spite of the Turkish support of the Syrian Sunni

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Baskın Oran, "Türkiye Kabuk Değiştirirken AKP'nin Dış Politikası", Birikim, Winter 2009,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> For the conceptualization in this era: Murat Yeşiltaş, "AK Parti Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası Sözlüğü: Kavramsal Bir Harita", Bilgi Dergi, No.23, Winter 2011, s. 9-34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup>USAK, "Interview with Ahmet Davutoğlu on Turkish Foreign Policy".

rebels against Assad. After the Arab Spring, all the balances in the Middle East have changed. Davutoğlu's policy on "the balance of security and freedom" is parallel with the spirit of Arab Spring. Davutoğlu believes that the security and freedom should be in balance, otherwise there should be chaos or authoritarian governance.<sup>36</sup> After the Arab Spring, chaos became evident in the Arabic world. In this confusion and unclear security environment, it is hard to say that the "zero problem with neighbours" policy can be successful in the short term period. However, this process should be observed in the long term period, so the results of this policy could be analyzed in the proper way. The EU has some hesitations to integrate Turkey in this unclear situation. Nonetheless, the EU has some big euro-crises, whereas Turkey's economic indicators are excelling. According to eleven EU Foreign Ministers (2011), Turkey could be a new "economic powerhouse" and also could be a regional player after the Arab Spring.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, with the Arab Spring a new structure is reconstructed in the international social structure and this new situation changes the interaction between Turkey and the EU as two different actors.

The traditional pro-American stance of Turkey has not been changed so long since the Özal era, but became more prominent during the Davutoğlu period. In the context of Turkey's mission in the Greater Middle East Project, there are some divergence between the U.S. and the EU. Turkey's mission in the region as a catalyst and role model has obviously an impact on the Turkey-EU relations in a positive and a negative way. But the fact that the U.S. and the EU have different structures<sup>38</sup> even though there is a close interaction between them. Therefore Turkev's move from Europeanization to Neo-Ottomanization is also related to the relations of Turkey with the U.S. or the EU. The Israeli apology to Erdoğan for the Gaza-bound flotilla raid (Mavi Marmara) after Obama's visit to Israel on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013<sup>39</sup> also shows the American support to Turkey's role in the region as a catalyst of socialization in the new reconstruction process of the Middle East. Actually, Turkey's relations with the U.S. have been parallel to the relations with European Union. On the one side, the U.S. support Turkey to have good relations with the EU and on the other side they prevent Turkey to integrate into the EU and take different foreign policy decisions apart from the U.S.

 $<sup>^{36}</sup>$  Gürkan Zengin, Hoca, İstanbul: İnkilap Kitapevi, 2010, s.85.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup>Eleven EU Foreign Ministers, "The EU and Turkey: steering a safer path through the storms", EU Observer, 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> While the U.S. could be interpreted as a military power or a smart power; the EU could be interpreted as a civillian power.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Sara Sidner et al., "Israel to Turkey: We apologize for deadly raid on Gaza-bound flotilla", CNN, 24 March 2013.

The reconstruction of identity is obviously related to the change of the status quo in and outside Turkey, so it is also parallel to the change of the Turkish social structure. Davutoğlu's "rhythmic diplomacy"<sup>40</sup> concept as one of his foreign policy perspective totally represents a change of the diplomacy perspective based on the status quo orientaion. According to him, diplomacy should be multi-track and dynamic. The win-win approach of the JDP government also has a reflection on the new Turkish foreign policy, whose main instruments are cooperation and mutual compromise. Foreign minister Davutoğlu claims that every agent has an impact on another. 41 The peacemaking efforts of the Erdoğan government with the PKK are definitely a good case to show the interaction between the internal and external impact of Neo-Ottomanization. The peace-making effort of Turkey would have consequences both inside and outside Turkey. During the long history of the Turkish-European relations, the Kurdish problem was a deadlock. If this conflict can be resolved then a new social structure will be reconstructed in Turkey which will have a remarkable positive impact on Turkey's relations with Europe.

## Conclusion

In this paper, Neo-Ottomanization is conceptualized in constructivist perspective and it is taken into consideration in the context of the impact of Europeanization on external countries. The two tables are designed to explain the processes of Neo-Ottomanization and Europeanization and to give an inspiration for new researches.

In the bottom-up process of Europeanization in Turkey, Neo-Ottomanization process is the main variable. In that sense, the internal and external dynamics of Neo-Ottomanization are focused. It is founded that both of these dynamics are closely linked so in this paper they are analyzed together. Therefore the Davutoğlu era in Turkish foreign policy is considered with parallel to JDP's identity-(re)building efforts. In the last part of the paper the reflections of Neo-Ottomanization on Turkey-EU relations reinterpreted.

The reconstruction of identity is a long process and the consequences could be observed in a long period. In that sense it is difficult to interpret the long term outcomes of neo-Ottomanization. In this paper the variables and

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<sup>40</sup> Zengin, s.92.

His perspective is obviously in parallel with constructivist approach and reflects the essence of the process of Neo-Ottomanization. Bknz. Davutoğlu, "Türkiye merkez ülke olmalı", Radikal, 26 Şubat 2012.

the background of this process tried to be illuminated and the short term consequences of this process asserted. In that respect, the impact of Neo-Ottomanization on Turkey-EU relations analyzed in the last part of the paper. Constructivist theory just analyze the process and do not make future prospects and helps us to analyze the process. Therefore the paper did not make future prospects on Turkey-EU relations but put forward how the social structure in Turkey changed and will be changed with parallel to the change in international social structure.

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