
THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS IN TURKISH DEMOCRACY HISTORY

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to analyze the impact of the external relations of Turkey upon its process of democratization. By considering main developments in Turkey's democratic transition, the aim is to trace the influences of Turkish foreign policy choices on strengthening democracy in Turkey. In this context, this study argues that westernization had been a modernization project of Turkey with the strategic and economic concerns until the end of the Cold War. In the post-Cold War period, the political Europeanization project of Turkey has made significant contributions to the process of democratization since the Helsinki Summit of 1999. However, with the problematic relationship of Turkey-EU after the golden years (1999-2005) of rapprochement, Turkey went to a redefinition process of its orientation in modernization, democratization and foreign policy under the Justice and Development Party rule in the last decade.

Keywords: Turkish foreign policy, democratization, westernization, Europeanization, Turkey-EU relations.

Jel Classification: F42, F50, F59.

TÜRK DEMOKRASİ TARİHİNDE DIŞ İLİŞKİLERİN ROLÜ

Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin dış ilişkilerinin demokratikleşme süreci üzerine olan etkilerini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, Türkiye'nin demokrasiye geçişindeki temel gelişmeleri hesaba katarak hangi dış politika tercihlerinin Türkiye'de demokrasinin güçlenmesine etki ettiğinin izini sürmektedir. Bu bağlamda, batılılaşmanın stratejik ve ekonomik kaygılarla Soğuk Savaş döneminin sonuna kadar süren Türkiye'nin modernleşme projesi olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde, 1999 Helsinki Zirvesi'nden beri de Türkiye'nin siyasal Avrupalılaşma projesi demokratikleşme sürecine önemli katkılarda bulunmuştur. Buna rağmen, yakınlaşmanın 'altın yıllarından' (1999-2005) sonraki sorunlu Türkiye-AB ilişkileriyle Türkiye, son on yıldır Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi yönetimi altında modernleşme, demokratikleşme ve dış politika eksenini yeniden tanımlandığı bir döneme girmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk dış politikası, demokratikleşme, batılılaşma, Avrupalılaşma, Türkiye-AB ilişkileri.

Jel Sınıflandırması: F42, F50, F59.

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1. Introduction

Turkish democracy has been affected by the political instability, weakness and the inability of the political establishment since the multiparty system have been in operation in 1946, during which time it has experienced sixty-five governments, three military take-overs of 1960, 1971, 1980 and three constitutions. An overview of the civil-military relations in Turkish political history shows that the nature of his relationship has idiosyncratic Ala-Turca characteristics. Since the foundation times, Turkish military has had a function to bring Turkey in line with the standards of the Western civilization. In this vein, the military officers in Turkey had the inclination to stay in office for a short time period in the period following the military coups. During the military regime, the primary mission of the Turkish armed forces was to restore the regime as quickly as possible while carrying out the required the reforms. Therefore, it is fair to argue that the Turkish military committed to a democratic form of government while never denying the legitimacy of the democratic regime. On the other hand, with an undemocratic nature, the military in Turkey intervened into the democratic regime and caused to the breakdowns of the democratic rule.

In this context, this paper is built upon three main arguments. First, the Ala-Turca nature of civil-military relations has been effective in Turkish democracy history. Second, the Western orientation of Turkish modernization project led to Turkey's relations with Europe being the main determinant of its democratization. Third, Turkey has entered a new era in the consolidation of its democracy with re-orientation of its foreign policy and modernization project under the Justice and Development Party rule in the 2000s. In this respect, the ultimate goal of this study is to assess to what extent Turkey's external relations, in particular with Europe could be a determining factor in the process of democratic transition in Turkey. Based on these assumptions and the research question, this article demonstrates the role of foreign relations in historical transformations of Turkish democracy from the 1920s to the 2000s.

2. The First Democratic Transition: The Establishment of the Multiparty System in Turkey

As an anti-colonial struggle the Turkish Independence War (1919-22) engendered redrawn geographical boundaries of the Ottomans and foundation of Turkish Republic under the principles of M. Kemal Atatürk. Turkish nation-building and state-building processes were part a grand project of westernization, secularization and modernization (Ahmad 1993: 53, Aylin and Tekelioglu 2005: 443). The first political party which was named the Republican People's Party (RPP) established in April 1923. The symbol of six arrows adopted on the party's emblem in referring to the Ideology of Kemalism (Akturk 2007: 357-359) that based on the six fundamental and unchanging principles of Republicanism, Nationalism, Populism, Statism, Secularism and Reformism (Cooper 2002: 116).

The republican government established the institutions as the Institute of Turkish History and the Institute of Turkish Language. Moreover, the abolition of religious courts in 1924 and the adoption of the Latin Alphabet in 1928, with the target of establishing the institutional basis of objective secularization, thereby removing religious beliefs and symbols from the process of modern state-building and its consolidation (Keyman 2007: 222). The new Kemalist regime created the modern industries under explicit state sponsorship in the 1920s and formulated in 1933 their own five-year plan for industrial development (Cooper 2002: 117). In addition to these, Turkish women being awarded suffrage and becoming eligible to stand for parliament in 1934 pertaining to one of the other key aspect of Kemalism was the notion of gender equality (Brown and Humphreys 2002: 146). Beside these constitutional and structural reforms, Turkey needed to modernize its education, economy and army. Moreover, the emerging opposing groups and the protection of territorial integrity were the greatest challenges of the single party government.

In consideration of this reality of the country, Turkey followed a balance of power policy with a realist perspective by keeping its 'active neutrality' policy (Deringil 1989) and playing a role of non-belligerent ally during the Second World War. Although Turkey did not take side in the war, almost

one million men were under arms to be prepared for fighting. This war atmosphere dramatically influenced agriculture-based economy of the country and caused alienation of the population from the single party government. Ingravescent situation of the economy and the post-war conjecture of the international system pushed Turkey to leave its autonomous foreign policy and to form a westernization, literally Americanisation of Turkey's international orientation (Gonlubol and Ulman 1996). Specifically, what laid the groundwork for this revision of country's place in the world was the termination of the 1925 Treaty by the Soviet Union in acting against 'pacta sunt servanda' principle and demanding rights on Turkish Straits and Eastern territory.

In addition to these realistic preferences, westernization of the new Republic was based on a normative choice. The foundational fathers of Turkey defined 'modernization' with reference to the attempt to 'reach the level of contemporary civilization' (Bilgin 2008: 144). As taking the West as the civilization model for transformation of Turkey, the formulation of Turkish foreign policy decisively entered Turkey into the Western camp as part of the Western institutions such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1948, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Council of Europe in 1949 (Oran 2008: 353).

In the course of period between 1945-1960 the Cold War was structured and institutionalized through the construction of new institutions and pacts to contain the Soviet Union (Turan 2008: 419). In this period Turkey and the US relations developed in different areas such as military, economy, politics and culture. But, three key steps in Turkish foreign policy which were Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan and NATO membership consolidated the country's position in the post-war international system. In other words, the Democrat Party government harmonized its foreign policy with the US foreign policy. Americanization of foreign policy in the Cold War simultaneously brought democratization efforts in Turkey's internal politics (Gozen 2008: 385). The process of construction of Turkish democracy launched with Ankara's attempts to be a part of new world order formed by the leadership of the USA against the Soviet Russia.

Just one week after the declaration by Robert Schuman for a united Europe, Turkey experienced the first free and fair elections on May 14, 1950. The first true competitive elections in Turkish politics resulted the former opposition party of Democrat Party (DP) received the 53% of the popular vote and gained considerable majority within the parliament (Hale 2002: 168).

After the first four-year term in the government, in the general elections of 1954 the DP won considerably majority in the Parliament as receiving 490 seats out of 535 Assembly seats. Hence the absence of the check and balance system over the policies of the DP let political tactics and strategies began to exert pressure over the bureaucracy, the press, the judges and the university to lessen the power of the opposition against the DP government. In this suitable political atmosphere, the antagonistic and discriminative strategies towards the supporters of the RPP lead to an emergence of a high level of political polarization within the society through division into two camps (Yılmaz 2009: 53-57). The tension between the governing party of the DP and the opposition party of RPP caused to the radicalization of some part of the society that damaged the existing social cohesion within the society. As a result, the DP asked the military impediment the increasing reflections, demonstrations and protests against the policies pursued by the DP government and rebuilt damaged social cohesion within the society. In other words, only one year after Turkey made an official application for associate membership in the European Economic Community (EEC), the Turkish armed forces took over the administration of the state through overthrowing the DP government in 1960.

Turkey's application for associate membership in the EEC was directly linked to the economic problems encountered by the DP government in Turkey. The Common Market was perceived as a westernization project and the policy-makers thought that Turkey should be a part of this project and it would serve to generate support for the party in domestic politics. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the intention of increasing its legitimacy in the international sphere afterwards the end of the Second World War and consolidating its position in the democratic western world

was the immediate reason behind Turkey's application (Oran 2007). In this vein, the Democrat Party government prepared its application with the threat of being isolated from the European economic integration project and submitted it into the EEC just a month later than the Greek application. It was thought that Greece would use her position vis-à-vis Turkey if it would become a member of the Common Market due to one of the most crucial issues of the 1950s was the Cyprus Problem among Turkish and Greek people.

Beside this problem, Turkey was occupied with integration to Euro-Atlantic economic and security organizations in its foreign relations. It demonstrated its determination on westernization of Turkish politics by sending troops to Korean war in lieu of NATO membership, voting for France against Algeria in the UN decisions and being the first Muslim country, which recognized Israel state.

3.The Second Democracy Transition in the 1960s

Although the military coup transformed the political power to the civilian politicians after the following eighteen months, the military intervention resulted in the deterioration of Turkey-ECC relations because of the requirement of the restoration of the democratic regime in Turkey. In fact, the military regime was a 'reformist' regime which carried out the vital political, social and political reforms such as the preparation of the new constitution that the most libertarian Constitution of Turkey (Ozbudun 2000) enlarged the political rights and freedoms; the establishment of the bicameral parliamentary system for creating political check and balance system; the separation of legislative and executive power; formulating the economic policies providing labor class gained certain social, politic and economic rights. Following the general election in 1961 forced to create the first coalition government was constituted by the RPP and Justice Party (JP).

The coalition government led by Ismet Inonu took the necessary initiatives to improve the deteriorated relations with the EEC with the intention of finalizing the associate membership of Turkey. In the end, the Ankara Treaty was signed on September 1, 1963 and the official relation between Turkey and the EEC started from that time on. Hence, thanks to the Ankara Treaty, Turkey's Europeaness was recognized by the EEC while affirming the eligibility of Turkey for membership into the EEC when Turkey fulfilled the requirements for membership.

After the high degree of political instability due to weak, unsuccessful coalition governments in the early 1960s, a single-majority government of the JP came the power while receiving approximately 53% of the general votes in 1965. The leader of the party called Suleyman Demirel wanted to create 'Great Turkey' after studying in the USA (Purtas 2008). First the Cuba Missile Crises, then the Johnson's Letter Crises (Sahin 2002) intensified anti-American sentiments in Turkish public opinion. Especially 1968 youth movements escalated the pressure on the governments and politicians. The Turkish government and Foreign Office questioned American-centered foreign policy with the fear of losing public support. Moreover, opposing to the arms race causing 'balance of terror system' the rise of the disarmament demands in the international society triggered to revise strategies of the sides. Thus, the flexible response doctrine came forward in the NATO's security conceptions (Casin 2008: 610).

This détente period of the Cold War was a transition period in TDP (1965-1971) from unilateralism to multilateralism (Gonlubol and Kurkcuoğlu 1989). Based on the developments in the international politics Turkey did not hesitate to improve its relations with the Soviet Union. Furthermore, Demirel tried to change 'America first policy' in Turkey's relations with the Muslim countries. In the Arab-Israel War of 1967 Turkey supported Arab countries against Israel and the US. Demirel emphasized the Islamic character of the government which had a strict anti-communist and discriminative approach towards the leftist political parties. However, this contributed to rising of the political fragmentation, polarization, and radicalization in Turkish political sphere. The meet of the leftist political violence with the rightist political violence

escalated political violence in the streets which began to be seen with extremist and anarchic activities of the youth movements as bombing, robbery and kidnapping.

Because Turkish political elites directed their all attention and energy to deal with serious ongoing internal problems in the late of 1960s, the level of the achieving conformity with the European norms, procedures and practices in Turkey remained insignificant in the course of this circumstance due to slow track relationship between Turkey and the EEC. However, they started negotiations of the Additional Protocol for the passage to the transitional stage of Turkey on March 1969, but Turkey experienced another military intervention on March 12, 1971 with the consequence of the JP was unable to cope with fundamentally deteriorated social cohesion and order in Turkey.

4. The Third Democracy Transition in the 1970s

The regime breakdown in 1971 Turkey through the military memorandum led to the raising criticism of European governing elites regarding the illiberal omnipresent role of the Turkish armed forces in Turkish politics, hindering the close relationship with Turkey and the EC. It is fair to claim that the required political dialogue between Turkey and the EC was not developed by the politicians of Turkey throughout the 1970s were the missed the years from the point of Turkey's aspiration for inclusion to the EC. The politicians of Turkey were primarily required to tackle the ongoing domestic political problems gave their attention and efforts to solve them.

The liberal political atmosphere of the 1961 Constitution was perceived as responsible for the emergence of political extremism and violence, so the Constitution revised extensively in 1971 and 1973 which strengthen the power of the executive branch. The amendments to the 44 articles of 1961 ended the autonomy of the universities, limited the freedom of the press and enlarged of the powers of the National Security Council and introduced National Security Courts with the aim of curbing the political violence.

The failure of the inward-looking, import-oriented economic policies during the 1970s emerged the negative socio-economic impacts in Turkish economy such as massive unemployment; poverty; high rate of inflation; and the emergence of the shortages of basic consumption goods and black market. Because of the deteriorated socio-economic structure in Turkey, the extremist youth groups moved to struggle with each other in order to get the control of the streets and campus; thus, aftermaths of the political violence and terrorism caused the death of five thousand people. The rate of political killings became an average of over twenty per day by the summer of 1980. As an inevitable result with much larger and alarming scale 1980 military intervention took place as a similar pattern to that of 1971 military intervention.

In addition to troubled domestic politics, in the foreign relations of Turkey, the Cyprus and Aegean Sea Disputes between Turkey and Greece were the most significant events of this period (Sonmezoglu 2006).

5. The Fourth Democracy Transition in the 1980s and the 1990s

When the military of 1980 led by Kenan Evren came to the power, the military dissolved the parliament; deposed the government; lifted the immunities of the deputies; abolished the political parties from engaging with the politics; arrested 150,000-200,000 individuals while dealing with root causes of the escalating political violence and terrorism (Gole 2007: 515). These undemocratic acts under the military rule caused to the cooling of the relationship between Turkey and the EC. Moreover, Greece's inclusion to the EC as a full member in 1981, Turkey began to experience a serious setback in its relations with the EC due to their diverged preferences and interest on the issue of Cyprus and Greece veto power within the EC's decision-making mechanism (Aybak 2002: 230).

As one of the most important restructuring efforts of the military regime, with the effort of finding the appropriated solutions to the socio-economic problems, the protective import-oriented

economic policies were moved towards export-oriented liberal economic policies by the January 24 Economic programs of the National Front Coalition in accordance with the advice of the IMF. Another most important effort of the military regime was the objective of ensuring the depoliticized society by the Constitution of 1982 with the slogan of "Leave politics to the politicians". The liberal policies followed by Prime Minister Turgut Ozal became pioneering in the establishment of democracy in Turkey (Dodd 2002: 242). Under this mindset, Ozal made its first official application for full membership into the European Community on April 14, 1987. The Commission's opinion that highlighted serious economic and political problems existing that had a potential of preventing Turkey from accession to the EC was endorsed by the Council on February 5, 1990.

Following the Revolutions of 1989 in the Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Soviet Union, NATO went to revise its mission and strategies in the new world order. In this transformation process NATO-centered security and foreign policy of Turkey required be reconstructed in the terms of new opportunities and challenges. During the Cold War period Turkey occupied the buffer state role as a barrier to the Soviet threat, thus Turkey was a part of the West with the strategic considerations. Being a member of Western countries had been defined from a security-based approach. With the end of the Cold war era, identity- based and right-based approaches came into prominence; thus, the debate about Turkey's Western identity, culture and place in the Europe raised again (Redmond 2007 p.306). The economic, political and social factors gained importance in Europe's approach to Turkey regarding the EC began to pay more-enormous emphasis on standards of the candidate countries to have the institutions guaranteeing democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; and respecting and protecting minority rights, formulated by the Copenhagen Summit of 1993.

The European governing elites did not welcome Turkey's application for the membership due to the deficiencies of democracy; the Kurdish question related human rights; the problems regarding Cyprus issue. On the other hand, Turkey's application was submitted at the least possible time, because the Community had just enlarged to the South, including Greece, Spain and Portugal, and also the issue of developing a common internal market with the Single European Act, the EC was focused on deepening rather than enlargement. The timing of Turkish application was not appropriate to receive positive answer from the EC regarding Turkey's application.

As considering Turkey's large size, population, the level of development, religious and cultural difference, the European politicians preferred to improve the relationship with the Custom Union as the basic mechanism between Turkey and the EU. On March 6, 1995, the Custom Union agreement was signed, and Turkey became the first country to conclude a Customs Union with the EC without being a full member. In addition, with the dissolution of the communist regimes of the Central and Eastern European Countries, the Turkish application for full membership lost its significance for the EU with the emerging process of integration of Western and Eastern Europe. Turkey was pushed back of the queue as the post-Cold War Europe redefined itself (Bilgin 2007).

In June 1997, the coalition government led by the Islamist Welfare Party was ousted owing to its anti-secularist activities and the raising Islamic figures in social life with the considerable influence of Turkish armed forces. Although this process of 28 February 1997, called as the half coup or post-modern coup, was considered as a response of the secular establishment in Turkey, it negatively affected Turkey's aspiration for EU membership as leading the EU to give negative answer to the application of Turkey for EU membership at the Luxembourg Summit of 1997 (Font 2006:198). It should be point out that the EU took the negative decision in the deal with shortcomings of Turkey in the terms of upholding the principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights which were connected to the problems with Kurdish Issue in the 1990s, the rise of the political Islam and the omnipresent role of the military. Turkey was the only rejected country whereas the EC opened up accession negotiations with all applicant countries, including the Central and Eastern European countries and Greek-Cyprus.

It was understood by the Turkish political elites that the new world order brought new conditionality for Turkey to reach the level of contemporary civilization and to maintain its place among the European countries. In this manner, Europeanisation of Turkish foreign policy (Aydin and Acikmese 2007) meant the consolidation of Turkish democracy. Turkey launched to make the impressive reforms in fields on human rights, especially the cultural rights of the minorities due to changing perception of security (Muftuler-Bac 2000: 168-169). Under this circumstance Turkey attained the candidacy status without any precondition in the Helsinki Summit of 1999. There were more reasons lying behind the change in the attitude of the EU towards Turkey (Font 2006: 206). First of all, the EU considered the frustration of Turkey after the Luxemburg Summit and aimed to smooth the deterioration of relations; secondly, the new social democrat (SPD) and the Green coalition government in Germany supported Turkey's acceptance as a candidate; thirdly, the rapprochement between Turkey and Greece in the aftermath of the twin earthquakes; and finally, the US support Turkey's efforts towards the EU seemed to play an active role in the developing relations.

6. The Fifth Democratic Transition of Turkey under the Justice and Development Party in the 2000s:

As a result of the negative impacts of the 2000-2001 twin economic crises, a massive wave of unemployment and high inflation rate, the potential material benefits of EU membership became more attractive for all segment of the society. The three-party coalition, composed by the Democratic Left Party (the DSP), the Nationalist Action Party (the MHP) and the Motherland Party (the ANAP) was perceived as the sole responsible for the emergence of severe economic crisis in Turkey. Therefore, the anti-EU coalition government parties experienced severe loss of political authority (Muftuler-Bac 2004) and the loss of the legitimacy, thus the supports of the Turkey's accession to the EU grew to a greater extent which accelerated the political Europeanization of Turkey. Nearly one-fifth of the 177 articles of the Constitution were changed in 2001, including the amendments that limited the role of the military representatives and The National Security Council in the state organization (Cizre 2004: 109).

Meanwhile, the EU has been perceived as safeguards for Turkish citizens in terms of democracy. The conservative political forces were willing to support for Turkey's quest for EU membership as a response to the trauma of 28 February military intervention. One of the other popular will in Islamist mass was mobilized around the 'turban' debate and the freedoms on expressing identities (Eligur 2010). As this demand of the conservatives, Kurds who constituted the largest non-Turkish ethnic group in the country had a strong tendency to prefer to join into the EU circle due to reclaim their distinct political, social and cultural rights and freedoms against the acts of strict Kemalist identity politics (Kasaba 2006: 16). Because of these reasons in general, the support of Turkey's plausible membership of EU reached to 75% in Turkey.

The inability of the tri-party coalition government opened the way to the achievement of the victory of the pro-Islamist Justice and Development Party (the JDP) as getting 35.7 percent of the popular votes in the general elections of the November 2002 (Muftuler Bac 2004: 424). From the point of the Turkey's political Europeanization process, instead of being coalition government with the opinion divergence within the coalition partners, the single party majority government could accelerate the reforms process in Turkey. The harmonization packages which entered into force until the Brussels Summit of 2004, brought significant changes (Parker 2009: 1093) to the freedom of association, deterrence against torture and mistreatment; and also, they amended the Penal Code, the Law on State Security Courts, the Press Law, the Law on Political Parties, the Law on the Use of the Right of Petition (Gunter 2007: 117-123). The JDP government's strong commitment to consistently pursue strategy of the zero tolerance towards torture and ill-treatment was the significant administration change and the noticeably important step toward implementation of the EU norms and standards. In addition to these they introduced significant legal changes expanding the freedom of expression, religious freedom, and right to life and retrial.

Finally, according to the regular report of the EU Commission published on October 6, 2004, it was acknowledged that Turkey has adequately fulfill the Copenhagen criteria, because of that the EC decided to open up accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3, 2005. However, the EU's demands from Turkey regarding Cyprus (Suvarierol 2003) and Kurdish Question (Onis 2003) negatively affected the mutual relations. The EU's official document of the Negotiating Framework (Brussels, Oct. 2005) emphasized the possibility of suspending the negotiations or the other options different than full-membership such as privileged partnership might become the prospective outcome of open-ended negotiations that were not welcomed by Turkey. These 'privileged' clauses perceived the discriminatory attitude of the EU member states towards Turkey's candidacy by Turkish public opinion.

The reluctance of the EU member countries towards Turkey's bid for the EU membership appeared clearly when the Negotiations took a start in 2005. It should be claimed that the reasons lying behind the deceleration of the relationship between Turkey and the EU were the factors as the consequences of the East enlargement for the EU budget; rising Islamophobia and xenophobia in Europe since 9/11, the following caricature crises in the Netherlands and the murder of the movie maker Theo Van Gogh; Sarkozy's Anti-Turkism (Muftuler-Bac 2008: 201) and the offer of Mediterranean Unity Project or privileged partnership for Turkey; giving the priority to the establishment of the European Constitution and raising debate of Lisbon Treaty in the EU, lastly the aftermaths of the world economic crises.

The rise of the EC's emphasis on the open-ended nature of the accession talks in the Turkey-EU relations caused to strengthen the voice of the nationalist and anti-EU block in domestic politics in Turkey, even the Turkish public support for the EU accession decreased to 44% in 2006 (Taraktas 2008:253). In April 2007, the concerns of Kemalist secularist population regarding the JDP's religious identity and politics (Ozbudun 2009) increased and Turkey witnessed the important political crisis because of the growing tension between the pro-Secularist circle and Islamist circle due to Kemalists aimed to prevent the election of Abdullah Gul as the next president of the Turkish Republic by issuing a memorandum (Parker 2009: 1091). As the vanguard guardian of the Kemalist regime Turkish military continued to exercise its influence via informal mechanism over the matters other than military matters. In this context, on April 27, 2007, via the official website of the Turkish Armed Forces, the Turkish military officials made statement is so-called as e-coup is that was perceived as a threat against the government. Because of the blockage of the presidential elections with the undemocratic efforts of the Turkish military and the Constitutional Court, Abdullah Gul withdrew its candidacy; the JDP government decided to hold early elections in July 2007 and adopted the number of constitutional amendments. A package of constitutional reforms, including 'headscarf amendment' was accepted in the public referendum of October 2007. However, more comprehensive amendments to Turkish Constitution of 1982 were still needed. In March 2009, the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, in other words European Commission for Democracy through Law strongly criticized the Turkish constitutional and legal rules concerning the prohibition of political parties. In fact, the military officers of 1982 junta designed an authoritarian, statist, and tutelary constitution that would limit the area of civilian politics as much as possible by establishing several institutions to check the powers of the elected agencies (Ozbudun 2012: 41-42).

A common will to change the Constitution appeared in Turkish public sphere in 2010. The internal dynamics became more influential than the external dynamics in the developments of Turkish democracy history. Turkish civil society has begun to play the more active role in influencing decision-making mechanism and shaping policies which has made significant contribution to both Turkey's process of consolidating its democracy through engaging with the lobbying activities in both international and domestic level. To change the 1982 military-coup constitution Turkey went to hold a constitutional referendum on September 12th, 2010 and approved the amendment package with a 58 percent majority.

In addition to these developments, foreign policy advisor of Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdogan, Ahmet Davutoglu became the minister of Turkish Foreign Affairs in May 2009. The Davutoglu effect has been more influential in Turkish foreign policy. Davutoglu's *Strategic Depth* approach is based on the concepts of civilizational geopolitics which offers a 'new geographic imagination' of Turkey (Bilgin and Bilgic 2011). In this new geographic imagination Turkey is located outside Western civilization and is imagined as the leader of its *own civilization* by the revival of Ottomanism in national and international policies of Turkey. Since 2011 the Arab uprisings and the war in Syria have been litmus test for Davutoglu's foreign policy doctrine. The regional instability and turmoil originating from the uprisings and security threats rooted from the Syrian civil war and rising terrorist attacks of ISIL and PKK challenged Turkey's internal and external relations, specifically 'zero problems with neighbors' principle of Turkish foreign policy (Aras 2014). Because of a series of miscalculations about the Syria unrest, Turkey followed a foreign policy which took Ankara to the period of 'precious loneliness'.

Lastly on 16th April 2017 Turkish citizens went to the polls to vote 'Yes' or 'No' on eighteen-article amendments to the 1982 Constitution, including the replacement of parliamentary system with the presidential system. The result was 'Yes' to the amendments. The referendum took place under the state of emergency declared in the aftermath of the failed military coup of 15 July 2016. The external investigators and commentators have criticized the ongoing state of emergency and 'war on terror' in Turkey. The last developments have showed that Turkey follows its *own way* in 'democratization' with Ankara criteria rather than Copenhagen or Washington criteria.

7. Conclusion

With the strategic considerations, westernization had been the main orientation for Turkey's domestic modernization and foreign policy from the foundation times of Republic to the post-Cold War era. In the post-Cold War period, Europe was related to democracy, human rights, and an influence on identities for free expression of their distinctions. In the period before the start of the political Europeanization, military take-overs, human rights violations, and shortcomings in treatment of minorities were very common in Turkey. The major reasons behind the widespread human rights violations and shortcomings in treatment of minorities were originated from the highly centralized and over-institutionalized state machinery, undemocratic public bureaucracy, also the worse security conditions of Turkey. Thanks to the EU, on the road to full membership Turkey has taken certain progressive steps in terms of Turkey's centralized, hierarchical administrative system reformed into a decentralized, participatory, transparent one in the 2000s. Turkey's political democratization triggered recommendation and reconstruction of dominant Turkish identity in terms of some sensitive issues such as cultural rights of minorities and the civil-military relations. Thus, the years between 1999 and 2005 were called as 'the golden times' of the EU and Turkey relations. After the dead-lock of Turkey-EU relations in 2006, both in its domestic and external relations Turkey redefined its orientation with an emphasis on its on historical and cultural legacy. When it came to 2010, Turkey wanted more democracy, not just for fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria of the EU, but also facing with her own history and people. Therefore, Turkey went to the constitutional referendums in 2010 and in 2017 with the hopes of a creation of a new constitution and a civic constitutional citizenship which would be born with ongoing pangs of democracy.

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