Turkish "Foreign Policy" Towards the European Union

Under AK Party Rule: From "Europeanization" to the "Alliance of Civilizations"

Ali ASLAN[1]

Abstract - This study applies poststructuralist foreign policy analysis in Turkey's relations with the EU. It argues that in order to enervate the existing hegemony in the domestic realm, the AK Party put the objective of integration with the EU at the top of its foreign policy agenda in its early years. However, as the existing hegemony weakened, the AK Party has launched its project of constructing a conservative society. In order to achieve this goal, it has gradually engaged in re-articulating Turkey's relations with the EU around the theme of the alliance of civilizations and also pushed back EU integration process in its foreign policy agenda. The secular and liberal sectors of society have argued that this change derails Turkey from the "civilizing" process and undercutting democratization. The leaders of AK Party, in response, assert that Turkey's goal for EU membership is still on the table but with a caveat: it is not integration with *the* civilization; it is rather relations *among* civilizations.

Key words: Poststructuralism, Foreign policy, Turkey-EU relations, Europeanization, Alliance of civilizations

Introduction

According to mainstream view of foreign policy, it involves bridging the two sub-systems of international politics – domestic and international. The critical approaches oppose this view of foreign policy. For instance, poststructuralism argues that foreign policy, in effect, functions to produce those sub-systems through producing boundaries between the inside and outside of the state. From this perspective, Turkey's

1 Ali Aslan, PhD, University of Delaware, USA.

relations with the European Union (EU) cannot be thought independent from domestic developments, and vice versa. For example, in the 1990s, the EU demanded Turkey to promote its democracy and human rights record in order to be EU member and pass as a "Western state" in the international realm. Since these political demands undercut Kemalist "society" and hegemony, in the mid-1990s the Kemalist elite shifted Turkey's international orientation towards the US-Israeli axis in order to construct Turkey as a "Western state". This was significantly backed by the fact that the US-Israeli axis did not insist much on Turkey's level of democracy and its human rights record in order to have close relations with Turkey. After the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AK Party) came to power in 2002, Turkey has decisively re-turned to pro-EU foreign policy in order to debilitate the Kemalist hegemony through accelerating the process democratization in the domestic realm. However, AK Party's goal of constructing a "conservative" society has evidently come to clash with its pro-EU foreign policy. Therefore, it has gradually re-articulated Turkey's relations with the EU and also pushed back the objective of EU integration in its foreign policy agenda.

This study aims at analyzing this discursive change in Turkey's international relations with the EU. In the following, I briefly discuss the poststructuralist conception of foreign policy. Then, I apply this view of foreign policy in the study of Turkey's relations with the EU under AK Party rule.

Poststructuralist view of "Foreign Policy"

Any attempt of political analysis rests on a specific conception of ontology – the nature of (social) reality. This highlights, inter alia, a particular account of subjectivity. Poststructuralism rests on negative ontology which basically refers to the idea that all totalities are imbued with internal negativity that bars them to be completed. Hence, poststructuralism refutes the idea of a pre-existing subjectivity and thereby it proposes to "shift analysis from assumptions about pre-given subjects to the problematic of subjectivity and its political enactment." (Campbell, 2010, p. 229)

In the realm of international relations, the sovereign state is the primary subjectivity/political actor and from poststructuralist perspective, the activities of the state – *statecraft* – are viewed to create an effect of completeness. Statecraft functions to represent the state as a finished and objective political unit (Edkins, Persram and Pin-Fat, 1999). It indicates that "no state is complete and all states struggle against failure (Devetak, 1995, p. 20)." In this regard, poststructuralist political analysis proposes to focus on examining the boundary-producing activities or practices of the state, which constantly attempts at grounding the sovereign state as the primary subjectivity of world politics (Ashley, 1988).

The field of foreign policy is one of the primary sites of statecraft. Based on its specific ontological assumptions, poststructuralists distinguish "Foreign Policy" from "foreign policy." "Foreign Policy" is argued to be different from "foreign policy" in the sense that the latter refers to the reactions of pre-given and complete state actors to their environment whereas the former underscores the fact that the field of foreign policy is all about producing the "other" or "foreign" to achieve complete and stable subjecthood: "the self identity of a state rests on a prior difference from other states (Devetak, 1995, p. 29.)." In other words, while the former refers to rendering the other as "foreign," the latter is primarily about managing relations with other states. Thus, the field of foreign policy is not about linking two complete political systems – domestic and international – but instead is about the production of these political systems or spaces.

In sum, "Foreign Policy" contains, first, the production of two political spaces – domestic (self) and international (other) – second, the fixation of meaning in each of these political spaces and, finally, the maintenance of a degree of correspondence between those meanings and objectivities in order to generate a particular state-centric reality and an enclosed totality on the basis of *nation*, which currently holds the empty place of "power" or sovereignty; the primary referent of sovereignty is the people or nation (Weber, 1995; Biersteker and Weber1996).

AK Party's "Foreign Policy"

The division of the global political space into domestic (the space of the self) and international (the space of the other) political spaces is implemented according to a certain conception of "nation" or national identity. The boundaries between inside (self) and outside (other) are drawn according to this identity. And this supports a particular political position and set of interests within the society since the nation, like all other totalities, is ontologically incomplete and constructed.[2] That is, it has to be grounded on the basis of a *political project* which fills the empty place of nation in the domestic realm.

The AK Party, as a hegemonic political force, came to the scene with a specific political project – "conservative-democracy." The conservative-democratic political project has displayed Turkey's will to produce a civilizational *difference* within the global liberal order: "[W]e believe the dialogue between civilizations is a necessary step for world peace and brotherhood in the current time. Respecting civilizational differences and meeting on a common ground are imminent for a democratic world (Erdogan, 2004, p. 13.)." This has involved drawing new boundaries between the inside (self) and the outside (other) on the basis of conservative-democratic identity. The AK Party accordingly has sought to fix the domestic political space around the "conservative-democracy" whereas, in correspondence, it has attempted to oppose liberal Western universalism in the international political space by offering a democratic political ground in world politics, which requires the recognition of the plurality of civilization(s). Therefore, this process of constructing a new polity has involved democratization in order to roll back the Kemalist hegemony and erecting a "conservative" society in the inside; and in correspondence in the outside, it has engaged in the process of "europeanization" with a caveat of emphasizing Turkey's civilizational *difference* with Europe. However, in its early years the process of "europeanization" – to be a EU member – was the number one issue in AK Party's international orientation in order to dislocate

2 See for its classic statement, Anderson, 1983.

the Kemalist hegemony through democratization in the inside whereas later it has gradually steered away from the European orbit by increasing the emphasis on the plurality and "alliance of civilizations" in the outside in order to hegemonize the Turkish discursive field by constructing a "conservative" society and expanding it through the so-called "democratic opening" process[3] in the inside.

Indeed, there have been two alternative subject positions[4] with which Turkey could identify and in congruence with the search for civilizational difference in global politics. One is the subject position "bridge," expressing that Turkey is a "bridge" between the West and the Muslim East. The other is the so-called "center-state." There have been tendencies of both in the AK Party's discursive practices; there have been supporters of both subject positions within the AK Party and there has always been an overt tension between these two subject positions. However, the subject position "center-state" has gradually gained weight in the AK Party's statecraft. Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu (was an advisor to Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in 2004), for instance, has refused the subject position "bridge":

> When Turkey's role in the international system was defined, this was usually the role of "bridge." In fact, the sole function of a bridge is to connect two entities and carry over one side to the other; an actor defined as a bridge is not regarded as an independent actor with agency. Embracing this definition had led us to be perceived as imposing the values of the West when we establish relations with the East and as an Easterner carrying the negative attributes of the East when we establish relations with the West. In this new period, Turkey has to be defined as "center" state, not a "bridge."[5]

3 The "democratic opening" has involved the recognition of differences and expansion of democratic rights and freedoms that had been suppressed by the Kemalist elite. In the meantime, it has also encapsulated the process of bringing together those differences around a new society, identity – conservative-democracy.

4 The concept of "subject positions" aims at decentering the rationalist subjectivity. It tends to understand subjectivity as differential positions within a discursive system depending on the rejection of extra-discursive realm of experience and existence. If society is a symbolic system resting on the differential positions, social actors come to being as occupying differential positions within this system. Besides, social actors are argued to have multiple subject positions within this system of differences, such as being "white," "middle class," "feminist," etc. See, Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, pp. 115-116.

5 Ahmet Davutoglu, "Turkiye merkez ulke olmali" [Turkey has to be center state], ***Radikal***, 26 February, 2004. Available at http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=107581.

According to this subject position, Turkey is itself a power-center subscribing to universal democratic and local conservative values and radiating towards its spatial environment both in the directions of the West and the East: "Turkey can act as a European in Europe and as an Easterner in the East; because we carry both identities."[6] Instead of being a transmitter of values and interests between different civilizational centers and thus determined by them, the AK Party has imagined and represented Turkey as a distinct power center with multiple civilizational homes.

The phase I in EU-Turkey relations: "europeanization"

The first term of the AK Party was imprinted by its attempt of "europeanization": "the EU membership, for us, is the most ideal and effective political instrument to renovate and update our dearest Republic's foundational principles in this period of history."[7] This indicates that the primary agenda of AK Party's "Turkey" was democratization and it could be facilitated through becoming EU member. Accordingly, the AK Party restarted and deepened the EU reform process, which had already been on the agenda of Turkish politics since the Helsinki Summit in 1999. On 3 August 2002, the parliament passed an important package of reforms, with the support of the AK Party's parliamentary group, including the abrogation of the death penalty, new permission to learn and broadcast in local languages, the granting to religious minorities of the right to buy real-estate and dispose of them, all in order to bring Turkey more in line with the Copenhagen criteria.[8] The hope was that these adjustment laws would persuade the EU to give Turkey a starting date for full accession negotiations at the Copenhagen Summit, which would meet on 12-13 December 2002. The AK Party made a full

6 "Davutoglu dunyanin 4 Kissenger'indan biri" [Davutoglu is one of 4 Kissenger(s) of the world], ***NTV-MSNBC***, 10 March, 2010. Available at http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25067440.

7 "Erdogan: Yeni donemde AB'ye daha yakin olacagiz" [Erdogan: We will engage further with the EU in the new period], ***Hurriyet***, 13 December, 2002. Available at http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/printnews.aspx?DocID=115566.

8 "AB uyum paketi TBMM'den gecti" [The EU adjustment package passes in Parliament], ***Radikal***, 3 August, 2002. Available at http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=45450.

effort to secure this after it came to power on 3 November. Before the summit, Erdogan embarked on a round of visits to European capitals, obtaining the backing of the leaders of Britain, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Greece, and as well as President George W. Bush in Washington, but was faced with less enthusiastic support from the leaders of Germany and France (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010, pp. 121-122). He also attended the summit to lobby for Turkey's EU membership.[9] Ten candidate states, including Cyprus, were decided to be EU member as of May 2004 but the decision about Turkey's membership was postponed. The final declaration of the Summit stated that if the EU deemed that Turkey met the Copenhagen criteria by the next summit, which would be held in December 2004, the accession negotiations would start at the earliest possible date.[10] Erdogan, not satisfied with the decision, was hopeful for Turkey's membership to the EU, stating that the decision had upgraded the level of relations between the EU and Turkey.[11]

In 2003, the AK Party government took significant steps to bring Turkey in line with the Copenhagen criteria and to get a date for accession negotiations. The fourth[12] and fifth[13] reform packages came into force respectively on 11 and 23 January. These were followed by the sixth and seventh harmonization packages of democratic reforms, which were passed in Parliament in July 2003 despite the adamant opposition of the Kemalist political parties.[14] The seventh package, which reformed civil-military relations, was labeled as "revolutionary" in terms of

9 "Kopenhag'da soluk kesen diplomasi" [Breathtaking diplomacy in Copenhagen], ***Hurriyet***, 12 December, 2002. Available at http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/printnews.aspx?DocID=115136.

10 "Turkiye 25'in insafina kaldi" [Turkey is on the hook of 25], ***Aksiyon***, 16 December, 2002. Available at http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/aksiyon/haber-11075-26-turkiye-25in-insafina-kaldi.html.

11 "Erdogan: Yeni donemde AB'ye daha yakin olacagiz" [Erdogan: We will engage further with the EU in the new period], ***Hurriyet***, 13 December, 2002. Available at http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/printnews.aspx?DocID=115566.

12 "AB uyum paketi yururluge girdi" [The EU adjustment package comes into force], ***Hurriyet***, 11 January, 2003. Available at http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=121056.

13 "5. Uyum yasalari" [5th adjustment laws]. Available at http://www.belgenet.com/yasa/ab_uyum5-4.html.

14 "Cankaya'da hava puslu" [It's hazy in Cankaya], ***Radikal***, 1 August, 2003. Available at http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=83641.

the consolidation of democracy in Turkey and applauded by the EU.[15] Accordingly, in the EU Summit in Brussels on 12-13 December 2003, it was stated that Turkey had made significant progress in harmonizing with the EU and it was pledged that the EU would continue to work with Turkey.[16] Later on, in September 2004, some important changes were made in the Penal Code. These changes were also applauded by the EU, and the progress report on Turkey stated that Turkey had now met the Copenhagen criteria.[17] The EU eventually took a decision to start the accession negotiations with Turkey on 3 October 2005 at the Luxemburg Summit.[18]

However, as Turkey took steps to meet the Copenhagen criteria and to remove barriers to integration, conservatives in the EU, especially in the countries such as Germany, Austria, and France that had opposed Turkey's membership by politico-cultural reasons, began to put forward the idea of giving Turkey "privileged partnership" instead of "full membership."[19] This new status –"privileged partnership" – offered pursuing "an open-ended process of membership negotiations" without promising a final result of membership. In this sense, it was nothing but a way of saying "no" to Turkey's membership without pushing it away from the EU's orbit. German Chancellor Angela Merkel, came to power in September 2005, for instance, argued later "I definitely assume Turkey will not shift of its axis. We want to sustain cooperation with Turkey. We shall have common projects in the field of foreign policy in particular."[20] In contrast with the Germany-France axis, other European countries supported Turkey's membership. With respect to

15 "AB'den uyuma alkis" [The EU applauds the progress in harmonization], ***Vatan***, 7 July, 2003. Available at http://haber.gazetevatan.com/0/12481/1/Haber.

16 "Turkiye-AB iliskileri kronolojisi" [The timetable of Turkey-EU relations], ***NTV-MSNBC***, 29 January, 2008. Available at http://arsiv.ntvmsnbc.com/news/241510.asp.

17 "AB Komisyonu Turkiye Raporu" [The European Commission's report on Turkey]. Available at http://www.belgenet.com/arsiv/ab/rapor2004-01.html.

18 "Turkiye-AB muzakereleri resmen basladi" [Turkey-EU accession negotiations officially starts], ***Hurriyet***, 4 October, 2005. Available at http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=355054.

19 "Imtiyazli ortaklik" [Privileged partnership], ***Radikal***, 19 May, 2005. Available at http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=153171.

20 Author's translation. Semih Idiz, "Imtiyazli ortaklik'ta israrli" [She persists on privileged partnership], ***Milliyet***, 24 March, 2010. Available at http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-imtiyazli-ortaklik-ta-israrli/semih-idiz/siyaset/yazardetay/24.03.2010/1215530/default.htm.

the "privileged partnership," England's Minister of Foreign Relations David Miliband, for example, stated "[T]hese concerns stem from a static and outmoded view on Turkey."[21]

In addition to the rise of conservative parties in Europe, the Cyprus problem was another factor that complicated Turkey-EU relations. In 1974, the Turkish troops occupied the island after the Greek junta made a move to unite the island with Greece (the so-called *enosis*). In September 1983, *Kuzey Kibris Turk Cumhuriyeti* (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, KKTC) was established and recognized officially by Turkey. At the 1999 Helsinki Summit, where Turkey's application for membership was officially accepted, a pre-condition was introduced that Turkey had to find a political solution to Cyprus problem.[22] In September 2002, UN General Secretary Kofi Annan submitted a peace plan, (the so-called "Annan Plan") to Turkish and Greek sides in the island. According to the plan, the Greek and Turkish sides were to be taken as equal partners and united as single independent state.[23] In Turkey, while the AK Party supported the plan, the Kemalist establishment, including the President of KKTC Rauf Denktas, opposed it by labeling it as a "submissive" diplomatic move.[24] At the same time, the EU had admitted the Greek sides application for full membership to the EU in the Copenhagen Summit of December 2002. In April 2003, the EU signed the agreement for the Greek side's membership to the EU and agreed to admit the Greek side into the Union in May 2004, with the other nine countries. Therefore, the island had to be united urgently before May 2004. A month before, in April 2004, a referendum on the Annan Plan was held; according to the referendum results the Turkish side suppor-

21 Author's translation. "Miliband: Turkiye icin imtiyazli ortaklik onerisi demode bir gorus" [Miliband: The privileged partnership offer to Turkey is an outmoded view], ***Euractiv***, 28 October, 2009. Available at http://www.euractiv.com.tr/3/article/miliband-turkiye-icin-imtiyazli-ortaklik-onerisi-demode-bir-gorus-007522.

22 "Turkiye'deki secimler ve Kibris Sorunu" [The Turkish General Elections and the Cyprus Problem], ***Zaman***, 7 November, 2002. Available at http://arsiv.zaman.com.tr/2002/11/07/yorumlar/yorum2.htm.

23 "Annan Plani - Ozet" [The Annan Plan - Summary], ***Hurriyet***. Available at http://dosyalar.hurriyet.com.tr/annan_plani_ozet_tr.pdf.

24 "Baykal: Annan plani ciddi sorunlar tasiyor" [Baykal: The Annan Plan caaries serious risks], ***Hurriyet***, 22 April, 2004. Available at http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=219712.

ted the plan with 65 percent of votes whereas the Greek side opposed the plan with 76 percent.[25] This was a blow to both the EU and the AK Party, which significantly altered Turkey's traditional Cyprus policy which rested on maintaining the "status quo."[26] This situation created a serious problem for the AK Party government in the following period. For instance, Turkey was pressured to give Cypriot-registered ships and aircraft access to Turkish harbors and airports since it had to sign an additional protocol to the existing customs unions agreement (1996) after 3 October 2005. This was rejected by the AK Party government lest it might be considered as recognizing the sovereign independence of the Greek Cypriot state.[27] The EU increased the pressure on Turkey to sign the additional protocol. Upon Turkey's resistance, the EU decided to reduce the speed of accession negotiations with Turkey.[28]

The phase II in EU-Turkey relations: the rise of civilizational discourse

These factors have diminished the enthusiasm for EU membership in Turkish society[29] and in the AK Party leadership as well. In this lucrative socio-political environment, the AK Party has gradually increased the tone of civilizational (conservative) discourse in Turkey's relations towards the EU in order to expand the conservative-democratic hegemony in the domestic political space, establish a "conservative" society. For instance, in November 2005, after growing tension with the EU, Erdogan was now arguing with reference to the post-9/11 international environment:

25 "Annan Plani'na Turkler 'evet', Rumlar 'ohi' dedi" [Turks say "yes", Greeks "no" to the Annan Plan], ***Yenisafak***, 25 April, 2004. Available at http://yenisafak.com.tr/arsiv/2004/nisan/25/p02.html.

26 "Bakan Gul, Annan Plani'ni savundu" [Foreign Minister Gul defends the Annan Plan], ***Habervitrini***, 13 April, 2004. Available at http://www.habervitrini.com/haber/bakan-gul-annan-planini-savundu-126301/.

27 "AB'yle Kibris Restlesmesi" [The Cyprus dispute with the EU], ***Radikal***, 17 June, 2006. Available at http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=190414.

28 "AB'den 'limanlari acin' baskisi" [The EU pressure on "opening harbors and airports"], ***Dunya Bulteni***, 8 November, 2006. Available at http://dunyabulteni.net/index.php?aType=haberArchive&ArticleID=5660.

29 The opinions polls suggested that a decline public support from 67.5 percent in 2004 to 57.4 percent in 2005 and 32.2 percent in October 2006. See, Hale and Ozbudun, 2010, p. 125.

> If Turkey becomes a full-member of the EU, the alliance of civilizations will be achieved. If that does not happen, clashes between civilizations will continue and also the EU will turn into a Christian club. Turkey is not a primitive tribal community, the EU should view Turkey as a bridge between civilizations as much as Turkey sees the EU membership as a necessity.[30]

Around the same time, Erdogan also stated to a French daily, *Le Monde*, that "[T]he primary reason for Turkey's motivation to be a full-member of the EU is to prevent a clash of civilizations."[31] He also added that "without an alliance of civilizations, the EU will not be a super power," because Turkey's EU membership will bring the support of 1.5 billion Muslims to the EU.[32]

In this context, Turkey has strived to establish itself as a leader of the Islamic world. Accordingly, within the scope of the United Nations (UN), in 2005 Turkey and Spain started the project of an "Alliance of Civilizations" (AC).[33] This initiative attempted to reverse Turkey's image as a "Western state," and Turkey for the first time in its history was now leading a global initiative.[34] Indeed, Turkey had headed a similar initiative by the coalition government in 2002 by special efforts of Turkey's Foreign Minister Ismail Cem. On 12-13 February 2002, in the scope of the OIC-EU Joint Forum, foreign ministers of European and Muslim countries came together.[35] In this initiative, Turkey emp-

30 Author's translation. "Medeniyetler ittifakinin yolu Turkiye'den gecer" [Alliance of civilizations is not possible without Turkey], ***Yenisafak***, 7 November, 2005. Available at http://yenisafak.com.tr/arsiv/2005/kasim/07/p03.html.

31 "Erdogan: 'Medeniyetler catismasini onlemek icin AB'ye girmek istiyoruz'" [Erdogan: "We want to be a EU member to prevent clash of civilizations"], ***Habervitrini***, 12 November, 2005. Available at http://www.habervitrini.com/haber/erdogan-medeniyetler-catismasini-onlemek-icin-abye-girmek-istiyoruz-192960/.

32 "Erdogan: 'Medeniyetler catismasini onlemek icin AB'ye girmek istiyoruz'" [Erdogan: "We want to be a EU member to prevent clash of civilizations"], ***Habervitrini***, 12 November, 2005. Available at http://www.habervitrini.com/haber/erdogan-medeniyetler-catismasini-onlemek-icin-abye-girmek-istiyoruz-192960/.

33 See, http://www.medeniyetlerittifaki.org.tr/.

34 Ali Balci, "Medeniyetler ittifaki ve AKP" [Alliance of Civilizations and the AKP], ***Radikal***, 12 November, 2006. Available at http://www.radikal.com.tr/ek_haber.php?ek=r2&haberno=6425.

35 "AB-IKO Forumu, Ortadogu'ya baris cagrisiyla sona erdi" [The OIC-EU Forum closes with a call for peace in the Middle East], ***Radikal***, 13 February, 2002. Available at http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=29171.

hasized its "bridge" role between the West and the Islamic world and attended not as a member of the EU but a member of the OIC. The AC initiative, in comparison, highlighted Turkey's "center-state" role.[36]

The AC was established after the Prime Minister of Spain, Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, offered to establish an alliance between the West and the Muslim world in his speech in October 2004 at the UN General Assembly. This was prompted by the al-Qaeda attacks in Madrid in March 2004. In July 2005, Turkey joined this project. Accordingly, the UN officially proclaimed that the project had begun on 14 July 2005.[37] Receiving the backing of the UN, the first meeting of the project was held in 27-29 November 2005 in the city of Palma de Mallorca in Spain. The theme of the meeting was terrorism and possible solutions for this problem. In his speech, Erdogan expressed his concern about identifying Islam with terrorism and the growing use of the expression of "Islamic terrorism" in the Western media.[38] This was followed by a second meeting in the capital of Qatar, Doha on 25-28 February 2006. There the so-called "cartoon crisis,"[39] which involved the events erupting in the aftermath of the publishing of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammed in the Danish daily, *Jyllands Posten*, on 30 September 2005, was debated.[40] The AK Party leadership campaigned for the AC project at the EU Foreign Ministers meeting in Salzburg, Austria,[41] and at the Arab League Summit in Khartoum, Sudan in March 2006.[42]

36 Hasan Kosebalaban, "Turkiye'nin yeni dis politika doktrini: Medeniyetler Ittifaki" [Turkey's new foreign policy doctrine: The Alliance of Civilizations], ***Anlayis***, October 2005. Available at http://www.anlayis.net/makaleGoster.aspx?makaleid=1939.

37 See, http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2005/sgsm10004.doc.htm.

38 "Erdogan: Terorun onune din kelimesi konmaz" [Erdogan: Terrorism should not be attached with any religion], ***Hurriyet***, 27 November, 2005. Available at http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=3570956.

39 "Karikatur krizi tirmaniyor" [The cartoon crisis escalates], ***Radikal***, 2 February, 2006. Available at http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=177449.

40 "'Eylem plani' hazirlaniyor" ["Plan of action" is prepared], ***Star***, 27 February, 2006. Available at http://www.stargazete.com/dunya/kisa-kisa-haber-47336.htm.

41 "Gul'un 'medeniyetler ittifaki' aciklamasi" [Gul's statements of "alliance of civilizations"], ***Mynet Haber***, 11 March, 2006. Available at http://haber.mynet.com/gulun-medeniyetler-ittifaki-aciklamasi-216923-dunya/.

42 "Erdogan in Khartoum: Islam is a religion of peace," ***Hurriyet***, 28 March, 2006. Available at http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/4159252_p.asp.

The third meeting was held in Dakar,[43] the final meeting took place in Istanbul in November 2006.[44]

The tension between Turkey and the central powers of the EU – Germany and France – has grown over time. In April 2009, Olli Rehn, the European Commission member responsible for the Union's expansion, threatened Turkey by stating that if Turkey vetoed Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who stood as candidate for the General Secretary of the NATO, Turkey's membership would be jeopardized. Turkey opposed the Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen's candidacy for General Secretary of NATO due to his uncompromising attitude towards Turkey in the "cartoon crisis" and his turning a blind eye to a pro-PKK Kurdish television channel in Denmark. Turkey did not back down in the face of the EU's pressures and vetoed Rasmussen. The crisis was resolved after the US President Obama persuaded the Turkish government to change its vote.[45] Later, the tension between Turkey and the EU peak when the French parliament passed a law enabling legal charge against those, including historians and researchers in the field who refute the Armenian "genocide" (in 22 December 2011).[46] Erdogan reacted to the decision by saying it is "flippant" and "unjust."[47] Similarly, in April 2011, in response to criticisms leveled against the AK Party around the 10 percent election threshold, Erdogan attacked France as being not "enough democratic" by giving examples of the purge of Roma and the lack of religious freedom in France in his speech in the European Commission in Strasbourg.[48] Accordingly, the level of self-confidence

43 "Alliance of Civilizations' group advances work at Dakar meeting," ***UN News Centre***, 30 May, 2006. Available at http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=18677&Cr=alliance&Cr1=civilization.
44 "Medeniyetler Ittifaki Istanbul zirvesi" [The Istanbul Summit of Alliance of Civilizations], ***Hurriyet***, 12 November, 2006. Available at http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=5423902.
45 "NATO'da Rasmussen krizi" [the Rasmussen crisis at NATO], ***Vatan***, 4 April, 2009. Available at http://haber.gazetevatan.com/NATOda_Rasmussen_krizi/231461/9/Haber.
46 "Fransa, Ermeni tasarisini kabul etti" [France passes the "Armenian" law], ***Zaman***, 22 December, 2011. Available at http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=1218252.
47 "Basbakan Erdogan'dan Fransa kararina ilk tepki" [The immediate reactions of Erdogan to the decision taken in France], ***En Son Haber***, 22 December, 2011. Available at http://www.ensonhaber.com/basbakan-erdogandan-fransa-kararina-ilk-tepki-2011-12-22.html.
48 "Basbakan Erdogan'dan 2. 'one minute' Avrupa'ya" [PM Erdogan's second "one minute" goes to Europe]. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tuKLVnpfpk.

and of civilizational discourse has gradually continued to rise in AK Party's relations with the EU. In March 2011, Erdogan contended:

> If you reject us, we would rename the Copenhagen political criteria as the "Ankara political criteria" and would keep walking our way. In the place of Maastricht economic criteria, we would introduce the "Istanbul economic criteria" and would keep walking our way. We have the necessary preparations to do that. We do not have any concerns. Turkey is now a strong and self-sufficient country. Among 27 countries in the EU, there are countries which cannot even be compared with Turkey as regards to their political and economic indications; yet, the EU gave them full-membership due to political reasons. In our personal meetings, they are bound to confess this fact. Alas, one day, the EU will have to ask Turkey to become a EU member.[49]

Concluding remarks

Kemalists and liberals view Turkey's EU membership as a project of civilization. They deny Turkey's membership to another supranational cultural formation. For instance, the CHP's deputy secretary and a retired ambassador Onur Oymen criticized the AC initiative:

> What have we kept saying, as Ataturk stated, since the establishment of Republic? There are many cultures but only one civilization. And we consider our society as a part of this modern civilization. As you utter Alliance of Civilizations, as prime ministers of Turkey and Spain sit around a table, Spain represents the Western civilization. In this case, what civilization do you represent? You, therefore, cast out Turkey from Western civilization.50

Similarly, the CHP leader Deniz Baykal asked whether "secular" Turkey had embarked on representing the Muslim world in this project. And he criticized Erdogan by presenting Turkey not as a "secular" but as

49 Author's translation. "AB, Turkiye'yi kendileri almak durumunda kalacaklar" [The EU will have to ask Turkey to become a EU member], ***Haberturk***, 20 March, 2011. Available at http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/612267-ab-turkiyeyi-kendileri-almak-durumunda-kalacak.

50 Author translation. Quoted in Hasan Kosebalaban, "Turkiye'nin yeni dis politika doktrini: Medeniyetler Ittifaki" [Turkey's new foreign policy doctrine: The Alliance of Civilizations], ***Anlayis***, October 2005. Available at http://www.anlayis.net/makaleGoster.aspx?makaleid=1939.

a "moderate Islamic" country.[51] In another context, Ahmet Altan, a prominent liberal figure in Turkey, was criticizing Erdogan after his speech in the European Commission in April 2011 as acting as an "outsider," putting distance between Turkey and Europe and with the EU's democratic values.[52] In this sense, both discourses, political forces oppose imagining Turkey as a "bridge" between the West and the East or a "center-state."

The AK Party, in contrast, has embraced both of these subject positions. However, this has dragged the AK Party into a dilemma and disorientation. If Turkey is a "center-state," its relations with the EU should be understood as relations between two separate polities. If Turkey is a "bridge" between the West and the East then Turkey should act as an "insider" of the EU. The AK Party has tried to embrace and operationalize both subject positions in its foreign relations. Indeed, the verbal usage of both subject positions is still present in the AK Party circles. This reflects the presence of a discursive divergence within the AK Party. Yet, while the subject position "bridge" came forward in AK Party's earlier years, the subject position "center-state" has dominated in its later years. That is, as the AK Party has consolidated power at the expense of the Kemalist hegemony in the domestic realm, it has grown used to its new role in global politics. Those deeming Turkey to be a "center-state" have grown more powerful within the AK Party; and as Turkey has been excluded from the EU due to the European conservatives that have obtained power, the AK Party government has shifted towards the subject position of "center-state." And for now, this trend seems to persist in the future of the country.

References

Anderson, Benedict (1983). *Imagined Communities*, London and New York: Verso.

Ashley, Richard K. (1988). "Untying the Sovereign State: A Double Reading of Anarchy Problematique," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 227-262.

51 Zeynep Gurcanli, "Baykal AB'den kesin tarih istedi" [Baykal asks of a definite date from the AB], ***Hurriyet***, 21 November, 2008. Available at http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/printnews.aspx?DocID=10415660.

52 "Avrupa'ya Turk kalmak" [Denying Europe for the sake of Turkishness], ***Taraf***, 14 April, 2011. Available at http://www.taraf.com.tr/ahmet-altan/makale-avrupa-ya-turk-kalmak.htm.

Biersteker, Thomas J. & Weber, Cynthia, (1996). eds., *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Campbell, David (2010). "Poststructuralism," in Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith, eds., *International Relations Theory*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Devetak, Richard (1995). "Incomplete States: Theories and Practices of Statecraft," in John Macmillan and Andrew Linklater, eds., *Boundaries in Question: New Directions in International Relations*, London and New York: Pinter Publishers.

Edkins, Jenny & Persram Nalini and Pin-Fat,Veronique *Sovereignty and Subjectivity*, Colorado and London: Lynne Rienner Pub., 1999.

Erdogan, Recep Tayyip (2004). "Açılış Konuşması [Keynote Speech]," *Uluslararası Muhafazakârlık ve Demokrasi Sempozyumu* [International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy, UMDS], Ankara: AK Parti Yayınları.

Hale, William and Ozbudun Ergun (2010). *Islamism, Democracy, and Liberalism in Turkey: The Case of the AKP*, New York: Routledge.

Laclau, Ernesto and Mouffe, Chantal, (1985). *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, London: Verso.

Weber, Cynthia (1995). *Simulating Sovereignty*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

* * *

Özet: *- AK Parti İktidarında Avrupa Birliğine Yönelik Türk "Dış Siyaseti": "Avrupalılaşmak"tan "Medeniyetler İttifakı"na-* Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin AB ilişkilerini postyapısalcı dış politika anlayışı perspektifinden ele alıyor. İç politikada mevcut hegemonyayı zayıflatmak için AK Parti, hükümetteki ilk yıllarında AB ile bütünleşme hedefini dış politika gündeminin ilk maddesi yaptı. Fakat mevcut hegemonya zayıfladıkça, AK Parti muhafazakâr toplum inşa etme hedefini hayata geçirmeye başladı. Bu amacını gerçekleştirebilmek için, zamanla Türkiye'nin AB ile ilişkilerini medeniyetler ittifakı çerçevesinde yeniden tanımlamaya başladı, aynı zamanda da AB ile birleşme hedefini dış politika gündeminde geriye itti. Seküler ve liberal toplum kesimleri bu değişikliğin Türkiye'yi "uygarlaşma" sürecinden çıkardığı ve demokratikleşmeyi sekteyi uğrattığını iddia etmektedirler. Buna karşı, AK Parti'nin lider kadrosu Türkiye'nin AB üyeliği amacının hala devam ettiğini fakat bunun medeniyete entegre olmaktan daha çok iki medeniyet arasındaki bir ilişki olduğunu iddia etmektedirler.

Anahtar kelimeler: Postyapısalcılık, Dış politika, Türkiye-AB ilişkileri, Avrupalılaşma, Medeniyetler ittifakı