

USING “THE OTHER” IN FOREIGN POLICY MAKING: AN ANALYSIS OF  
TURKEY-EU RELATIONS BETWEEN 2002 AND 2014

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **USING “THE OTHER” IN FOREIGN-POLICY-MAKING: AN ANALYSIS OF TURKEY-EU RELATIONS BETWEEN 2002 AND 2014**

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The objective of this thesis is to examine the impact of the changing political discourses of Turkey’s identity vis a vis the EU during the AKP (Justice and Development Party / Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) term on relations with the European Union. To this end, the study focuses mainly on the discursive formulation of Turkey’s role in a context of “otherness” as a Muslim and Middle Eastern country under the rule of the AKP governments, Turkey’s major pro-Islamic party which first came to power in 2002. It is argued that “The ‘otherness’ of Turkey could be an advantage rather than an impediment in Turkey-EU relations if Turkey would be able to combine it with the European norms and values.” In order to substantiate this argument, the present thesis tries to understand the perceptions of Turkey’s “otherness” of both parties, i.e., Turkey and the EU, and its transformation during the AKP rule from 2002 to 2014. On the basis of the discourse analysis of the AKP’s political leadership and the regular progress report on Turkey released by the European Commission, this study distinguishes two contradictory periods: first, a compromise on “the otherness” of Turkey between 2002 and 2005 and second, its dissolution between 2010 and 2014. Between these two diverse periods which contain opposite discourses, from 2005 and 2010, it is found that the compromise was neither ruptured nor progressed.

**Keywords:** Turkey-EU Relations, AKP Rule, Turkish Identity, Turkey’s Otherness.

## ÖZ

### DIŞ POLİTİKA YAPIMINDA ‘ÖTEKİ’ KİMLİĞİNİN KULLANIMI: TÜRKİYE- AB İLİŞKİLERİNDE 2002-2014 YILLARININ ANALİZİ

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Bu tezin amacı AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) döneminde Türkiye’nin kimliği üzerine değişen siyasi söylemlerin AB (Avrupa Birliği) ile ilişkilerine etkisini incelemektir. Bu amaca ilişkin olarak çalışma, 2002’de iktidara gelen Türkiye’nin siyasal İslam geleneğini temsil eden partilerinden AKP döneminde AB ile ilişkilerinde Türkiye’nin Müslüman ve Orta Doğulu olarak “öteki” kimliği bağlamında söylemsel formülasyonun rolüne odaklanmaktadır. Tezin temel argümanı Türkiye’nin ‘öteki’ kimliğinin Avrupalı değer ve normlarla birlikte ele alındığında Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinde dezavantaj yerine avantaj olabileceğidir. Bunun için bu tez her iki tarafın da 2002-2014 yılları arasında AKP döneminde Türkiye’nin ‘öteki’ kimliği üzerine olan algıları ve bu algıların dönüşümünü anlamaya çalışmaktadır. AKP siyasi liderliğinin ve Avrupa Komisyonu’nun Türkiye üzerine yayınladığı ilerleme raporlarının söylem analizleri temelinde bu çalışma birbirine zıt iki döneme ayrılmaktadır: ilki, 2002-2005 yılları arasında Türkiye’nin “öteki” kimliği üzerinde sağlanan uzlaş, diğeri 2010-2014 yılları arasındaki ayrışma. Birbirine zıt söylemleri içeren bu iki dönem arasındaki sürede (2005-2010) ise, uzlaşının ne ilerlediği ne de kırıldığı bir süreç yaşandığı görülmüştür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Türkiye-AB İlişkileri, AKP Dönemi, Türk Kimliği, Türkiye’nin ‘Öteki’ Kimliği.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AKP	: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi
ANAP	: Anavatan Partisi
BDP	: Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi
CHP	: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi
DSP	: Demokratik Sol Parti
EEC	: European Economic Community
EU	: European Union
HSYK	: Hakimler ve Savcılar Yüksek Kurulu
IR	: International Relations
MHP	: Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
NPPA	: National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis
NSC	: National Security Council
OIC	: Organization of Islamic Conference
TBMM	: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi
TRT	: Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This thesis aims to understand Turkey-EU (European Union) relations during the AKP (Justice and Development Party / Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) era, between 2002 and 2014. Analyzing the dynamics of this period in which Turkey officially started negotiations with the EU is crucial for Turkey's EU membership process. Under the AKP rule, Turkey's domestic and foreign policy have been transformed. This transformation has taken place due to the fact that, while the AKP acknowledged Turkey's religiously and culturally Muslim identity or culturally and geographically Eastern identity, the party was also supportive of the European norms and values, hoping to become a successful democratic model for the larger Islamic community. In these terms, unlike the previous Islamic-oriented political parties in Turkey (even though their political effect was limited in Turkish politics because they were not always in government), the AKP did not start out as an anti-EU party as a ruling party using new discourses in Turkish politics. The AKP rule in Turkey brought about new opportunities for further relations between the two actors.

In this thesis, it is argued that the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP created a compromise on Turkey's identity as "the other" of the EU, which is based on instrumentalization of Turkey's "otherness" in its region by associating it with the European norms and values. This compromise corresponded to a process through which Turkey's cultural distinctiveness or the "otherness" of its identity in relation to the EU could be effectively used for the benefit of both Turkey and the EU. In this sense, this compromise consists of two dimensions: an emphasis on Turkey's identity as composed of non-European elements (such as a predominantly Muslim population, close historical ties with the Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries, etc.) while acknowledging Turkey's organic ties with the larger European identity in that it has become an inseparable part of Europe. These two characteristics are used to suggest that Turkey's "otherness" is indeed a positive value and asset for the EU, to the extent Turkey manages to internalize European norms and values regarding democracy, the

rule of law, and respect for human rights; while it progressively institutionalizes the EU legal acquis. From this perspective, Turkey would not deny its identity as the “other” of the EU. Rather, Turkey would use it in its region in order to promote the norms and values of the EU which can be considered universal in terms of the ideals of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Thus, the compromise on Turkey’s identity as “the other” of the EU would have advantages both for the EU by enabling an effective policy in its neighborhood and for Turkey by promoting and justifying its long term objective of becoming a full-member of the EU. The AKP government as well would benefit from the compromise, as this would reinforce its legitimacy and secure its survival as a pro-Islamist party in power.

This study examines the topic at hand in the context of the rhetorical use of the “otherness” of Turkey, which was evident in EU-Turkey relations in the AKP era. Such a historical analysis, which covers the period between 2002 and 2014, will contribute to a better understanding of both parties’ perceptions of Turkey’s identity and its effects on their relationship. It is important to evaluate the framework that the AKP laid out from the very beginning in order to analyze the effects of the rhetorical use of Turkey’s identity as “the other” of the EU. Uncovering Turkey’s governmental discourse in terms of the EU-Turkey relations will prove vital in assessing the relationship, which has been based on a compromise between the two actors.

This thesis also inquires into the dynamics of changing perceptions on Turkey’s use of “otherness” in the EU context. The AKP era has witnessed a variety of methods in the instrumentalization of Turkey as “the other” of Europe. The meaning of the concept itself shifted several times. This change by and large resulted in the diversion from the compromise that was initially acknowledged by both parties. However, defining how this compromise was constructed and then altered requires a holistic approach. For this end, both the discourse employed by Turkey’s successive governments under the AKP and the EU’s opinion as reflected by the progress reports on Turkey’s identity as “the other” will be analyzed.

In order to analyze the compromise and its transformation in time, this study employed the discourse analysis method. Discourse analysis is a qualitative method which is used to understand the perceptions of actors through language in the social science. In order

to grasp the respective identity perspectives of actors and their gradual change, this method is deemed useful because of the inherent relationship between language and reality. The importance of language lies in its relation with the construction of the reality. As Jorgensen and Phillips stated that,

...all discourse analytical approaches converge with respect to their views of language and the subject. Discourse analytical approaches take as their starting point the claim of structuralist and poststructuralist linguistic philosophy, that our access to reality is always through language. With language, we create representations of reality that are never mere reflections of a pre-existing reality but contribute to constructing reality (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, pp. 8-9).

Such a relationship between language and reality makes possible to question the identity in the language. In this manner, the anti-essentialist approach to identity implies the construction of identity through language and claims that “cultural identity is not an essence but a continually shifting description of ourselves” (Barker & Galasinski, 2001, p. 30). According to this argument, the discourse plays a constitutive role for the identities. Moreover, its constitutive role is “not simply an abstract philosophical one, but is an argument located in the everyday social conversations of ‘ordinary’ life” (Barker & Galasinski, 2001, p. 44). Thus, the discourses to be analyzed could be from the daily speeches of actors, not necessarily from carefully prepared texts.

Since anti-essentialist approach to identity implied a construction through language “shared constitutive norms, relational meanings, social purposes, and cognitive worldviews” could be observed in discourses (Hintz, 2015, p. 9). Therefore, due to the strong relationship between discourse and identity, the discourse analysis method would be a proper method in order to uncover the compromise on the idea of “otherness” that helps differentiate between the EU and Turkey. Thus, in this thesis, the discourses of prime ministers, foreign ministers and chief negotiators and/or ministers of EU affairs under the AKP rule are analyzed by interpreting their explanations about the EU and Turkey’s identity in order to understand the changing perceptions of Turkey’s identity and “otherness” in terms of EU-Turkey relations. In addition, the responses of the progress reports for each period are examined to identify the perspective of the EU on Turkey’s “otherness”. This study also deals with the specific themes in the discourses and cases that give clues about Turkey’s identity

perception. They are significant in analyzing the compromise and its transformation in each of the periods concerned.

This paper has to grapple with some limitations. Within the scope of this study, it was practically not likely to hold interviews with hundreds of people, who took part in the crafting of the policies of Turkey and the EU towards one another. Thus, speeches by only a certain number of AKP officials were analyzed in this study.

Time and accessibility constraints, among other reasons constitute major obstacles for the overall success of such a methodology. To overcome this, existing official transcripts of the speeches of AKP leaders and the progress reports are used as the primary resources of this thesis that is based on a methodology of discourse analysis. For analyzing some of the speeches included here, their media coverage was also utilized as a supportive source.

Additionally, the primary focus of this thesis is on the AKP era. This period in Turkish political life presents an appropriate case because of the profound policy reorientations of the AKP towards identity and foreign policy between 2002 and 2014. In this endeavor, the bureaucratic and institutional changes related to identity will be eliminated since they have not undergone deep changes in this relatively short period of time. Also, there are several alternative views concerning Turkey's identity and membership prospect for the EU in Turkey's parliament and in non-governmental organizations. They have also affected Turkey's identity definition but these particular views will be omitted in order to evaluate the specific significance of the governmental discourse.

Lastly, this thesis had to endure temporal obstacles as it was written during the pre-election period in Turkey. This made it difficult to access the party elite, who were probably the leading figures in shaping the party's EU policy in relation to their particular perception of Turkey's identity. However, their tight schedule did not allow for the inclusion of their views in this research. Thus, it was impossible to conduct supporting interviews with them.

With this scope and limitations, the thesis aims at defining three specific periods between the EU and Turkey under the AKP rule in terms of engendering a compromise

on Turkey's identity as "the other" of the EU and its change: (1) 2002-2005, (2) 2005-2010, and (3) 2010-2014 periods present highly distinct characteristics in the understanding of Turkey's "otherness" within the EU context. This study hopes to contribute to the academic literature by analyzing the discourses of AKP officials, and annual progress reports on Turkey written by the European Commission in order to understand whether the compromise between the EU and Turkey under the rule of successive AKP governments actually provides an opportunity for enhancing the relationship between these two actors or not, and how the compromise on Turkey's identity of "otherness" changed in time.

The years between 2002 and 2005 can be described as a period of full compromise. This period presents a window of opportunity for both sides. In the second period, Turkish officials started to emphasize its "otherness" more rigorously, which gradually impedes the balance of compromise by highlighting Turkey's Eastern identity. The third period reflects the conditions, under which the AKP has fully consolidated its power and control in domestic politics. The damage inflicted on the pre-existing compromise during this period resulted in a severe cutback of progress in the accession talks.

There, thus, emerges a clear contrast between the first and the third periods in this analysis. While there is a vigorous shared understanding of Turkey's identity as a projected model by both the EU and the AKP in terms of convergence of Islamic cultural identity and the EU's political ideals and values in the first period, this model becomes unsustainable due to the authoritarian turn of the AKP politics particularly during and after the Gezi Park protests. Between these two periods, there is a period between 2005 and 2010 in which neither promises of the compromise on Turkey's "otherness" has been fulfilled nor it has been totally disrupted. In this period the AKP, while concerned with its survival in the face of closure by the constitutional court, begins to emphasize its revivalist vision of the Ottoman heritage in Turkish foreign policy. This signals a diversion from playing the role of a "model country" as projected previously and a turn towards claiming leadership in the region. This tendency would merge with the authoritarian turn in the domestic politics after 2010, leading to a rupture with the original compromise that was previously reached between the EU and

Turkey in order to set the theoretical groundwork for the negotiation process in the first place.

Within this framework, the study is organized in the following ways: After the introduction which includes the objective, argument, methodology and organization of the thesis, the second chapter explains the historical background and provides an overall description and conception of the process through which a compromise on “the otherness” of Turkey in and for the EU project has originally been constructed in accordance with the EU's and the AKP's respective visions regarding Turkey's identity and role, and then disrupted or even subverted by the AKP's domestic and foreign policies. The second chapter presents the genesis and transformation of the compromise between the EU and the AKP on Turkey's “otherness”. After this chapter, a discourse analysis of the AKP leadership is introduced to trace and express how this process unfolded in the following chapters. This analysis is conducted and organized in two separate chapters. The first brings into focus the time period between 2002 and 2010, which is then divided into two sub-periods; (1) 2002 - 2005, when the compromise has been constructed, laying the groundwork for the beginning of the negotiations, and (2) 2005 - 2010, when the compromise was suspended. Then, the next chapter discusses the period between 2010 and 2014 as “the rupture.”

Within this framework, in the third and fourth chapters of this work, the discourses of the AKP representatives and responses of the EU in progress reports on Turkey will be analyzed in order to understand the changes in the AKP's approach to the identity of Turkey in relation with the EU. It is significant to see the transformation of both Turkey's and the EU's perceptions of Turkey's identity as “the other” of the EU.

The third chapter covers the period during which the convergence was constructed and utilized in EU-Turkey relations; i.e. the initial stage of the AKP era. It also includes the stagnation period between 2005 and 2010 in which the compromise was still intact. Focusing on the discourses about Turkey's identity, the discourses about specific cases which allows us to track the course of Turkey's changing position vis-a-vis the EU are also analyzed.

The fourth chapter analyses the discourses that mark the period following the 2010 constitutional referendum in Turkey. Including particular themes in the discourses, the

chapter deals with the cases that shed light on Turkey's approach with regard to the question of identity. Gezi Park Protests, one of the most important cases in that period, is an example of that cases because it turned to be an important issue for Turkey-EU relations by engendering heated debates on Turkey's adoption of the European norms and values.

The changing patterns of identity-construction underlying the evolution of Turkey-EU relations throughout the three successive periods in question can be observed in the discourses employed by the party's officials and policy makers. In their speeches, some specific discourses were highlighted in each period. For instance, in the period between 2002 and 2005, when a rapid Europeanization process took place, concepts such as the "harmony of civilizations" or the "model country" were frequently mentioned. However, in the period between 2010 and 2014, in which the compromise between the EU and Turkey on Turkey's "otherness" came to a halt, the Ottoman heritage was emphasized in the speeches of the AKP officials. Such examples clearly demonstrate that the transformation of the compromise could be observed in the discourses of the government officials and also the EU's progress reports on Turkey.

In each of these periods, there are several prevailing discourses on Turkey's identity and the compromise between the EU and Turkey on Turkey's "otherness". While the prevailing discourses of the first period shows that a compromise was indeed emerging, the discourses employed during the last period shows that such a compromise was no longer deemed valid. The second period was a period when the compromise was in limbo. The prevailing discourses of the three periods defined between 2002 and 2014 are summarized in the following table:

**Table II.I Prominent Discourses on the Compromise by Periods**

<b>2002-2005</b>	<b>2005-2010</b>	<b>2010-2014</b>
* Harmony	* AKP's closure trial	* Islamic tone in the discourses
* Democratization	* European values to survive	* Not promotion/adoption of the European norms and values
* Combination of the Islamic values with the European values	* Occasional criticism towards the EU	* Strong criticism
* Harmony of Civilizations	* Standing by Muslim communities	* Emphasizing the Ottoman Legacy of Turkey
* Turkey as the Model Country	* Stagnation	* Gezi Park Protest
* Promoting peace and stability		* Pressure on the media
		* Leadership in the Region

With the analyses of the discourses preferred by AKP officials and responses of the EU in progress reports in each of the periods, it would be possible to find out the use of compromise between the EU and Turkey and the transformation of perceptions about the compromise which is argued in this thesis. After a discourse analysis in the third and fourth chapters, the main argument and findings of the thesis are summarized in the conclusion.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE BACKGROUND AND THE CONTEXT OF THE COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE EU AND THE AKP ON TURKEY'S "OTHERNESS"**

#### **II.I The Background of the Compromise: Changing Perspectives**

The overwhelming uncertainty that surrounds the future of Turkey-EU relations has had significant implications for Turkish politics because of its transformative effects on the EU accession process as far as Turkey's foreign and domestic policy is concerned. However, the focus on Turkey's EU accession process has gradually been omitted from Turkish politicians' agenda in both of the realms. The governing AKP, being the most dominant actor shaping the Turkish political landscape for over a decade, left only little room for the public to contemplate on the EU membership after 2010.

As is claimed in the Introduction, there emerged a compromise on "the otherness" of Turkey between the EU and Turkey in the period between 2002 and 2005 - when a rapid Europeanization process was being observed in Turkey. However, the compromise stagnated in the period between 2005 and 2010, and it was fully dissolved after 2010. Both the emerging of the compromise, and the transformation and rupture of it have sufficient reasons. The emerging of the compromise corresponds to a moment in which both the EU and Turkey were experiencing domestic transformation. What was it that drove the AKP and the EU away from emphasizing the significance and priority of Turkey's EU accession process, on which the two parties initially had relied?

Turkey-EU relations can be traced back to 1959, when Turkey first applied to join the European Economic Community (EEC) which evolved into modern-day EU. However, Turkey's distinct identity became a highly contested issue inhibiting its EU membership process since the debates on whether Turkey is genuinely European or not became commonplace by the end of the Cold War. This period corresponds to the

advent of “the interest of identity formation” to International Relations (IR) discipline at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (Neumann, 1999, p. 1).

Looking at the identity debates in the IR discipline, it can be said that there are two parts of identity construction: to construct ‘self’ and to construct “other”; Neumann calls this “self/other nexus” (Neumann, 1999). Thus, “the other” part of the identity is significant in order to define an identity in the first place. In the case of Turkey-EU relations, Turkey’s position was generally constructed as “the other” of the EU, while also being a prospective member of the EU. Turkey’s population is mostly Muslim and has a different culture because of religious, cultural and ethnic reasons. As Müftüler-Baç claimed about Turkey-EU relations, “Turkey’s main difference probably lies in its Ottoman imperial past and its political culture. In addition, what sets Turkey apart from other European countries is the uncertainty concerning its European nature” (Müftüler Bac, 2005, p. 16).

Positioning culturally as “other” of the EU, Turkey’s identity was also related to the debate over what is meant by culturally European. Sassatelli mentions two different tendencies and their combination about European identity: unity, diversity and unity in diversity (Sassatelli, 2009). While “the unity” is based on common cultural heritage for a European identity, “the diversity” emphasizes that there are many European identities (Sassatelli, 2009). Unity in diversity combines the utopian side of the unity and the pragmatic side of diversity in this manner (Sassatelli, 2009, p. 35). Even though unity in diversity was officially accepted, the EU includes political groups which think rather differently concerning the shared European identity. The general perspective may possibly change in time as well. For instance, Lundgren claimed that, there used to be a shared perception about Turkey that “Europe’s identity would be lost if Turkey entered the Union”, however such a perception on the part of the EU concerning the European identity has changed over time (Lundgren, 2006, p. 121). Lundgren further suggests that “From the latter perspective the EU could possibly embrace all countries, regardless of religion or historical background” with its inherent perspective that gives priority to universal values, so “Turks [who] are often assumed to be culturally different from Europeans” would be able to be seen under the light of this principle (Lundgren, 2006, p. 121).

The end of the Cold War has precipitated this shift in the EU's perspective mainly because in post-Cold War era, "the EU has appeared as a model of democratic and economic stability to be pursued by new or newly-democratic countries of Europe" (Smith, 1996, p. 6). The inclusive approach that was assumed by the EU in order to extend its system over other countries was evidenced in the Central and Eastern Europe, which were once separated by a strong boundary from the EU (Smith, 1996, p. 19). However, all that started to change with the end of the Cold War.

Besides integrating some of the Central and Eastern European countries, the EU generated new policies in order to promote the European order after the Cold War. For instance, the EU created its neighborhood policy in order to promote not only stability and welfare, but also "democracy, pluralism, respect for human rights, civil liberties, the rule of law and core labour standards" in its neighborhood (Commission of the European Communities, 2003, p. 7). This means that the EU holds normative claims which aim to spread the European norms and values over its neighborhood.

The EU's normative foreign policy goals were not limited to its policies towards Central and Eastern European countries or its neighborhood. The EU also had some initiatives that were designed exclusively for Middle Eastern countries. For instance, the EU released the Barcelona Declaration which was adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in 1995 with the attendance of Turkey and some of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries (Barcelona Declaration, 1995). This partnership was offering not only a cooperation in the fields of economy and security but also adaptation of European norms and values, such as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (Barcelona Declaration, 1995).<sup>1</sup> Turkey could be a good "model" which promotes these norms and values in the region as being a prominent Muslim-majority country. However, Turkey was not accepted as a candidate country by the EU in the Luxembourg Summit in 1997. Apart from various well-known economic and political reasons, an essential argument that concerned Turkey's identity and was raised mostly by Christian Democrats was Turkey's "otherness" in cultural terms (European Union Center of North Carolina, 2008, p. 3). Coming to power after the Christian Democrats in the EU, Social Democrats who embraced a multiculturalist

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<sup>1</sup> Later, the EU developed its policy by releasing "EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East" in 2004. For a detailed information, see: (Kuzmicheva, 2006)

perspective managed to alter the course of Turkey-EU relations in a positive manner (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2005, p. 269). Combined with several other reasons, this process resulted the candidacy of Turkey in the Helsinki Summit in 1999.

Even though Turkey's "otherness" started to seem like an advantage for the EU, it was unable to generate a rapid Europeanization process in Turkey because of Turkey's domestic political context. In Turkey, there was a coalition government of the DSP (Democratic Left Party - Demokratik Sol Parti), the MHP (Nationalist Action Party - Miliyetçi Hareket Partisi) and the ANAP (Motherland Party - Anavatan Partisi) at the time. According to Öniş and Yılmaz, only the ANAP, a minor partner in the coalition, had a pro-EU orientation (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2005, p. 268).

The AKP came to power in 2002 general elections. With its roots in the political Islamist tradition, the AKP showed that they were a pro-EU party with its claim that they assessed Turkey's EU membership as a "natural result of modernization process" (AK Parti, 2002, p. 24). In this way, the AKP differs from other pro-Islamist parties in Turkish politics. As Dağı claimed that, "The JDP's position on the EU membership and globalization reflects an effort for a 'rethinking' which differs significantly from any conventional Islamic stand" (Dağı, 2006, p. 92). This politics of ruling party could turn into a good moment for Turkey-EU relations.

Actually, there was great concern from the EU about the AKP government's approach to the EU because the Islamist parties such as Welfare Party (Refah Partisi) or Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi) in Turkey were anti-EU until the AKP was founded in 2001. Raptopoulos also draws attention to this by saying, "as far as foreign circles are concerned, it is the European powers that have been most troubled by seeing Turkey, a candidate state of the EU, governed by a (pro) Islamic party" (Raptopoulos, 2004, p. 3). However, the AKP made perfect use of its pro-Islamist identity by associating it with the EU values between 2002 and 2005. Thus, the "integration into the West and maintaining Islamic identity are no longer seen as mutually exclusive choices; one can remain attached to an Islamic identity yet advocate integration with the West as in the case of Turkey's EU membership bid" (Dağı, 2006, p. 92). This attitude of Turkey's government and the EU's changing policy transformed the perspective of parties on Turkey's "otherness".

In such a scene in Turkey-EU relations, there emerged a compromise on Turkey's "otherness" between the EU and Turkey. While Turkey's perception of being "the other" of the EU seems generally negative in the path of the EU, it can also be used positively by both the EU and Turkey in the accession process of Turkey. It is possible to attribute such a positivity to "the otherness" of Turkey in EU-Turkey relations. The beginning of the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey corresponds to such a moment. The process between 2002 and 2005 corresponded to a root-and-branch reform process for Turkey. After the AKP came to power in 2002, the EU reforms were realized rapidly thanks to such a compromise on "the otherness" of Turkey.

## **II.II The Context and Transformation of the Compromise**

Unlike previous efforts of Turkey for the membership of the EU, an interesting compromise is created between the EU and AKP's initial image of Turkey. In that Turkey appeared as "the other" of the EU in historical, cultural and religious terms yet at the same time as a partner of the EU in terms of internalizing civic statehood, democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights (the Copenhagen political criteria) and representing and promoting them in the Middle East, Central Asia and wider Muslim world as "a model". The Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards accession in 2004 confirms Turkey's being role model as a country with a majority Muslim population:

Turkey is at present going through a process of radical change, including a rapid evolution of mentalities. It is in the interest of all that the current transformation process continues. Turkey would be an important model of a country with a majority Muslim population adhering to such fundamental principles as liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law" (European Commission, 2004a).

According to this compromise, the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP agreed on this projection of Turkey's identity which could be useful for both parties if Turkey manages to successfully combine its predominantly Islamic culture with the norms and values of the EU.

The recognition of "otherness" in these terms is valid for both the EU and Turkey. While Turkey adopts the European values as a part of its identity, helping to promote

a positive image in wider world, the EU also accepts Turkey's "otherness" in a positive way as a Muslim and Middle Eastern country. This overlapping understanding on the "otherness" provides EU and Turkey with certain cultural capital which could be a ground for a good relationship.

When considering the recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards accession on November 6, 2004, there are several points about Turkey's identity which draw attention (European Commission, 2004a). First of all, the European Commission emphasizes that Turkey's accession would be different from previous enlargements. The reasons are Turkey's population, size, geographical location, its potential to affect the economy, security and military; and these reasons give an ability to provide regional and global stability. This is the instrumental and pragmatic aspect of Turkey's accession.

Secondly, the identity aspect regarding Turkey's membership is also indicated in the recommendation of the European Commission. "Turkey would be an important model of a country with a majority Muslim population adhering to such fundamental principles as liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law," the Commission observed (European Commission, 2004a). This article implies Turkey's Muslim identity and turns this into an advantage by combining it with European values. Indeed, the EU's expectations from Turkey relate not only to security issues such as contributing to provide global and regional stability but also to political issues of the countries in the region of Turkey.

The EU's foreign policy and the role of Turkey in this policy coincided with the AKP's active foreign policy, which is constructed by emphasizing its Islamic identity and Ottoman heritage. As Emerson and Tocci claimed,

Turkey's neighborhood in the eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans, the Middle East and Eurasian regions is the primary focus of Turkish foreign policy and has become the main source of Europe's security concerns: weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and illegal trafficking of drugs and people" (Emerson & Tocci, 2004, p. 3).

Also, the election manifesto of the AKP in 2002 echoes with this mission offered by the European Commission:

Turkey is an element of stability in the region where it is located, with its democracy, economy and its attitude of respect for human rights. With these qualities, it shall take more initiative in the spots of crisis in regions neighboring Turkey and try to make a more concrete contribution to the solution of the crises<sup>2</sup> (AK Parti, 2002, p. 132).

According to the AKP, this role makes the accession of Turkey advantageous for Turkey as well as the EU. As Öniş and Yılmaz claimed, “Despite its limited concrete achievements, the value attached to Turkey’s Eastern heritage and Islamic identity, as well as its ties with the West, also appealed to the domestic audience” (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009, p. 12). In this context, the AKP aimed to take more role and responsibility in the world by creating a new discourse in its foreign policy (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009, p. 12).

The AKP indicates the importance of relations with both Islamic countries and the EU in the election manifesto in 2002. It is announced that the AKP gives a “special significance” to Turkey's relations with Islamic countries (AK Parti, 2002, p. 134). In this regard, the AKP offers to take more initiative in international organizations which are for Islamic countries (for example Organization of Islamic Conference - OIC).

The Islamic agenda is emphasized in Turkey under the AKP rule. However, combining the EU values with Islamic identity which accepted non-European and European identity is turned out a part of an important claim of the European agenda of Turkey. As Tepe said,

...the AKP found itself called upon not only to reform Turkey’s failing economy and to define the new terms of Islamic politics without being confrontational or utopian, but also to campaign for Turkey’s entry into the European Union -a goal, newly embraced by Turkey’s Islamists, that is now at the heart of the country’s political life (Tepe, 2005, p. 71).

The Islamic and oriental identity of Turkey was used for the European integration policy of Turkey as in the other foreign policy issues. Ertuğrul claims,

The AKP’s ideology has affirmed the Islamic-Oriental otherness of Turkey in European imagery through its sublimation and challenged the peripheral

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<sup>2</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Türkiye, demokrasisi, ekonomisi ve insan haklarına saygılı yönetimiyle bulunduğu bölgede bir istikrar unsurudur. Bu nitelikleriyle, çevresindeki kriz bölgelerinde daha fazla inisiyatif alacak ve krizlerin çözümüne daha somut katkı sağlamaya çalışacaktır.”

position accorded to it in an ambitious foreign policy vision aspiring to regional leadership and a capacity for global impact” (Ertuğrul, 2012, p. 160).

Thus, this instrumental using of Turkey’s “otherness” as an Islamic country for EU accession is a new approach for Turkey’s EU process. Raptopoulos assessed this approach as an opportunity and defines this approach of the AKP as a combination of the “Oriental (Anatolian) face” and the “Occidental” face of Turkey (Raptopoulos, 2004, p. 4).

“The otherness” of Turkey is derived from the contrast between Christianity and Islam, the West and the East, and modernity and tradition. As Neumann claims, “The dominant other in the history of the European state system remains ‘the Turk’, and because of the lingering importance of that system, we have here a particularly important other” (Neumann, 1999, p. 39-40).

There has been political parties that have different political agenda according to their approaches about Turkey’s identity by supporting one side of it more. For instance, there were political parties which had a pro-Islamist agenda, also before the AKP. Turkey’s Islamic parties rooted in the “National Outlook Movement” choose to emphasize Turkey’s Islamic identity. However, there was not a compromise on “the otherness” of Turkey between the EU’s perspective and those Islamic parties belonging to the National Outlook Movement. The leader of the National Outlook Movement, Necmettin Erbakan, calls the EU a “Christian Club” and claims that becoming a member of the EU is treason (Erbakan, 1991, p. 16).

However, the AKP’s assessment of Islam did not exclude global and European values from the identity of Turkey. For the AKP, becoming “the other” of Europe as a Muslim and Eastern country does not necessarily mean that Turkey should be against the EU, contrary to previous Islamic Parties rooted in the National Outlook Movement. As claimed by Patton, “The new party’s ‘post-Islamist’ political programme abandoned reference to Islamic values, embraced the free market economy, adopted the discourse of democracy, human rights and rule of law, and enthusiastically supported Turkey’s entry into the EU” (Patton, 2007, p. 343). Thus, there is a compromise of identity with the implication of cultural “otherness” between the EU and Turkey. This compromise turned into a project which is advantageous for both sides and helped to put Turkey on

the EU process track of membership negotiations. The compromise of Turkey's Islamic identity aspiring to European political values is not only in discourses of Turkey generated by the AKP government but also in Turkey's acts and implementations of policy during the term between 2002 and 2005. Turkey made a lot of reforms until the official starting of negotiations on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2005.

The EU reforms included eight harmonization packages which were passed following the constitutional amendments and other legislative regulations according to the report released by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. With these harmonization packages, Turkey tried to meet the accession criteria known as the Copenhagen Criteria politically, economically and in terms of *acquis*. Political requirements of accession are "stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities". Economic necessities are "existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union". The last necessity is to accept the Community *acquis* which is the "ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union" (European Council, 1995).

The first three harmonization packages were realized before the general elections on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, 2002, when the AKP came to power. The AKP continued reforms. With the First Harmonization Package, which was put into force on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February, 2002, Turkey regulates the Penal Code, the Anti-terror Law, the Law on the Establishment of and Proceedings at the State Security Courts and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Political Reforms in Turkey, 2007, p. 5). These codes and laws provide "expansion of the freedom of expression, the reduction of pre-trial detention periods and the safeguard provisions of the rights of prisoners" for providing a harmonization with the EU standards and requirements.

The Second Harmonization Package includes reforms on the Press Law, the Law on Political Parties, the Law on Associations and the Law on Meetings and Demonstration Marches and the Law on Civil Servants, and further amended the Law on the Establishment of and Proceedings of State Security Courts, the Act on the Organization, Duties and Competences of the Gendarmerie and the Act on Provincial

Administration (Political Reforms in Turkey, 2007, p. 6). This harmonization package is generally about freedom of media and the right of demonstration.

The Third Harmonization Package, which became effective on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, 2002, regulated the Law on Associations, the Law on Free Zones, the Law on Meetings and Demonstration Marches, the Press Law, the Law on Foundations and the Decree on the Organization and Duties of the Directorate General of Foundations, the Code of Civil Procedure and the Code of Penal Procedure, the Law on the Establishment of Radio and Television Enterprises, and the Law on Foreign Language Teaching and Education as well as the Law on the Duties and Competences of the Police (Political Reforms in Turkey, 2007, p. 6). The most debatable issue of this package was the death penalty. The death penalty remained with this package in peace-time.<sup>3</sup>

After the most controversial harmonization package, the AKP came to power on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November in 2002 by gaining 34.2 percent of votes and 363 out of 550 seats in Parliament. After its first election victory, the AKP government enacted a number of reforms including the five harmonization packages.

The Fourth Harmonization Package went into effect on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, 2003. This harmonization package generally includes changes in the Law on Political Parties. With these changes, the closure of a political party is only possible if there are "reasons stipulated in the Constitution" (Political Reforms in Turkey, 2007, p. 6).

Entering into force on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, 2003, the Fifth Harmonization Package mainly regulates the laws on the establishment of a foundation, retrial and the freedom of association (Political Reforms in Turkey, 2007, p. 6).

The Sixth Harmonization Package which became effective on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July, 2003, includes regulation on "expanding the freedom of expression, safeguard provisions on the rights of prisoners, religious freedom, right to life and retrial" (Political Reforms in Turkey, 2007, p. 6).

This fast reform process continued with the Seventh Harmonization Package which entered into effect on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 2003. This harmonization package had

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<sup>3</sup> The death penalty was abolished totally in 2004 in Turkey.

important changes in terms of “the expansion of the freedom of expression, freedom of association, safeguard provisions on the rights of prisoners, religious freedom, the rights of children, cultural rights, civilian-military relations and the functionality of the executive” (Political Reforms in Turkey, 2007, p. 6). This is a significant package in some ways for the EU. First of all, as a candidate serving as a model country in its region, Turkey should promote democratic values and liberties from the EU’s point of view. In this regard, civilian-military relations are important.

As an Islamist Party, the Welfare Party had experienced a military intervention, also known as a post-modern coup, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February in Turkey in 1997. At the National Security Council meeting of 28 February, 1997, the military asked the government to implicate 18 anti-Islamist measures (Jenkins, 2007, p. 345). The process resulted in the resignation of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, 1997.

For the AKP, the combination of EU norms and values and Turkey’s Islamist identity became a strategy in this regard in order to survive in Turkey’s political scene. Thus, one of the main dynamics of the compromise between the EU and Turkey was the regulation of civilian and military relations. Regulation of civilian-military relations according to the EU norms is required for not only AKP’s interests but also the EU’s interests. For the AKP, there was a danger of a military intervention after the experience of the Welfare Party in 1997 with the process of 28<sup>th</sup> February. However, the EU norms could restrain the effects of the military on politics. Hence the Seventh Harmonization Package includes such a regulation on the effects of military on politics. As Çağaptay indicated, the Seventh Harmonization Package curbs the role of the military in politics by “limiting the executive powers and areas of responsibility of

the National Security Council (NSC)”<sup>4</sup>, “increasing the civilian presence on the NSC”<sup>5</sup> and “subjecting the NSC to executive authority”<sup>6</sup> (Çağaptay, 2003, p. 214).

Domestically, these reforms helped the AKP to consolidate its position in power vis-à-vis military. For the EU, the demilitarization of politics in Turkey meant creating a good democratic model in the region. One of the important requirements of being a democratic country is to normalize civilian-military relations according to the EU. Thus, in the 2002 Progress Report, civilian control over the military is described as the essential issue for a democratic system (European Commission, 2002, p. 16). Thus the influence of the military in the National Security Council (NSC) and its effects on Turkish politics had been criticized by the European Commission before the Seventh Harmonization Package (European Commission, 2002, p. 25). Pursuant thereto, the demilitarization process in Turkey was appreciated by the EU. In the first progress report after the regulations on the military, it is stated,

Political reforms have introduced changes ranging from improved civil liberties and human rights to enhanced civilian control of the military. Civil society has grown stronger. The reform process has clearly addressed major issues and, importantly, highlighted a growing consensus in favour of liberal democracy” (European Commission, 2004b, p. 15).

Appreciating by the European Commisison, the regulations within the Seventh Harmonization Package was one of the main agreement areas between Turkey and the EU.

The Eighth Harmonization Package entered into effect on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, 2004, abolished the death penalty and made some regulations on the Law on Higher Education and the Law on the Establishment of and Broadcasting by Radio and Television Corporations (Political Reforms in Turkey, 2007, p. 18).

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<sup>4</sup> Çağaptay stated that the NSC turned into an “advisory board” even though it has great role in Turkey’s foreign policy and also security before the package (Çağaptay, 2003, p.214).

<sup>5</sup> For instance, the NSC secretary-general can be held by a civilian rather than an army general (Çağaptay, 2003, p.214).

<sup>6</sup> For example, the NSC have to report to the deputy prime minister in every other month (Çağaptay, 2003, p.214).

The reforms of the harmonization packages and other reforms that the AKP enacted showed Turkey's efforts for the EU membership. Thus, the EU also appreciated these efforts and made concrete initiatives in order to respond to Turkey's efforts. Thus, the EU officially launched accession talks with Turkey on October 3, 2005. This was a crucial point in the relations between the EU and Turkey under the rule of a pro-Islamist party. Even though the AKP was a pro-Islamist party, it would be able to contribute to the Europeanization process with several reforms in Turkey. Since it is combined with the European norms and values, Turkey's identity as "the other" of the EU did not emerged as an obstacle, but an advantage for Turkey in its relations with the EU. It also showed that the use of "otherness" in the relations created a fast progress for Turkey as a candidate country in the path of the EU.

With the starting of negotiations for the EU membership, the activism in the EU process started to decrease. Even though there was not a rejection of the compromise on Turkey's "otherness" and the combination of Turkey's Islamic-Oriental identity with the EU values, the EU and Turkey could not develop further the project that they started. There were some reasons for this both caused by Turkey and the EU.

First of all, since domestic politics dominated the AKP's agenda, the EU process lost its priority. The process between 2005 in which the EU negotiations started and 2010 in which a constitutional referendum was held can be named as a 'survival' term for the AKP. As Avcı claimed, there was a struggle between the AKP and secular structures in Turkey such as with the armed forces, judiciary and bureaucracy (Avcı, 2011, p. 413). Also, Dağı claimed that,

Despite its electoral victory the JDP [AKP] has remained vulnerable to secularist opposition directed not only by the main opposition party, the Republican People's Party, but also the military and some civil sectors that see the JDP as a pro-Islamic movement with a secret agenda to undo the Kemalist/secularist reforms (Dağı, 2006, p. 89)

The struggle resulted in several critical points in the history of the AKP such as Abdullah Gül's presidential election and the AKP's closure trial. Abdullah Gül's presidential election is accepted as a political crisis in Turkey in terms of civilian-military relations and the democratization process. When Ahmet Necdet Sezer's presidency was ending on May 16, 2007, the AKP declared its candidate for

presidency: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül. However, this decision was criticized by secular opposition in Turkey and tension increased among society. One of the main opponents of the AKP's candidate was the Turkish Armed Forces because this decision was seen as a threat to secularism. According to Akça and Balta-Paker, the reason for concern for Gül's candidacy was the fact that his wife, Hayrunnisa Gül, wears a head-scarf and also Gül's attachment to political Islam (Akça & Balta-Paker, 2013, p. 84). The first round of the presidential elections was held on April 27, 2007. Abdullah Gül gained 357 votes out of 361 (Milliyet, 2007). However it was not enough to be elected because the quorum is claimed to be 367 (Tahincioğlu, 2007). Even though there were some signals against Abdullah Gül (for example a press conference<sup>7</sup> held by the Chief of the Turkish General Staff Yaşar Büyükanıt), the significant event was The Turkish General Staff press release dated April 27, 2007, which is also called an "e-memorandum". It is stated in the press release that

In recent days, the problem during the presidential election has focused on secularism discussions. This situation has been anxiously followed by the Turkish Armed Forces. The Turkish armed forces maintains its firm determination to carry out its clearly specified duties to protect these principles and has absolute loyalty and belief in this determination (Tavernisa, 2007)<sup>8</sup>.

The attitude of the military is criticized by the government and assessed as an anti-government statement (Çiçek, 2007). Minister of Justice Cemil Çiçek said that "Belonging to the Prime Ministry, Presidency of General Staff's use of any expression against government cannot be accepted in a state of law" (Çiçek, 2007)<sup>9</sup>. Also, the EU supports the government in this debate. The EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn warned the Turkish Armed Forces not to interfere in politics and to respect democratic values (BBC, 2007).

There was not only military opposition but also public and NGO opposition to Gül's candidacy. Secularist reaction which are also called "Republican Rallies" were held

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<sup>7</sup> For the full text of speech in press conference, look:  
<http://arsiv.ntv.com.tr/news/405466.asp#storyContinues>

<sup>8</sup> This is removed from the official website of Turkish General Staff in 2011 and it is quoted from a report of The New York Times (Tavernisa, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> The original Turkish quotation is "Başbakan'a bağlı bir kurum olan Genelkurmay Başkanlığı'nın herhangi bir konuda hükümete karşı bir ifade kullanması demokratik bir hukuk devletinde düşünülemez."

by the Atatürkist Thought Association and other NGOs in order to protect secularism in Turkey according to their claim (Akça & Balta-Paker, 2013, p. 84). It made the reactions more democratic and broad because the reactions were not only rooted by military but also civil society.

In the wake of the political and public debates, the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi - CHP) applied to the Constitutional Court after the first round of elections in the parliament, claiming that 367 was quorum for the voting in the Parliament. Although criticized for being political, the Constitutional Court ruled that the presence of 367 deputies in the Parliament at the time of voting was required for quorum, and proclaimed that the first round was invalid (Karakaya-Polat, 2009, p. 137-138). The second round was held on May 6, 2007; however, it could not achieve the necessary number of deputies required for the voting to be valid as well. Only 358 deputies were present in the Parliament (TBMM, 2007, p. 258). Consequently, a political crisis ensued.

The presidential election was postponed, and an early general election was decided on with the support of all political groups in the Parliament. On July 22, 2007, the early general election was held in Turkey. The AKP took 46.58 percent of votes (CHP 20.88 and MHP 14.37) and came to power again (HT Seçim, 2007). In the aftermath of the general elections, the presidential election became top priority on the political agenda once again.

In that term, the AKP declared that Abdullah Gül would be their candidate for the second time (Aksoy, 2007). However, it did not result in a political crisis because of the action of the MHP. The MHP announced that they would attend the ballot (Hürriyet, 2007). With this decision, the ballot could be valid in accordance with the Constitutional Court's decision. Abdullah Gül could not achieve enough numbers (367) for the first and second ballots (on August 20 and 24, 2007). However, there were enough members present to cast 276 votes for the third ballot, and Gül was elected as president with 339 votes on August 28, 2007 (Radikal, 2007).

This crisis affected the EU and Turkey relations. In this case, there was not a break in the compromise on identity. It can be inferred that the EU supported the AKP's pro-Islamist identity and that the AKP also supported the EU's democratic values. Even

though there is a harmony between the discourses of both sides, the progress reports show that there is a limited harmonization with the EU's *acquis* in most of the chapters, contrary to fast process with the harmonization packages. It is also claimed that the EU reforms are not enough and substantial anymore when compared to the term before 2005 (Avcı, 2011, p. 417).

The political solution of the presidential crisis was thus accepted as a sign of normalization of civilian and military relations in Turkey. Nevertheless, this process is not the only case in which the AKP faced a threat from the military. The AKP faced also the Ergenekon and Balyoz plans. Starting in 2007, "the Ergenekon organization" which includes military-affiliated people and also journalists, academics and businessman was claimed to plan coups to overthrow the government (Aknur, 2013, p. 140). Several operations were held by the police for this case. Balyoz was also a plan which aimed to provoke "high tension to eventually justify a military takeover ... [by] blowing up mosques during Friday prayers, setting off terrorist acts, assassinating political figures, attacking museums and initiating a conflict with Greece" (Aknur, 2013, p. 140). The investigation and judicial process of these cases was a protracted process, ending in 2012 and 2013.

The EU supported the AKP's position in these cases. The European Parliament's Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union claimed that the Ergenekon investigation was crucial for resolving murders allegedly committed in the name of the state, and also the Co-Chairman of the European Union-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee Joost Lagendijk, assessed the Ergenekon investigation as an opportunity for Turkey (The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 2009).

Nevertheless, the presidential crisis and ongoing Ergenekon and Balyoz cases were not the only crises that the AKP had to handle. Linked to Gül's presidency, the concerns over secularism increased. In 2008, the AKP faced a new survival struggle. On March 14, 2008, Chief Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of Appeals, Abdurrahman Yalçınkaya, filed a case to the Constitutional Court to close down the AKP and place a political ban on 71 of the AKP's politicians including Abdullah Gül as a former AKP's politician (NTV, 2008a). Referring to several "anti-secular" discourses and

implications, Yalçinkaya claimed that the AKP has become “a hotbed of anti-secular activities” (NTV, 2008a). The court accepted the lawsuit and examined the claims.

On July 30, the Constitutional Court voted on whether the AKP should be closed or not. Six of the judges on the Constitutional Court voted to ban the party while four of them agreed that the party had become a focal point for anti-secular activities, but not a serious one, and one of the judges rejected the trial (Milliyet, 2008). Thus, the AKP was not banned since seven votes were needed. However, the President of the Constitutional Court Haşim Kılıç announced that the AKP was warned seriously and one-half of the AKP’s financial assistance from the state would be cut (Milliyet, 2008). The reasons for the ruling of the Constitutional Court were debated. There are some claims related to political reforms and the EU process of Turkey.

The reasons behind the decision ... mainly include the political reforms undertaken by the AKP to achieve alignment with the EU, demonstrating once again the significance of the EU anchor for the survival of the party in the Turkish political system” (Aydın Düzgit, 2008, p. 27).

In terms of the EU and Turkey relations, the decision was welcomed by the EU because it advocated freedoms. In its declaration dated 31<sup>st</sup> of July, 2008, the EU called for the solving of problems within the framework of “dialogue and compromise”:

The European Union invites all those involved in Turkish politics to resolve their differences in a spirit of dialogue and compromise, while respecting the rule of law and fundamental freedoms. The European Union, which is attentive to the democratic functioning of institutions, will continue to watch the situation in Turkey carefully (Council of the European Union, 2008).

In this case, the EU membership process of Turkey is advantageous for both sides. As an Islamic-rooted party, the AKP can survive with its different thoughts and implication as a requirement of freedom in the country. The viewpoint of the EU is that the freedoms could be achieved even though the prominent identity of the ruling party is separate from the EU’s other members. Thus, it can be inferred that the compromise between the AKP and the EU on Turkey’s identity as an “other” of the EU did not break at that time. The EU respected the ‘Islamic’ identity of the AKP, and the AKP also respected (and wanted) the freedoms which were promoted by the EU.

In this term, the harmonization with the EU *acquis* was still continuing even though it was slower than the first term of the AKP until 2005, for instance, as Avcı indicated,

the adaptation of The Law on Foundations in February 2008 and the decision to implement the new National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) on December 31, 2008 (Avcı, 2011, p. 417). In addition, there are some institutional changes in order to conduct the EU process well. For example, the government appointed an official EU negotiator, Egemen Bağış, for the first time in 2009.

Some EU chapters also opened in this term. According to the Ministry for EU Affairs, these chapters (and their numbers) are:

4) Free Movement of Capital 6) Company Law 7) Intellectual Property Law 10) Information Society and Media 12) Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy 16) Taxation 18) Statistics 20) Enterprise and Industrial Policy 21) Trans-European Networks 22) Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments 25) Science and Research 27) Environment 28) Consumer and Health Protection 32) Financial Control “ (Republic of Turkey Ministry for EU Affairs, 2013).

Only the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter closed provisionally among opened chapters. The other chapters either were blocked or not opened in this term. (And only the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter would be opened in 2013). Even though there was progress in the EU relations with Turkey, it seems limited when compared to the progress of accomplishment of the Copenhagen Criteria in the previous term of the AKP.

The other challenge that the AKP faced was a constitutional referendum in 2010. Before the general and local elections, the AKP had been promising that they would change the constitution that was prepared after the military coup of September 12, 1980. The AKP aimed to create a “civilian” constitution which would replace the 1982 constitution act. The prominent planned changes included “to curb the excess power of the president, to lift the headscarf ban in universities, and to redefine the concept of ‘Turkishness’ in terms of citizenship and loyalty to the constitution” (Gümüşçü & Sert, 2010, p. 62). It would also change the structure of the Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors (Hakimler ve Savcılar Yüksek Kurulu - HSYK) and the Constitutional Court. These were major and controversial changes but there were comprehensive changes.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> For the all changes, see: Bölme, S. M. ve Taha Özhan (2010) *Constitutional Referendum in Turkey* Ankara: SETA

The constitutional reform process turned into a competition among political parties rather than an effort for obtaining consensus. The parties in the parliament disagreed with the changes in the constitution. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of May, 2010, the package of the constitutional amendments was voted on in Parliament, and 336 out of 550 members of Parliament voted “yes” and 72 members voted “no” to the package (NTV, 2010). On May 12, 2010, President Abdullah Gül signed the changes and offered a referendum because 367 votes were required to adopt the proposals outright (Hürriyet Daily News, 2010). September 12, 2010, was the date chosen to hold the referendum.

The major political parties in the Parliament, CHP and MHP, ran a “no” campaign for the constitutional referendum. The other major party, the Peace and Democracy Party (Bağımsızlık ve Demokrasi Partisi - BDP) declared that they would boycott the referendum because the proposal of the constitution was still describing all citizens as Turk (Radikal, 2010). Even though it was not supported by one of major parties in the Parliament, there was also “Not enough, but Yes” campaign by some activists for the referendum in Turkey.

The referendum was held on September 12, 2010, on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the military coup. According to official data, 57.88 percent of participants voted “yes” and 42.12 percent of peoples voted “no” for the constitutional amendments (Yüksek Seçim Kurulu, 2010).

The result of the referendum satisfied the EU’s expectations. The EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Füle assessed the reform as “a step in the right direction” in terms of the EU membership criteria (Borrud & Jones, 2010). Thus, it can be claimed that the compromise between the AKP and the EU on the identity of Turkey which includes both the EU values and Islamic and Eastern values was continuing. At least, it can be inferred that there was not a radical change in this term between 2005 and 2010 even though there was decreasing emphasis on the European Union (and also on other foreign policy issues) because of the domestic struggles that the AKP faced.

After this result of the referendum, the AKP reinforced its power against its opposition, especially the military and secular groups in the bureaucracy and state. Nevertheless, the debate on “military tutelage” gave way to “civilian tutelage” after the power gained by the new reforms on the constitution. It also affected the approach to the identity.

Öniş claimed that the AKP's power after the elections resulted in the "social engineering" and it led the society in Turkey "in a more conservative direction, with religion having an increasingly important role in public space" (Öniş, 2013, p. 108). With the gain of power and suppression of threat directed to the government, the AKP's emphasis on European norms and values decreased while the emphasis on Turkey's "otherness" increased. In this regard, a new era started in the relations with the EU. After the constitutional referendum in 2010, the power of the AKP was consolidated. This is reflected in the construction of Turkish identity, and the AKP started to describe Turkey differently from the first period between 2002 and 2005.

In this period, the debate of "shift of axis" in Turkish foreign policy which implying Turkey's references in its foreign policy shifted from the West towards to the East began among scholars and politicians. While some scholars (like Öniş) explain the active foreign policy of Turkey in the Middle East and Balkans by defining a shift (Öniş, 2011, p. 50); some others explain this difference in patterns as "a unique strategic identity which combines idealist and Realpolitik elements" (Kardaş, 2011, p. 19). Even though it was a controversial issue in Turkish foreign policy, discussion on this issue itself implies a paradigm change. Furthermore, the subsequent developments in Turkish foreign policy also reinforced the change concerning the reasons and dynamics. Thus, debates on the "shift of axis", referring to Turkey's active foreign policy in the Middle East and Balkans, and the rise of governmental discourses on the Ottoman Empire by emphasizing its religious character (at least) raised some questions about the AKP's perception of Turkey's identity.

According to the classification of Öniş and Yılmaz, Turkey had three active foreign policy terms after the Cold War, and two of these active foreign policy terms were experienced during the AKP rule: the first term had an emphasis on Europe and second term included clashes between Europe and Eurasia (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009, p. 7). Thus it can be inferred that the same ruling party, the AKP, changed its tendency in the foreign policy in these active terms.

The AKP's foreign policy tendency was towards the EU during the first period until negotiations began, and there was a fast reform process in that period. However, it is observed that the speed of the EU process decreased between 2005 and 2010.

However, the AKP was still combining Turkey's Islamic identity with European values. Thus, there was not a rejection of the requirements of the European identity. Nevertheless, after 2010, the EU started to be strongly criticized by the AKP, and the emphasis on Turkey's "otherness" increased. As Gülmez claimed, the AKP's activism in the EU process turned into a strong criticism against the EU (Gülmez, 2013, p. 333). According to him, the reason for the criticism against the EU was the AKP's view about process: "They [AKP officials] question why the EU started the membership negotiations if Turkey was not wanted in the EU. ... It is even stated that Turkey's EU membership is not indispensable" (Gülmez, 2013, p. 333). In this regard, the AKP started to question Turkey's position on the path of the EU. This questioning was also included in the AKP's description of Turkey's identity.

In this term, Turkey developed its relations with the Middle Eastern, Balkan and Asian countries. However, the tone of the Ottoman heritage increased in relations with the countries in Middle East and Balkans. "An 'Islamist/Ottomanist discourse' is often considered as the opposite of Kemalism and 'Westernization', which is not exactly inexplicable" because the influence of the AKP increased on the state institutions which were dominated before by the military (Maessen, 2014, p. 316). Therefore, the opposite discourse was created by emphasizing Turkey's "otherness" without a consideration of the European norms and values. This opposite discourse damaged the project which is the result of the compromise between the EU and Turkey.

In the period after 2010, there was a rupture in the compromise between the EU and the AKP government on Turkey's "otherness". On one hand, the EU's values and principles were excluded as a part of identity. On the other hand, the Eastern and Islamist part of Turkish identity, which seems to be "the other" of the EU, was highlighted by the AKP. There were several reasons in terms of parties of the compromise. First, it was difficult to sustain to be a "model country" in the Middle East because the "Arab Spring" created a challenge for this role of Turkey. Even though Turkey's role as a "model country" was important, as Öniş claimed "the more Turkey is actively engaged in the region and becomes an active participant in on-going conflicts, the less likely it will have the ability to play a constructive stabilizing and reformist role" (Öniş, 2012, p. 57). Thus, Turkey's potential turned into a disadvantage. Also, Turkey could not promote the European norms and values in this

process because of the authoritarian tendency of government that was possible to observe in the discourses in that period.

Second, since the euro crisis erupted in the EU in the late 2009, it became a priority for the EU. In terms of the foreign policy, it is argued that the crisis limited the time and attention of the EU (Whitman & Juncos, 2012, p. 149). This was another reason of the rupture of the compromise between Turkey and the EU on Turkey's "otherness" after 2010.

As the government of a candidate country, the AKP unexpectedly engaged in a redefinition of identifying characteristics of the EU in relation to Turkey. For example, the EU had been described as a region of welfare; however, the AKP started to describe Turkey as an economically developed country and the EU as in economic crisis (EurActiv, 2012). Furthermore, it can be claimed that Turkey's relationship with the EU is questioned and changed from candidacy to partnership with the more self-confident attitudes in Turkey. Although being a ruling party of a candidate country, the AKP indicated clearly its discomfort concerning the EU's assessment about Turkey (Özkaya, 2014). These attitudes can be indicators of the rupture of the compromise between the EU and the AKP on "the otherness" and Turkey and also of the project which resulted from this compromise.

In this period, Turkey experienced a significant popular resistance during Gezi Park protests under growing intolerance towards the opposition, arresting journalists. Moreover, concerns over the independence of the Turkish Central Bank both in its domestic and foreign policy that can be evidence of this claim. Before Gezi Park Protests, the TEKEL Strikes also took place which was "a focal point of the government's wider strategy of suppression" in 2010 (Moudouros, 2014, p. 190).

One of the principles correlated with the EU is freedom of expression. In this regard, the Gezi Park protest can be an example of this disagreement. The Gezi Park protest started on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May, 2013, against the Taksim project which was thought to be harmful for the environment. After the harsh response of the police, the demonstrations turned into wide-range protests across Turkey. The context of the Gezi Park Protest also was extended by covering not only environmental concerns of protesters but also their concerns over intervention in their lifestyles among different groups of protesters.

As Moudouros claimed that “Protesters who came from different ideological backgrounds but who were united in their demands for the right to work, their rights in public space, human environment and against authoritarianism” (Moudouros, 2014, p. 191).

As it will be elaborated in the fourth chapter, the increasing tension between the government and the protesters had a broad repercussion in the EU and was assessed as the AKP’s divergence from the EU values. This highlighted Turkey’s “otherness” more in its relationship with the EU. Even though the “growing and active civil society in Turkey” was appreciated by the European Commission, the “government-civil society and parliament-civil society relations” was not deemed adequate in Turkey (European Commission, 2013, p. 11). Furthermore, the Turkish police’s use of disproportionate force towards protestors was criticized by the EU. While it was security issue for the government, it was an issue of fundamental rights and freedoms for the EU. For instance, the European Parliament President Martin Schulz stated that the reaction of police was “disproportionate and will only lead to expansion of the protests” (EEAS, 2013). Similarly, the EU’s Commissioner for enlargement, Stefan Füle, also criticized the ruling party, the AKP. During protests, Füle reminded the Turkish government of the European values and called on Turkey “to not ‘give up on its values’ on fundamental rights and freedoms” (Hürriyet Daily News, 2013b).

Another principles of the EU is press freedom related to freedom of expression which was challenged by the AKP in the period between 2010 and 2015. According to the Press Report of the Freedom House, Turkey experienced the second biggest decline in the years between 2009 and 2010 after Ukraine (Freedom House, 2014). From 2011 to 2015, the EU indicated its concern about freedom, especially about media freedom. In the Progress Report released in 2011, the Commission found media freedom in Turkey limited and pointed out the big number of arrested journalists related to the Ergenekon Case (European Commission, 2011, p. 6). Even though the reason of the criticism was changed, the latest progress report released in 2014 mentioned also lack of media freedom in Turkey in some ways: first, the government’s use of state media, Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu - TRT), for election campaign, and second, the lack of transparency and domination of the Radio and TV Supreme Council’s (RTÜK) on the pro-opposition media (European

Commission, 2014, p. 33). Furthermore, arrest of journalists was still a problem in Turkey in 2014 according to the EU. For instance, after the arrest of opponent journalists, the foreign affairs chief of the EU Federica Mogherini and EU Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn assessed these arrests as “incompatible with the freedom of media, which is a core principle of democracy”, and Mogherini also claimed that this is against European values (BBC, 2014).

When compared with the first and second period under the rule of the AKP, there has been slow down in the EU and Turkey relations. The only chapter which opened between September 2010 (from constitutional referendum) and August 2014 (to presidential election) was the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter (Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments).

When looked at the AKP era in Turkey between 2002 and 2014, convergence between the EU and Turkey until 2005 and fast institutional Europeanization process could be observed. This made Turkey privileged in its region as mostly Muslim-populated country which also adopts European norms, values and standards. However, this position of Turkey started to change because “other” part of Turkey’s identity gained more significance in Turkey-EU relations. After 2010, this compromise was broken and Turkey turned into an ordinary “other” for the EU. Since Turkey’s “otherness” cannot be combined with the European norms and values, Turkey loses its privileged position in the path of the EU.

In the following two chapters, the discourses on the compromise are elaborated in order to shed light into how it is constructed and used in the relations between the EU and Turkey in the beginning and how it is transformed since 2005 towards a point of rupture after 2010.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **UNDERSTANDING THE COMPROMISE ON TURKEY’S IDENTITY AS “THE OTHER”: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

There were five governments between 2002 and 2014 under the AKP rule in Turkey, and they were not a coalition government for any of that time. Thus, the governmental positions were determined by the AKP since 2002. Thus, it would not be incorrect to choose government officials such as ministers to analyze their discourses because it is supposed that their discourses reflect also the opinion of the AKP.

In the first period between 2002 and 2005, there were two governments in Turkey: the 58<sup>th</sup> government of the Republic of Turkey which was formed in November 2002 and ended in March 2003, and the 59<sup>th</sup> government which was founded in March 2003. In order to understand the AKP’s identity perception in terms of Turkey’s EU relations, the discourses of the high level government officials will be analyzed. The discourses of these government officials gives an idea about the AKP’s approach because the AKP was the only ruling party between 2002 and 2014. The high level government officials who formed the EU policy of Turkey were Abdullah Gül (as the Prime Minister of the 58<sup>th</sup> government and as the Foreign Minister of the 59<sup>th</sup> government) and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (as the leader of the party and also the prime minister of the 59<sup>th</sup> government) in the period between 2002 and 2005.

For the second period between 2005 and 2010, there were both the 59<sup>th</sup> government and the 60<sup>th</sup> government. In order to analyze this period, the discourses of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (as the prime minister of both governments), Abdullah Gül (as the foreign minister of the 59<sup>th</sup> government until 2007) and Ahmet Davutoğlu (as the foreign minister of the 60<sup>th</sup> government) will be analyzed. Moreover, another important position for membership negotiations was defined in 2005 when negotiations between Turkey and the EU were started. Ali Babacan became the first chief negotiator of Turkey until 2009. Then, Egemen Bağış became the second chief negotiator of Turkey.

For the third period between 2010 and 2014, there were three governments, the 60<sup>th</sup> and the 61<sup>st</sup>. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was the head of the AKP and also the prime minister of Turkey. Erdoğan was both the founder of the party and the prime minister until being elected as president on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, 2014. He had a direct effect on the party in this period. Thus, Erdoğan's speeches are still important during his presidency to analyze in order to understand the AKP's identity construction. Furthermore, as the prime minister of the 62<sup>nd</sup> government and also the foreign minister until 2014, Ahmet Davutoğlu's speeches will be analyzed for the EU-Turkey relations in terms of Turkey's identity perception.

In this term, there was an important step of institutionalization concerning Turkey's EU membership negotiations. With the foundation of the 61<sup>st</sup> government, a. ministry was created only for the EU; and the first minister for EU affairs and the chief negotiator became Egemen Bağış until 2013. Thus, the discourses of Bağış will be examined for this period. After 2013, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu became the minister for EU affairs and chief negotiator until 2014, and he became the foreign minister in 2014. Therefore, his discourses will be analyzed as both the minister of EU affairs and the chief negotiator, and also as the foreign minister.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, election manifestos of the AKP would be helpful in explaining the general view of the party. Also, the change of the perception of Turkey's "otherness" in its relationship with the EU can be traced via these documents. Thus, besides the discourses of the high policy makers and officials who define the EU policies of the party, documents will be analyzed.

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<sup>11</sup> For the list of the people whose discourses will be analyzed, see Table III.I.

**Table III.I. Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers and Chief Negotiators or/and Ministers for EU Affairs in the Rule of the AKP by Periods**

Years	Prime Ministers	Foreign Ministers	Chief Negotiators or/and Ministers for EU Affairs
2002-2005	Abdullah Gül (2002-2003)	Yaşar Yakış (2002-2003)	-
	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (2003-2014)	Abdullah Gül (2003-2007)	
2005-2010	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (2003-2014)	Abdullah Gül (2003-2007)	Ali Babacan (2005-2009)
		Ali Babacan (2007-2009)	Egemen Bağış (2009-2011)
		Ahmet Davutoğlu (2009-2014)	
2010-2014	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (2003-2014)	Ahmet Davutoğlu (2009-2014)	Egemen Bağış (2009-2011)
			Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (2013-2014)

As shown in the chart, these people who were in important positions as policy makers and officials of the AKP will be analyzed into three periods.

### **III.I 2002-2005: A Rapid Europeanization in Turkey Based on the Compromise**

For the first period, the important and significant political figures were Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Abdullah Gül.<sup>12</sup> 2002 election manifesto can also be references in order to analyze this period.

2002 election manifesto of the AKP stated that “Turkey has been in close relationship with Europe both geographically and historically. For this reason, relations with European nations shall continue to be at the top of the list in Turkey's foreign policy agenda” (AK Parti, 2002, p. 132)<sup>13</sup> However, Europe was not the only region which is

<sup>12</sup> Even though Yaşar Yakış was also a foreign minister for a short time -approximately four months- his discourses will not be analyzed because it does not seem possible to understand the party's ideology via his discourses in such a short time.

<sup>13</sup> The original Turkish quotation is “Türkiye'nin gerek coğrafi, gerekse tarihi açıdan Avrupa ile yakın ilişkileri vardır. Avrupa ülkeleriyle ilişkiler Türkiye'nin dış politika gündeminde en üst sıralarda yer almaya bundan sonra da devam edecektir.”

emphasised concerning its closeness with Turkey. Central Asia was also defined as having “historical, cultural and social closeness”; the Middle East was also defined as having “close historical and cultural ties” with Turkey; and the Balkans are described again as having “historical, cultural and economic relations” with Turkey (AK Parti, 2002, pp. 133, 135). These regions are related to Turkey’s differences from the EU. Especially the phrase “special importance to Turkey's relation with Islamic countries” confirms the emphasis on Turkey’s “otherness” against the EU. The notable thing in 2002 election manifesto is that the discourse does not exclude Europe or other regions but brings them together.

The other document which can be analyzed to understand the party’s identity perception of Turkey is the 2002 election manifesto. In that bulletin, Turkey’s EU membership was seen as a “natural result of the modernization process” of Turkey (AK Parti, 2002, p. 24). There is also a awareness of European values like the individualist perspective rather than etatist and beaurocratic government, or democratic, civil and plural understanding (AK Parti, 2002, p. 24). In addition, the membership goal of Turkey was repeated in the manifesto and the other regional integrations were mentioned within the context of being a subsidiary of the EU (AK Parti, 2002, p. 24).

The then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s speeches confirm the ideology and the perception of the AKP in terms of the EU-Turkey relations. Erdoğan emphasizes that the global values of Europe are valid for Turkey (as a mostly Muslim populated country):

We do not want the EU because it is the fashion of the moment. We want to bring into force the global values behind the European identity. These global values cohere with the contemporary admission norms promoted by the EU. Turkey will neither turn in upon itself by isolating its own values nor open the world nor damage them by opening the World unprincipled. Turkey will provide harmony between its own values and contemporary ideals and will show its persistence and potential in this term (Erdoğan, 2003-2007a, p. 52-53)<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> The original Turkish quotation is: “Her zaman söylediğim gibi, yine tekrar etmek istiyorum ki; biz Avrupa Birliği'ni günün modası olduğu için istemiyoruz. Bizim istediğimiz, Avrupalılık kimliğinin arkasında oluşturulan evrensel değerlere ülkemizde de işlerlik kazandırmaktır. Bu evrensel değerlerin ile Avrupa Birliği'nin öngördüğü çağdaş yönetim normları birbiriyle uyum içindedir. Türkiye, ne kendi değerlerini dış dünyadan soyutlayarak içe kapanacaktır, ne de dış dünyaya ilkesiz biçimde açılarak

In this speech there are two dimension of the compromise: the first is Turkey's internalization of the EU's values and the second is Turkey's own identity because Erdoğan mentions global values as well as Turkey's own values.

In different contexts, Erdoğan claims that Turkey desires to combine global values which are also related to the EU and its own values which are generally related to Islam. Erdoğan claimed, "Turkey is a bridge between the East and the West; Islam and Christianity, Europe and Asia. Turkey's combination of its secular and democratic structure and Islamic values is watched carefully by both the East and the West" (Erdoğan, 2003-2007b, p. 284)<sup>15</sup>. Actually, the bridge-like position of Turkey was emphasized by Turkish foreign policymakers for years. The crucial point is that Turkey's identity was also defined with the 'bridge' image of Turkey in Erdoğan's speech because the bridge points out not only a connection between civilizations but also a combination of them.

There is also an instrumental use of Turkey's identity description by Erdoğan in terms of a "clash of civilization". He said, "We would like to construct a 'harmony of civilization' with the EU by refuting the thesis of a 'clash of civilization' with our rooted political accumulation and heritage and also Muslim identity which we own and is our pride" (Erdoğan, 2002-2005, p. 124)<sup>16</sup>. Thus, one of the reasons of the compromise between the EU and Turkey about Turkey's identity and a project of Turkey could be accepted as the instrumental use of Turkey's "otherness" in terms of the EU-Turkey relations.

The other important point of Erdoğan's perception of Turkey's identity in terms of the EU relations is Turkey's position in its region. Erdoğan thinks that Turkey is a model country which can promote European values to Middle Eastern and Islamic countries

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kendi değerlerini zedeleyecektir. Türkiye, kendi eşsiz değerleriyle çağdaş idealler arasındaki uyumu sağlayacak ve bu potansiyele, kararlılığa sahip olduğunu da gösterecektir."

<sup>15</sup> The original quotation is "Türkiye doğu ile batı, İslam ile Hristiyanlık, Avrupa ile Asya arasında köprü durumundadır. Türkiye'nin laik ve demokratik yapısıyla İslam kültüründen kaynaklanan gelenekleri bir arada götürmesi doğudan da batıdan da dikkatle izlenmektedir."

<sup>16</sup> The original quotation is " Sahip olduğumuz ve gurur duyduğumuz Müslüman kimliğimizle, köklü siyasi birikim ve mirasımızla, "medeniyetler çatışması" tezlerini çürütüp, "medeniyetler uyumu"nun en sağlam örneğini, AB ile birlikte inşa etmek istiyoruz."

as one of “them”. He claimed, “Turkey, which is in the middle of the cultural clashes claimed to be the reason for and the quality of future wars, is the only model country which can accord with Western civilization among Muslim countries” (Erdoğan, 2002-2005, p. 86)<sup>17</sup>. It can be inferred from these sentences that Erdoğan positioned Turkey in the region of the Muslim countries, not the Western countries. However, Erdoğan’s speech shows that this identification cohesions in the compromises between the EU and Turkey.

Erdoğan’s “model country” definition for Turkey is not only for the Muslim countries but also for the EU because of its possible contribution to the EU’s “democratic accumulation and historical experience” (Erdoğan, 2002-2005, p. 86). This is the cause of the emergence of the project between the EU and Turkey when the compromise was created. The AKP’s efforts were recorded by the EU. For example, the 2004 regular report stated that “... the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs called on his colleagues from other Muslim countries to introduce more democracy and transparency into their political systems” (European Commission, 2003, p. 124). These efforts could be considered important for the EU’s foreign policy in Turkey’s closer region.

Erdoğan’s counterarguments against “the clash of civilizations” thesis circulating in the West indicate the rejection of Turkey under the rule of the AKP as such a clash and highlights harmony between civilizations by referring to Turkey’s identity as “the other”. Huntington had defined Turkey as a “torn country”<sup>18</sup> (Huntington, 1996, p. 144). According to him,

For many years Turkey met two of the three minimum requirements for a torn country to shift its civilizational identity. Turkey's elites overwhelmingly supported the move and its public was acquiescent. The elites of the recipient, Western civilization, however, were not receptive. While the issue hung in the balance, the resurgence of Islam within Turkey activated anti-Western

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<sup>17</sup> The original quotation is “Gelecekteki savaşların niteliğini ve nedenini oluşturacağı iddia edilen kültürel çatışma alanlarının merkezinde bulunan Türkiye; Müslüman ülkeler arasında Batı medeniyeti ile uyum sağlayabilecek tek model ülkedir.”

<sup>18</sup> Being a torn country has three requirements, according to Huntington: “First, the political and economic elite of the country has to be generally supportive of and enthusiastic about this move. Second, the public has to be at least willing to acquiesce in the redefinition of identity. Third, the dominant elements in the host civilization, in most cases the West, have to be willing to embrace the convert. The process of identity redefinition will be prolonged, interrupted, and painful, politically, socially, institutionally, and culturally. It also to date has failed” (Huntington, 1996, p. 139).

sentiments among the public and began to undermine the secularist, pro-Western orientation of Turkish elites (Huntington, 1996, pp. 148-149).

However, the AKP officials objected “the clash of civilization” thesis as well as Turkey’s definition and role in this thesis. For instance, Erdoğan mentioned “the clash of civilization” thesis which became popular especially after 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 and claimed, “When Turkey has fulfilled the integration process of the EU, the whole world will see that the East and the West, Christianity and Islam exist together.” (Erdoğan, 2003-2007b, p. 425)<sup>19</sup>. Thus, while Erdoğan draws a line between the East and the West and also Christianity and Islam, he put Turkey on “the other” side of the EU. The objection of “the clash of civilization” thesis constitutes one part of the compromise on “the otherness” of Turkey between the EU and Turkey since providing a harmony of civilizations requires different civilizations, and the AKP thinks that Turkey belongs to different civilizations from the EU. This approach shows that the AKP tried to integrate with the EU by using its differences and the part of its identity which reflects “the otherness” of Turkey in terms of the EU-Turkey relations.

The other point that Erdoğan emphasized in his speeches between 2002 and 2005 is that the EU’s identity requires to accept Turkey as a member state in order to fulfill itself. This can be assessed as the AKP government’s perception about the compromise. Erdoğan also indicated his view about European identity. He claimed, “...[the EU] is a comprise of political values and it is a reconciliation and meeting point and address of the civilization; Turkey’s accession to it will evoke this” (Erdoğan, 2003-2007c, p. 183).<sup>20</sup> He has such an approach that the EU has a pluralistic identity, and it will result in Turkey’s accession if the EU’s claim is similar. In addition, he stated in 2004, “If the European Union is not a coal community, if the European Union is not an economic union, if the European Union is not a Christian club, then the EU should say that we are announcing this accession of Turkey as the

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<sup>19</sup> The original quotation is “Bazı çevreler, 11 Eylül’ü “medeniyetler ve dinler savaşının habercisi olarak göstermeye çalışmaktadırlar. Türkiye Avrupa Birliği’yle bütünleşmesini tamamladığında, tüm dünya. Doğu ile Batının, Hristiyanlık ile Müslümanlığın ahenk içinde bir arada varolabileceğim görecektir.”

<sup>20</sup> The original quotation is “...[AB] bir siyasi değerler bütünüdür, AB medeniyetlerin bir uzlaşma, buluşma noktasıdır, adresidir, bunu çağrıştıracaktır Türkiye’nin oraya katılımı.”

address of reconciliation of civilizations” (Erdoğan, 2003-2007c, p. 333)<sup>21</sup>. With these statements, Erdoğan gives a mission to the EU because of the EU’s reference to not only economic integration but also cultural integration. Erdoğan’s words can explain the AKP’s perception on the reason for the compromise on Turkey’s “otherness” according to the EU.

It is important to see that two of the values which are associated with the EU in Erdoğan’s speeches are ‘peace and stability’ (and sometimes security related to these features). Since the Middle East has conflicts and interventions like the Iraq operation, Turkey under the rule of the AKP highlighted the importance of stability in its relations with the EU. Besides its instrumental use, Turkey emphasized its identity dimension connected to the EU. Erdoğan stated,

Turkey integrated with the EU prevents political and cultural differences from turning into a conflict in a wide area. In this regard, it is obvious that Turkey will greatly contributed to the peace, stability and security of the European Continent. (Erdoğan, 2003-2007a, p. 103).<sup>22</sup>

In this speech, the notions peace, stability and security were associated with Europe, and Turkey was shown as the transformative power in the region. Moreover, he stated that, “The importance of Turkey at the junction point between Asia and Europe will increase after its EU membership. Turkey will serve for regional peace and stability by contributing economic development and also global values and norms.” (Erdoğan, 2003-2007b, p. 352).<sup>23</sup> Thus, it can be inferred that stability and peace were used as both an instrument and notions associated with the EU by the Turkish government.

The EU was also crediting for Turkey’s role in its region. For instance, in the 2003 progress report of Turkey it is stated, “Turkey has continued to play a very important

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<sup>21</sup> The original quotation is “Mademki, Avrupa Birliği bir kömür birliği değildir, mademki Avrupa Birliği bir ekonomik birlik değildir, mademki Avrupa Birliği bir Hristiyan Klübü değildir, o zaman medeniyetler uzlaşmasının adresi olarak gelin bunu Türkiye'nin katılımıyla ilan edin, diyoruz.”

<sup>22</sup> The original Turkish quotation is “AB ile bütünleşmiş bir Türkiye, geniş bir coğrafyada, siyasi ve kültürel farklılıkların çatışmaya dönüşmesini önler. Bu bakımdan, Türkiye'nin, Avrupa kıtasının barış, istikrar ve güvenliğine önemli katkılarda bulunacağı aşıkardır.”

<sup>23</sup> The original Turkish quotation is “Avrupa ile Asya'nın kesişme noktasında bulunan Türkiye'nin önemi AB'ye üyelik sonrasında daha da artacaktır. Türkiye, bölgesinde ekonomik gelişmeye ve aynı zamanda evrensel değer ve normların yerleşmesine katkıda bulunarak, bölge barışına ve istikrarına hizmet etmiş olacaktır.”

role in stability and security in the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East” (European Commission, 2003, p. 123). In fact, the EU was also encouraging Turkey to play such a role: “Turkey should also continue to promote stability and security in its region, namely the Balkans, Caucasus, Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East” (European Commission, 2003, p. 123).

Even in the period between 2002 and 2005 when the EU integration process was faster than later periods, Europe was not the only region focused on by the Islamic-rooted ruling party. As Erdoğan claimed, “Turkey tries to strengthen its relationships with other regions to the highest level based on reciprocity as well as its historical stem in the path of the EU and its determination” (Erdoğan, 2003-2007d, p. 378).<sup>24</sup> This discourse was easily associated with a pro-Islamist party without an EU agenda; however, it also emphasizes the EU process and claims that activism would be equal to the EU process; it makes the AKP different from previous pro-Islamist parties. Also, the activism towards other regions differentiates the AKP from other pro-EU parties in Turkey; for example, the AKP highlighted the Ottoman heritage of Turkey. Hereby, the convergence between the AKP and the EU on “the otherness” of Turkey could be possible.

Similar to the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s speeches, the then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül’s speeches were also parallel to 2002 election manifesto in the period between 2002 and 2005. Gül especially emphasized the pragmatic feature of Turkey’s being “the other” of the EU. He said in The Grand National Assembly of Turkey (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi - TBMM) that Turkey will contribute by generalizing its democratic values; thus Turkey’s membership will be advantageous for both sides (Gül, 2007a, p. 25). Moreover, in 2004, Gül claimed, “The European Union in which Turkey is a member will become a cradle of the peace idea and harmony of civilizations” (Gül, 2007a, p. 89)<sup>25</sup>. This pragmatist approach was repeated several times by the then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül through the term

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<sup>24</sup> The original Turkish quotation is “Türkiye, Avrupa Birliği yolunda attığı tarihi adımlara ve sahip olduğu kararlılığa paralel olarak, diğer coğrafyalarla da ilişkilerini karşılıklılık temelinde en yüksek seviyeye çıkaracak hamleler içerisinde.”

<sup>25</sup> The Original Turkish quotation is “Türkiye’nin üyesi olduğu bir Avrupa Birliği, gelişen bir barış ülküsünün ve medeniyetler arası uyumun beflığı haline gelecektir.”

‘civilization’, as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan did. In one of the TBMM speeches, he expressed that there was a near conjuncture between Turkey and the EU, and Turkey could play an important role, and this is beneficial for both sides (Gül, 2007a, p. 234). Regarding the relations between civilizations he said that:

If you consider that the idea of the clash of civilizations was supported or watched with great interest, Turkey will contribute to the EU and world peace in terms of the harmony of civilizations and show that civilizations can be together rather than engaging in the clash of civilizations” (Gül, 2007a, p. 235)<sup>26</sup>.

Furthermore, Gül indicated in 2004 that the debate about the clash of civilizations would end with Turkey’s EU membership, and this would give a message of the harmonization of civilization (Gül, 2007a, p. 64). Thus it can be inferred that Turkey’s EU membership was supported by the AKP government pragmatically with the temporary global debates like the “clash of civilization”.

However, these arguments also point out the perspective of a pro-Islamist party on Turkey’s identity of Turkey as a candidate country because of the emphasis on the Islamic countries in Turkey’s region. The AKP government mentions civilizations in terms of being not a European country but an Islamic and Eastern country which also accepted European values. For instance, Abdullah Gül’s speeches shows the AKP’s perspective of Turkey’s identity as being “the other” of the EU and the compromise between the EU and the AKP on this identity. Abdullah Gül’s speech, which explains Turkey’s perspective of the EU-Turkey relations in Lithuania, shows this point clearly:

We are eager to prove and confirm that a Muslim society can achieve to be democratic, open, transparent, accountable, pluralistic and contemporary, that is “European”, while preserving its identity. Turkey is in the best position to prove that all these aspirations can be achieved. We will show that a Muslim society can attain the highest contemporary standards and values. Turkey’s eventual accession to the EU will reinforce the message of a harmony between cultures (Gül, 2007a, p. 304).

In this speech, Turkish society was defined as a Muslim society which also internalizes European values without renouncing its own identity. Nevertheless the EU was not

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<sup>26</sup> The original Turkish quotation is “Son yıllardaki medeniyetler çatışması fikrinin bazı çevreler tarafından çok desteklendiğini veyahut da çok büyük bir ilgiyle takip edildiğini dikkate alırsanız, medeniyetlerin çatışması değil, medeniyetlerin uyumu, medeniyetlerin beraber olabileceğini gösterme açısından da, Türkiye, Avrupa Birliği’ne ve dünya barışına çok büyük bir katkıda bulunacaktır.”

expecting such a situation because being a pro-Islamic party, the AKP could not pursue a pro-EU policy at the same time, according to Gül. When he evaluated the first period in 2007, he expressed his opinion about the EU's perspective of Turkey under the rule of the AKP:

When the AK Party [AKP] came to power, even Europe was shocked, even Europe was not expecting this [pro-EU policies] from the AK Party, because they were assuming as a result of propagandas that the AK Party would take Turkey from Europe to somewhere else. But the exact opposite took place..." (Gül, 2007a, p. 208)<sup>27</sup>.

As the AKP's Islamic and Eastern country, Turkey appeared as a kind of project to the EU. This identity approach with the comprehensive reform process resulted in the onset of the negotiations in 2005. The then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül evaluated it by saying, "I am witnessing with pleasure that this development [starting negotiations] was also appreciated by the Islamic world" (Gül, 2007a, p. 151)<sup>28</sup>. Also, a few days later after negotiations started, Gül stated:

The EU, today, is in a great position to know, understand and appreciate the full benefits of Turkey's strategic, cultural and economic potential for the Union's future identity. Turkish membership will raise the profile of the EU in the perception of common values and standards, better placing the EU to reach the hearts and minds of the peoples of a vast geographical area. Above all, Turkey's EU membership will leave little or no reason to suspect a divide between the East and the West on cultural terms (Gül, 2007a, p. 367).

Thus, Turkey's identity as an "other" of the EU was designed as an instrument for the EU to reach the wider region which has a different identity and also to build consensus between civilizations. Turkey under the rule of the AKP created a project for both sides by using its non-Western and non-European identity in its region, and also pursuing an active integration process with the EU.

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<sup>27</sup> The original Turkish quotation is "Ne zaman ki AK Parti iktidara geldi, Avrupa bile şok oldu, Avrupa bile AK Parti'den bunu beklemiyordu. Çünkü yapılan propagandalar neticesinde zannediyorlardı ki, AK Parti Türkiye'yi Avrupa'dan alacak, başka yerlere götürecekti. Tam tersi oldu..."

<sup>28</sup> The original Turkish quotation is "Bu gelişmenin İslam âleminde de çok olumlu karşılandığını memnuniyetle görüyorum."

As the Foreign Minister of that time, Abdullah Gül explained that the meaning of Turkey's EU membership with its own identity would provide a great advantage for the EU also. He stated:

I want you to imagine the extent of the contribution of the EU membership of Turkey as a country having a predominantly Muslim population, and also internalizing Western and democratic values to regional and global stability in terms when we faced the real threat of the clash of civilizations. Turkey will make a huge contribution via its special position and relations in its neighborhood the EU to deepen its political and economic relations. The EU will not be "the other" of these regions anymore and will turn into a multi-cultural and comprehensive organization (Gül, 2007a, p. 315)<sup>29</sup>.

In these statements, it can be inferred that the EU was perceived as "the other" in the region in which Turkey existed, and if Turkey becomes a member of the EU, this perception will change because one of the 'other' in the region will be part of the EU.

In this term, "the otherness" of Turkey and EU values, norms and principles were approached equally, and they do not reject each other in the discourse of the AKP as a governing party. As Gül said, "We always keep in mind that Turkey needs to move past the dilemma of being seen oriental in the West and occidental in the East, and we address the East in the East, the West in the West" (Gül, 2007a, p. 54)<sup>30</sup>. It shows that the two different civilizations did not exclude each other and exist together according to the AKP's foreign policy. According to him this "balanced" foreign policy was appreciated by both the EU and Islamic countries (Gül, 2007a, p. 56). This is the "optimum point" for Turkish foreign policy in terms of priorities in the EU, Islamic World and the Middle East (Gül, 2007a, p. 58). Also, Gül mentions that "the increasing interest directed toward Turkey's experience that approximate contemporary values with its traditional identity in the East and West" for several times in terms of Turkey's

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<sup>29</sup> The original Turkish quotation is "Nüfusunun çoğunluğu Müslüman olan, Batılı ve demokratik değerleri benimsemiş bir ülke olarak, AB üyeliğinin, medeniyetler arası çatışmanın gerçek bir tehdit olarak karşımızda durduğu mevcut dönemde, bölgesel ve uluslararası istikrara yapacağı katkının boyutunu zihninizde canlandırmanızı istiyorum. Türkiye, komşu bölgelerde sahip olduğu özel konum ve ilişkiler sayesinde, AB'nin bu coğrafyadaki siyasi ve ekonomik ilişkilerinin derinleştirilmesine de önemli katkı sağlayacaktır. AB artık bu bölgeler için "öteki" olmaktan çıkacak, çok kültürlü ve kapsayıcı örnek bir yapılanma ve örgüt haline gelecektir."

<sup>30</sup> The original Turkish quotation is "Türkiye'nin, doğuda batılı, batıda doğulu gibi görünme açmazından daima kurtulmak zorunda olduğu hususu, her zaman aklımızda oldu ve doğuda doğuya, batıda da batıya hitap ettik, uygun mesajlar verdik."

relationship with the EU (Gül, 2007a, p. 548). He stated, “Turkey’s successful fulfillment of the integration process will indicate the harmony of a Muslim society with European peoples which are united in terms of common, universal and democratic values” (Gül, 2007a, p. 565)<sup>31</sup>. So, the two dimension of the compromise between the EU and the AKP were mentioned together in order to promote Turkey’s EU membership by Abdullah Gül.

The EU also noted Turkey’s position which promotes democracy in 2005: “Turkey has on several occasions called upon Muslim countries to face the necessity of democratic reform and urged them to take the route of democratization” (European Commission, 2005, p. 130). The EU also appreciated Turkey’s efforts in the region, for instance, 2005 Progress Report stated that “Turkey makes an active contribution to the stabilization of the country in particular by deploying diplomatic efforts targeted at all Iraq’s neighbours” (European Commission, 2005, p. 131). In this period between 2002 and 2005, the convergence between pro-EU discourses and Turkish identity as “the other” of the EU was remarkable both in Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s speeches and Abdullah Gül’s speeches as officials of the AKP. Thus, “the otherness” of Turkey under the rule of the AKP became an advantage in its relationship with the EU. Also, the parties emerged as a project from Turkey’s “otherness” which is emphasized by a pro-Islamic and pro-active government in the other region out of Europe.

### **III.II 2005-2010: Neither Rupture nor Progress on the Compromise**

In the period between 2005 and 2010, the project which emerged as a result of the compromise between the EU and the AKP on Turkey’s “otherness” was neither ruptured nor sustained its speed in contrast to the period between 2002 and 2005. As is claimed in the first chapter, the AKP had to focus on its survival and legitimacy in the Turkish political system even though it was still the ruling party. Thus, the identity perception of the AKP did not result in a rupture in the EU-Turkey relations since it the AKP could not highlighted Turkey’s “otherness” because of it.

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<sup>31</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Türkiye’nin AB’ye katılım sürecinin başarılı şekilde tamamlanması, Müslüman bir toplumun, ortak, evrensel ve demokratik değerler temelinde bir araya gelen ve bu değerler çevresinde bütünleşen Avrupalı halklarla uyumunun yeni bir göstergesi olacaktır.”

There are both domestic and foreign factors of the interruptions in the relationship between Turkey and the EU in that period. Domestically, the AKP went through several troubles like the 2007 Presidential crisis and closure trial to the AKP. In terms of foreign policy, there were also some crises like the Cyprus issue between Turkey and the EU. Then, a dilemma emerged between two actors: While the AKP needed the EU political reforms and democratization process in order to survive on the Turkish political stage, it could not achieve an agreement with the EU on Turkey's identity literally as the "other" of the EU. Thus, the compromise between the EU and Turkey was neither ruptured nor continued.

The survival struggle of the AKP which is summarized in the first chapter made the progress of improving EU-Turkey relations slower than the period between 2002 and 2005. For the period between 2005 and 2010, the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, foreign ministers of the time Abdullah Gül and Ahmet Davutoğlu and also Chief negotiators of the time Ali Babacan and Egemen Bağış's speeches need to be analyzed in order to understand the AKP's identity perception about Turkey's identity in terms of the EU-Turkey relations.

To start with the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's identification of Turkey as a symbol of the harmony of civilization was still continuing. Erdoğan gives an infusive role to Turkey between civilizations. He stated, "Turkey's mileage on the path of EU membership is a successful and notable example of integration based on global values between cultures." (Erdoğan, 2006-2007a, p. 20)<sup>32</sup>. Even though the pro-EU discourses were still highlighted in this term by Erdoğan, there were 'unexpected' expressions when compared to his previous claims. The Ottoman heritage of Turkey gained more importance in Erdoğan's speeches in terms of EU membership. For instance, he mentioned Turkey's responsibility and significance for security in its region as a candidate country (like in his previous discourse); however, he added that Ottoman heritage also gives this mission to Turkey: "It is not only its geography that gives this role to Turkey. ... 24 new countries emerged after the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Turkey has a common history, culture and beliefs with wider geography,

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<sup>32</sup> The original quptation is "Türkiye'nin AB üyeliği yönünde kat ettiği mesafe, bugün farklı kültürler arasında ortak evrensel değerler temelinde kurulabilecek bütünleşmenin çarpıcı ve başarılı bir örneğidir."

especially with these countries.” (Erdoğan, 2006-2007a, p. 447)<sup>33</sup>. On the other hand, Erdoğan still touched upon Turkey’s EU perspective afterwards: “Also, Turkey is the only country which adopted democracy and secularism and is negotiating for membership with the European Union.<sup>34</sup> Thus, we have both a historical responsibility and a function as a bridge which can shape history.” (Erdoğan, 2006-2007a, p. 447)<sup>35</sup>. Even though the bridge metaphor was still kept, the Ottoman heritage came into prominence, and Turkey was seen as the center or the core country in its region in Erdoğan’s statements.

Turkey started to be perceived as the part of the Islamic geography like in the previous term by the AKP; however, it had a different context. In this period, Turkey started to take a position opposite to the EU rather than as a bridge actor in debates between ‘civilizations’. One of the examples of this is the ‘Islamophobia’ debate. In this term, the AKP government accused the EU. Erdoğan complained about the spread of Islamophobia in Europe and “grudge and hate” towards Muslims (Erdoğan, 2006-2007b, p. 33).

As stated before, there were domestic struggles for the AKP in this period. For the challenges against itself, the AKP referred to the European values. One of the struggles was the presidential election crisis in 2007. The AKP defended itself by highlighting democracy and the will of the public. Referring to his contacts abroad travels and his dialogue about presidential elections with journalists in a TBMM group meeting, Erdoğan stated, “I told them that there is not such a thing to focus on one person in our party. It is not important to have a good position for us” (Erdoğan, 2006-2007b, p. 334-

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<sup>33</sup> The original quotation is “Türkiye’ye bu rolü yükleyen, yalnızca coğrafi konumu da değildir. Bakınız, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun yıkılmasıyla birlikte, ortaya 24 yeni ülke çıkmıştır. Türkiye’nin bu ülkeler başta olmak üzere geniş bir coğrafyayla ortak tarihi, ortak kültürü, ortak inançları bulunmaktadır.”

<sup>34</sup> Fort he same argument, also see; *ibid*, p.258.

<sup>35</sup> The original quotation is “Yine Türkiye, İslam dünyası içinde demokrasi ve laikliği benimsemiş, Avrupa Birliği katılım müzakerelerini yürüten tek ülkedir. Bu yönüyle, hem tarihi bir sorumluluğu, hem de tarihi şekillendirecek bir köprü rolünü yüklenmiş durumdayız.”

335).<sup>36</sup> Erdoğan also referred to norms promoted by the EU such as democracy and pluralism in the context of the presidential elections. He claimed,

I would like to say that I assessed all these ideas and considerations as an acquisition for the future of our state and nation. The presidential election process which causes big debates and crises was held with a democratic maturity and democratic participation for the first time” (Erdoğan, 2006-2007b, p. 344).<sup>37</sup>

He also refers to the norms which were identified with the EU, such as “welfare, tranquility, justice” (Erdoğan, 2006-2007b, p. 328). Additionally, he stated that they considered the secularist republican rallies with a “democratic maturity” which will be useful for Turkey (Erdoğan, 2006-2007b, p. 332). In domestic policy, Erdoğan’s speeches were not contradicted with the European values.

Another example was the closure trial against the AKP. As stated in the first chapter, the trial was crucial for both the AKP and the future of Turkish politics. Erdoğan was respectful toward the judicial process in that case: “The Constitutional Court will do its own work. ... The case is in juridical process now. Thus, it is not proper to make many more comments on this process” (NTV, 2008b). He also repeated that they will work for the democratic and economic stability in Turkey (NTV, 2008b). In Turkish domestic policy, the closure trial against the AKP showed the importance of the EU process for the party again. The AKP referred to the European interpretation of ‘secularism’ in order to defend itself (T24, 2008). Since the claims against the AKP were related to violation of the secularism principle, the AKP defended itself by exemplifying European “democratic secularism” understanding which suggests that different life styles can come together (T24, 2008). The AKP claimed also that they worked for the EU membership of Turkey in order to make Turkey a more democratic country (T24, 2008). In that case, the EU also criticized existing rules and supported the AKP’s freedom of expression:

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36 The original quotation is “Dedim ki bakın bizim partimizde kişiye kilitlenme diye bir şey söz konusu değil. Bizim için makam mevki bunlar önemli değil.”

37 The original quotation is “Bütün bu fikirleri, mülahazaları çoğulcu, katılımcı demokrasimiz için, devlet ve milletimizin bekası için bir kazanım olarak gördüğümü özellikle belirtmek isterim. Hep büyük tartışmalara, krizlere sebep olan Cumhurbaşkanlığı seçimi süreci belki de ilk kez bu kadar demokratik bir olgunluk ve demokratik bir katılımcılık anlayışıyla geçmiştir.”

Regarding political parties, the closure cases against the AKP and the DTP illustrate that the current legal provisions applicable to political parties do not provide political actors with an adequate level of protection from the state's interference in their freedom of association and freedom of expression” (European Commission, 2008, p. 17).

It can be said that the EU's support was important for the AKP in order to survive, and the AKP's survival was important to the EU because of settling freedoms in Turkey, so they could sustain the compromise.

The other crucial point was the significance of the process of Ergenekon and Balyoz trials for the AKP's survival struggle in Turkish politics. Erdoğan was criticized by the leader of the main opposition party (CHP), Deniz Baykal, for intervening in the juridical process, and Erdoğan said, “The prosecutor works for the public and we are also trying to seek for right on behalf of the public. In this sense, yes, I am a prosecutor”<sup>38</sup> (Vatan Gazetesi, 2008). This claim was assessed as an intervention in the juridical process and was implied to be a violation of superiority of law which is an important principle for the EU. However, in the Ergenekon case, there was no divergence between the claims of the AKP and the EU. Even though it is indicated, “During the course of the investigation, there were reports regarding the insufficient safeguarding of the rights of defense and the excessive duration of detention periods without indictment” in the 2008 progress report of Turkey (European Commission, 2008); for instance, the relationship was called a “win-win game” by the EU Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn in the same year in terms of regional stability (Rehn, 2008, p. 17). The issue was also mentioned in the 2009 progress report of Turkey:

This case [Ergenekon] is an opportunity for Turkey to strengthen confidence in the proper functioning of its democratic institutions and the rule of law. It is important that proceedings in this context fully respect the due process of law, in particular the rights of the defendants” (European Commission, 2009, p. 6).

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38 The original Turkish quotation is, “Savcı millet adına vardır, biz de millet adına hakkı aramanın gayreti içindeyiz. Bu anlamda savcılık ise evet savcıyım.”

Similar to the EU's reactions to the AKP's closure case, this also created an agreement and restrained the further weakening of the compromise between the EU and the AKP on Turkey's position as a democratic country.

When the discourses of Abdullah Gül, who was still the foreign minister in the beginning of that period until 2007, are analyzed, the continuity is remarkable at first glance:

If Turkey becomes a member of the EU, it can contribute a lot to regional and global stability and to expanding the welfare. The EU with Turkey as a member will be a dominant power that produces and spreads welfare and security in the world (Gül, 2007a, p. 383)<sup>39</sup>.

In his speech, Gül emphasized Turkey's instrumental role for the EU and EU's desire to be a global power, as in the case of the first period of the AKP.

The then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül also claimed, "... Both the West and the East are getting interested in Turkey's experience of harmonization of its traditional identity and contemporary values ... Global values which also include European political criteria were welcomed by everyone" (Gül, 2007a, p. 548).<sup>40</sup> Even though the compromise between the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP on Turkish identity as "the other" of the EU was continuing, some discourses showed the AKP's increasing emphasis on Turkish identity as "the other" of the EU. For instance, Gül stated, "The European Union can boost its capability to use soft power in an extend geography from the Balkans to the Middle East, Caucasias and Central Asia [with the membership of Turkey]" (Gül, 2007a, p. 625)<sup>41</sup>. Another example is the use of Ottoman heritage by the AKP's officials. As Gül indicated: "Actually Turkey has been a determinant actor of the European political geography throughout history. Indeed, European history cannot be written without knowing Ottoman history" (Gül, 2007a, p.

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<sup>39</sup>The original Turkish quotation is "Türkiye, Avrupa Birliği'ne üye olması halinde, bölgesel ve küresel istikrara ve refahın yayılmasına ciddi olarak katkıda bulunabilecek bir ülkedir. Türkiye'nin üye olduğu bir Avrupa Birliği, dünyada güvenlik ve refah üreten ve yayan başat bir güç olacaktır."

<sup>40</sup> The original Turkish quotation is "'Batı'da ve Doğu'da, Türkiye'nin güncel değerleri geleneksel kimlikle uyumlaştırma deneyimine artan bir ilgi gösterilmektedir. ... Avrupa siyasi kriterlerini de içeren evrensel standartların hayata geçirilmesi herkes tarafından memnuniyetle karşılanmıştır."

<sup>41</sup> The original quotation is "Avrupa Birliği, Balkanlardan Ortadoğu'ya, Kafkaslara ve Orta Asya'ya uzanan geniş bir coğrafyada yumuşak gücünü daha fazla kullanma kabiliyetini artırabilir."

683)<sup>42</sup>. The Ottoman example and Turkey's sphere of influence in another geography which can be related to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey's identity as "the other" shows that the AKP changed the balance in the compromise of Turkey's "otherness".

The AKP's officials also criticize the EU especially in foreign policy issues like the Cyprus issue and Armenian claims about the events of 1915. Although disputes over the Cyprus problem with the EU and the delegations against Turkey regarding the events of 1915 especially in France strained the EU and Turkey relations further, the political attitude of the AKP did not drastically deviate from the official state policy, and to a great extent was identical with it. Thus, they are not related to the identity perception of the AKP but are effective in the EU-Turkey relations.

As a foreign minister and chief negotiator of that time, Ali Babacan had also a determinant role in the EU-Turkey relations. It can be seen that Babacan's speeches are parallel to Erdoğan's and Gül's. At one of his speeches at the European Parliament in 2008, he stated:

I believe that you are also among the ones who can best appreciate the contributions that Turkey is making and could make when Turkey becomes a full member of the EU in the future. You are following daily the developments in the Balkans, Caucasus, Black Sea, Mediterranean, Central Asia, Middle East, and Africa. You regularly prepare comprehensive and detailed reports concerning the developments in these regions and discuss them thoroughly (Babacan, 2008a).

This statement shows that Babacan connects Turkey's geographical region with the EU membership of Turkey. However, it can be inferred from this speech that Turkish government emphasizes Turkey's "otherness" more by defining Turkey's identity in that period.

Chief Negotiator of the time Babacan frequently repeated the need for the EU goal of Turkey in order to continue the transformation process. He stated in 2007, "To study for the EU goal means to realize the requirements of contemporary civilization for our

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<sup>42</sup> The original Turkish quotation is "Aslında Türkiye tarih boyunca Avrupa siyasi coğrafyasının belirleyici bir aktörü olmuştur. Doğrusu, Osmanlı tarihi bilinmeden Avrupa tarihi yazılamaz."

people. ... the EU accession process is a reconstruction process which raises the political, economic, social and legal standards of Turkey” (Babacan, 2007a)<sup>43</sup>.

As stated before, the political crisis periods which occurred in the period between 2005 and 2010 like the Cyprus issue, and some of the negotiation chapters were blocked by both the EU and some of the member states. In this tension between the EU and Turkey, Turkey’s identity emerged as “the other” of the EU. For instance, as Foreign Minister and Chief Negotiator of that time, Ali Babacan criticized the EU because of its blocking some of the chapters in negotiations and stated, “Other Islamic states are closely watching the EU approach to the membership aspirations of largely Muslim Turkey and will make appropriate conclusions”, as VOA News reported (VOA News, 2009). Here, Babacan mentioned Islamic states in terms of the importance of Turkey’s EU membership, not Turkey’s democratization process or Turkey’s contribution to the EU. Moreover, the reference to other Muslim countries shows that Turkish government started to see Turkey as representative of them.

In addition, Ali Babacan used the Ottoman history of Turkey in order to explain Turkey’s importance to the EU. He stated, “When the Ottoman Empire is removed from European history, it will not be possible to remember Europe” (Babacan, 2007b).<sup>44</sup> Babacan mentioned the Ottoman Empire as a superior power in Europe. Whether this statement is true or not historically, it can be said that Babacan highlighted the ‘unwelcomed’ part of Turkish identity by Europeans as a Chief Negotiator of a candidate country.

In the period between 2005 and 2010, the anti-thesis of the “clash of civilization” was still important for the EU-Turkey relations. For instance, Babacan showed the Turkey example as an evidence of harmony between two civilizations in 2007: “Turkey which is the best evidence of harmony between Islam and democracy plays a leading role in the efforts to stop the wrong way which reinforces negative prejudices and creates a

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<sup>43</sup> The original Turkish quotation is “AB hedefi için çalışmak, çağdaş uygarlığın gereklerini halkımız için yerine getirmek demektir. ... AB katılım süreci, Türkiye’nin siyasal, ekonomik, sosyal ve yasal standartlarını yükselten bir yeniden yapılanma sürecidir aslında.”

<sup>44</sup> The original quotation is “Avrupa tarihinden Osmanlı İmparatorluğu çıkarıldığında geçmişte Avrupa’yı hatırlamak mümkün olmayacaktır.”

hostility between different cultures and religions” (Babacan, 2007c)<sup>45</sup>. Thus, Turkey’s EU process was seen as a project which is also significant for other Islamic countries. Indeed, like other officials of the AKP, Ali Babacan emphasized on many occasions that:

Today, every reform of Turkey creates reactions in North Africa, Central Asia, the Middle East and South Eastern Asia. In a sense, Turkey is followed by the world as a country in which Islam and secularism exist together well every passing month and year...” (Babacan, 2008b)<sup>46</sup>.

The construction of “the otherness” of Turkey gave a “bridge country” mission. Babacan claimed, “...Turkey tries to construct a new paradigm which changes ‘othering’ to ‘empathy’, institutionalizes mutual respect and highlights common grounds rather than differences between different cultural and religious systems” (Babacan, 2008c)<sup>47</sup>. In this period, this perspective was still kept in discourses.

In 2008, Ali Babacan answered the question, “Is there a lack of energy in Turkey’s efforts for the EU?” by rejecting any kind of inaction in the process (Babacan, 2008d). However, the emergence of these kinds of questions and critics shows that there was considerable change in the EU-Turkey relations.

In the last two years of this period, Ahmet Davutoğlu was the foreign minister and Egemen Bağış was the Chief Negotiator. Until 2010, there were similar debates in Turkish foreign policy and the EU policy of Turkey as well. For example, in 2009, Davutoğlu answers the critics about Turkey’s EU politics by stating that,

Nowadays, some analyses and comments can be seen that evaluate Turkey’s efforts for developing relations with its immediate environment especially neighbors as a ‘move away from the West’. I would like to emphasize that

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<sup>45</sup>The original Turkish quotation is “İslam’la demokrasinin uyum içinde bir arada yaşayabilirliğinin en güzel kanıtı olan Türkiye, farklı kültür ve dinler arasında husumet ortamı yaratan ve olumsuz önyargıları pekiştiren bu yanlış gidişatın durdurulmasına yönelik çabalarda da öncü rol oynamaktadır.”

<sup>46</sup> The original Turkish quotation is “Bugün Türkiye’nin attığı her reform adımı Kuzey Afrika, Orta Asya, Orta Doğu ve Güneydoğu Asya’ya kadar yankılar uyandırmaktadır. Bir bakıma, Türkiye, demokrasi, İslam ve laikliğin aynı anda ve her geçen ay, her geçen yıl daha iyi bir şekilde birarada bulunduğu bir ülke olarak bütün dünyada izlenmektedir...”

<sup>47</sup> The original quotation is “...Türkiye, değişik kültür ve inanç sistemleri arasında, farklılıklar yerine ortak noktaları ön plana çıkaran, karşılıklı saygıyı kurumsallaştıran ve ‘ötekileştirme’yi ‘empati’ ile ikame eden yeni bir paradigmanın yerleştirilmesine gayret etmektedir.”

Turkey's main strategic goal and state policy is full membership of the EU. This goal was never changed. (Davutoğlu, 2009a)<sup>48</sup>.

Another example is the use of the Ottoman background of Turkey in the EU-Turkey relations. Davutoğlu stated,

The Ottoman Empire and then the Republic of Turkey have been an integral part of the political, economic, cultural and social space that is Europe. The interaction between European nations and Turkey has not always been easy but the continuous interaction has consistently bred the major trends on all sides of the old continent. (Davutoğlu, 2009b).

The discourses of Egemen Bağış were in the same direction. He also saw Turkey as a representative of Muslims and one of them (not one of the European countries). According to him, Turkey is “1.5 billion Muslims’ light and hope”; however he also claimed that Turkey is “not a burden but a contributor to the EU” and “not a problem but a solution for the EU” (Anadolu Ajansı, 2009). He stated, “Turkey’s EU process is watched by 1.5 billion Muslims. The message that the EU will give to Turkey is also a message to the whole Islamic world” (Bağış, 2009)<sup>49</sup>. It can be seen that the Islamic side of Turkish identity (and also “the other” of the European identity) was frequently used in the period between 2005 and 2010. Thus, neither the similarities between the EU and Turkey nor the combination of two different aspects of the identity of Turkey were highlighted as in the previous period.

Between 2002 and 2005, the compromise between the EU and the AKP on Turkey’s identity as an “other” can be seen in the discourses of the officials of the AKP. When looking at the progress reports in these years, it can be seen that the AKP’s discourses were responded positively by the EU. In that period, Turkey’s identity as an “other” of the EU was harmonized with the EU’s norms and values.

The period between 2005 and 2010, though it cannot be regarded as a progress, deepening or fulfillment of the proceeding period which can be regarded as

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<sup>48</sup> The original quotation is “Türkiye’nin komşuları başta olmak üzere yakın çevresiyle ilişkilerini geliştirmek ve zenginleştirmeye yönelik çabalarını, basite indirgeyerek “Batı’dan uzaklaşmak” biçiminde değerlendiren bazı yorum ve analizlerin görüldüğü bugünlerde şu hususun altını bir kez daha çizmek isterim: Türkiye’nin temel stratejik hedefi ve devlet politikası, Avrupa Birliği’ne tam üyeliğidir. Bu hedefimiz hiçbir zaman değişmemiştir.”

<sup>49</sup> The original quotation is “Türkiye’nin AB’ye üyelik sürecini 1,5 milyar İslam alemi izliyor. AB’nin Türkiye’ye vereceği mesaj, tüm İslam alemine vereceği mesajdır.”

foundational in starting the EU-Turkey negotiations can be considered as a continuation of the 2002-2005 period in certain senses. Most importantly, the AKP derived significant support from the EU in a case of closure in the Constitutional Court. Moreover, the AKP sustained its discourse on democratic reform. Yet, it is in this period that the AKP leadership and officials started to signal their ambitions for 'leadership' in the region by claiming the Ottoman 'heritage'. Unfortunately, this foreign policy turn would soon merge with an authoritarian turn in domestic politics. As Tombuş claimed that, even though the AKP objected the Kemalist tutelage and used "liberal and democratic ideas" at first "The AKP has retained and reproduced certain authoritarian reflexes in the political system" (Tombuş, 2013, p. 314). This process undermined the projected democratic identity of a model country which was both modern-democratic-civic and Islamic-oriented.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RUPTURE IN THE COMPROMISE: 2010-2014

The last period that this thesis covers is the period between 2010 and 2014 in which the compromise between the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP was ruptured. In this period, several challenges were observed in the EU-Turkey relations. Even though these challenges indeed have been turned into an opportunity to display Turkey's internalization of the EU values, the government policies failed in that, and they were increasingly criticized by the EU. It can be claimed that after 2010 the AKP ignored the EU's norms and values, and this means that one of the dimensions of the compromise was violated. Thus, in this chapter, the discourses of the AKP's officials who had an effect on Turkey's EU policy and the EU's response are analyzed in order to understand the compromise between parties.

In this period, the AKP's officials who shaped Turkey's foreign policy and in particular the EU policy were Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu and Chief Negotiator and Ministers for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiators Egemen Bağış and Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. Thus, their discourses on Turkey's identity and the EU need to be examined for this period.

In this period, Turkey's position in front of regional problems and instability are generally main issues that the first to draw attention in the discourses of the Then Prime Minister Erdoğan. Contrary to the convergence between the EU and Turkey about Turkey's identity, Erdoğan did not emphasize the democratic and pro-EU side of Turkey: rather he chose to emphasize "the other" side of Turkey's identity. For example, Erdoğan breaks and digresses from the compromise by rejecting its instrumental role for the EU in its region by saying, "Turkey is now ... a world power and a leader country" (Erdoğan, 2011a)<sup>50</sup>. Similarly, Erdoğan claimed that Turkey's reputation was at its best with the AKP (Erdoğan, 2011b). He stated, "The AKP is not only Turkey's party but also the world's party. From Mogadishu to Sarajevo, from

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<sup>50</sup> The original quotation is, "Ülkemiz artık ... bir dünya ülkesi, bir lider ülke."

Damascus to Skopje, from Sana'a to Bishkek, from Abu Dhabi to Islamabad, from Gaza to Benghazi, from Pristina to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, wherever there is oppression, the AKP is there. We are such a type of party” (Erdoğan, 2011c)<sup>51</sup>. It is interesting that Erdoğan positioned Turkey as a representative of Muslim countries because there is not one non-Muslim country mentioned in his speech. Also, he did not make a distinction between poor and rich cities, because the cities in his speech have different economic features, and if he did, he could mention a non-Muslim African city. The only common feature of these cities is that they are mostly Muslim-populated cities. Two points are significant in this speech: First, Erdoğan saw Turkey as a world power by rejecting the role that expected by the EU in its region. Second, “the other” side, such as being a Muslim country, was emphasized in Erdoğan’s speeches after 2010. Thus, these attitudes break the compromise between the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP on Turkey’s identity after 2010.

One of the interesting points in Erdoğan’s speech was his strong criticism towards the EU after 2010. As stated in the first chapter, between 2002 and 2005, the EU was seen as the transformative power for Turkey by the AKP government which mentioned its values, democracy, etc. However, the EU was not mentioned with its normative side and was criticized by the AKP for being unreasonable in the relations with Turkey after 2010. For instance, the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan criticized the EU by stating,

[The latest]... Progress Report showed once again that the EU was in a serious eclipse of reason. Unfortunately, we saw once again that the EU still had a status quo approach for the problems which block the negotiation process. The aim is to denigrate Turkey (Erdoğan, 2011d)<sup>52</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> The original quotation is, “AK Parti, sadece Türkiye’nin partisi de değil dünyanın partisidir. Mogadişu’dan Saraybosna’ya, Şam’dan Üsküp’e, Sana’dan Bişkek’e, Abu Dabi’den Islamabad’a, Gazze’den Bingazi’ye, Priştine’den Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti’ne, dünyanın neresinde bir mazlum varsa AK Parti onun yanı başındadır, biz böyle bir partiyiz.”

<sup>52</sup> The original quotation is, “[Son]...İlerleme Raporu bir kez daha bazı konularda Avrupa Birliğinin ciddi bir akıl tutulması içerisinde olduğunu gösterdi. Maalesef müzakere sürecini tıkayan sorun alanlarında hala Avrupa Birliği tarafından statükocu bir yaklaşımın benimsendiğini bu raporda bir kez daha gördük. Ne yapayım da Türkiye’ye çamur sıçratayım, dert bu.”

This shows that the image of the EU changed over the years according to the AKP officials, and this breaks the balance of Turkey's identity perception between being "the other" of the EU and being a country which promotes EU values.

The critics mainly focus on the economic situation of the EU in Erdoğan's speeches. According to him, Turkey's economy is better than the economies of most of the member states of the EU. For example, he claimed that,

Now, the governments have difficulty measuring the global economic crisis because of populist concerns for the election in Europe. ... Therefore, they cause the crisis to deepen and the damage of the global crisis to increase. However, in Turkey, although we are in the election year, we have a performance which is watched in admiration and appreciation not only by Europe but also in the world (Erdoğan, 2012a).<sup>53</sup>

Here, the then Prime Minister Erdoğan compares Turkey and the EU, and he finds Turkey more successful than European countries in managing the crisis even though they are in the same circumstances.

It is also interesting that Turkey under the rule of the AKP associated the economic situation of Turkey with other regions, excluding Europe. For instance, in his speech in 2011, Erdoğan stated,

The whole Europe mentions the rise of Turkey, while the countries of the European Union are struggling with the crisis. They envy Turkey. Our Country is rising again with the power gained by the history in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and the Balkans (Erdoğan, 2011d).<sup>54</sup>

While Europe was not mentioned in Erdoğan's speech, the historical ties with the other regions was the reason of the rise of Turkey in terms of its economy, according to him.

In this period, the EU started to be criticized on the basis of certain negative features by the AKP. Especially, European identity was associated with Islamophobia, racism

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<sup>53</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Şu anda Avrupa'da hükümetler seçim kaygısıyla, populist kaygılarla küresel ekonomik krize karşı tedbir almakta zorlanıyor. ... Krizin derinleşmesine, küresel krizin tahribatının daha yüksek olmasına zemin hazırlıyorlar. Biz ise 2011 Türkiye'de seçim yılı olmasına rağmen sadece Avrupa'da değil tüm dünyada takdirle izlenen, hayranlıkla izlenen bir performans sergiledik."

<sup>54</sup> The Original Turkish quotation is, "Avrupa Birliği ülkeleri ekonomik krizle boğuşurken bütün Avrupa Türkiye'nin yükselişini konuşuyor. Türkiye'ye gıptayla bakıyor. Ortadoğu'da, Afrika'da, Asya'da, Balkanlar'da ülkemiz tarihten aldığı güçle yeniden ayağa kalkıyor

and xenophobia rather than with the positive features such as democracy, rule of law, and freedoms by the government of Turkey. When it is assumed that the agreement on the European values between the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP is an important part of the compromise between the two actors, the importance of the breaking of this agreement after 2010 will be clearer, since Turkey has assumed a role in terms of promoting European values in its region in this compromise.

In the period between 2010 and 2014, the agreement on European values which is generally associated with positive features was thus broken, and discourses of the AKP officials on European values were changed. For example, when he was criticizing the law which offers to punish the rejection of the claims of so-called Armenian genocide, the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan claimed that there was a “racist mentality” behind that law and stated,

... it is not the issue of France or Turkey, it is directly the issue of Europe and the European Union. We had some tragic events which took place in the last half century; however, everyone should know that Turkey is not the old Turkey. Turkey is not a country which remains unresponsive and keeps its silence to mischievously rising racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia in Europe (Erdoğan, 2012b)<sup>55</sup>.

In his speech, it is clear that Erdoğan positioned Turkey against Europe and the EU, which, in his view, harbored includes Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism according to him. This makes Turkey to be supportive of Islam, foreigners and different ethnicities in the EU. As Erdoğan also stated, “We are reminding by emphasizing that the West should immediately take measures for the rising anti-Islamic discourses and rising racism parallel to this, and also impose serious sanctions for them” (Erdoğan, 2012c)<sup>56</sup>. Thus, the AKP officials were not accepting Turkey as a country which can promote the European values and norms as one of the candidate countries in its region

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<sup>55</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “... bu mesele bir Fransız meselesi, bir Türkiye meselesi değildir. Bu mesele, doğrudan doğruya bir Avrupa meselesi, Avrupa Birliği meselesidir. Biz Avrupa’nın kimi ülkelerinde son yarım yüzyılda yaşanan bazı acı hadiseleri sineye çekti. Ancak bugün şunu herkes bilsin ki, Türkiye eski Türkiye değildir. Türkiye Avrupa’da sinsice yükselen ırkçılık, yabancı düşmanlığı ve İslamofobia karşısında susacak, tepkisiz kalacak, boynunu bükecek bir ülke değildir.”

<sup>56</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Batı dünyasında tırmanışa geçen İslam karşıtı söylemlere, buna paralel olarak tırmanan ırkçılığa karşı derhal önlem alınması, çok ağır yaptırımların getirilmesi hususunu bir kez daha altını çizerek hatırlatıyoruz.”

anymore because even the values and norms themselves were questioned and indeed criticized by them for being discrepant from their claims.

One of the points that was criticized by the AKP is the ‘hypocrisy’ of the EU. This tendency in the discourses of the AKP’s elites is also related to the values of the EU. Here again, the Turkish government questioned the EU values and norms (and also its normative power) and accused it of contradicting its own values and norms. The reactions of the EU’s policy about Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be an example of this. Erdoğan claimed,

...the whole West was supporting a two-state solution. But, where is this? They are planning to empty Palestine and give it to Israel in their own way. For this, we are saying that Turkey, Egypt, the Gulf countries especially Qatar, and also Saudi Arabia have to cooperate all together (Erdoğan, 2012d)<sup>57</sup>.

This attitude of Turkey was also noted by the EU in the 2012 Progress Report: “As regards the Middle East, Turkey’s diplomatic relations with Israel remain downgraded and military agreements with Israel suspended. Turkey repeatedly strongly condemned Israeli settlement activities. Close relations were maintained with the Palestinian Authority” (European Commission, 2012). According to his speech, Erdoğan was not only criticizing the EU but also referring to an alternative to cooperation for the crisis in the region. Actually, the cooperation with other countries (especially with Muslim countries) could not directly show that the compromise between the EU and Turkey on Turkish identity as “the other” of the EU, if the then Prime Minister Erdoğan did not classify the parties and put Turkey on the side of the Muslim countries. It can be inferred from this discourse that Turkey is not “the other” which promotes the EU norms and values but “the other” which criticizes those norms and values, similar-to “non-European” (“Oriental/Islamic”) “other”s criticizing the EU in the Middle East for instance. Thus, the compromise which was creating a project between Turkey and the EU for membership of Turkey is not valid anymore.

The breaking of the compromise can be seen in Turkish domestic politics of the government. The EU and the AKP government were dissented from each other in the

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<sup>57</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “...tüm Batı hep şunu söylüyordu: İki devletli çözüm. Nerede iki devletli çözüm? Şu anda tamamıyla Filistin’i kendilerine göre boşaltıp adeta İsrail’e bunu teslim etmenin hesabı içindeler. Onun için biz diyoruz ki, Türkiye, Mısır, başta Körfez ülkeleri içinde Katar olmak üzere Suudi Arabistan hep birlikte el ele vermeye mecburuz.”

period after 2010. As a Muslim and Eastern country, Turkey was expected to internalize the EU values and norms. In the period between 2002 and 2005, the compromise between the EU and the Turkish government was based on this key issue, and then a speeded up process could be realized for the EU membership of Turkey. As stated in the second chapter, Turkey was also appreciated for democratization and internalization of the EU values, such as the rule of law in its domestic policy by the EU (European Commission, 2004, p. 15,53,54). However, it can be seen that this compromise was corrupted after 2010 when the discourses of the AKP's officials are analyzed. The "religious generation" debate in Turkey in 2012 can be an example of this. Erdoğan stated in Parliament, "We want to raise a religious youth," in his speech and added, "Do you expect the conservative democratic AK Party to raise an atheist generation? That might be your business, your mission, but not ours. We will raise a conservative and democratic generation embracing the nation's values and principles" (Al Arabiya News, 2012). These words of Erdoğan could mean an intervention into secular education, which was also incompatible with the EU's democratic standards. Thus, this discourse brings Turkey's identity as "the other" of the EU into the forefront. In addition, "the nation's values and principles" is a reference point of this educational goal of the government rather than the EU's values and principles.

Concerning Turkey's domestic problems, Erdoğan constructs an identity-based solution for the co-existence of different ethnicities: "The same *Ezan* was calling for all of us in Van, Diyarbakır, Ankara, İstanbul, Edirne and it makes the same call. ... Hopefully [with the permission of God], we will unite with love in the shadow of the azan of Mohammed by getting rid of mischief-makers in this process" (Erdoğan, 2013a)<sup>58</sup>. Here, Erdoğan assessed Islam as a uniting factor between different ethnic groups in Turkey<sup>59</sup>. However, religion, which is "the other" part of Turkey's identity in its relationship with the EU, was highlighted more and more in Erdoğan's speeches.

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<sup>58</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Van'da, Diyarbakır'da, Ankara'da, İstanbul'da, Edirne'de kardeşlerim, aynı ezan okunuyor ve bize, hepimize, dikkat edin, aynı çağırıyor yapıyor. ... İnşallah bu süreçte aradaki fitnecileri çıkarıp ezanı Muhammedinin gölgesinde daha bir muhabbetle kucaklayacağız."

<sup>59</sup> For more discourses supporting this, see: (Erdoğan, Başbakan Erdoğan'ın 10 Haziran'da katıldığı NTV Programının Tam Metni, 2011)

Another example that shows the rising Islamic tone of Erdoğan's speech in the domestic politics of Turkey is the debate over the 'national drink' of Turkey. The debate was started with the new alcohol policy of the Turkish government which banned the sale of alcohol between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., alcohol advertising and included some other restrictive regulations (Resmi Gazete, 2013). The then Prime Minister Erdoğan said, "Raki was unfortunately presented as a national drink. However, our national drink is ayran" (Burch, 2013). The point that Erdoğan mentioned can be accepted as an identity debate, too. Because contrary to raki containing alcohol, ayran is suitable for Islam which forbids alcohol. As the leader of an Islamic-rooted party, Erdoğan's speech promoting ayran shows the tendency of Erdoğan and AKP to interfere with daily life preferences of the individuals, which could be considered as a threat to the civil liberties. Thus, it strongly contrasts with the EU's norms of both secularism and civil liberties.

The Islamic tone of the discourses of the then Prime Minister Erdoğan was emphasized not only in Turkey's domestic policy, but also in foreign policy. For instance, Erdoğan stated: "I am saluting from Istanbul Sarajevo, Baku, Beirut, Cairo, Skoype, Baghdad, Damascus, Gaza, Ramallah, Mecca, and Medina which are siblings of Istanbul" (Erdoğan, 2013b)<sup>60</sup>. Here, Istanbul is associated with other Islamic cities, not European cities even though one part of it belongs to Europe geographically. There is not only an association but an implication of leadership ambition by way of an allusion to the Ottoman past. This is also illustrative of the political transformation of Turkey's government.

Similar to the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's speeches, "the otherness" of Turkey's identity dominated the discourses of the foreign minister of that time, Ahmet Davutoğlu. As a foreign minister of a candidate country, Davutoğlu thought that the EU needs Turkey:

Turkey still hopes to join the EU even it feels humiliated by the opposition of Germany and France because of their prejudices against Muslims. ... However,

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<sup>60</sup> The original quotation is, "Şu anda İstanbul'dan, İstanbul'un kardeşi Saraybosna'yı, Bakü'yü, Beyrut'u, Kahire'yi, Üsküp'ü, Bağdat'ı, Şam'ı, Gazze'yi, Ramallah'ı, Mekke ve Medine'yi selamlıyorum."

Europe loses the most [if Turkey does not join the EU]. The EU is in economic crisis. Turkey's one-trillion dollar economy is growing (Davutoğlu, 2012)<sup>61</sup>.

Davutoğlu both compares the economic situations of two parties and implies the EU's need of Turkey.

The crisis and other obstacles in the EU were also questioned by Davutoğlu after 2010. He criticized several times the European integration and its dynamics in his speeches. For example, he stated, "Europe has a choice: will it become pluralist culturally, dynamic economically and concerned geopolitically or stay idle, static; and isolated culturally? If they choose the second one, they will lose their trustworthiness, activeness and dynamism in the international stage" (Davutoğlu, 2012)<sup>62</sup>. Davutoğlu was of the opinion that the EU was in the wider crisis originating from the economic crisis. As the economic crisis causes some to question the EU, it is shown as the reason of the other social phenomena, such as Islamophobia in the EU. Thus, Davutoğlu claimed that,

I see that Europe is in a deep economic crisis during my travels. Europe has high unemployment rates and they will continue to increase. The people who think that they are native masters of a country see someone else, mostly immigrants responsible for this bad situation. In such terms, the hate against foreigners emerges frequently. ... I am really concerned (Davutoğlu, 2011a)<sup>63</sup>.

Thus, since Davutoğlu thinks that the economic crisis in the EU affects the European norms and the values in a negative way, one of the components - which is Turkey's acceptance of the EU's values and norms as an "other" of the EU- of the compromise between the EU and Turkey under the AKP rule becomes questionable.

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<sup>61</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Türkiye, Almanya ve Fransa'nın Müslüman karşıtı önyargısından kaynaklanan direnişinden dolayı aşağılanmış hissetse de hâlâ AB'ye katılmayı umuyor. ... Ama en çok kaybeden Avrupa olur. Avrupa ekonomik krizde. Türkiye'nin 1 trilyon dolarlık ekonomisi büyüyor."

<sup>62</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Avrupa'nın önünde bir seçenek var. Jeopolitik olarak ilgili, ekonomik olarak dinamik ve kültürel olarak çoğulcu mu olacak yoksa atıl, statik ve kültürel tecrit hâlinde mi kalacak? İkincisini seçerlerse güvenilirliklerini, etkinliklerini ve dinamizmlerinin yanı sıra uluslararası arenada ağırlıklarını kaybedecekler."

<sup>63</sup> The original quotation is, "Seyahatlerim sırasında Avrupa'nın ağır bir ekonomik kriz içinde olduğunu belirgin bir şekilde görüyorum. Avrupa'da işsizlik oranı yüksektir ve artmaya devam edecektir. Bu tür ekonomik krizlerde genel olarak, kendilerini bir ülkenin yerli efendileri olarak gören kişiler içinde bulundukları kötü durumdan başkalarını, çoğunlukla göçmenleri sorumlu tutmaktadırlar. Böyle dönemlerde sık bir şekilde yabancılara karşı nefret yeşermeye başlar. ...Gerçekten çok endişeliyim."

The other factor that breaks the compromise between two actors is the emphasis on the Ottoman heritage of Turkey. As in the discourses of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Ottoman heritage which is accepted as “the other” part of Turkey’s identity in the EU relations become more and more important for Turkey’s foreign policy in Ahmet Davutoğlu’s speeches. He referred to the Ottoman geography repeatedly, especially the Balkans. For instance, he said,

Let’s share not only the common pain but also good centuries of our common history. Let’s share our left behind bridges, workhouses, and caravanserais and let’s walk together through the future vision. Let’s make our own cities Balkan cities. Let’s normalize our cities and meet them with its natural hinterland (Davutoğlu, 2011b)<sup>64</sup>.

Also, Davutoğlu mentions some initiatives of Turkey in the region by comparing them to the EU:

You know, a triple mechanism started between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey and Serbia two years ago and we solved five or six problems which were waiting on the table with the Foreign Minister of Serbia Vuk Jeremic and Sven Alkalaj, the Foreign Minister of Bosnia within a few months; Serbia apologized for Srebrenitsa, the ambassadors visits were mutual. We three countries solved the problem that could not be solved by the EU in 3 or 5 years in the summit of foreign ministers and after that in the summit of leaders step-by-step (Davutoğlu, 2011b)<sup>65</sup>.

It can be inferred from the discourses of Davutoğlu that Turkey started to see itself as an alternative within the EU in the region of Balkans, where the Ottoman Empire was located before. Davutoğlu justifies this leadership role of Turkey by using Ottoman legacy in the region, because he mentions in his book “Strategic Depth: Turkey’s International Position” (Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye’nin Uluslararası Konumu) that, Turkey’s instrument for political effect was “Muslim societies that was inherited from

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<sup>64</sup> The original quotation is, “...ortak acıları paylaşalım, ortak tarihimizin sadece acılarını değil güzel anılarını da paylaşalım. Bıraktığımız köprüleri, imaretleri, oradaki kervansarayları da paylaşalım ve beraberce gelecek vizyona yürüyalım. Şehirlerimizi yeniden kendi şehirlerimiz olmak kadar Balkan şehri yapalım. Şehirlerimizi normalleştirelim, tabii hinterlandlarıyla buluşturalım.”

<sup>65</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Biliyorsunuz Bosna Hersek-Türkiye-Sırbistan arasında üçlü bir mekanizma başladı iki sene önce Sayın Vuk Jeremić, Sırbistan Dışışleri Bakanı ve Sven Alkalaj, Boşnak Dışışleri Bakanıyla ve bekleyen 5-6 büyük problemi birkaç ayda çözdük; Sırbistan Srebrenitsa dolayısıyla özür diledi, karşılıklı büyük elçiler gitti-geldi. Avrupa ülkelerinin 3-5 sene çalışıp uğraşıp yapamadıkları hususu 3 ülke bir araya gelip dışışleri bakanları, sonra da liderler zirvesinde adım adım çözdük.”

Ottoman [Empire]" in the region (Davutoğlu, 2013e, p. 122). His suggestion for Turkey's foreign policy was to use its historical and strategic depth in order to be a "core country" (Davutoğlu, 2013e, p. 563). It can be inferred that Davutoğlu aims to change Turkey's position both in the region that Ottoman Empire was located before and also in the global stage. Additionally, Davutoğlu gives Turkey a leading role in the region in any possible integration later:

Our intention and goal is not to become in the periphery of the European Union if we join the EU and Balkans. Our aim should be to create not the community of second class and needy countries which are not in the decision making mechanisms but a new Balkan geography which shapes the destiny of Europe. Our aim should be grounded in such a vision (Davutoğlu, 2011b)<sup>66</sup>.

Even though the goal of the EU membership was maintained, Turkey's emphasis on the Ottoman geography and alternative integration recommendation in Davutoğlu's speeches shows that "the other" part (such as Ottoman heritage in this case) gained importance in Turkey's identity perception, and the European norms and values loses its importance when describing Turkey's position in the international stage. This description shifts to other regions especially the Balkans:

We are in the Balkans, the Balkans are in us. We are Balkans, Balkans is us. It is impossible to take away Turkey from the Balkans and Europe. Our future will be a peaceful future; we will achieve peace in the future together (Davutoğlu, 2011b)<sup>67</sup>.

Thus, the foreign minister of the time describes Turkey as a Balkan country rather than a European country in his speech even though he thinks that Turkey is also a part of Europe.

Not only the Balkans, but also other regions gained importance between the term 2010 and 2014 in Turkey's foreign policy when Davutoğlu's speeches were analyzed. For

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<sup>66</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Balkanlara girdiğimizde de niyetimiz ve hedefimiz Avrupa Birliğine girdiğimizde niyetimiz ve hedefimiz Avrupa Birliğinin böyle kenar bir bölgesi olmak değil. Hani ikinci sınıf bir ülkeler topluluğu, muhtaç ve karar verme mekanizmasına giremeyen bir ülkeler topluluğu değil, aksine Avrupa'nın kaderini şekillendiren yeni bir Balkanlar coğrafyası oluşturmak, hedefimiz bu olmalı Avrupa içindeki hedefimiz de böyle bir vizyona dayanmalı."

<sup>67</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Biz Balkanlardayız, Balkanlar bizde. Biz Balkanlarız, Balkanlar biziz. Bizi Balkanlardan koparmak Avrupa'dan koparmak mümkün değil. Geleceğimizde Balkan milletleriyle birlikte bir barış geleceği, olacak bunu hep beraber gerçekleştireceğiz"

instance, after mentioning “promoting a cooperation with Balkans”, Davutoğlu stated that their aim is the same in the Middle East:

[Our main goal is] to construct a regional union all together. This region has every natural wealth. If we come together, these regions [Balkans and the Middle East] become the center of attraction of the world as long as we do not give any chance to those who desire to create a religion, sectarian and ethnic conflict between us (Davutoğlu, 2011b)<sup>68</sup>.

Actually, the compromise between the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP on Turkey’s identity did not reject Turkey’s activism (even it encouraged Turkey to have a good relationship with its region) because it was based on Turkey’s identity as an “other” in the EU for instrumental use. However, the compromise also includes Turkey’s identity as a part of the EU, and its European identity makes this “otherness” valuable as explained in the previous chapters.

While Davutoğlu’s speeches emphasized the “otherness” of Turkey, especially by using the Ottoman heritage of the country, the then Foreign Minister Davutoğlu rejected the critics<sup>69</sup> claiming that the AKP was pursuing a neo-Ottoman foreign policy in that term. He stated,

They think that we are pursuing an adventurous neo-Ottoman politics. No one thinks that Europe was pursuing a neo-Roman or neo Holly Roman politics when they were integrating within the European Union. However when we think how we can create a common economic basin in this region when we go to Central Asia, the Balkans and the Middle East, everyone thinks that we are neo-Ottoman. Yes, we will be in the European Union; however, we will achieve the great success of the EU which is obtained by using the correct methods, while integrating with the periphery countries in this region with the same principle” (Davutoğlu, 2013a)<sup>70</sup>,

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<sup>68</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Ortadoğu’da da temel hedefimiz budur. Büyük bir bölgesel birliği inşa etmek hep beraber. Bu topraklar, her türlü doğal zenginliğe sahip çevre bölgelerimiz. Bir araya geldiğimizde bu bölgeler dünyanın çekim alanı haline gelecektir. Yeter ki, mezhep, din, etnisite üzerinden bizi birbirimizle çarpıştırmak isteyenlere fırsat vermeyelim.”

<sup>69</sup> For such a critics, see: (Onar, 2009).

<sup>70</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Sanki biz maceracı bir yeni Osmanlı politika içindeymişiz, neo-Osmanlı. ... bütün Avrupa, Avrupa Birliği etrafında bütünleşirken bu yeni Romacılık olmuyor, yeni kutsal Romacılık olmuyor, biz Orta Asya’ya gittiğimizde, Balkanlar’a gittiğimizde, Ortadoğu’yla acaba bütün bu coğrafyayı nasıl ekonomik anlamda bir ortak havza haline getirebiliriz diye düşündüğümüzde yeni Osmanlı oluyoruz. Hayır, biz Avrupa Birliği’nin de içinde olacağız, ama Avrupa Birliği’nin

From this speech<sup>71</sup>, it can be inferred that while the Turkish government was using increasingly the Ottoman heritage of Turkey after 2010, they were also rejecting that they had a neo-Ottoman policy in Turkey's foreign policy. It can be said that this emphasis on the Ottoman heritage and rejecting neo-Ottomanism are contradictions in these discourses.

The AKP's neo-Ottomanism was not only in foreign policy but also in domestic policy of Turkey. As Ongur claimed, AKP's neo-Ottomanism which "involves daily routines, printed and visual media, political discourse and public policies by which Turkish civil society is reminded of the historical and cultural heritage of its Ottoman past" has also social dimension (Ongur, 2014, p. 425). This made the AKP's use of Ottoman heritage more visible in Turkey-EU relations.

The other point is that Turkey wants to create an alternative integration with other regions besides the EU. Such a role is not acceptable for the compromise between the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP because Turkey was expecting to promote the EU's norms and values as one of them (the other Eastern or Muslim countries) in its regions, not to create a new integration model in the regions.

When looking at the discourses of the then Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, Davutoğlu's geographical references which are used for describing Turkey's identity are remarkable. After 2010, Turkey located itself in other regions besides Europe, according to Davutoğlu's speeches. For instance, he stated,

Yes, we are a Balcanic state, a Middle Eastern state, a Caucasian state, a Hazar state, a Central Asian state, an Asian state, a European state and even an African state. However, before all of them, we are a Mediterranean state (Davutoğlu, 2013b)<sup>72</sup>.

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sağladığı büyük başarıyı, doğru bir yöntemle sağladığı büyük başarıyı bu çevre bölgelerle de bütünleşerek aynı esaslar üzerinde sağlayacağız."

<sup>71</sup> For other examples, see: (Davutoğlu, 2013d) and (Davutoğlu, 2014).

<sup>72</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Evet biz, Balkan devletiyiz, Ortadoğu devletiyiz, Kafkasya devletiyiz, Hazar ve Orta Asya devletiyiz, Asya devletiyiz, Avrupa devletiyiz, hatta Afrika devletiyiz. Ama onlardan daha önce bir Akdeniz devletiyiz."

This speech and the previous examples show two implications: First, Turkey lost its focus on the EU and second, Turkey's role in its region does not totally coincide with the compromise that was realized between Turkey and the EU in 2002. It can be seen that the government of Turkey made concessions on the European part of its identity while it kept "the other" part of its identity. Thus, it created an unbalanced situation for the compromise.

The discourses of the then Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Egemen Bağış was in the same manner as Erdoğan's and Davutoğlu's. The blocks of Turkey's negotiation chapters by member countries and the Council were strongly criticized by Egemen Bağış. He also thought that the EU needed Turkey and stated, "They tried to end negotiations since the last 50 years for all the time. They made great effort to give up on Turkey. We will not end this. We give this pleasure to the Europeans" (Özalp, 2011)<sup>73</sup>. From this speech, it can be inferred that Turkey did not want to end the EU process; however, the government did not see Turkey as an inseparable part of the EU anymore. The government of Turkey did not seem much enthusiastic to continue its efforts for Turkey's EU membership when this period was compared with the period between 2002 and 2005.

Bağış also expressed his opinions which can contradict the European values such as freedom of expression about Turkey's agenda. For instance, he criticized Fazıl Say, a Turkish pianist and composer prosecuted because of his comments about Islam; he was accused of disrespectful to the sacred values of the society (Kırkeser, 2013). It can be said that Bağış gave priority to the sacred values of society rather than European values such as freedom of expression.

The discourses of the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the EU Minister and Chief Negotiator of Turkey of that time show that Turkey broke the compromise based on Turkey's identity as the "other" of the EU by combining it with the European values. From their speeches, it can be inferred that they tended to choose to behave like an Eastern or Muslim populated country without considering the EU norms. Thus,

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<sup>73</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Son 50 yıldır Türkiye'yi masadan kaldırma girişimleri hep oldu. Türkiye'yi vazgeçirmek için çok çaba harcandı. Fişi çeken biz olmayız. Bu zevki Avrupalılara bırakırız."

it makes Turkey an ordinary “other” of the EU and abolishes the valuable “other” that also internalizes the European values and can promote them in its regions.

Increasing emphasis on “the otherness” part of Turkey’s identity peaked with the Taksim Gezi Park protest in June 2013. It is a crucial point that highlights the transformation of Turkey’s identity perception in contrast to the EU. It can be seen directly in the discourses of the AKP’s policy makers. Thus, the term after the beginning of the Gezi Park protests can be examined elaborately.

#### **IV.I Gezi Park Protests and Its Aftermath: Sharpened Divergence from the Model Identity of Turkey**

On 28 May 2013, demonstrations started against the urban policy of government which was planning urban transformation of the Gezi Park in Istanbul. Actually, the emphasis on the Ottoman heritage of Turkey can also be seen in this urban policy of the government because they were planning to build Ottoman barracks in the Gezi Park. When they were resisting against starting of the construction on the Park, the police intervened brutally against protesters with tear gas (Hürriyet, 2013a). This resistance was supported by the wide range of people in Turkey and the protest spread all over the country.

The protests were indicative of the government’s decision and reaction to the protests in terms of the EU and Turkey relations. In this way, the protest had a determinant role in order to understand the identity perception of Turkey’s government during the protest. According to the compromise that was achieved between the EU and Turkey, Turkey was expected to accept the norms and values of the EU in addition to its Oriental and Islamic identity. Thus, Turkey was also expected to be respectful of the right to freedom of expression and the peaceful protests. However, during the Gezi Park protests both the discourses and policies of the government were criticized by the EU for being not suitable for the European standards (European Commission, 2013, p. 11).

About the Gezi Park protest, the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan assessed the protests from the perspective of security and defended the police. He stated,

The protest that was said to be about the less than 15 trees in the Gezi Park bereaved us of 3. ... They are saying, 'Remove police'... This country is the Republic of Turkey. The police force realized its mission against those who attack public institutions, public vehicles, vehicles of civilian citizens and even the people (Erdoğan, 2013c)<sup>74</sup>.

Erdoğan here sounds caring for the state and property rather than being concerned with liberties, rights and lives of the citizens.

The tension coming with the protests turned into a dividing and blaming process when considering the discourses of the AKP government. Erdoğan claimed that the protests are not innocent or democratic and are supported by the foreign powers, media groups and interest rate lobby. (Erdoğan, 2013d). He assessed the protests as a threat to Turkey and announced that the protesters included illegal organizations and marginal groups (Erdoğan, 2013d). Then he called his party's supporters for meetings called "Respect to National Will" in several cities. These meetings turned into an anti-Gezi protest in which Erdoğan strongly criticized the Gezi Park protesters. For instance, in Ankara in an occasion of the 'Respect to National Will' meeting series, Erdoğan stated,

Is this your understanding of democracy and freedom? Is the issue related to the Gezi Park? Be sure, we will explain all of them with documents in time. You will see. It is a coordinated process both at home and in abroad, we have its documents. We will introduce this traitor organization (Erdoğan, 2013e)<sup>75</sup>.

It is clear that such kind of discourses from Erdoğan did not help to decrease the tension within society.

Erdoğan also blamed Europe directly in his speeches for trying to create a misperception in the finance sector: "These events [the Gezi Park protests] in Turkey were conveyed systematically and exaggerated abroad. Some of the media institutions in Turkey coordinated with their European partners [in order to create economic

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<sup>74</sup>The original Turkish quotation is, "Gezi Parkı'nda sayısı 15'e bile varmayan ağaç için yapıldığı söylenen gösteriler bugün arkasında 3 kayıp bıraktı. .... Ne diyorlar; 'Polisi çekin'. ... bu ülke Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devleti'dir. Kamu kurumlarına, kamu araçlarına, sivil vatandaşlarımızın araçlarına varıncaya kadar, insana varıncaya kadar herkese saldıranlara karşı polisimiz görevini yapmıştır."

<sup>75</sup>The original Turkish quotation is " ...sizin demokrasi anlayışınız bu mu, sizin özgürlük anlayışınız bu mu, olayın aslı Gezi Parkı mı? Bunların hepsini sizlere belgelerle belli bir süre içerisinde daha sonra açıklayacağız merak etmeyin. Bu işin kaynağı neresi? Bunların göreceksiniz. Bu iş, dışarıda ve içeride koordineli olarak yürüyen bir süreçtir, hepsi belgeleriyle elimizde. Bu ihanet şebekesini milletimize tanıtacağız."

instability in Turkey]” (Erdoğan, 2013f)<sup>76</sup>. He also accused interest lobbies and foreign powers (Erdoğan, 2013g).

The then Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu also criticized the EU for having an Orientalist approach while making a decision (Davutoğlu, 2013c). The decision that implied by Davutoğlu was made by the European Parliament, which announced concerning the EU values that the European Parliament,

recalls that freedom of expression and media pluralism are at the heart of European values and that a truly democratic, free and pluralist society requires true freedom of expression; recalls that freedom of expression is applicable not only to information or ideas that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive, but also, in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights, to those that offend, shock or disturb the state or any section of the population (European Parliament, 2013).

Davutoğlu expressed that the decision was “unacceptable” (Davutoğlu, 2013c). While the EU thought that Turkey moved away from the European values, the government of Turkey assessed the protests as a security issue and criticized the EU.

Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, also commented on the Gezi Park protests as a barrier for Turkey: “Someone got really annoyed with the development, improvement and progress of Turkey. For this reason, they tried to block Turkey with the Gezi Park protest” (Hürriyet, 2013b)<sup>77</sup>. However, when he wrote a letter which was published in the New York Times he emphasized Turkey’s loyalty to the European values:

If there is one major reason behind the recent peaceful protests, it is because a vibrant civil society has flourished in Turkey, thanks to the opportunities we have provided to our people. Besides, be it for environmental issues or individual freedoms, protesting against a democratically elected government without resorting to violence I believe proves Turkish society’s European identity (Bağış, 2013).

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<sup>76</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Türkiye’deki bu hadiseler[Gezi Parkı protestoları] yurt dışına sistemli şekilde ve abartılı şekilde aktarıldı. Türkiye içindeki bazı medya kuruluşları Avrupa’daki ortaklarıyla birlikte [Türkiye’de ekonomi kötüye gitsin diye] koordineli şekilde çalıştılar.”

<sup>77</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Türkiye’nin büyümesi, kalkınması, ilerlemesi birilerini fena halde rahatsız etti. İşte bundan dolayı da Gezi Parkı ile Türkiye’nin önünü tıkamak istediler.”

In this letter, while Bağış claimed that the AKP government kept its commitment to the European values and asserted that the protests confirmed Turkey's loyalty to its European identity.

Contrary to the governmental approach in Turkey, Turkey's Progress Report in 2013 made a distinction between civil society in Turkey and the AKP government. While the report praised civil society and active citizenship in Turkey, the policies against protests were criticized: "The events surrounding Gezi Park have highlighted the importance of promoting dialogue across the political spectrum and society more broadly and the need for respect of fundamental rights in practice" (European Commission, 2013, p. 1). The EU also criticized "an overall absence of dialogue" (European Commission, 2013, p. 2) and suggested Turkey should develop the relationship between civil society and administrative power:

There is a growing and active civil society in Turkey. The Gezi Park protest in Istanbul and related protests across Turkey from May-June reflected the emergence of vibrant, active citizenry. Civil society in Turkey needs to overcome a number of challenges. As illustrated during the Gezi Park events, it is still not widely considered by those traditionally involved in politics as a legitimate stakeholder in democracy. Government-civil society and parliament-civil society relations should be improved through systematic, permanent and structured consultation mechanisms at policy level, as part of the legislative process and with regard to nonlegislative acts at all levels of administration (European Commission, 2013, p. 11).

Thus, it can be inferred from the EU's critics and suggestions that the EU and Turkey had different points of view about the freedom-security dilemma.

The other issue that challenged Turkey in its relationship with the EU is freedom of media in Turkey. Even though the government held that there was no restrictions on the media freedoms, it was mentioned in the progress reports after the Gezi Park protest that media suffers from government repression (European Commission, 2013, p. 52). Erdoğan also claimed that the protest was abused by some media organizations that exaggerated and helped spread the protest (Erdoğan, 2013f). He also accused both the national and international media for dissembling the truth behind the Gezi Park protests (Erdoğan, 2013f).

The then Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu blamed international media for trying to damage Turkey's image on the international stage (Davutoğlu, 2013c). Bağış also criticized the international media, specifically the Western media. He stated that, "We saw once more the hypocrisy of the Western media and their real feelings about us with these events. Western media made a mistake. They thought that Taksim would turn into Tahrir but it would not" (Bağış, 2013)<sup>78</sup>.

Although the AKP government officials claimed that Turkey protected the right to media freedoms, the European Commission criticized the restrictions on the media in Turkey in progress reports. For instance, in 2013 it is stated:

In particular, the mainstream media hardly reported on the Gezi Park protests in early June. Columnists and journalists were fired or forced to resign after criticizing the government. As a result, freedom of the media remained restricted in practice. ... In June, RTÜK issued warnings to a number of television stations which had transmitted live coverage of the Gezi Park protests on the basis that they were violating the principle of objective broadcasting and fined them for inciting violence. All stations concerned appealed to the courts and the cases are ongoing (European Commission, 2013, p. 52).

The pressure on the media mentioned by the European Commission shows directly a divergence between the EU and Turkey. The authoritarian tendency of the government of Turkey such as putting pressure on the media or restricting the protests also shows that the compromise between the EU and Turkey was ruptured since the government of Turkey ignored the European values and put forward its identity as "the other" of the EU.

After the Gezi Park protests, the two dimensions of compromise (realizing the EU's norms and values and use of identity as an "other" especially in foreign policy) could not achieved a balance. For instance, the Progress Report in 2014 stated, "Turkey plays an important regional role and is actively involved in its wider neighborhood. In this regard, further development of dialogue and cooperation on foreign policy issues of common interest is needed" (European Commission, 2014, p. 1). This statement in the report is about Turkey's use of identity as an "other" in its region. Even though this

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<sup>78</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, "Bu vesile ile Batı medyasının da riyakarlığını ve bizlere karşı besledikleri duyguların gerçek rengini bir kez daha görmüş olduk. Batı medyası hata yaptı. Taksim'den Tahrir çıkar sandılar ama Taksim'den Tahrir çıkmaz."

active policy was appreciated by the EU, Turkey was shown as having failed concerning the realization of the values and norms of the EU. For instance, measures taken on gender discrimination were not enough in Turkey, according to the EU:

Further work is needed to provide equal access to education opportunities, integrate people with disabilities and bring practice in line with European standards. Further work is also needed to bring antidiscrimination legislation and practice in line with EU acquis, in particular by including reference to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity (European Commission, 2014, p. 16).

The criticism of the EU also proceeded to the issue of the use of brutal force by the police in Turkey (European Commission, 2014, p. 54). The freedom of expression and freedom of media were also pointed out after the Gezi Park protest in the next progress report in 2014. It was stated that, “Intimidating statements by politicians and cases launched against critical journalists, combined with the ownership structure of the media sector, led to widespread self-censorship by media owners and journalists, as well as sacking of journalists” (European Commission, 2014, p. 15). The freedom of media was also taken up in terms of the presidential elections. The European Commission also touched upon the lack of objectivity of the media in Turkey during presidential elections campaigns (European Commission, 2014, p. 7). From this assessment, it can be inferred that the EU generally criticized not Turkey’s role as the “other” of the EU but the inability of the convergence of this role with the European norms, values and standards both in its domestic and foreign policy.

Concerning the fundamental rights and freedoms, the AKP government introduced a “democratization package”<sup>79</sup> in September 2013. Also, the government announced 2014 as the EU year for Turkey, hoping for an active progress in the relations (Erdoğan, 2014). These efforts made by the government of Turkey indicate that gaining membership in the EU was still a goal for Turkey. As the then Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu stated, the EU was strategic goal for Turkey (Çavuşoğlu, 2014). He also claimed that, “It is understood better the importance of the Turkey’s loyalty to its democracy goal and reforms for the EU

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<sup>79</sup> The democratization package introduces the rights to political parties to use any language during campaign, to have co-leaders and to get funds if they receive at least 3 percent of votes. (Hürriyet Daily News, 2014).

process in the term when the world started to forget some values as it is in chaos.” (Çavuşoğlu, 2014)<sup>80</sup>. However, there were contradictory discourses about these processes. For instance, Erdoğan claimed that their reference was the EU norms when they prepared the democratization package which also offers the changes in the electoral system and explained that the electoral system of Turkey is criticized by the EU (Erdoğan, 2013). The new democratization package was expected to maintain the election system which is criticized by the EU, however the same election system was implemented at the end of the day.

The rule of law, accepted as one of the “key requirements for the EU membership” and also the basis of the EU (European Commission, 2014) is also questionable in the discourses of AKP officials. For instance, the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan answered the corruption and bribery claims<sup>81</sup> by mentioning the national will: “Gezi events which has a design against the future of the nation melted away by the will of the nation. The attempt of the coup under the mask of corruption melted away by the will of the nation” (Erdoğan, 2014)<sup>82</sup>. Thus, it is possible to say that the will of the nation is a reference for the corruption claims rather than the rule of law, according to Erdoğan’s speech. The discourses Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu supported Erdoğan’s thoughts. About critics of the EU on judicial independence, he stated, “I am calling our European friends to become more careful and to avoid from prejudgments when the comments about Turkey’s domestic issues which has also political dimension. (Çavuşoğlu, 2013)”<sup>83</sup>. The government’s answer of corruption claims was criticized by the EU. In the 2014 Progress Report, The European Commission stated, “...the government response to corruption allegations, which amounted to interfering of the executive into

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<sup>80</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Dünyanın bir kaos atmosferine sürüklenip bir takım değerleri unutmaya başladığı dönemde Türkiye’nin AB uyum sürecinde gerçekleştirdiği reformların ve ileri demokrasi hedeflerine bağlılığının kıymeti daha da iyi anlaşılmıştır.”

<sup>81</sup> Having a great impact in Turkish politics, these claims started with arresting the sons of three ministers in the by claiming bribery and corruption in December 17, 2013 and resulted resignation of their resignations (Peker, 2013)

<sup>82</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Milletin ikbaline kasteden Gezi olayları milletin iradesi karşısında erimiştir. Yolsuzluk maskesi altında darbe girişimi milletin iradesi karşısında erimiştir.”

<sup>83</sup> The original Turkish quotation is, “Avrupalı dostlarımızı Türkiye’nin içişleriyle ilgili siyasi boyutları da olan gelişmeler konusunda yorum yaparken peşin hükümlerden kaçınmaya ve daha temkinli olmaya davet ediyorum.”

the independence, impartiality and efficiency of the judiciary, raised serious concerns. This led to further polarization of the political climate” (European Commission, 2014, p. 10).

In the period between 2010 and 2014, while the Turkish government was maintaining the EU goal, the relationship between the two actors was not based on the compromise on Turkey’s identity as the “other” of the EU. After 2010, Turkey still kept its feature as the “other” of the EU, it did not implement the European standards, norms and values as it did in the first and (part of the) second period. This made Turkey an ordinary “other” for the EU, and this identity which is not harmonized with the European identity did not help Turkey achieve membership. After 2010, only one chapter was opened (22<sup>nd</sup> Chapter which was named Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments) and none of them closed.

To conclude, the AKP government could not sustain the compromise between the EU and Turkey on the model of a projected identity of society based on an Islamic culture and religion having a civic state fully complying with the ideals of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights; as the discourses of the politicians also illustrated, it repressed its European credentials and highlighting the “other” part of its identity. Consequently, while Turkey played an active role in its region, the country could not use this role as a capital for EU entry because of the inability, unwillingness or political and ideological choices of the AKP blocking the promotion of the European norms and values. As stated before, the projected model identity of Turkey by the EU and the AKP in the beginning was crucial for enabling Turkey to play a unique role in its region as both European and Eastern or a Muslim country. However, when Turkey could not fulfill the requirements of European identity, the compromise between the EU and Turkey under the rule of the AKP was ruptured in the period between 2010 and 2014.

This period contradicted the first period between 2002 and 2005 in terms of discourses on Turkey’s identity vis a vis the EU. While, in the first period, the AKP government gave primacy to European norms and values such as democracy, freedom and rule of law by not rejecting Turkey’s Islamic or Eastern identity, they then started to employ Islamic and Eastern references without crediting European norms and values. This

shift was evident in the discourses of the leading AKP officials analyzed in the third and the fourth chapters. This new approach took Turkey into a new position: Turkey was no longer a privileged actor for the EU in the region which adopted EU's norms and values while bearing an Islamic and eastern identity.

These three periods that analyzed in this study shows that Turkey's "otherness" in its relations with the EU is not to be necessarily to the disadvantage of Turkey's prospective EU membership. On the contrary, if the compromise is reached on Turkey's "otherness" between the EU and Turkey, Turkey's "otherness" could be beneficial for both sides, as it was the case in the first period. Thus, the revival of the compromise on Turkey's "otherness" between the EU and Turkey is significant for a prospective further relationship between the EU and Turkey in the future.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

The protracted process of the EU accession and EU-Turkey relations includes many ups and downs in itself. When the AKP came to power in 2002, the two actors successfully arrived at a consensus on Turkey's "otherness" perception in terms of the latter's identity vis a vis the EU. This harmony of understanding created a project in which Turkey did not need to deny the distinct components of its identity in its relationship with the EU.

In the first period between 2002 and 2005, Turkey attempted to start negotiations for membership with a rapid transformation through legislative and constitutional reforms. This effort on the Turkish part resulted in the start of the accession negotiations in 2005 for an eventual full-membership. The discourse analysis of the AKP officials and the annual progress reports of the European Commission on Turkey indicated an affirmative attitude and commitment towards this policy. The main logic behind this stemmed from the fact that both sides benefited from the compromise on Turkey's identity as "the other" of Europe.

The second period began with the negotiations in 2005 and lasted till the constitutional referendum in 2010. In this period, the compromise by and large continued, without a considerable rupture. However, when the discourses of AKP officials and comments of the EU are examined, it is revealed that some divergences started to appear. The AKP began to emphasize "the otherness" of Turkey's identity by gradually reducing the focus on core EU values and principles such as freedom, democracy and human rights.

In the third period between 2010 and 2014, when presidential elections was held, the compromise was broken by the violation of Turkey's European identity in terms of drifting away from political norms and values promoted and upheld by the EU which, in the end, highlighted "the otherness" in a negative way. Thus, the balance suggested

by the compromise could not be realized in this period; and the relationship between Turkey and the EU took a problematic character.

The period between 2002 and 2005 epitomized the realization of a compromise on Turkey's identity as "the other". The identity that made Turkey a 'valuable other', which also internalized the European norms and values, and used them in its region, would present an opportunity for Turkey to become a member of the EU. However, between 2005 and 2010, the discourses of the AKP elite indicated that Turkey's identity perception started to change to some extent. The emphasis on the European identity still continued, however, the compromise could not be sustained in the following years after negotiations started. The democratic progress could not be sustained. The harmony with democratic values in domestic politics only continued until the AKP finally consolidated its power and authority in domestic politics.

Finally, following constitutional referendum in 2010 in Turkey, which consolidated the AKP's power, the compromise was broken. This rupture could also be traced in the discourses of the AKP's policy makers. In this ongoing period, while the AKP continued to emphasize Turkey's "otherness" in the EU-Turkey relations, the significance of the European norms and values was consistently undermined in domestic and foreign policy.

Consequently, it can be inferred from this analysis of the process that Turkey's "otherness" in its relationship with the EU could be a benefit when used in a combination with the European norms and values. While the use of "otherness" makes Turkey a 'valuable other' for the EU, it also puts Turkey in an advantageous position for the membership process. Yet, it is also important that when this 'otherness' is stripped of its commitment to universal values of democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and minority rights which the EU defines as its first principle for membership, this "otherness" no longer functions as a positive asset for Turkey. Unfortunately, the last period of the EU-Turkey relations under the AKP rule has witnessed such a drift, which has taken Turkey towards 'illiberal' and 'authoritarian' forms of limited democracy.

To revive the compromise between the EU and Turkey on Turkey's identity as "the other" of the EU, espousing and promoting the universal political norms, is of utmost

importance. With the peace and stability construction and the promotion of the European values in its region, Turkey and the EU would benefit from the compromise, as well as the countries in Turkey's region.

The normative conclusion that can be drawn from this study thus suggests that the future of the EU-Turkey relations will depend on the level of compromise between the two actors. If Turkey could merge its European identity with its "otherness", it could be a still valuable actor in its region which would be able to promote European norms and values.

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## APPENDICES

### A: TURKISH SUMMARY

Türkiye ve Avrupa Birliği (AB) ilişkileri, ilişkilerin başlamasından bu yana çeşitli engel ve zorluklarla karşılaşmıştır. Hem Türkiye hem de AB içerisindeki meseleler, inişli çıkışlı ilişkilerde rol oynayan faktörler haline gelmiştir. Bunlardan biri de hiç şüphesiz kimlik konusudur. Uluslararası İlişkiler literatürüne girdiği ve AB içerisinde tartışılmaya başlandığı günden bugüne Türkiye'nin AB ile ilişkilerinde üzerinde çokça durulan konulardan biri olan kimlik meselesi üzerine tarafların hem kendini hem de karşı tarafı tanımlama konusunda bakış açıları zaman zaman farklılaşmıştır.

Kimlik konusu Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinde olduğu kadar AB'nin kendi içerisinde de tartıştığı ve ortak bir noktaya varamadığı konular arasındadır. Avrupalılığın ne olduğu, ne olmadığı, sınırlarının nerede çizilmesi gerektiği üzerine farklı düşünceler bulunmaktadır. Örneğin, AB içerisinde farklı kültürlerden oluşsa da bunlar arasındaki ortaklığa vurgu yapanlar olduğu kadar farklılıklardan oluşmasının AB'yi var ettiği görüşünü savunanlar da bulunmaktadır. Biri ortak yanları biri farklılıkları vurgulayan bu iki görüşün yanı sıra, resmi söylemlerde sıklıkla karşılaşılan “farklılık içinde birlik” anlayışı da AB içerisinde kimlik tartışmalarının önemli görüşlerinden biridir. Bu ise ideal bir uyum içerisinde farklılıkların da korunmasını savunmaktadır. Bu tartışmalar genel anlamda AB'nin kendini (self) tanımlamaya yönelik taptığı tartışmalardır, ancak görüşlerin öne çıkardıkları noktalar ötekini (other) tanımlamaya yardımcı olmaktadır.

Kimlik inşasında kendini (self) tanımlamak kadar önemli olan bir diğer konu ötekini (other) tanımlamaktır. Bu da kimliğin ne olmadığına ilişkin algılar oluşturur ve “biz” le “öteki”nin sınırlarını çizer. Kimlik inşasının süreklilik arz eden bir yapıda olduğu düşünüldüğünde, bu kavramların hem kapsamı hem de anlamı bakımından değişikliğe uğrayabileceği öngörülebilir. Bu da “biz” ve “öteki” tanımlarının sınırlarının zaman içerisinde değişebileceği anlamına gelmektedir. Kimlik inşasında “biz” ve “öteki” tanımlamaları değişebileceği gibi farklı yönleri önceleyen kimlik tanımlarının

bazılarının zaman içerisinde daha çok öne çıktığı bazılarının ise daha az karşılık bulduğu dönemler yaşanabilmektedir.

Türkiye ve AB ilişkilerinde kimliğin rolü tartışılırken bu değişimleri göz önünde bulundurmak gerekir; çünkü işte tam bu noktada, Türkiye-AB ilişkilerini anlamak adına AB'nin kimlik anlayışında “kendi” ve “ötekisi”ne yönelik bakış açısı ve öne çıkan kimlik tanımlamalarının değişimi incelenmeye değerdir.

Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesi, AB'nin kimlik anlayışında önemli değişikliklere yol açmıştır. Bu dönemde Avrupalılığın evrensellik iddiası ortaya çıkmıştır ve AB kendisine Soğuk Savaş boyunca arasında kalın sınırların bulunduğu bölgelere Avrupa sistemini yayma gibi bir rol biçmiştir. Örneğin, Avrupalılıkla özdeşleştirilen hukukun üstünlü, temel hak ve hürriyetlere saygı, eşitlik gibi evrensel değerlerin Orta ve Doğu Avrupa'ya yerleştirilmesi için AB entegrasyon politikası izlemiştir. Ancak bu politika, AB'nin evrensellik iddiasının tek örneği değildir, çünkü AB sadece bu bölgede değil başka bölgelerde de Avrupa sisteminin, norm ve değerlerinin yayılması ve barış ve istikrarın sağlanması için çeşitli girişimlerde bulunmuştur. Örneğin, Orta ve Doğu Avrup entegrasyonundan sonra genişleyen çevresi ve değişen sınırları sebebiyle AB, komşuluk politikası gibi araçlarla yakın çevresine ve çeşitli iş birlikleriyle daha geniş bir coğrafyaya Avrupalılıkla özdeşleştirilen evrensel değerleri yaymak için belli politikalar geliştirmiştir. Bu coğrafyalardan biri de barış ve istikrarın sağlanmasının zor ancak öncelikli olduğu Orta Doğu'dur.

AB'nin evrensel değerleri yayma politikaları bu noktada Türkiye için ikili ilişkilerde önemli bir fırsat haline gelebilecektir. Uzun yıllar boyunca Avrupa'nın “ötekisi” olarak konumlandırılan ve üyelik perspektifine rağmen Avrupa'nın bir parçası olup olmadığı sıklıkla tartışılan Türkiye, AB ile ilişkilerinde Avrupalı değerleri benimseyen bir ülke olduğunu vurgulayarak ve Avrupa'nın “ötekisi” olduğunu genellikle reddederek bir politika geliştirmiştir. Ancak AB içerisinde kimlik algısının değişmesi ve AB'nin evrensellik iddiasıyla Avrupalı değer ve normları yayma politikası Türkiye'nin AB üyeliğine yönelik başka bir bakış açısı kazandırmıştır. Sadece bu politika değil, AB içerisinde kimlik konusunda farklılıkları ve çok kültürlülüğü öne çıkaran Sosyal Demokratların iktidara gelmesiyle yaşanan değişim de Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliğinin ilişkilerde engel ya da soruna dönüşmesini engelleyen unsurlardan biri olmuştur.

1990'lı yılların sonuna tekabül eden bu değişimde Türkiye ekonomik kriz içinde ve AB yanlısı olan partinin baskın olmadığı bir koalisyon döneminde olduğundan 1990'lı yılların sonunda bir Avrupalılaşma sürecine girilememiştir. Ayrıca Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinde Türkiye'nin "öteki" kimliğinin öne çıkarılmadığı (hatta reddedildiği) ve "Avrupalı" bir ülke olduğu şeklindeki klasik bakış açısı halen varlığını sürdürmektedir. Bu anlayış dış politika yapımında da kendini göstermektedir. Ancak 2000'li yılların başına gelindiğinde Avrupa'da böylesi bir değişim yaşanırken Türkiye'de kendi içerisinde Türkiye'nin kimliğine ve uluslararası alandaki konumuna ilişkin paradigma değişikliği oluşturabilecek bir dönüşüm yaşamıştır. 2001 yılında kurulan AKP'nin yeni söylemlerle kurulduktan bir sene sonra yapılan seçimlerde iktidara gelmesi, Türkiye AB ilişkileri açısından da –özellikle dış politika yapımında ve Türkiye'nin kimliğine ilişkin olarak- önemli sonuçlar doğurmuştur.

Türkiye siyasetinde çoğunlukla "öteki" konumunda kalmış siyasal İslam geleneğinden gelen bir parti olarak AKP, 2002 seçimlerinden birinci parti olarak çıkmış ve parlamentoda tek başına hükümeti kuracak çoğunluğu sağlamıştır. AB karşıtı diğer siyasal İslam geleneğinden gelen partilerden farklı olarak AKP, AB yanlısı bir politika benimsediğini açıklamış ve Türkiye'nin AB üyeliğini modernleşmesinin doğal bir sonucu olarak gördüğünü dile getirmiştir. Bu dönemdeki AB yetkililerine ait olan söylemler, AB'nin öncelediği demokratikleşme, hukukun üstünlüğü, temel hak ve özgürlüklere saygı gibi konular üzerinde durmakta ve temel referans noktası olarak AB'yi göstermektedir. Her ne kadar AKP'nin AB yanlısı söylemleri AB tarafında başta şüpheyile karşılanırsa da ilişkilerde yaşanan hızlı ilerleme ve atılan adımlar bu şüpheleri gidermiştir. AKP'nin AB yanlısı söylem ve adımları onu siyasal İslam geleneğinden gelen diğer partilerden ayırmıştır. Çünkü Türkiye'de ilk defa siyasal İslam geleneğinden gelen bir parti aynı zamanda AB yanlısı olduğunu açıklamış ve Türkiye'nin AB üyeliği hedefi yönünde önemli girişimlerde bulunmuştur.

AKP'yi Türkiye siyasetindeki diğer AB yanlısı partilerden ayıran özellik ise Türkiye'nin kültürel olarak farklılıkları vurgusuna dayanan "öteki" kimliğini reddetmemesi ve hatta bunun üzerinden politika geliştirmesidir. Bu anlamda Türkiye'nin tarihi ve kültürel bağlarının aktif bir dış politika için kullanılabileceği yönündeki anlayış, AB ilişkilerinde de katkı sağlayacağı inancıyla örtüşmektedir. AKP iktidarının olduğu Türkiye, farklı coğrafyalarla (özellikle tarihi ve kültürel bağların

bulunduđu Orta Dođu ve Balkanlar gibi bölgelerle) iş birliđi yapmaktan çekinmemiştir.

AKP iktidarının getirdiđi bu deđişim ve AB içerisinde yaşanan dönüşümün zamanı, iki taraf arasında önemli bir ana tekabül etmektedir. Nitekim AB'nin de Türkiye ile müzakerelere başlamasında çoğunluğu Müslüman olan nüfusuyla Türkiye'nin Avrupa'nın deđer ve normlarını bölgesinde yayabilecek bir aktör olması önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Türkiye için bakıldığında ise AKP gibi siyasal İslam geleneğinden gelen ancak AB üyeliđini destekleyen bir partinin iktidarda olması AB-Türkiye ilişkilerinde bir avantaja dönüşmüştür. Dolayısıyla AB ile AKP'nin iktidarda olduđu Türkiye arasında Türkiye'nin kültürel olarak “öteki” kimliđi üzerinde bunun araçsal olarak kullanımına ilişkin bir uzlaşmaya varılmıştır.

AB ile Türkiye arasında sağlanan Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliđi üzerindeki uzlaşının iki temel boyutu bulunmaktadır: İlki, Türkiye'nin Avrupalı deđer ve normları benimsemesi ve içselleştirmesi, ikincisi ise “öteki” kimliđini reddetmek yerine onu bölgesindeki ülkelere bu deđer ve normları yerleştirmek için kullanması. Uzlaşının bu iki boyutunun sağlanması halinde Türkiye, bölgesindeki ülkeler için bir “model” olabilecektir ki bu hem Türkiye'nin hem AB'nin hem de bölge ülkelerinin yararına bir durumdur.

Bu bakımdan AB ve AKP'nin iktidarda olduđu Türkiye arasında Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliđi üyelik yolunda dezavantaj olmaktan çıkmış, bir avantaja dönüşmüştür. Dolayısıyla Türkiye ve AB, Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliđi üzerinde uzlaşarak bir proje ortaya çıkarmıştır.

AKP döneminde kimlik açısından AB-Türkiye ilişkilerine bakıldığında Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliđi üzerinde tarafların sağladığı uzlaşının AKP'nin iktidara geldiđi 2002 ile üyelik müzakerelerinin başladığı 2005 yılları arasında ideal bir şekilde çalıştığı görülmektedir. Nitekim 2002 ve 2005 yılları arasında Türkiye'de kurumsal olarak hızlı bir Avrupalılaşıma süreci yaşanmış ve uyum paketleriyle üyeliđin gerektirdiđi standartlar sağlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra Türkiye aktif bir dış politika izleyerek bölgesinde barış ve istikrarı sağlayacak girişimlere katılım sağlamıştır.

AKP tarafında bu döneme ilişkin söylemler de uzlaşının iyi bir şekilde ilerlediğini gösterir niteliktedir. Örneğin bu dönemde AKP yetkililerinin öne çıkardığı söylemlerin

“uyum” “demokratikleşme” gibi söylemler olduğu görülmektedir. Ayrıca, o dönemin güncel konuları arasında yer alan “medeniyetler çatışması” tezine karşı çıkılarak “medeniyetler ittifakı” söyleminin sıklıkla dile getirildiği gözlemlenmiştir. AKP hükümeti tarafından AB’ye yönelik şüphe ve eleştirilerin olmadığı bu dönemde, AB’ye üyelik hedefinin ciddiye alındığına dair pek çok konuşma ve metne rastlanmaktadır. AB tarafında ise Türkiye’nin hem AB değer ve normlarıyla uyumlu olacak şekilde attığı adımlar ve hayata geçirdiği uygulamalar hem de bölgesinde üstlendiği rol memnuniyetle karşılanmıştır. Dolayısıyla bu süreç, AKP’nin başta şüphe ile karşılanan AB yanlısı politikalarının söylemlerde ve uygulamalarda hayata geçtiği bir dönem olmuş ve üyelik müzakerelerinin başlamasıyla sonuçlanmıştır. Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinin katılım müzakerelerinin başlaması aşamasına geldiği bu dönemin siyasal İslam geleneğinden gelen AKP döneminde gerçekleşmesi ise Türkiye ve AB içerisinde yaşanan Türkiye’nin “öteki” olarak kimliğinin kullanılması bakımından önemli bir göstergedir.

Bu dönemde tam da uzlaşıdan beklenildiği gibi Türkiye hem Avrupalı değer ve normları benimseyen hem de çoğunluğu Müslüman nüfusa sahip olan bir ülke olarak bölgesinde etkin rol oynayan bir konumdadır. AB ile ilişkilerinde “öteki” kimliğinin araçsallaştırılması bakımından izlenen aktif politika iç politikada AB değer ve normlarının yerleştirilmesi ile de desteklenmektedir. Söylemsel olarak da AB ve Türkiye’nin Avrupalı değeri benimsemesinin ve AB sürecinin önemi her zaman dile getirilmekte, bunun yanı sıra Türkiye’nin bölgesinde tarihi ve kültürel bağları bulunan coğrafyalarda daha etkin bir politika izlemesi gerekliliğine değinilmektedir. Ancak bunların her ikisi de aynı anda sağlanabilmekte ve uzlaşının gerektirdiği denge korunabilmektedir.

Türkiye içerisinde söylemsel olarak ve uygulamada kendini gösteren uzlaşma, AB tarafından ta takdir edilmektedir. Örneğin, Türkiye iç politikasında demokratikleşmeyi ve hukukun üstünlüğünü sağlayacak uyum paketlerini yürürlüğe koyması AB tarafından memnuniyetle karşılanmıştır. Türkiye’nin yaşadığı hızlı Avrupalılaşma sürecinde, sivil-asker ilişkilerinin düzenlenmesinden medya özgürlüklerine kadar geniş bir alanda Avrupa müktesebatına uyumu gerçekleştirilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bunlar yapılırken çoğunluğu Müslüman bir nüfusa sahip olan bir ülke konumundaki Türkiye, uluslararası alanda bu doğrultuda girişimlerde bulunmuştur. Medeniyetler İttifakı

girişimleri gibi Orta Doğu’da barış ve istikrarın sağlanmasına yönelik Türkiye’nin etkin bir şekilde katıldığı girişimler, bu dönemde “öteki” kimliğinin araçsal olarak kullanımının örneklerini teşkil etmiştir. AB Türkiye’nin hem kurumsal olarak yaşadığı hızlı Avrupalılaşma sürecini hem de bu tür girişimlerini memnuniyetle karşılamıştır.

Üyelik müzakerelerinin 2005 yılında başlamasından 2010 anayasa referandumuna kadar devam eden dönemde ise uzlaşının iki boyutu arasındaki denge bozulmaya başlamıştır. Dolayısıyla uzlaş, Türkiye-AB ilişkilerini daha ileri bir boyuta taşıyamamıştır. Bu dönem, Türkiye’nin “öteki” kimliği üzerinde 2002-2005 yılları arasında sağlanan ve iyi bir şekilde işleyen uzlaşıda bir durgunluk dönemine tekabül etmektedir. Bu durgunluk dönemi, AKP yetkililerinin resmi söylemlerinde ve AB tarafından bunlara verilen cevaplarda da kendini göstermektedir. Bunun Türkiye’ye bakan sebepleri vardır.

Bu dönem AKP’nin iç politikada çeşitli meydan okumalarla karıştığı ve bu meydan okumalar karşısında var olabilme mücadelesi verdiği bir dönemdir. Ergenekon ve Balyoz davalarının başlangıcı, cumhurbaşkanlığı krizi ve kapatma davası gibi AKP ve Türkiye siyaseti için önem taşıyan olaylar bu dönemde yer alır. AKP’nin güç kazanması sonucu iç ve dış politikada daha rahat hareket etmesiyle aldığı kararlar ve uyguladığı politikalar toplumun bazı kesimleri tarafından eleştirilmiştir. AKP’ye yönelik temel eleştiri noktası laiklikir, nitekim kapatma davasının önemli gerekçesi de AKP’nin laikliğe aykırı uygulamaların hayata geçirilmesine sebep olduğudur. Toplumda ise AKP’nin iktidar partisi olarak insanların hayat tarzına müdahale edilmesi ya da belli bir yaşam tarzını empoze etmeye ve yerleştirmeye çalışması gibi endişelerin bulunduğu görülmektedir. Buna yönelik siyasi ve hukuki tepkiler (örneğin kapatma davası) olduğu gibi sivil tepkiler (örneğin Cumhuriyet mitingleri) de görülmüştür. Ancak hem parlamento içerisindeki muhalefet partilerinin hem de toplumun bir kısmının tepkisini çekecek uygulamaların hayata geçirilmesi sonucu oluşan tepkilerin demokratik olmayan biçimlerde gösterilmesi endişesi de hem AB hem de AKP tarafında yaşanmıştır.

Bu olayların Türkiye-AB ilişkilerindeki yansıması ise henüz gücünü konsolide edemeyen ve Türkiye siyasetinde var olabilmek için mücadele vermesi gereken AKP için Avrupalı norm ve değerlerin ülke içinde benimsenmesinin hala bir zorunluluk arz etmesidir. Nitekim AB de AKP’ye karşı meydan okumalarda Avrupalı değer ve

normların gereği olarak “hukukun üstünlüğü”, “temel hak ve özgürlüklere saygı” temelinde AKP’nin yanında yer almıştır. AKP de bu tür meydan okumalara karşı kendini savunurken sıkça Avrupa norm ve değerlerine atıfta bulunmuş ve konumunu AB standartları çerçevesinde ele almıştır. Örneğin AKP’nin kapatma davası için hazırladığı savunma metninde AB bir referans olarak gösterilmiş ve evrensel değerlere atıfta bulunulmuştur. AKP her ne kadar Avrupalı değer ve normlarla çeliştiği düşünülebilecek söylem ve politikalarla gündeme gelse ve AB’ye yönelik bazı bağlamsal eleştirilerde bulunsu da AB hala parti için dış politikada önemli bir yere sahiptir. Dolayısıyla bu dönemde AB’nin hala temel referans noktası olduğu söylenebileceğinden bu dönemi birinci dönemin devamı gibi düşünmek mümkündür.

Bu dönemde yaşanan temel değişim, AKP yetkililerinin Türkiye’nin kimliğine ilişkin söylemlerine yeni kavram ve atıfların girmesidir. Bu durum Türkiye dış politikasında “eksen kayması” tartışmalarını da beraberinde getirmiştir. AKP bunu reddetmiş ve Türkiye’nin tarihi ve kültürel bağlarının olduğu coğrafyalarda aktif bir dış politika izlemesinin çarpıtılmaması gerektiğini savunmuştur. Bununla birlikte, AKP hükümeti tarafından AB hedefinin korunduğunu ve iş birliklerinin AB’ye alternatif olmayacağı da vurgulanmıştır. Yine de bu dönemde iktidar partisi AKP’ye Türkiye’de ilk dönemle kıyaslandığında kurumsal olarak hızlı bir Avrupalılaşma sürecinin yaşanmadığı ve AB’ye değerlerinin gereklerinin yerine getirilmediği yönünde eleştirilerin yöneltildiği göze çarpmaktadır. Bu dönemde Türkiye-AB ilişkileri kimliksel olarak daha çok Türkiye’nin iç politikasındaki olaylar üzerinden şekillenmiş ve kimliğe ilişkin söylemler ve başta sağlanan uzlaşının değişimi bu olaylar üzerinden takip edilmiştir.

2010 anayasa referandumu ise AKP ve Türk siyaseti açısından bir dönüm noktası olarak görülebilir, zira bu referandumla birlikte AKP’ye yönelik varoluşsal tehdit ve meydan okumalar ortadan kalmış, AKP Türkiye siyasetindeki yerini kesinleştirmiştir. Çünkü artık AKP, kendisine yönelik meydan okumalarla tek başına mücadele edebilecek kadar gücünü konsolide etmiştir. Bu da AKP’yi AB sürecinin ve bunun getirdiği norm ve değerlerin partinin varlığını sürdürmesi için gerekli olmadığı bir konuma getirmiştir. Dolayısıyla AKP’nin, ne birinci dönemde olduğu gibi kendini kanıtlamak zorunda kalmış ne de ikinci dönemde olduğu gibi meydan okumalara karşı varlığını sürdürme endişesi yaşamıştır.

Bu dönemde AKP, iç politikada otoriterleşme, dış politikada neo-Osmanlılık eğilimleri bulundurduğu şeklinde eleştirilere maruz kalmıştır. Nitekim AKP yetkililerinin hem içeride yaşanan olaylara yönelik tepkilerine hem de dış politikaya yönelik söylemlerine bakıldığında da bunların yersiz eleştiriler olmadığı görülmektedir.

Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinde ise AB'nin sert bir şekilde eleştirildiği ve Türkiye'nin uluslararası konumunun birinci ve kısmen ikinci dönemde olduğundan farklı görüldüğü bir döneme girilmiştir. AB'nin benimsediği ve yaymaya çalıştığı Avrupalı değerlerin aslında AB tarafından uygulanmadığı ya da ikiyüzlü bir şekilde uygulandığına dair söylemler AKP hükümeti yetkilileri tarafından dile getirilmeye başlamıştır. Bu durum da AB'nin kendisinin sorgulanması ve Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliğiyle AB değerlerini uzlaştırmada daha mesafeli davranmasına sebep olmuştur. Bu eleştirilerin başında AB'nin İslam karşıtlığı ya da İslamofobi ile ilişkilendirilebilecek uygulamaları gelmektedir. Bu tartışmalarda Türkiye hükümeti, Türkiye'yi Avrupalı değil Müslüman ülkelerin yanında konumlandırmış ve AB'yi İslamofobik olmakla suçlamıştır. Bunun da AB'nin kendi değerleriyle çeliştiğinin altı çizilmiştir.

Dolayısıyla, ilk dönemde yaşanan uzlaşının aksine Türkiye bölgesinde Avrupalı değer ve normları yayan, kendisi de bu değer ve normları benimsemiş bir aktör değil, bunları sorgulayan ve bölgesinde AB ile uyumlu politikalar izleyemeyen bir aktör konumuna gelmiştir. Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliği üzerinde yaşanan uzlaş, Türkiye'yi Müslüman nüfusa sahip bir ülke olarak Avrupalı norm ve değerlerin benimsemesiyle diğer bölge ülkelerinden ayırırken bu boyutun ortadan kalkmasıyla Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliği üzerinde AKP ve AB arasında uzlaşının ortadan kalktığı görülmektedir. Hem iç politikada hem de dış politikada artan bir şekilde İslami tonun ve referansların kullanılması AB ile ilişkilerinde Türkiye'nin “öteki” kimliğini git gide öne çıkararak Türkiye'yi değerli ve diğer bölge ülkelerinden farklı bir “öteki” olmaktan çıkarmıştır. Dolayısıyla artık Türkiye, AB için kendisini farklı kılan Avrupalı norm ve değerlere sahip olma yönünü göz ardı edip Müslüman nüfusa sahip sıradan bir “öteki” haline gelmiştir.

Bu dönemde dış politikada yaşanan önemli değişimlerden biri Osmanlı mirasının AKP yetkililerinin söylemlerinde sıklıkla dillendirilir olmasıdır. Bunun Türkiye-AB

ilişkilerine bakan yönü ise Osmanlı mirasının kullanılmasının Türkiye'nin kimliğinde Avrupa'nın "ötekisi" olduğu yönünü öne çıkaran bir durum olmasıdır. Ayrıca, Türkiye hükümeti, bölgesinde AB ile iş birliği yapmaktansa Balkanlar gibi Osmanlı'nın etkin olduğu bölgelerde AB'nin alternatifi olmayı ima eden söylemler de kullanmıştır. Bu durum, bahsi geçen uzlaşının sağlandığı ilk dönemle kıyaslandığında, söylemlerde Avrupalı değer ve normlar ile Türkiye'nin "öteki" kimliği arasındaki dengelerin, ikincisine ağırlık verilecek şekilde değiştiğinin göstergesidir.

AKP iktidarının bulunduğu Türkiye'de, bölgede Avrupalı norm ve değerleri yayma çabalarının aksine, bölgenin lideri olma söylemlerinin hükümet yetkililerince kullanılması, Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinde Türkiye'nin "öteki" kimliği üzerinde kurulan uzlaşının kırılmasının sebeplerinden biridir. Liderlik konusu Türkiye'nin kimliğini ve uluslararası konumunu da tartışmaya açtığından Türkiye ve AB arasındaki ilişkiler bakımından önemlidir, zira AKP Türkiye'yi güçlü bir ülke olarak dünya liginde konumlandırmaktadır.

İç politikada ise AKP hükümetinin otoriterleştiği yönündeki tartışmalara sebep olan çeşitli olaylar yaşanmıştır. 28 Mayıs 2013'te başlayan Gezi Parkı eylemleri bunlardan en önemlisi sayılabilir. İstanbul-Taksim'de bulunan Gezi Parkı'nın imarı konusunda çevre duyarlılığıyla AKP hükümetinin izlediği şehircilik politikalarına karşı çıkmak için başlayan gösteriler, eylem yapan gruba polisin müdahale etmesi sonucu büyümüştür. Hükümetin şehircilik politikalarının yanı sıra yaşam tarzına müdahale olarak değerlendirilen uygulamaları (alkol düzenlemesi gibi), süregelen politikaları ve polisin orantısız güç kullanımı da tepkilerin artmasına ve eylemlerin büyümesine neden olmuştur. Hükümetin toplumla uzlaşmaktan uzak durması, kullandığı söylemler ve göstericilere verdiği tepki eleştirilere yol açmıştır. Nitekim AB, sivil toplumun güçlü olmasından duyduğu memnuniyeti dile getirirken hükümeti bu yönleriyle eleştirilmiştir. Bu olayda kullanılan söylemlerin ve sert müdahalenin de ifade özgürlüğü gibi Avrupalılıkla özdeşleştirilen evrensel değerlerle bağdaşmadığını söylemek mümkündür.

İç politikada AKP hükümetine yöneltilen otoriterleşme eğilimlerinin olduğu yönündeki eleştirilerin bir değer sebebi ise basın özgürlüklerinin kısıtlanmasıdır. Muhalif gazetecilerin tutuklanması ve medyaya yönelik uygulanan sansürlerin artması yine Avrupalı değerlerle uyuşmayan bir durumdur. AB de basın özgürlüğü konusunda

Türkiye hükümetini eleştirmiştir. İç politikada yaşanan bu ve benzeri olaylar da Türkiye’de hükümetin kimliksel olarak Avrupalı değerleri göz ardı ederek “öteki” kimliğini öne çıkardığı bir dönem yaşandığını göstermektedir.

İç ve dış politikada yaşanan söylemsel değişiklikler, AKP’nin Türkiye’nin kimliğine ilişkin algısının birinci dönemden üçüncü döneme değiştiğini ve iki dönem arasında zıtlıkların olduğunu göstermektedir. İlk dönemde sağlanan Türkiye’nin Avrupa’nın “ötekisi” olduğu ancak bunun AB değer ve normlarıyla birleşmesi durumunda ortaya her iki tarafın da avantaj sağlayacağı anlayışı üzerine kurulu olan uzlaş, üçüncü dönemde Avrupalı değer ve normların göz ardı edilmesi ve Türkiye’nin “öteki” kimliğinin öne çıkarılması sonucu sona ermiştir. Bu durum Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinin müzakere boyutuna da yansımış ve 2010’daki anayasa referandumundan sonar yalnızca 22’nci fasıl olan “Bölgesel Politikalar ve Yapısal Araçların Koordinasyonu” başlığı açılabilmiştir.

İlk dönemde uzlaşının sağlanmasının sebepleri olduğu gibi üçüncü dönemde bu uzlaşının bozulmasının da nedenleri mevcuttur. Öncelikle AB, euro krizi sebebiyle kendi içerisindeki sorunlarla ilgilenmek durumunda kaldığından dış politikaya yeterli çaba ve zaman ayıramamıştır. AB içerisinde yaşanan bu ekonomik krizin, AB entegrasyonunun kendisini de sorgular hale getirdiği düşünülürse, genelde dış politikanın özelde ise bir aday ülke olarak Türkiye ile ilişkilerin de arka planda kaldığı söylenebilir. Türkiye’ye bakıldığında ise, gücünü konsolide etmiş ve uzun yıllar boyunca iktidarda bulunan siyasal islam geleneğinin temsilcisi bir partinin AB’ye “ihtiyaç duymadığı” bir ortamda kendi çıkarlarını gözetmesi ve Türkiye’nin kimliğini sahip olduğu ideoloji doğrultusunda değerlendirmesi söz konusudur. Türkiye’nin etkin bir rol almasının beklendiği Orta Doğu coğrafyası ise “Arap Baharı” sonrasında kontrol edilmesi ve uygun politika geliştirmesi güç bir hal almıştır. Tüm bu sebepler birleşerek ise Türkiye’nin “öteki” kimliği üzerinde varılan uzlaşının sona ermesiyle sonuçlanmıştır. Dolayısıyla hem Türkiye hem AB hem de bölge ülkeleri için büyük fırsatlar oluşturabilecek bir proje olan bu uzlaşının bu dönemde artık işler bir durumda olmadığı görülmektedir.

Oysa Türkiye ve AB arasında Türkiye’nin “öteki” kimliği üzerinde başta sağlanmış olan böylesi bir uzlaş, Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinde olumsuz gibi görünen kimlik konusunu Türkiye’nin lehine çevirerek ilişkilerde ilerleme sağlayabilecektir.

Dolayısıyla bu uzlaşının canlandırılması hem Türkiye hem AB hem de Türkiye'nin bölgesindeki ülkeler için yeniden bir fırsat sağlayabilir.

## **B: CURRICULUM VITAE**

### **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Surname, Name: Akcalı, Öznur  
Nationality: Turkish (TC)  
Date and Place of Birth: 16 September 1990, Manisa  
Marital Status: Single  
Phone: +90 553 551 94 61  
e-mail: oznurakcali@gmail.com

### **EDUCATION**

<b>Degree</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Year of Graduation</b>
MSc	METU The Department of Political Science and Public Administration	2015
BA	TOBB University of Economics and Technology Mechanical Engineering The Department of International Relations	2013
BA	TOBB University of Economics and Technology Mechanical Engineering The Department of Turkish Language and Literature	2013
High School	Savaştepe Anatolian Teacher Training High School / Balıkesir	2008

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
2014-Present	Analist Dergisi	Assistant Editor
2013-Present	International Strategic Research Organization (Uluslararası Stratejik Araştırmalar Kurumu - USAK)	Assistant Researcher
2011-2011	Yunus Emre Turkish Culture Center	Intern Instructor
2010-2010	Aktuelle Verlag	Intern Editor & Reporter

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Fluent English (Toefl IBT-86, YDS-85)  
Basic Knowledge of German (Start Deutsch Certificate A2)  
Computer Literate - MS Office Tools (Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint)

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **Book Reviews:**

Akcalı, Öznur. “Çağdaş Sanat ve Kültüralizm [by Artun, Ali (ed.)]”. *Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika* Vol. 10, No.7, 2014, p.169-173.

Akcalı, Öznur. “Avrupa Birliği’ni Türkiye’den Okumak: Kültür, Kimlik ve Medya [by Kaymas, Serhat]” *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 11, No:43, Güz 2014, p. 189-191.

### **Non-scholarly Articles:**

Akcalı, Öznur. “Eşitlikçi Bir Liberal: John Rawls”. *Liber+*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 22-25.

Akcalı, Öznur and Banu Arslan. “Nükleer Enerji Reklamları Neyi Pazarlıyor?” *Analist*, Vol.5, No.52. p.104-108.

## **HONORS & ACTIVITIES**

TÜBİTAK Scholarship (for master and doctorate education)

Ranked as the 6th student in the university entrance exam, ÖSS (taken by more than 1.5 million students) in 2008

Chairperson of a student community The Community of Language, Culture and Literature

Member of the Student Council of TOBB University of Economics and Technology

Member of the Library Consultation Commission of TOBB University of Economics and Technology

Organizing “Literature Days” includes three sections.

Attendant to “Turks and Science” as responsible for inviting, transportation and accommodation

## C: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### **ENSTİTÜ**

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☐

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

### **YAZARIN**

Soyadı : Akcalı

Adı : Öznur

Bölümü : Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : Using “The Other” in Foreign Policy Making: An Analysis of Turkey-EU Relations Between 2002 and 2014

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
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**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**