Turkey's Quest for Strengthening its Democratic and Social Model Amidst Difficult Neighbours of the Cold War Years

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ABSTRACT

Turkey has been trying to increase its democratic and social standards for quite a long time. In this endeavour, the gradually constructed fight in the society between secular republicanism and conservative communitarianism slowed down the country's pace. This paper argues that this division in the society has been mostly a consequence of the country's positioning at the battlefront during the Cold War years. As a result, Turkey has evolved towards a unique modernisation example, where the "civilianisation" of the excessively institutionalized modernist state structures (generally leaning towards authoritarianism) and the "institutionalisation" of the existent Oriental-Mediterranean-Religious societal solidarity through the rule of law and welfare state policies, have remained greatly limited. This constructed division in the Turkish society between the modernists and the traditionalists, the country's surrounding neighbours' highly volatile political and economic situation, and the country's positioning in the borderline of the global bi-polar politics of the Cold War years, kept Turkey as a highly security oriented state. Additionally, the lacking/fluctuating European support (particularly, Europe's highly hesitant steps with regards to Turkey's integration with the EU) has also played a key role in the limited democratic and social transformation of the country. In this context, this paper will analyse the reasons of the democratic and social welfare deficit in the country by mainly focusing on the impact of the Cold-War years on its model and the 'high politics' manoeuvres of its neighbours (influenced either from the USA and the USSR) during that period.

Keywords: Turkey, Democratisation-Civilianisation, Welfare State, Cold-War Neighbours, European Union

Soğuk Savaş Yıllarının Zorlu Komşuları Arasında Türkiye'nin Demokrasisini ve Sosyal Modelini Güçlendirme Serüveni

ÖZ

Türkiye uzun yıllardır demokratik ve sosyal standartlarını geliştirmeye çalışmaktadır. Bu süreçte toplumda zaman içinde inşa edilen seküler cumhuriyetçilik ile muhafazakâr cemaatçilik arasındaki kavga süreci ülkenin hızını oldukça yavaşlatmıştır. Bu makale, toplumdaki bu bölünmenin özellikle Soğuk Savaş yıllarında ülkenin iki kutup arasındaki kavganın tam ortasında kalması nedeniyle ortaya çıktığını öne sürmektedir. Bunun sonucu olarak Türkiye, nadir bir modernleşme örneği şeklinde gelişmiş ve ülkedeki fazlasıyla kurumsallaşmış modernist devlet yapılarının 'sivilleşmesi' (çoğunlukla otoritaryanizme kayan) ile mevcut Oryantal-Akdeniz Kültürü-Din merkezli toplumsal dayanışmanın 'kurumsallaşması' oldukça yetersiz kalmıştır. Türk toplumunda zaman içinde inşa edilen modernistler ve gelenekçiler arasındaki bölünme, ülkenin çevresindeki komşularının oldukça inişli çıkışlı iktisadi ve siyasi durumları ve ülkenin Soğuk Savaş yıllarının çift kutuplu küresel politikalarının tam sınırında yer alması, Türkiye'nin çoğunlukla güvenlik politikaları merkezli bir ülke olarak kalması sonucunu doğurmuştur. Ayrıca, ülkeye verilen oldukça yetersiz ve sürekli değişken Avrupa desteği (özellikle, Avrupa'nın Türkiye'nin AB üyeliği çerçevesinde oldukça çekingen kalması) ülkenin kısıtlı demokratik ve sosyal dönüşümünde kilit rol oynamıştır. Bu çerçevede, bu makale, Türkiye'deki demokrasi ve sosyal devletle ilgili açıklar üzerinde durmakta, özellikle de söz konusu açıkların ortaya çıkmasında ülkenin Soğuk Savaş yıllarındaki komşularının 'yüksek siyaset' manevralarının (çoğunlukla ABD ya da SSCB'den etkilenen) etkisi üzerine yoğunlaşmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Demokratikleşme-Sivilleşme, Sosyal Devlet, Soğuk Savaş Komşuları, Avrupa Birliği

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1. Introduction: Turkey in between the Difficult Eastern and the Western Neighbours

Decades of experience with modernisation and westernisation, in a multi-ethnic and multicultural landmass at the heart of Huntington's famous 'clash of civilisations' geography makes Turkey a great place of research for social science academics. As being one of the first nations to undertake rapid political, economic and social modernisation in the twentieth century, Turkey also undertook what is perhaps the most difficult transformation of all, the conversion of a traditional society into not only a 'modern' but also a democratic one (Weiker, 1973: 22). After the proclamation of the republic, Turkey adopted a new constitution, changed completely the system of law, secularised its model, and introduced a new and easier way of writing (Ahmad, 1993: 5-9). With these steps the Kemalist revolution had been successful in establishing a set of formal political institutions, which could provide the shell within which a democratic society could be built, and the government effectively created a situation in which most of the older-traditional Turkish political institutions ceased to exist (Weiker, 1973: 33-34). In the following decades, the masses started to assign a positive value to multiparty pluralism, seeming to correlate it with their personal welfare (Özbudun, 2000).

However, the Turkish civil society has historically remained weak and the political institutions of the modern republic could not fully replace the historical conservative/communitarian institutions of the country. Undoubtedly, this was a major challenge due to long years of experience with the Islamic model of governance in the Ottoman Empire. For most of the people, the state was not considered as an institution working for the people, but as a sacred entity to which the individuals should work for. Moreover, various segments of the society considered religion as capable of ruling both the social and the political life. Also, they were highly critical of the western political structures and political philosophies. Consequently, the state (politics) and religion remained highly amalgamated in Turkey (Mardin, 1962) and the historical communitarian/conservative institutions remained quite powerful, when compared with the newly established political institutions of the new modern republic.

The picture became more complicated due to the highly limited education level of the Anatolian farmers (the majority of the people in the country) who were expected to become the new citizens of the emerging political model following the proclamation of the republic. They were also expected to be conscious of their social and political rights. Consequently, the pendulum of governance in modern Turkey started to move between two movements fighting for political power, namely:

conservative communitarian religiosity (resisting change) and centralist Jacobinism (forcing change) (Heper, 1992 & Özbudun, 2000 & Houston, 1999 & Mackenzie, 1981 & Meeker, 1997 & Toprak, 1988 & Heper, 1988 & Weiker, 1973 & Kedourie, 1996). Mardin defines this as 'center and periphery cleavage' in Turkey and this analysis has been quite useful to understand the sociological divide in the country for decades (Mardin, 1962).

The already fragile civilianisation and democratisation in Turkey, which was initiated by the authoritarian Kemalist elite, has been particularly challenged during the Cold War years, when the Turkish people were forced to take sides in one of these camps. To a great extent, the relatively poorer classes in the society remained in the communitarian religiosity camp, whereas the richer classes took side with centralist Jacobinism. The flimsy liberal groups who supported a civilian political regime and egalitarian welfare state model have been greatly pressurized and politically eliminated during the same period, as the flourishing of a potential third option, a coalition between the centre and periphery, was never permitted. From start, modernity and tradition was regarded as mutually destructive, and therefore, a potential co-habitation of them was not imagined at all.

Furthermore, during the Cold-War years, the elite driven Kemalist social engineering project (kind of enlightened despotism) was transformed into a greatly USA driven 'conservative-market consumer' creation project. The governments of the Cold-War years, which were mostly formed and controlled by the NATO member, USA and Israel ally Turkey's generals, started to use the existing state institutions for this task. Unfortunately, the Turkish state bureaucracy and military cadres were frequently used in this project for strengthening several forms of authoritarianisms.

In line with the American foreign policy of those years; a 'Green Belt against the USSR', a militarist/statist/Islamist/conservative identity was also planted. For their economic and political gains, and in line with the wishes of the USA, the administrative cadres of Turkey abused the views of the founding fathers of the model (including Mustafa Kemal Ataturk); and used these historical figures for justifying all of their actions. Furthermore, only a selected few (generally having connections with the American MNCs and supporting Turkey's strategic partnership with USA and Israel in the region) could freely operate in the Turkish market and they have also been the financiers of the authoritarian political elite of the country. On the other hand, the USSR and the communist block supported equally authoritarian Marxist revolutionary groups in the country, and thus, also prevented a real emancipation in the society. During the 1970s the armed conflicts between the left and right

wing extremists would pave the way to the 1980 military intervention, which would bring the ultra-fascistic 1982 constitution that ruled the country in following decades.

As the country's social and economic evolution has been interrupted by several military interventions and different forms of authoritarianisms on both sides distorted the natural evolution of the political processes, the Turkish society has been highly traumatized during the Cold-War years. The authoritarian and security oriented political atmosphere of the Cold War years has also prevented the development of a more emancipatory third way models (flourishing from the amalgamation of the tradition and the modernity) in the country. Unfortunately, instead of considering the initial Rousseuian state as a transition period towards a more democratic and participatory form, the governments of the Cold-War years tried to further strengthen it against the diverging individual wills in the country. The Turkish state bureaucracy and military cadres were frequently used in this project for strengthening several forms of authoritarianisms.

The only clearly defined enemy in Turkey during the Cold War years were the groups who supported a civilian political regime and egalitarian welfare state model. This excessive focus on security and a neo-liberal economic model also led to the de-politicisation of the Turkish society and increased loyalty to authoritarian discourses.

Also, as Turkey could not get a clear EU membership perspective for decades, the authoritarian, security oriented and highly nationalist tendencies have further gained ground, which also hampered civilian transformation of the country. Ironically, the country was expected to support western ideals with most of its political, economic and military resources during those years, however, its integration to the EU was never fully supported by its European neighbours. This in turn also led to the development of increasing criticisms against the EU integration and NATO alliance that the country focused on for decades (Grigoriadis, 2010).

2. Turkey's Europe Inspired Modernisation: Ironically Isolated from Europe by its European Neighbours for Decades!

For quite a long time, Turkey has been highly influenced from the developments in Europe and has taken it as a model during increasing its democratic standards and reshaping its social model. The modernisation steps in this geography started centuries before the modern Turkish Republic. To some extent, the Ottoman Empire was the 'other' of the western civilisation and the Ottomans have also been crucial in the 'self' definition of the Europeans (Yurdusev, 1997). However, during this

interesting and generally conflictual relationship, the Ottomans have also been influenced by the developments in Europe. Moreover, they also influenced Europe with their living styles and traditions. Furthermore, when the reform steps of Sultan Selim III and Sultan Mahmud II in late 18th and early 19th century, the Tanzimat Reforms between 1839 and 1876, as well as the steps taken during the following constitutional parliamentary monarchy eras in 1876 and 1908 are comprehensively analysed, one clearly sees the influence of Europe on the Ottoman Empire's modernisation steps. The influence of the European Enlightenment and its humanist discourses was highly visible in the Ottoman intelligentsia during the 18th and 19th centuries (Mardin, 1962).

As a newly developing nation-state, the following Modern Turkish Republic also followed a similar modernisation track and its elite was particularly influenced from the secular and democratic nature of the western ways of governance. Subsequently, Turkey would become a founding member of the United Nations in 1945, join the Council of Europe in 1949 and become a NATO member in 1952. During the Cold War years, Turkey would become a crucial NATO ally and due to its massive military capabilities would take part in several NATO operations and support the alliance. During those years, Turkey would also apply to the EEC to be a part of the speedily developing European integration project. However, this endeavour would never be fully supported by its European neighbours and its accession journey would continue for almost half a decade without any concrete results. Ironically, as the only Europe inspired modernisation example in the Middle East, Turkey would be greatly isolated from the EU and its economic benefits, mostly emanating from integration to the single market. However, the same European powers would always seek Turkey's support when the security of the 'west' was at stake.

Therefore, one can say that from start the USA and the European countries have always considered Turkey as a Buffer Zone against the potential southern movement of USSR (or Russia) and thus its inclusion to the Western political structures, particularly the valuable ones such as the EU, was never envisaged. More importantly, most of the policy makers in Turkey have also been aware of this problem, however, they still told lies to the Turkish people as it was a vote winner argument. When analysed from this perspective, it won't be wrong to say that the outcome of the political relationship was already set from start, and therefore Turkey lost very valuable amount of time in the following years.

In the September of 1959, EEC Council of Ministers would accept the applications of Greece and Turkey for associate membership. With the help of the American and West European foreign policies of the

day and their security concerns, the EEC was hoping to include the South-eastern European countries to the newly developing economic alliance against the looming Soviet threat (Eralp, 1997). In this context, the following Ankara Association Agreement of 12 September 1963 formed the basis of the relationship between the Turkey and the EU and an Association Council that met periodically and discussed matters about partnership between Turkey and the EU was also formed. The Ankara Agreement included provisions that aimed at Turkey's accession to the four main freedoms of the Community, namely free movement of goods, services, capital and labour (hence the Single Market). With the ending of the preparation period for Turkey in November 13, 1970, the future responsibilities of the two sides (transition period) were determined in the Additional Protocol, which took effect in 1973. However, Turkey could not fulfil its responsibilities during the transition period (mostly due to internal political problems, emanating from left and right wing political confrontation mostly resulting from the Cold-War atmosphere in its surrounding regions, and the very limited European support to solve them) and particularly the tariff removal (and thus its full economic integration to the EEC) was halted between 1978 and 1988. The already problematic relations with the EU during 1970s (due to military intervention and political upheavals in Turkey, Cyprus issue, political problems with Greece, and alike) were fully frozen with the 1980 military coup and they could only restart with Turkey's application for full membership in April 14, 1987. Unfortunately, during those years, the Cold-War's security oriented discourses would become the dominant paradigm in the country, and the EU has taken few steps to change this outcome.

When the Cold War was over, this time, the ex-Communist neighbours of the West European powers in the Eastern and South-eastern Europe would become a much higher priority for the EU, and Turkey-EU relations could only gain a new impetus with the signing of the Customs Union between Turkey and the EU that took effect on January 1, 1996 (Association Council decision number 1/95). Following the signing of the Customs Union Agreement, Turkey hoped for the provision of a full membership perspective like the 10 Eastern and South-eastern European countries with the 1997 Luxembourg Council. However, again, the EU decided to exclude Turkey from this group and instead it offered a rather vague European strategy for Turkey. Hence, Turkey was again expected to remain as a buffer zone in between the east and the west, and a serving neighbour of the western political, economic and military structures. As a result, the relations between the EU and Turkey halted until 1999 as Turkey strongly protested this situation. Finally, in the Regular Report on Turkey, which was published by the EU Commission on October 13, 1999, a recommendation (as a result of Turkey's strong protests) would be made to the Council confirming

Turkey's wishes about the approval of its candidacy for full membership. Finally, at the Helsinki Summit that met on December 1999, Turkey was finally given a clear-cut candidacy status for full EU membership (Arıkan, 2003), which was indeed a reconfirmation of the Ankara Agreement's Article 28[1].

After the Helsinki Summit in 1999, Turkey, like the other candidate states, started to benefit from a pre-accession strategy (although with very limited financial aid when compared with prior enlargement waves) and initiated several political and economic reforms in the country. As a result of all these steps, the European Council stated that Turkey sufficiently fulfils the Copenhagen accession criteria on 17 December 2004 and decided to open the EU's accession negotiations with Turkey on 3 October 2005.

Although the accession negotiations started rapidly following this date, Turkey's accession talks stalled in the following years due to a number of domestic and external problems. Currently, due to political difficulties about Cyprus problem (and several other security and cultural difference related concerns, such as France's negative attitude/veto against Turkey), some chapters are frozen, and due to the enlargement fatigue on both sides (and particularly due to the current economic crisis in Europe) the accession negotiations are moving very slowly.

In 2014 European Commission has announced that the accession process will take at least until 2021. In the same year, in a press conference held in Brussels, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Stefan Fule, said "no one had any intention to make Turkey's negotiations a subject for the *Guinness Book of Records*. The negotiations will never be a subject for the *Guinness Book of Records* especially in the case of a key country like Turkey." Yet, more recently, David Cameron has argued that Turkey may only join the EU in 3000.

As it can also be comprehended from these comments, the current status of the accession negotiations is not so promising. However, Turkey has started to align itself with the EU *acquis* for quite a long time and the country is still considered as a crucial European power in South-eastern Europe and the Middle East. Furthermore, during the last decade the boom in the Turkish economy (and the economic slow-down in

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[1] Article 28 of the Ankara Agreement, 1963. "*As soon as the operation of this Agreement has advanced far enough to justify envisaging full acceptance by Turkey of the obligations arising out of the Treaty establishing the Community, the Contracting Parties shall examine the possibility of the accession of Turkey to the Community.*"

Europe) has further increased the importance of Turkey for Europe. Also, the current problems and instability in the Middle East keeps Turkey as a stable economic and political partner in the region.

However, the ongoing Cold-War influence on Turkey and the more recent re-emerging political conflicts between Russia and the USA in the region (in Crimea and Syria and during the so-called Arab Spring processes) still forces the country to remain as a buffer zone between the east and the west. Furthermore, the same global neighbours in Turkey's surrounding regions seems to be content with the division in the Turkish society, where the tradition and the modernity is destined to fight with each other. Undoubtedly, in such an instable region full of 'high-politics' of global superpowers, the division and the trauma in the Turkish society and the country's isolation from the European Union makes things further complicated. That said, due to the political and economic stability achieved during the last decade, the divisions in the Turkish society started to partly disappear and the country started to become more powerful with regards to standing independently in its region and thus not necessitating a continuous alignment to global superpower networks (Oğuzlu, 2011).

3.   The Impact of the Cold War Years on Turkey: Divide the Society and Rule!

Briefly speaking, Turkey has remained as a battleground for the dominant actors of the Cold War years, where the liberal-conservative and socialist-revolutionary ideologies were mutually strengthened, and all probable emancipatory liberal-social synthesis forms were eradicated. Economically liberal but politically conservative groups (in both modernist and traditionalist lines) in the country have been greatly supported during those years and this attitude (besides its other negative repercussions with regards to democratisation) has also partly prevented the strengthening of the welfare state model in the country (Berberoğlu, 1982). On the other hand, highly authoritarian and deterministic Orthodox Marxist revolutionary groups have been also supported during the same years. The outcome of this was continuous and never ending conflicts in the society, which made it more prone to military interventions.

To make the matters worse, the governments of the Cold War years started to use the existing strong state institutions for their own political goals. Instead of supporting the flourishing of the civil society as the backbone of the modernization, various governments during the Cold War years opted for the strengthening of the modernist state institutions against the citizens (Heper, 1994). Turkish army repeated this same mistake as they considered their main role as solely protecting the

Modern Republics' institutions and mostly equated modernisation with the existence of these institutional structures without appreciating the importance of people having consent for such modernity. As a result, the tensions between the society and the administrative structures started to increase as the modernisation project of the elite could not continue to keep the masses within the political mechanisms.

As a result, the potentially emancipatory (though initially top-down/Jacobin) Kantian-Rousseuian reforms of the Modern Republic have been transformed towards strictly authoritarian state ideologies (Karpat, 1964). For political control of the masses, the 'fear' in the society was regularly constructed by using terrorism, possible devolution of the country, left and right wing conflicts, Cyprus problem, the problems about the European Union membership process, continuous usage of narratives about the decline of Ottoman Empire and the Turkish independence war, and political problems in Turkey's neighbouring countries in the greater Middle East and the Caucasus. The left and right wing confrontation during the 1960s and the 1970s, Turkey's more challenging foreign policy problems following the Cyprus intervention in 1974 (especially with Greece, which blocked the EEC integration in the coming years), the escalating Kurdish problem during the 1980s and 1990s, and the continuous political problems in Turkey's neighbouring countries in the greater Middle East and the Caucasus also kept the country as a security oriented state, mostly in the service of NATO. Following the 1960 and 1971 military interventions, 1982 Constitution, which was prepared by the military junta, eliminated most of the remaining freedoms in Turkey.

Extremists on both sides of the political spectrum, including the Kurdish separatists, resorted to murder and other forms of violence in those years. Prior to the 1980 coup, political leaders, rather than attempting to repress this anti-Democratic behaviour, reacted selectively: Demirel (rightist) tended to excuse rightist violence, while Ecevit (leftist) viewed leftist attacks as legitimate reactions against the social injustice. Moreover, the economy, which had been expected to improve, failed to do so. Instead, in 1980, inflation reached 117.4 percent, unemployment increased from 20 to 25 percent, and industrial production fell by almost 3 percent. The deteriorating economic situation meant that Ankara had to re-negotiate agreements with the OECD and the IMF, and was required to introduce measures - including liberalisation of foreign investment laws - that many of Turkey's statist-minded leaders felt threatened national independence.

The Cold War years' security oriented discourses, the increasing frustration due to the delays in Turkey's integration with the European structures and the never ending economic problems of the country also

helped several societal groups in the country to develop counter arguments against the modernization steps and also increased the criticisms against the Western ideal that the country followed for two centuries (Göle, 1994: 178). Gradually, the potentially emancipatory (though, in practice, highly top-down) modernist reforms of the republic were disregarded (partly, quite understandably) and the so-called modernizing elites began to lose their power to transform the society (Nadi, 1996). Decades of domination and exploitation by the elite, who regularly used and abused the views of the founding fathers/modernizers of the Republic and republican/nationalistic feelings of the people, resulted in the total dismissal of these groups by the masses (Mumcu, 1998).

Yet, in an atmosphere where the critical and progressive forces have been eliminated and a consumer culture is strongly planted, the newly emerging alternative political discourses have also been trapped in authoritarian frameworks (Yalman, 1973). In 1990s, the economic liberalisation policies of Turgut Ozal partly opened the Pandora's Box and the silenced masses started to question the centrally planned political models and the cultural revolution of the modern Turkish Republic (Heper, 1994). The development of communications technologies and the freer dissemination of knowledge via increasing number of TV and radio channels increased the questioning of the official ideology in Turkey (Öniş, 2004). That said, this economic liberalisation process in 1990s was not supported by social policies, and the governments made highly selective analyses of the developments in Europe (and in the World). For instance, the trade union movements were very rarely communicated to the Turkish society and a greatly exploitative market model was considered as sufficient for the liberalisation of the country. This liberal transformation did not include a social basis, and the balancing mechanisms of a welfare state model were not permitted to develop. In such an atmosphere, the communitarian/conservative institutions (mostly religiously oriented NGOs) have gradually taken place of the Turkish nation-state's already fragile and ineffective institutions in this domain and they were also expected to take care of the social needs of the de-politicized masses (Mumcu, 1998).

Gradually, politics was mostly equated to an area to fight for the ethnic, cultural and religious demands and the remaining economic activities were expected to be solely performed in the free market model. Political organisation on certain social problems has remained greatly underdeveloped and the welfare state policies and social rights have started be considered as highly trivial. Contrarily, the historical experience has shown that the civilianisation and democratisation necessitate a social basis and a highly operative welfare state. Without social rights, political rights are nothing but an 'iron hand in a velvet

glove' or 'authoritarianism parading as democracy in disguise' (Marshall, 1950 & Polanyi, 2001 & Giddens, 1998 & Gosta, 1990 & Kleinman, 2002 & Flora, 1990 & Jones, 1993 & Habermas, 1991 & Habermas, 2001 & Leibfreid, 1993). To a great extent, the developments in Turkey, particularly during the Cold War years, justify this statement.

Put briefly, Turkey has been used as a 'Buffer Zone' against the USSR (and Russia) for decades and a potential southern movement of the Soviets was prevented by Turkey's bridge like geography in the north-south dimension. What's more, the EU accession journey has been used as a part of the 'stick and carrot' policy, the EU membership perspective representing the carrot, and the regular military interventions representing the stick. Moreover, the divide in the Turkish society between the traditionalists and modernists were exacerbated again by the policy makers of the Cold-War years, as the control of such a divided society was easier and it made it prone to Military interventions. Therefore, a co-habitation between traditional and modern values of life was not permitted, and quite contrarily the traditional values of life was considered as a threat to the western interests in the region. Undoubtedly, the Kemalist revolution itself has also based its program on modernisation, however, its radicalisation towards the eradication of the tradition is mostly an outcome of the Cold-War years, and is particularly visible after Turkey's NATO membership in 1952.

4. General Conclusions:

The ending of the Cold War helped Turkey to decrease the role of its highly security-oriented institutions. Moreover, the limited speeding up in Turkey's EU accession process, particularly following the 1999 Helsinki Summit that gave Turkey a candidacy status, also helped this transformation (Aydın, 2000). The authoritarian elite started to gradually leave the political sphere to the individuals with the electoral victories of the AKP governments during the last decade. This has positively influenced the civilianisation of the regime and furthermore the economic growth of the country has also speeded up. However, the recently increasing instability in Turkey's surrounding regions and the increasing tensions between the Russia and the USA are again bringing several difficulties for the country. Briefly speaking, keeping democracy and economy in well shape with such difficult neighbours (global superpowers) is a highly daunting task. Thus, the Turkish experience proves that the regional stability is crucial for economic prosperity and consolidation of democracy. When considered from this perspective, Turkey's current democratic and economic record can be considered as a miracle in such a difficult geography. Furthermore, its more recent economic growth and civilianisation is indeed a great success story.

Undoubtedly, the further anchoring of Turkey to the European structures and its support by its European neighbours may still play a key role in the development of a fully democratic and civilian ethos in Turkish society and politics in the coming years (Ulusoy, 2008). Moreover, Turkey's accession to the EU (which itself is also is in crisis) will not be important only for Turkey, but it will play a key role in the multicultural and economic transformation of the project, as Turkey will bring a different colour and economic dynamism to the model (Kaloudis, 2007). If supported by its European neighbours (which has been hardly the case), the maturing of the Turkish democratisation/civilianisation and economic development experience (which has historically managed to combine the colours of the Orient and the Occident) can also provide a major inspiration for the currently instable countries of the South-Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

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