The Use of the Past in Populist Political Discourse: Justice and Development Party Rule in Turkey

Ayhan Kaya and **Ayşe Tecmen**

Abstract

This chapter investigates the use of the past in Turkey's Justice and Development Party's (JDP) political discourse. We explore how the JDP utilises culture, heritage, the past and memory to culturalise social, economic and political issues. This case-specific exploration of the JDP's culture and heritage discourse will shed light on similar mechanisms used across Europe. Through a discourse analysis of the official texts produced by the JDP, the speeches of the party leaders and government officials, we explore how neoliberal policies have shaped the formulation of a 'past' drawing on religion and religious differences through an emphasis on Turkey's Ottoman past and its Muslim characteristics. This has become a strategic instrument for the JDP in its selective revival of Ottoman past to govern the memories of its constituents through Islam, Ottomanism and neo-Ottomanism.

Introduction

Similar to its counterparts in Europe, the Justice and Development Party (JDP)'s populist discourse is centred on criticisms of globalisation while promoting nationalism (*milli*) and nativism (*yerli*) to legitimize their take on the selectively constructed heritage and history narrative. In addition, JDP shares features of populist movements and parties such as anti-EU sentiments, neoliberal economic strategies, strong leadership, and strategic exploitation of

1

crisis. However, JDP is different from its counterparts, such as *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), Front National (FN), Party for Freedom (PVV), Five Star Movement (5SM), and Golden Dawn (GD) that we explored in the CoHERE Project. JDP has been the governing party in Turkey for the past 16 years, thus they had sufficient time, influence and access to resources to formulate a hegemonic discourse on heritage. The transformation of national policies and politics under JDP rule translates into a more prominent, more visible reconnection with the Ottoman past through the retelling of Ottoman history as well as new myths and narratives surrounding historical key events and notable figures.

JDP's populist rhetoric is driven by attempts to address the political periphery's societal and economic needs. As we discuss below, the framing of cultural and religious ties with the Muslim world as well as the persistent, strategic references to the grand narratives and heroism of the Ottoman era are politically and economically pragmatic means of establishing a stronger position for Turkey in the global order. Neo-Ottomanism within the foreign policy context is therefore an extension of the party's need to maintain its discursive construction of a glorified Ottoman legacy to satisfy its constituency. This is aligned with other European right-wing populist leaders' assertion of historical antagonisms between "the Judeo-Christian Western countries" and "the Muslim Ottoman Empire". As we illustrate, JDP and its counterparts have deployed this strategy to construct a civilisational discourse in the last two decades (Kaya, 2016, 2017, Kaya and Tecmen, 2018). This articulates a common transnational memory using the past to "other" Muslim societies, in this case signified by the Ottoman Empire, through its juxtaposition with the West.

This chapter argues that the JDP has instrumentalised a triangulation of political discourses of Islamism and populism and neo-Ottomanist in international relations. Since the 2000s, Turkey

experienced the proliferation of cultural productions, including television series, movies, museums, cultural projects, as well as the increased use of symbols denoting and connoting Ottoman heritage. These government-sponsored and/or endorsed representations of the past combined with JDP's interventions in the cultural and religious identity space are an outcome of the transformations in the official state discourse in domestic politics. By extension, neo-Ottomanism is a post-imperialist political ideology promoting greater engagement with ex-Ottoman territories.

Following a discussion of methodological preferences, this chapter will first analyse the ways in which the JDP has instrumentalised Ottomanism, Islamism and populism as the main driving forces of its governance in domestic politics. Subsequently, the chapter will focus on neo-Ottomanism's role in JDP's foreign policy. The chapter will conclude with a review of findings collected from the discourse analysis of the speeches of main political actors and of the interlocutors, JDP supporters, interviewed in Istanbul. Our interlocutors were mostly from higher social-economic status with higher education levels. In this sense, they represent a minority among JDP supporters, and they demonstrate the party's support by a heterogeneous group of voters.

Methodology

JDP's emphasis on Ottoman culture and heritage in the national identity narrative has both a national and an international dimension. On the one hand, we observe that extensive references to the Ottoman past aids in reformulating the Turkish national identity narrative by selectively reconceptualising the past in the framework of their populist political rhetoric. On the other hand, particularly after 2007, JDP instrumentalised Ottoman culture to reconnect with ex-

Ottoman territories through emphasis on a shared past, culture and heritage. JDP leaders emphasize this reconnection to legitimize their increasing political and economic ties with Muslim countries. This is called 'neo-Ottomanism', an economic and cultural ideological formation comprised of both national and foreign policy interests, based on a nostalgia for the Ottoman past.

The authors of this chapter will track the indications of JDP's neo-Ottomanist, Islamist and populist forms of governance by analysing the speeches of prominent political actors and face-to-face interviews conducted by the authors with JDP supporters. This chapter conducts discourse analysis of two different types of resources. Primarily, we conducted a discourse analysis of the speeches of JDP officials, focusing on key figures such as party leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Ahmet Davutoğlu, former Foreign Minister and former Prime Minister and the architect of JDP's foreign policy strategy. This preliminary research provided the contextual framework for the articulation of the JDP's populist discourse, leading to our identification of conservative democracy, neoliberalism, and neo-Ottomanism as the key elements of this discourse. In doing so, Ottoman past, comprised of history, heritage and culture, is a signifier in this populist discourse providing a historical context for the Islamisation of Turkish politics.

We also conduct a discourse analysis of the fieldwork from CoHERE project's Work Package 2, titled "the use of past in political discourse and the representation of Islam in European museums", carried out with JDP supporters between March and May 2017 in Istanbul. In our analysis, we focus on the responses to following questions: (1) Do you think there is such a thing as a European culture/civilization? If so, what is it about? What is its relationship to your national culture?; (2) Do you think there is such a thing as a European memory/heritage? If so,

what is it about? What is its relationship to the past of your nation?; and (3) Are you aware of the JDP's approach to the European Union? Do you agree/disagree with this approach?

As the interlocutors' responses indicate, their views on the JDP were critical in many cases, but they still expressed support for the party. This stems from the fact that they could not identify another political party that can represent their advocacy for representation of Islam in the public and political sphere. The snowball sampling method also became restrictive because some interlocutors no longer wished to participate in a study on European heritage and memory because during the fieldwork there were widely mediatized conflicts between Turkey, and the Netherlerlands and Germany. This caused a surge of anti-EU and anti-European sentiments amongst JDP electorate. This also limited the number of individuals willing to participate in the CoHERE fieldwork.[i] Additionally, in 2017, the increasing number of refugees hosted in Turkey, as well as the consequent uncertainties about their economic and cultural accommodation, exacerbated anti-immigrant sentiments. In turn, the rights provided to Syrian refugees were a source of discontent for the interlocutors, which also accounts for their criticisms of the JDP government.[ii]

Justice and Development Party: Conservative Democracy and Populism

The Justice and Development Party (JDP) was established in 2001 when Turkey experienced the strongest economic crisis in its history. As populism literature contends, populist parties take advantage of such crisis as voters tend to seek new political attachments during these transitional periods (Berezin, 2009). Utilizing the economic crisis, JDP immediately gained popularity with its anti-elitist, anti-Kemalist, anti-corruption discourse reinforced with a strong Islamist, and paradoxically Europeanist discourse fitting into the culturalist and civilizationist

paradigm of the 2000s. While economic liberalization and the quasi-liberal and clientalist Turkish economic system originated in the 1980s, years of crisis and/or recession succeeded rapid growth. The February 2001 financial crisis was the most severe crisis in Turkey's economic history since World War II (Arpac and Bird, 2009). Additionally, between 1991 and 2002, inefficient coalition governments had governed Turkey lowering the confidence in the existing parties and political institutions. The November 2002 elections confirmed this attitude when all governing parties were swept from the parliament, and JDP won an unexpected majority of the seats in the Parliament and formed the government.

JDP's commitment to neoliberal reforms and policies, despite having constituents from lower echelons of society who were looking for "social justice", is paradoxical (Öniş and Keyman, 2003). Since its inception, the party became increasingly popular among poor masses and social groups such as housewives, followed by farmers, private sector labour, and the unemployed. Therefore, as the "populism" literature suggests, JDP was mainly supported by the unorganized and poor sections of society. In the early-2000s, Turkey's representative institutions such as political parties, labour unions, and autonomous social organizations were weak. This paved the way for the direct, personalist mobilization of heterogeneous masses by Erdoğan and the JDP. In fact, deep crises result in populism as they cause a breakdown between citizens and their representatives (Moffitt, 2016). In turn, the emergence of populism in Turkey in the early 2000s is not surprising. Other conditions in Turkey that were conducive to populism were weakness of the rule of law, the politicized nature of the state, the lack of political accountability, high inequality and unmet social needs, and a cultural tradition favoring charismatic and paternalistic leadership. Therefore, when a leader like Erdoğan who was skilled in transmitting the populist message of the neoliberal ideology to the masses emerged, populism was inevitable.

The JDP gained an absolute majority of parliamentary seats in the 2002, 2007, 2011 and 2015 general elections, as well as in the 2004, 2009 and 2014 local elections. It became the first party since 1987 to win the majority of seats in the Turkish parliament. Furthermore, it was only the third Islamist party ever to become a part of a government in modern Turkey. Additionally, subaltern, conservative and religious circles considered Erdoğan as one of them, distanced from the aristocracy, military, oppressive state, and the elitist Kemalist republicanism (Tuğal, 2009: 176; and 2012). His family background, namely the fact that he was raised in Kasımpaşa (a conservative, sub-urban district of Istanbul), his Islamic discourse in everyday life, his sermon-like public speech style, and the slang-like language that he used from time to time in Istanbul, and his Sunni-dominant rhetoric made him appealing to a large segment of the population (Tuğal, 2009: Chpt. 5).

Taking over executive power through the electoral process in 2002, the JDP managed to make a political and societal alliance with the European Union, the Gülen movement (Seufert, 2014), and liberals, as well as with its electorate to fight against the military tutelage, which had banned JDP's predecessors in the preceding years. However, the party could not consolidate its absolute power until the 2007 Presidential elections when parliamentary democracy put an end to the power of distinctly secular President Ahmet Nejdet Sezer, who was an ally of the laicist army, and often refused to sign bills proposed by the JDP. President Sezer had vetoed several JDP legislative proposals, participated in secular demonstrations against the JDP, and openly warned the public against the threat of Islamization during his term in office. After Abdullah Gül, who was Erdoğan's companion in their progressive faction against Erbakan's conservative leadership in the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP) originating in the National Vision trajectory (*Milli Görüş*), was elected as President, the JDP started to exercise a more authoritarian rule in

Turkey (Kaya, 2015). From 2007 onwards, the JDP's policies became increasingly illustrative of neoliberal populism centred on the establishment of a new dominant Muslim elite economically supported by the JDP. Then, new codes of conduct and values were (re)introduced, legitimized and normalized within the scope of Ottomanism and Islamism.

JDP's Populism and Islamization of Politics and Society in Turkey

As we discuss throughout, the JDP is a populist party promoting the power of the people against the elitist and institutionalist character of the former modernist and militarist Kemalist regime. Recapturing the Ottoman heritage and an Islamist discourse is at the core of the JDP's populist discourse. Similar to other populist parties, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the JDP leadership often explain social and political movements through conspiracy theories and accusing international powers such as the EU, the USA, Russia, and an "international interest lobby". Furthermore, it has generated a very strong polarizing form of governmentality perpetuating the religious-secular divide, especially after the *Occupygezi* movement of June 2013. Another populist characteristic of the JDP is its growing Euroscepticism after EU accession negotiations began in 2005. Moreover, JDP's current populist rhetoric is centred on anti-establishment views appealing to the political periphery, more specifically the socio-economically disadvantaged Sunni-Muslim-Turkish fragments of Turkish society.[iii]

Since its inception, JDP adopted a conservative democratic ideology with an emphasis on secularism, social peace, social justice, the preservation of moral values and norms, pluralism, democracy, free market economy, civil society and good governance (Bilge-Criss, 2011). By using this discourse, JDP aimed to mobilize socially and economically marginalized classes who resented the inequalities deriving from the processes of globalization and urban life. JDP

also became attractive to the liberal and secular bourgeoisie, and upper-middle and middle classes, who were disenchanted with the political system because of political and economic instability (Hale and Özbudun, 2009: 37). The JDP immediately took the initiative to increase toleration and respect for the freedom of religion and conscience, and for the protection of religious rights such as the right to practice religion in public and private space. This kind of conservative Ottoman-like multiculturalism celebrating cultural differences, local values and the past was complemented by an acceptance of the inevitability of political and economic reforms demanded by the processes of globalization, and informed by universal values such as democracy, human rights, rule of law, protection of minorities and the free market (Houston, 2006: 166).

The revitalization of the Ottoman past and the tolerance discourse through Ottoman heritage is an essential characteristic of the JDP's populist rhetoric. However, the revitalization of the tolerance discourse does not lead to fairer treatment of ethno-cultural and religious minorities, who have always been stigmatized and problematized in Turkey because they do not fit into the definition of nation (*millet*) prescribed by the 'holy trinity' of Sunni-Muslim-Turk. For instance, Kurds, Alevis, Circassians, Georgians, Lazis, non-Muslims and Romas disrupt the unity of the nation as they are neither ethnically Turkish, nor religiously Muslim, nor Sunni. Like the Ottoman Empire's modernisation in the 19th century, neither has the recent Europeanization process of Turkey yet challenged the conventional definition of the Turkish nation. This has led to the re-stigmatization of these ethno-cultural and religious minorities through their differences. As long as these groups pay their tribute to the Turkish state and accept a subaltern and secondary position, they are tolerated. Otherwise, those groups will be inclined to encounter further ontological challenges.

The revitalization of the tolerance discourse in contemporary Turkey contributes to what Wendy Brown (2006) calls the "depoliticization of the social". As Mircea Eliade asserts, ruling groups can revitalize myths when social, political, and economic conditions of a group of people become unpleasant. Eliade (1991: 58-59) underlines his point with the following words:

> Merely by listening to a myth, man [sic] forgets his profane conditions, his 'historical situation' as we have accustomed to call it today... [W]hen he is listening to a myth, forgets, as it were, his particular situation and is projected into another world, into a Universe, which is no longer his poor little universe of every day... The myth continually reactualizes the Great Time, and in so doing raises the listener to a superhuman and suprahistorical plane; which, among other things, enables him to approach a Reality that is inaccessible at the level of profane, individual existence.

Similar to Michael Herzfeld's (2016) discussions of cultural intimacy, social poetics and practical essentialism, myths become resurgent in times of crisis when reality hits at least some members of a larger society. For instance, ruling groups revitalise the myth of tolerance to conceal the reality of inequality, subordination, and injustice experienced by those individuals, or groups. In Turkey's case, these groups are those who are not Sunni-Muslim-Turks. Currently, in Turkey and elsewhere we observe the rise of the tolerance discourse which is leading to what Wendy Brown (2006) calls the culturalization, thus depoliticization, of what is social in the age of the neo-liberal form of governmentality, which relies on the reduction of civilization to religion. Against this background, there is a discrepancy between the JDP's religious-based civilizational perspective and Turkey's long-standing European perspective of becoming a soft power in the Middle Eastern region. As we discuss below, the JDP is more inclined to use the neo-Ottoman tolerance discourse and religious-based civilization rhetoric to attract Middle Eastern populations to disseminate Turkey's hegemony in the region.

Turkey's unique experiences with modernisation have also contributed to its relations with the West and, particularly, Europe. In the early years of the Republic, modernisation was defined as a transformation along the lines of Western civilization, requiring alignment with Western countries and separation from Eastern countries. Particularly in the Kemalist era, introduction of a Roman alphabet-based Turkish alphabet (replacing the Ottoman alphabet) and the establishment of a secular state (restricting the role of Islam in the public sphere) changed the dynamics of Turkey's relations with Middle-Eastern countries and served to endorse an assumed superiority of Western civilizations (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2008). Despite its attempts to modernise, Turkey's volatile relations with the EU demonstrate Turkey's contested modernisation. Turkey's cultural location in-between Europe and the Middle East remains an important issue. The JDP government has addressed the predicament regarding Turkey's role between Western and Eastern cultures. For instance, Erdoğan noted that Turkey has responsibilities towards the Middle Eastern region stemming from its historical ties, and stated that:

> Turkey is facing the West, but Turkey never turns her back on the East. We cannot be indifferent to countries with whom we have lived for thousands of years. We cannot abandon our brothers to their fate.[iv]

His speech is an explicit depiction of his post-imperial nostalgia for the Ottoman way of managing cultural and religious diversity in this geography based on the idea of negotiating between different ethnicities, cultures and faiths. In a public speech that he delivered in Istanbul on 3 March 2017 at an event organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Erdoğan expressed his fear of globalization, with the following words by implicitly using an Ottoman nostalgia:

A culture and a civilization cannot be built by works that have no depth or permanence and are produced and consumed daily. We have to focus on permanent and long-term works… How we greet people, how we sit down and stand up, what we wear, what we eat and drink and how we decorate our houses are all determined by our culture… The world is moving fast toward becoming a monoculture… This situation not only effects Turkish culture. It is a big threat against all cultures. Our generation is the last user and witness of the richness of local cultures. The new generations are unfortunately left devoid of this richness and will continue to be so if things go on like this. We will be left in the claws of a cultural drought if we cannot understand the culture of a person walking in the streets of Istanbul from his clothes, shoes, hat and posture… If we lose our identity, character and individuality, we will get lost among the masses. That's why we say, 'One nation, one flag, one country, one state.' These principles are the safety locks of our independence and future.[v]

The critical media interpreted Erdoğan's statements as Ottoman nostalgia because he was referring to the differentiation of the code of clothing in the Ottoman Empire in accordance with religious differences that constituted the *Ottoman Millet System.* The management of ethno-cultural and religious diversity in the Ottoman Empire was mostly accomplished through the *millet* system which was the basis of its multicultural ideology. The Kemalist regime removed this cultural memory from the Turkish identity narrative to formulate a wide-spread rupture from the Ottoman past and its multicultural memory.

<Image 3.1 HERE>

Islamism and the Victimization Discourse

As opposed to its predecessor conservative political parties such as the Democrat Party (DP), the Motherland Party (ANAP) and the True Path Party (DYP), the JDP claims to represent the excluded values of society, such as Islamic values, and bring these values to power. Their aim is to create a perception of resemblance between the lifestyle of the nation and of those

occupying political power. Rather than using an elitist jargon in their everyday language, JDP leaders have always been meticulous in using a language shared by the masses. As such, the use of slang language has become commonplace. For instance, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Bülent Arınç (former head of the National Parliament) and Egemen Bağış (former minister of EU Affairs)'s use of everyday language have successfully created a solidarity with the masses. Besides, the life-style of JDP leaders, especially then PM Erdoğan's lifestyle, was admired by various groups of the subordinate people as they have found it akin to their own life-styles. Cihan Tuğal eloquently describes this symbolic capital of then PM Erdoğan as an instrument of contributing to the hegemony of the JDP:

> Although the leader of the JDP, Erdoğan, had openly shunned Islamism and adopted neoliberalism, his past involvement as an Islamist, his shared everyday practices with the poor, and his origins in an urban poor neighbourhood enabled popular sectors to read non-neoliberal meanings into the party. Although he was the municipal mayor of Istanbul, Erdoğan broke his fasts in slums or shanties together with the poor. Right after he was elected as mayor, he had his hair cut in the poor neighborhoods where he grew up. Erdoğan became even more popular after he spent time in jail due to an Islamist poem he had read at a rally before he had shunned Islamism. Hence, the symbolic capital circulated by the Islamist movement (piety, suffering for the religious cause, shared origin and practices with the people, etc.) was still deployed by the JDP, even though it had ideologically quit Islamism (Tuğal, 2011: 91–92).

As these common religious values are the JDP's main cultural capital, the party elite instrumentalised these values to overcome class differences between themselves and their poor constituency. By appointing devout Muslims to ministries and the bureaucracy, the JDP aimed to create identification between the party and the nation.

Furthermore, the JDP successfully employed a vigorous political victimization discourse to mobilize the masses along with its own political and societal agenda. Continuing the former

Milli Görüş line, the party elite argued that the Kemalist-laicist regime continuously victimised devout Muslims. In this regard, pro-Islamist political parties including the JDP regarded and presented laicism, which is the secularisation of political and social institutions, as anti-Islam and anti-religion. Freedom of religion has always been the main discursive tool of such political parties to sustain their power. Laicism was also classified as "anti" or "hostile toward" religion by some scientific circles, who argued that the JDP endorsed a secularism that entails *freedom of religion*, while the Kemalist-laicist model promoted one constituting *freedom from religion* (*inter alia*, Yavuz, 2009). However, there are other scientific circles claiming that the Kemalist regime has institutionally supported, promoted and financed a distinct interpretation of Sunni Islam through the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*) established in 1925 (Hanioğlu, 2012). One of our interlocutors addressed the JDP's meticulous set of realignments:

The party came to power with a liberal view on religion, addressing issues like the headscarf dilemma. There were many debates on this issue, whether those wearing a headscarf could go to school or not. The party solved the problem quickly. That's when people began to favour Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Then they moved on to history, prepared a programme around neo-Ottomanism, there were several diplomatic openings. They took on a selective approach to history. They focused on our history after 1299 because they fit their agenda. They didn't start with the Seljuks because then they would have to include Shi'ites in their agenda. They are very good at being selective. They focused on religious values and Erdoğan began to look like the leaders of the Muslim world, sort of like the Caliphate. That's how they promoted him abroad as well. He became very well-known after Davos. He always addressed issues about Palestine. He was very vocal in Davos and he put Israel in its place… He challenged Israel's authority. He stood by those who were victimised and reinforced his position as a leader. People like siding with victims but they love strong leaders more. I think the people of the Muslim world were expecting a leader to represent them internationally. They were waiting for an Islamic state to rise in the Middle East. Tayyip Erdoğan filled in that position. I should also note that it's not a coincidence that Turkey and a Turkish leader became the face of Islam. Turks are not Arabs and they are different from Arabs so we are not subjected

to the same prejudices. We are more like the face of modern Islam (25, male, assistant at a Municipality in Istanbul, Istanbul, 1 March 2017).

Erdoğan's persona during the Davos crisis (January 2009) also introduced a more antagonistic performance towards international actors, marking the beginning of Turkey's tendency to take unilateral actions in the international relations. This performance has also become a turning point and a symbol of Erdoğan's anticipation to represent Muslim Middle Eastern countries. More recently, Erdoğan used the failed putsch of 15 July 2016, to reinforce his self-presentation as struggling with the Turkish people against the visible and invisible forces of evil (the military, the shadowy Gülen network, and all the other outside forces) as opposed to the face of a populist leader, who is trying every opportunity to consolidate his might.

Multiculturalism in Political Rhetoric

Despite the JDP's emphasis on multiculturalism, the Syrian refugee crisis was a critical issue for the interlocutors. For a majority of the interlocutors, multiculturalism referred to different cultures united under Turkish language and Islam. This formulates those who do not speak Turkish and non-Muslims as the "other". For example, an interlocutor explained "Turkish multiculturalism" through the Ottoman *millet* system but noted that it has been modified to fit the JDP's political agenda. Despite their support for multiculturalism, a majority of interlocutors were concerned with Syrian culture's effects on Turkish culture indicating that multiculturalism is almost exclusively associated with new immigrants in Turkey.

I think Syrian refugees affect Turkish multiculturalism negatively. They have a negative effect on Turkey's image. I mean its image in general. I don't want to sound callous and cold. I mean I feel bad for

them because we hear about Aleppo every day, the news about that are everywhere (30, female, fitness instructor, 30 February 2017, Istanbul).

The majority of interlocutors noted their fear of terrorism and fundamentalism. They articulated refugees' leanings towards fundamentalism and terrorism as an outcome of negative socio-economic circumstances and isolation, which can be remedied through education and access to the job market (30, female, fitness instructor, 30 February 2017, Istanbul).

Despite these criticisms, the interlocutors still emphasised a shared-kinship with Syrians, and that it was Turkey's "duty" to accept refugees. Nonetheless, they also asserted that the JDP needs a new strategy mainly because Syrian refugees have started to leave the refugee camps to seek work in urban areas.

I'm uncomfortable with migration. Especially Syrian refugees…I accept that we have taken in Syrian refugees; there is nothing we can do about that now. But I'm uncomfortable with the fact that Syrians find jobs when there are so many unemployed Turkish people. They should not be able to move around the country and get jobs. (45, female, retired craftsman, 29 February 2017, Istanbul).

Competition in the labour market was a source of concern for most interlocutors who claimed that refugees were willing to work for less than minimum wage when provided with accommodation and living expenses. In turn, employers preferred to hire Syrians and exploit their dire circumstances rather than employing Turkish citizens for whom they need to pay insurance, higher wages. This was a result of the fact that the JDP's constituency is comprised of socio-economically disadvantaged masses who compete with Syrian refugees in the labour market.

> Because of Syrian immigrants, the health care system and the job market have become very complicated. Syrians have a work permit. They work for less, so they are getting our jobs…Syrians are given too many rights. It's simply too much. They have more rights than Turks do (50, female, textile worker, 29 February 2017, Istanbul).

There were also cultural concerns such as widely mentioned fears that Syrian refugees were "taking over" Turkish culture, specifically concerning the linguistic presence of Arabic in migrant-populated areas of Istanbul, mainly Fatih, a historical district housing Syrian immigrants. This issue elicited emotional and apprehensive remarks:

> I don't understand why we have to integrate them into our society. We are all trying to find a way to accommodate them, but we don't ask if they are happy here or if they want to integrate. They don't seem keen on adjusting themselves to our way of life. It's more likely that we are becoming more like Syrians, learning about Syrian culture rather than vice versa. Have you been to Fatih lately? Even the names of the stores are written in Arabic. Most of us can't read Arabic.It is very unsettling not to be able to read the signs in your own neighborhood? (22, male, student/works at a Municipality's public relations department, 10 April 2017, Istanbul).

As such, the main issue regarding Syrian refugees is not solely about accommodating their way of life but rather about socio-economic rivalry among the JDP's electorate base and the Syrian communities residing in Turkey. In this sense, the JDP's nostalgia for the *millet* system falls short of recognizing the short-term and long-terms effects of such economic and cultural clashes.

<Image 3.2 HERE>

The Turkish Identity Narrative and Ottomanism

There was consensus among the interlocutors regarding their support for JDP's approach to the Ottoman past noting that they felt an incomplete sense of history and national identity due to the omission of Ottoman heritage and culture from the Turkish identity narrative. To reiterate, the Kemalist government in the early-Republican era followed a top-down approach to modernisation.This forced modernisation implemented an ethnocentric monocultural understanding of Turkish identity centred on Sunni-Muslim-Turkish identities. Interlocutors constructed this as a "gap" in their memory resulting in a forced national identity narrative, which caused a cultural trauma that was persistently removed from the public and political spheres through military coups. This mirrored the JDP's anti-establishment and anti-Kemalist views. The sentiments expressed by the interlocutors were similar to that of Davutoğlu and Erdoğan:

> I support the government's emphasis on the Ottoman Empire and our heritage. We should not forget our past, our history. We should emphasise our Ottoman heritage and keep it alive for the next generations. We need to know and sometimes be reminded of what we are, where we come from. We owe it to ourselves to protect our cultural heritage (37, male, fitness instructor/former logistics specialist, Istanbul, 2 March 2017).

Interlocutors discussed the rupture after the Kemalist revolution to distance the new-born Turkish nation from the Ottoman past to underline JDP's and Erdoğan's success in restoring an uninterrupted sense of heritage. The JDP elite repeated this mantra in the last decade to build a "New Turkey" and to "close a hundred-year-old parenthesis" of the Kemalist Westernization project. In the early-1990s Davutoğlu discussed the "Kemalist-modernist parenthesis" to reject the Western "modernist paradigm" because of the "peripherality of revelation," that is the West's emphasis on reason and experience, versus divine revelation, which he argues results in an "acute crisis of Western civilization" (Davutoğlu, 1993: 195). Davutoğlu's intervention goes

beyond the boundaries of modern Turkey, and claims hegemony in the Middle East, particularly in the former-Ottoman territories. He assumes subsequent to the World War I, the imperial powers had imposed their will upon the peoples of the Middle East, dividing them up into artificial nation states. They then subjugated the Middle East by propping up despotic regimes. Davutoğlu's interventions resonate among JDP supporters particularly in relation to the Turkish identity narrative. As one interlocutor noted:

> When I was in elementary school, all we learned was Ataturk. What he did, who he was, how he lived. There were no mentions of the Ottoman Empire. It was as if the Empire never existed. It was traumatic not to know our heritage. There was a huge gap in our history, and no one talked about that (22, male, student/works at the Istanbul Municipality public relations department, Istanbul, 10 April 2017).

However, interlocutors also recognised the failures in the JDP's implementation of Ottomanism, specifically the party's deployment of the Ottoman past for exclusionary purposes, which conflicts with the Ottoman multicultural ideology:

> I like the idea of Ottomanism and neo-Ottomanism. That was an original idea. I used to read a lot about Ottoman history and I took a special interest in the party's approach to it. But its implementation wasn't good enough … Ottoman culture was built on multiculturalism and coexistence. Now they are excluding different groups in the name of Ottomanism. It goes against everything the Ottomans believed in (25, male, assistant at a Municipality in Istanbul, Istanbul, 1 March 2017).

Nonetheless, despite some diverging opinion, the interlocutors conveyed their support for the "official" narratives surrounding the Ottoman past, centred on Ottoman-nostalgia *vis-à-vis* the re-actualized memories of the Ottoman Empire. It is also significant that JDP supporters did not necessarily define the party's identity narrative but rather echoed the anti-Kemalist sentiments introduced in the JDP's populist discourse.

Revival of the Ottoman Past in Turkish Foreign Policy: Leveraging Ottoman Past in Regional Policy

As noted above, the JDP first emerged as a pro-EU political party, which could consolidate Turkey's Westernised political structures with its Muslim cultural characteristics. As such, between 2001 and 2005, JDP passed nine Constitutional Packages anticipating EU harmonisation. These packages concerned the legal protection of social, cultural and political rights of all Turkish citizens irrespective of religious and ethnic origin, redefining the role of the military in Turkish politics, minimizing its potential influence on politics, and enhancing legal protection of freedom of speech. The European Commission acknowledged the rapid reformation process, and accession negotiations began on 3 October 2005. However, Euroscepticism in Turkey, and Turkoscepticism in Europe affected EU-Turkey relations, which were already strained due to the JDP's increasingly Islamic populist rhetoric (Marcou, 2013: 6). Against this backdrop, the neo-Ottomanist discourse gained momentum as a reaction to the rejection from the European Union, which was instrumentalised by JDP officials to legitimise their emphasis on former-Ottoman territories.

The JDP's neo-Ottomanist discourse is rooted in Ahmet Davutoğlu's work titled *Strategic Depth* (2005), which was implemented in the scope of the "zero problems" policy approach that is based on six core principles:

> A balance between security and freedom, zero problems with neighbors, a multidimensional foreign policy, a pro-active regional foreign policy, an altogether new diplomatic style, and rhythmic diplomacy [...] Though these principles were by no means static, they have since inspired our institutional foreign policy approach. Together, they formed an internally coherent set of principles - a blueprint, so to speak

- that both guides our approach to regional crises and helps Turkey reassert itself as a preeminent country in the international system (Davutoğlu, 2013b).

Davutoğlu's vision aimed to realise Turkey's rightful place in the religious-historical narrative through neo-Ottomanism. This approach is also tied to the JDP's attempts to rise as a regional power that can serve as a bridge between the West and the East. Davutoğlu also articulated leveraging Turkey's Ottoman past in reinvigorating regional ties as an attempt to balance Western hegemony. As Davutoğlu warned,

"[t]he future cannot be built with recently created concepts of state that are based on nationalist ideologies wherein everyone accuses everyone else and that first appeared with the Sykes-Picot maps, then with colonial administration, and then on artificially drawn maps. We will shatter the state of mind that Sykes-Picot created for us" (Davutoğlu, 2013a).

Furthermore, Davutoğlu positions Turkey as the epicentre of historic events. His vision advocates a more balanced approach to international and regional actors, focusing on Turkey's economic and political significance to its surrounding regions (Davutoğlu, 2001; Danforth, 2008: 91). In contrast to the Kemalist ideology's isolation from regional affairs, JDP's foreign policy constructs Turkey as a pro-active regional player that has the responsibility to mediate regional affairs. The JDP's increased activism in the Middle East is also a product of economic pragmatism because, when the EU lost its appeal after the economic crisis in late-2000s, the East (Middle East, North Africa, and post-Soviet region) became viable alternatives (Öniş, 2010: 11-12). The "zero problem" approach lost its momentum in the early-2010s because of the Arab Spring and domestic turmoil, which demonstrated that this new pragmatic and neoliberal foreign policy approach made Turkey vulnerable to civil unrest.

<Image 3.3 HERE>

Davutoğlu's vision also discursively constructs the Middle East in a way that suits the JDP's Islamic identity in which Turkey's political, economic and socio-cultural reconnection with the region is a contribution to the country's position in international relations. However, interlocutors doubted the sincerity of these reconnection attempts and articulated the JDP's neo-Ottomanism as a way of governing citizens. They viewed it as a political strategy commercialising Turkey's Ottoman heritage rather than internalising the newfound remembrances of the past:

> They have been doing important things in terms of Ottomanism and our history. I like their approach to history and cultural heritage. We need to remember our past; we need future generations to know where we come from. But I don't like their approach to historical landmarks. They need to be protected. Unfortunately, Turkish people don't know the value of history. I saw people stepping on historical mosaics or even eating on top of tables that were on display in a museum. Turks like being the heir to the Ottoman Empire. I think it is being exploited by the government. They have commercialized our Ottoman history (26, female, language teacher, Istanbul, 2 April 2017).

The confusion over neo-Ottomanism stems from its broad definition and its implementation. To that end, there is an intense sense of grandeur attached to the JDP's reconceptualization of the Ottoman past but its implementation is hollow and opportunistic:

> We should have preserved the state culture of the Ottomans, the separation of state and religion. They utilised Islam to unite the society, not as a way of ruling the people. Now we say the Ottomans were great, we praise the empire. But that's a hollow approach. There is a sense of grandeur but it's simply a way of managing the public's perception (*algi yonetimi*). This sense of grandeur caused the fall of the Empire, we have to keep this in mind. We are very visual people. That's why people wrote the 'tall man' song about Tayyip Erdoğan. We care about appearances too much. The way we keep our Ottoman heritage

alive is by sticking with the one-man regime, sort of like the sultanate (25, male, chief assistant at a Municipality in Istanbul, Istanbul, 1 March 2017).

Despite the JDP's attempts to reconcile the East/West dichotomy in its foreign policy, the debates surrounding the possibility of an axis shift argument became apparent in early-2010s. The axis-shift argument formulates the JDP's "zero problems" approach as an imperialist and expansionist agenda which was used to legitimise the "Middle-Easternisation" of Turkish foreign policy (Kardaş, 2010: 115). This is predicated on the assumed mutual-exclusivity of the East and the West, meaning that Turkey's emphasis on Islam in national politics, supplemented by involvement in the Middle East came at the expense of its secular domestic stakeholders and European allies. This stems from the fact that Turkey did not only turn to the Middle East, but to the *Muslim* Middle East (Danforth, 2008: 86) which mirrored the Islamisation of domestic politics. For instance, Naci Koru (2013) noted that the region "shared a common destiny and contributed extensively to the world civilization, in particular our common civilization, the civilization of Islam", thus the "Turkish-Arab brotherhood and friendship" is not understood in the West. However, for some interlocutors, JDP's relations with the Middle East, though articulated as a regional policy implemented in the Balkans and Asia, was a source of concern;

I think we have a problem with diplomacy. Look at what happened with the Netherlands. We are moving away from globalization, trying to be more local, more regional. We are very close with the Arab world. Soon we will be so isolated from the West. Maybe we can have a slumber party with the Arab world…I don't think that we should pursue the West and leave out the Middle East. But I don't understand this obsession with the Middle East either. Financially we depend on Europe and Western countries (26, female, language teacher, Istanbul, 2 April 2017).

The JDP's neo-Ottomanist discourse remains a strategic neoliberal move in its rejection of the dichotomies between the West and the "others". In doing so, it articulates Turkey as the rightful

heir to the Ottoman Empire, which the interlocutors emphasise to understand why Turkey remains the "other" of Europe. This is apparent in the interlocutors' shared anxiety over being rejected from the EU:

> The EU is afraid of us. We are surpassing them. We are becoming stronger. They are afraid of Islam…We are modernising but we are not European. We have different cultures and beliefs and we cannot overcome that (37, male, fitness instructor/former logistics specialist, Istanbul, 2 March 2017).

Conveying the JDP's political discourse, interlocutors discussed the turmoil between Turkey and the EU with references to the Ottoman Empire. This was also reminiscent of other European populist political discourses (Kaya and Tecmen, 2018), which emphasise historical contentions between the Judeo-Christian West and the Muslim East to make sense of contemporary dynamics:

> The Ottoman Empire, more precisely Europe's encounters with the Empire, has kept Europeans together. Their fear of the Ottomans made them unite. If the Ottomans hadn't existed, Europeans wouldn't have united against a common enemy based on their fear. Instead they would have been fighting against each other (28, male, financial consultant, Istanbul, 10 April 2017).

In terms of creating bilateral economic relations in a liberal global market economy, neo-Ottomanism remains a way of deploying heritage and tradition to survive in a highly competitive environment. Interlocutors also acknowledged that they view neo-Ottomanism as a mere promotion strategy and some interlocutors noted that the JDP reinterprets Ottoman history to their advantage to collect more votes:

> The JDP has a very emotional approach to history and historical values. For example, Erdoğan refers to Abdulhamit II very frequently. He talks about the West's approach to the Sultan and how they tried to

overthrow him. This is a made-up historical account of Abdulhamit II. They use this false information to explain Western countries' approach to the JDP. They try to create links with the present and the past. People like hearing these similarities, even if they are not true. They use the past to explain the present. We have to understand that they are talking about two different time-periods…The JDP also emphasizes the religious characteristics of Ottoman sultans. This is a very reductive approach to history. Turkey is a Republic; the Ottomans were an Empire. We need to be able to make this distinction (38, female, PhD student in Social Sciences, History, Istanbul, 12 April 2017).

Neo-Ottomanist ties with ex-Ottoman territories were also accompanied by questions on the country's allegiances, which remains a popular criticism of the JDP's foreign policy. This image attempts to reconcile Turkey's traditional relations between Western centres and Eastern peripheries.

Conclusion

In the early -2000s, the party's articulation of conservative democracy alongside a liberal economic approach was a new political rhetoric demarcating from the dogmatic ideologies of previous governments. At that time, the revival of Ottoman heritage in domestic policies was constructed as the revitalisation of the Ottoman *millet* system, connoting multiculturalism, and diversity. However, Islamism in domestic politics and neo-Ottomanism in foreign politics have become instrumental for the JDP's populist rhetoric since the late-2000s. While conservatism has always been one of the pillars of the JDP and Erdoğan's political agenda, Islamism and Islamisation have since dominated the party's political rhetoric. In this sense, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's populist discourse has neglected to consider the views of the opposition and the Gezi Park protests, and the 2016 attempted coup have illustrated the shift from conservative democracy to a more dogmatic Islamic ideology neglecting the views of its opposition. This also coincided with the beginning of a de-Europeanisation process that become apparent with

the JDP's and Erdoğan's increasingly populist and antagonistic political style centred on anti-EU and anti-globalisation sentiments. This was supplemented by the "othering" of Europe through the implementation of Ahmet Davutoğlu's neo-Ottomanist foreign policy strategy.

As we discussed throughout, in regard to national policies and programmes, neo-Ottomanism refers to the revival of Ottoman culture and tradition through remembrance of the Ottoman heritage in both popular culture and political discourse. The controversial nature of this revival stems from its contradiction with the traditional Kemalist state ideology, which was solely Westward-oriented with detachment from the Middle East to avoid instability and sectarianism. Drawing on the transformation of domestic politics, the JDP's neo-Ottomanist political discourse presents the Ottoman Empire as an influential global actor, which contributed to Western civilisations while maintaining the ability to represent Muslim communities in the global political arena. This discourse is seen as both "imperialist" and "expansionist". Nonetheless, it is essential to the JDP's regional and global power rhetoric that relies on the de-contextualization of Ottoman history and its articulation under the Kemalist ideology. The revitalisation of Ottoman heritage in domestic and foreign politics have both been instrumental to the JDP's electoral victory.

This chapter has also revealed that the JDP has used heritage and myths to prompt its constituents to engage in acts of remembering and to create ways to understand the present. In this sense, the policy-makers strategizing the past are also aware of the fact that resorting to what is monumental, the heroic, the grand, rare, or aesthetically impressive in the practices of heritage, is an efficient way of coming to terms with the socio-economic and psychological constraints of the present. In other words, the JDP case reaffirms what Roland Barthes (1972: 3) said earlier regarding the functional use of myths by the ruling elite, as they "[myths]

organize a world which is without depth, a world wide open and wallowing in the evident”. As Sharon Macdonald (2013) also clearly shows memory is never only about the past but is strongly connected with the presence and the future. Hence, the use of the past by right-wing populist political parties seems to be a concious act of governmentality that is being performed to design the present and the future for the consolidation of their power.

References

Arpac, Ö. and G. Bird (2009). “Turkey and the IMF: A Case Study in the Political Economy of Policy Implementation.” *Review of International Organizations* 4, no. 2: 135-157.

Barthes, R. (1972). Mythologies. New York: Moonday Press.

Berezin, M. (2009). *Illiberal Politics in Neoliberal Times*: *Culture, Security and Populism in the New Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bozdağlıoğlu, Y. (2008). “Modernity, Identity and Turkey’s Foreign Policy.” *Insight Turkey* 10, no. 1: 55-75.

Brown, W. (2006). *Regulating Aversion*: *Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Danforth, N. (2008). “Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Ataturk to AKP.” *Turkish Foreign Policy Quarterly* 7, no. 3: 84-95.

Davutoğlu, A. (1993). *Alternative Paradigms: the Impact of Islamic and Western Weltanschauungs on Political Theory.* Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.

Davutoğlu, A. (2005). *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu* (Strategic Depth: Turkey's International Position).İstanbul: Küre.

Davutoğlu, A. (2013a). "*Büyük Restorasyon: Kadim'den Küreselleşmeye Yeni Siyaset Anlayışımız*" (Great Restoration: Our Understanding of Politics from the age of Antiquity to the age of Globalization) Paper delivered in Dicle University, Diyarbakır. March 15, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-ahmet-davutoglu_nun-diyarbakir-dicle-universitesinde-verdigi-_buyuk-restorasyon_-kadim_den-kuresellesmeye-yeni.tr.mfa.

Davutoğlu, A. (2013b). "Zero Problems in a New Era", Online Argument, Accessed May 6, 2018. http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/03/21/zero-problems-in-a-new-era/

Eliade, Mircea (1991). *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Hale, W. and E. Özbudun (2009). *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey: the Rise of the AKP.* London: Routledge.

Hanioğlu, Ş. (2012). "The Historical Roots of Kemalism," In *Democracy, Islam and Secularism in Turkey* edited by Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan, 32-56. New York: Colombia University Press.

Herzfeld, M. (2016). *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics and the Real Life of States, Societies and Institutions.* 3rd edition. New York: Routledge.

Houston, C. (2006). "The Never-Ending Dance: Islamism, Kemalism, and the Power of Self-Institution in Turkey." *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 17, no. 2: 161-178.

Kardaş, Ş. (2010). "Turkey: Redrawing the Middle East Map or Building Sandcastles?" *Middle East Policy*, 17, no. 1: 115-136.

Kaya, A. (2013). *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey: The Myth of Toleration*. London: Palgrave.

Kaya, A. (2015). "Islamization of Turkey under the AKP Rule" Empowering Family, Faith and Charity." *South European Society and Politics* 20, no. 1: 47-69.

Kaya, A. (2016). "The rise of populist extremism in Europe: Theoretical Tools for Comparison", 2016. Accessed April 13, 2018. http://digitalcultures.ncl.ac.uk/cohere/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/WP-2-Kaya-Critical-Analysis-Tool-1-1.pdf.

Kaya, A. (2017). "Syrian Refugees and a Tale of two Cities: Aleppo and Istanbul" *European Review*, Volume 1, no. 23, doi:10.1017/S1062798717000084

Kaya, A. (2018). "The rise of populist extremism in Europe: Lost in Diversity and Unity", 2017. Accessed April 13, 2018. http://digitalcultures.ncl.ac.uk/cohere/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WP-2-Kaya-Critical-Analysis-Tool-2.pdf.

Kaya, A. and A.Tecmen (2018). "Islam versus Europe: Populist discourse and the construction of a civilizational identity", 2018. Accessed April 13, 2018. https://eu.bilgi.edu.tr/media/uploads/2018/04/03/Islam%20versus%20Europe%20populist%20discourse%20and%20construction%20of%20a%20civilisational%20identity%20(Kaya%20and%20Tecmen%202018).pdf

Koru, N. (2013). Speech delivered in Kuwait, "Arabs and the World, a Future Perspective", 12 February 2013. Accessed May 6, 2018. http://www.mfa.gov.tr/speech-delivered-by-h_e_-naci-koru_-deputy-minister-of-foreign-affairs-of-turkey-at-the-meeting-entitled-_arabs-and-the-world.en.mfa

Kelsey, D. (2016). "Hero Mythology and Right-Wing Populism: A discourse-mythological case study of Nigel Farage in the Mail Online." *Journalism Studies* 17, no. 8: 971-988.

Laclau, E. (2005a). "Populism: What's in a Name?" In *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*, edited by Francisco Panizza, 32-49. London: Verso.

Laclau, E. (2005b). *On Populist Reason.* London: Verso.

Macdonald, S. (2013). *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today.* London, New York: Routledge

Marcou, J. (2013) "Turkey's Foreign Policy: Shifting Back to the West after a Drift to the East?" International Policy and Leadership Institute, *Turkey Policy Brief Series* No. 18.

Moffitt, B. (2016). *The Global Rise of Communism: Performance, Political Style and Representation.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Mudde, C. (2016). *On Extremism and Democracy in Europe*. London: Routledge.

Müller, J.W. (2016). *What Is Populism?* Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Öniş, Z. (2004). "Turkish Modernization and Challenges for the New Europe." *Perceptions* (Autumn 2004): 5-28.

Öniş, Z. (2010). "Multiple Faces of the "New" Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique", Center for Globalization and Democratic Governance, GLODEM *Working Paper Series*, no.4, Istanbul: Koç University.

Öniş, Z. and E. F. Keyman (2003). "A New Path Emerges." *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 2: 95-107.

Seufert, G. (2014). "Is the Fethullah Gülen Movement Overstretching Itself? A Turkish Religious Community as a National and International Player." *SWP Working Paper 2*, Berlin. Accessed: May 7, 2018. http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/studien/2013_S23_srt.pdf

Sharp, J. M. (2005). "The Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative: An Overview", CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service. Accessed May 6, 2018. https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS22053.pdf

Taguieff, P.A. (1995). "Political Science Confronts Populism: From a Conceptual Mirage to a Real Problem." *Telos* 103: 9-43.

Taşpınar, Ö. (2012) "Turkey: The New Model?" Brookings Institute, April 25, 2012. Accessed May 6, 2018. http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/04/24-turkey-new-model-taspinar.

Tuğal, C. (2009). *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism*. California: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Tuğal, C. (2012). "Fight or Acquiesce? Religion and Political Process in Turkey's and Egypt's Neoliberalizations." *Development and Change* 43, no.1: 23–51.

Türkeş, M. (2016). "Decomposing Neo-Ottoman Hegemony." *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 18, no. 3 (2016): 191-216.

Wodak, R. (2015). *The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean*. London: Sage, 2015.

Yanık, L. K (2011). "Constructing Turkish "Exceptionalism": Discourses of Liminality and

Hybridity in Post-Cold War Turkish Foreign Policy." *Political Geography* 30: 80-89.

Yavuz, H. (2009). *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey.* Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press.

Endnotes

[i]For media coverage of these polemics see an example https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/12/netherlands-will-pay-the-price-for-blocking-turkish-visit-erdogan

[ii] For further discussion on the reception, protection and integration of Syrian refugees in Turkey see Kaya (2017).

[iii] Due to the lack of space in this paper, the authors cannot go into a detailed explanation of the theories of right-wing populism in modern times. However, the authors of this paper want to underline that their analysis of the JDP as a right-wing populist party rests on the assumption that the JDP has successfully combined the social, economic, political and psychological deprivation of various segments of the Turkish society with a very strong civilizational, cultural and religious form of populist political style originating from a Manichean understanding of the world. For further readings on the theories of populism that the authors have benefited from see Taguieff, 1995; Laclau, 2005a, 2005b; Berezin, 2009; Moffitt, 2016; Mudde, 2016; Müller, 2016; Kelsey, 2016; Wodak, 2015).

[iv]*Daily Sabah*, 08.04.2010, http://www.sabah.com.tr, entry date 13 June 2018.

[v]*Hurriyet Daily News*, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/cultural-superficiality-one-of-biggest-problems-of-our-era-president-Erdoğan-.aspx?pageID=517&nID=110433&NewsCatID=338