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Natolin

# Turkey in Bosnia and Herzegovina: by fits and starts.

Soft power  
and public diplomacy *alla turca*.

Sofía Lopez Piqueres



DEPARTMENT OF  
EUROPEAN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Natolin Best Master Thesis

01 / 2014

*To my parents, for their endless support, love and encouragement.*

*Merci Béranger de partager toujours cette passion pour la  
Turquie et les Balkans avec moi depuis des années. Ce que tu  
m'as appris – et que tu m'apprends toujours- est incalculable.*

*Avrupa Koleji'nden arkadaşlarım sayesinde!*



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Sofía Lopez Piqueres

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for the  
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EUROPEAN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Natolin Best Master Thesis

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COLLEGE OF EUROPE NATOLIN CAMPUS

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SOFÍA LOPEZ PIQUERES

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## Abstract

In the past years, the idea of Turkey being a soft power has permeated many corners of the political debate in its neighbourhood, notably in the Balkans, leading the road of discussions to a fork. One way is followed by those who admire Turkey and look for her support; Those who are alarmed and untrusting of Ankara's ever-growing presence in the Balkans tend to go over another path, that of neo-Ottomanism and opposition to Turkey. This divergence is especially obtrusive in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country held in great esteem by Ankara given its historical and religious ties. This divergence, along the ties that unite both countries, makes Bosnia an optimal field where to test the soft power and public diplomacy tools that have been developed under the leadership of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* -AKP).

The research was conducted predominantly on the basis of analysis of the academic literature exploring the notions of soft power and public diplomacy in general, and the way those concepts are understood and developed by the Turkish authorities in particular. The analyses of the perceptions existing both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Turkey are a cornerstone of this project, thus, articles have been a major source of research, which have been published by scholars and journalists of those countries. Another vital source of information is composed of speeches and pieces written by the Turkish and Bosnian elites.

The Introduction provides an overview on the current state of play of the discussed topic and the structure of the work. The present situation has been crafted to a large extent by centuries of common history that cannot be ignored, thus we will address the historical background in the first chapter. The definitions of soft power, diplomacy and public diplomacy are presented in the second chapter, with special attention paid to the scholarly work of Joseph S. Nye. Chapter three focuses on the manifestations and attempts of Turkey's deployment of soft power and public diplomacy tools on the ground in the fields of politics, economy, culture, education and religion. Turkey's approach is not exempt from criticism and shortcomings, aspects that will be dealt with in the fourth

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chapter. The Conclusion sums up the research results and provides recommendations for the Turkish authorities. Ankara's elites claim that Turkey is a soft power and that public diplomacy and soft power are at the core of their foreign policy. It is true that there has been a progress towards the 'ideal' soft power and public diplomacy standards defined by the scholars in chapter two. However, Turkey has a long way to go and it seems to be developing what we could call soft power and public diplomacy *alla turca*, characterized by huge ambitions, ever-growing resources albeit limited at present time, and the mark of emotional speeches delivered by the upper echelon of the AKP, notably, by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu.

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## Dramatis personæ

**Abdülmeçid I:** Sultan that reigned in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> c. succeeding his father Mahmud II and launched a programme of reforms (following his father's path) known as Tanzimat-i Hayriyye.

**Ahmet Davutoğlu:** Political scientist and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey since 2009. Previously he served as Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister Erdoğan. Professor Davutoğlu is credited with having created a new foreign policy based on the concept of “Zero Problems” with neighbours and Turkey’s “Strategic Depth”.

**Cengiz Çandar:** Turkish writer and journalist that served as special adviser to Turkish President Özal. Çandar advocated for the carrying out of a “neo-Ottomanism” policy.

**Darko Tanasković:** former Ambassador of Yugoslavia and Serbia to Turkey. Prominent orientalist, author of “Neo-Ottomanism: a doctrine and foreign policy practice”. Many consider Professor Tanasković, including Serbian intellectuals, as a leading anti-Islamist figure in the Balkans.

**John IV Kantakouzenos:** Byzantine Emperor in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. The Ottoman armies first entered ‘Europe’ in 1345 as his mercenaries when he was submerged in a civil war (the second byzantine civil war) against John V Palaiologos.

**John V Palaiologos:** See John IV Kantakouzenos.

**Hajrudin Somun:** Former Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Turkey.

**İbrahim Kalın:** Chief Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister Erdoğan. He founded the SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research in Ankara.

**Osman I:** governor of the Seljuk principality that bordered the Byzantine Empire and founder of the Ottoman Empire in 1299.

**Osman Baydemir:** Mayor of Diyarbakır from 2004-2014 with the Kurdish political party Peace and Democracy (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi –BDP).

**Mahmud II:** During his reign (1808-1839), he tried to recover the control of the Empire over the provinces and to prevent the Empire from collapsing introduced measures in different fields that culminated into the Decree of the *Tanzimat-i Hayriyye* (reordering, reforms).

**Mehmet Görmez:** President of Diyanet (Presidency of Religious Affairs) of Turkey.

**Mehmet II:** also known as “Fatih Sultan Mehmet” or “the Conqueror” for he conquered Constantinople.

**Milorad Dodik:** Bosnian Serb politician. President of the Republika Srpska.

**Murad I:** created the Janissaries (from the Turkish ‘yeni çeri’, new soldier), an elite infantry composed at first of former prisoners of war and slaves, and then of boys from Balkan Christian families that through the process of *devşirme* (‘collecting’) were taken slaves and converted to Islam.

**Mustafa Efendi Cerić:** the highest official of religious law, i.e. grand mufti (reis-ul-ulema) of Bosnia and Hercegovina from 1993 to 2012.

**Topal Osman-paşa:** Bosnian governor from 1861 to 1869. He continued the Sultan’s reformist path.

**Recep Tayyip Erdoğan:** Turkish Prime Minister, in office since 2003. Chairman of the Justice and Development Party (AKP).

**Selim III:** Sultan from 1789 to 1807. He introduced a new military corps, the New Order, trying to emulate the Christian European examples. He was deposed and imprisoned by the Janissaries.

**Suat Kınıklıoğlu:** former AKP lawmaker

**Suleyman I:** Sultan known as ‘the Lawgiver’ in Turkey (and as ‘the Magnificent’ in Europe). Under his mandate in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Ottoman Empire reached its height in Europe.

**Tomislav Nikolić:** President of Serbia since 2012. Founder of the Serbian Progressive Party. Former member of the Serbian Radical Party and the People’s Radical Party.

**Turgut Özal:** Turkish Prime Minister from 1983 to 1989 and President from 1989 to 1993.

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## Abbreviations

<b>AKP</b>	<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i> – Justice and Development Party
<b>BiH</b>	<i>Bosnia i Hercegovina</i> – Bosnia and Hercegovina
<b>CUP</b>	Committee for the Union and the Progress
<b>DEİK</b>	<i>Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu</i> – Foreign Economic Relations Board
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign Direct Investment
<b>MPFSEE</b>	Multinational Peace Force for South East Europe
<b>MÜSİAD</b>	<i>Müstakil Sanayici ve İş Adamları Derneği</i> – Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>OPD</b>	Office of Public Diplomacy
<b>PIC</b>	Peace Implementation Council
<b>RS</b>	Republika Srpska
<b>SAP</b>	Stabilization and Agreement Process
<b>SEB</b>	South East Europe Brigade
<b>SEECF</b>	South East European Cooperation Process
<b>TİKA</b>	<i>Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı Başkanlığı</i> – Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency
<b>TİM</b>	<i>Türkiye İhracatçılar Meclisi</i> – Turkish Exporters Assembly
<b>TOBB</b>	<i>Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği</i> – The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey

- TUKSON** *Türkiye İşadamları ve Sanayiciler Konfederasyonu* –  
Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists
- TÜSİAD** *Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği* –  
Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association

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## The Natolin Best Masters' Theses Series

PROF. NANETTE NEUWAHL

DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

COLLEGE OF EUROPE (EIS PROGRAMME, NATOLIN CAMPUS)

The “Natolin Best Master’s Thesis” series showcases the best Masters’ Theses produced by the students of the Natolin campus of the College of Europe in any given year.

The College of Europe (CoE), founded in 1949 at the instigation and with the support of leading European figures, in particular, Salvador de Madariaga, Winston Churchill, Paul-Henri Spaak and Alcide de Gasperi, is the world’s first university institute of postgraduate studies and training specialised in European affairs. The idea behind this particular institution was, to establish an institute where university graduates European countries could study and live together, and the objective was to enhance cross-border interaction and mutual understanding. The Natolin campus of the College of Europe in Natolin, Warsaw (Poland) was established in 1992 in response to the revolutions of 1989 and in anticipation of the 2004 and 2007 enlargements of the European Union. Ever since, the College of Europe operates as ‘one College – two campuses’.

The European Interdisciplinary Studies (EIS) programme at the Natolin campus invites students to view the process of European integration beyond disciplinary boundaries. Students are awarded a ‘Master of Arts in European Interdisciplinary Studies’. This programme takes into account the idea that European integration goes beyond the limits of one academic discipline and is designed to respond to the increasing need for experts who have a more comprehensive understanding of the European integration process and European affairs. The EIS programme is open to graduates in Economics, Law or Political Science, but also to graduates of History, Communication Studies, Languages, Philosophy, or Philology who are interested in pursuing a career in European institutions or European affairs in general. This academic programme and its professional dimension prepare graduates to enter the international, European and national public sectors as well as nongovernmental and private sectors. For some of them, it also serves as a stepping stone towards doctoral studies.

The European Single Market, governance and external relations are focal points of academic activity. Recognised for its academic excellence in European studies, the Natolin campus of the College of Europe has endeavoured to enhance its research activities, as well as to encourage those of its students who are predisposed to do so,

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to contemplate a career in academia. The European Parliament *Bronislaw Geremek* European Civilisation Chair and the *European Neighbourhood* Policy Chair in particular, encourage research on European History and Civilisation, respectively, the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood.

The EIS programme culminates in the writing of an important Master's Thesis. At the College of Europe every student must, in order to get his or her degree, produce a Thesis within the framework of one of the courses followed during the academic year. The research must be original and linked to European policies and affairs, on a topic chosen by the student or proposed by the Professor supervising the Thesis. Very often, a student chooses a subject which is of importance to his or her subsequent career plan. Masters' theses are written either in French or in English, the two official languages of the College of Europe, often not the native language of the students.

A scientific committee selects the Best Masters' Theses among more than 100 produced on the campus every year at the Natolin campus. By publishing them, we are proud to disseminate throughout the wider European studies academic community some of the most interesting research produced by our students.



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## **La série des meilleures thèses des Masters du campus de Natolin**

PROF. NANETTE NEUWAHL

DIRECTEUR D'ÉTUDE

COLLÈGE D'EUROPE (PROGRAMME EIS, CAMPUS NATOLIN)

La série « Meilleure thèse de Master du campus de Natolin » met en valeur les meilleures thèses de master rédigées par les étudiants du campus de Natolin du Collège d'Europe pour une année donnée.

Le Collège d'Europe (CoE), fondé en 1949 à l'instigation et avec le soutien de figures européennes de proue telles que Salvador de Madariaga, Winston Churchill, Paul-Henri Spaak et Alcide de Gasperi, est le premier institut universitaire d'études supérieures du monde spécialisé dans les affaires européennes. L'idée à l'origine de cette institution était de créer un institut dans lequel des diplômés universitaires issus de différents pays européens pourraient étudier et vivre ensemble afin de promouvoir la communication transfrontalière et la compréhension mutuelle. Le campus de Natolin du Collège d'Europe à Natolin, Varsovie (Pologne) a été fondé en 1992 à la suite des révolutions de 1989 et pour anticiper les différents élargissements de l'Union européenne prévus pour 2004 et 2007. Depuis lors, le Collège d'Europe fonctionne désormais selon la formule « un collège – deux campus ».

Le programme d'études européennes interdisciplinaires (EIS) du campus de Natolin invite les étudiants à analyser le processus de l'intégration européenne au-delà des frontières disciplinaires. Les étudiants obtiennent un « Master en études européennes interdisciplinaires ». Ce programme tient compte de l'idée que l'intégration européenne dépasse les limites d'une seule discipline académique et est conçu pour répondre aux besoins croissants d'experts qui conservent une compréhension globale du processus de l'intégration européenne et des affaires européennes. Le programme EIS est ouvert non seulement aux étudiants en économie, en droit ou en science politique, mais également aux diplômés en histoire, en communication, en langues, en philosophie ou en philologie désireux de poursuivre une carrière dans les institutions européennes ou les affaires européennes, en général. Ce programme académique et sa dimension professionnelle préparent les étudiants à intégrer les secteurs publics nationaux, européens et internationaux ainsi que les secteurs non-gouvernementaux et privés. Pour certains d'entre eux, ce programme constitue également une étape vers des études doctorales.

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Le marché unique européen, la gouvernance et les relations extérieures sont des points majeurs de l'activité d'enseignement. Reconnu pour l'excellence de ses programmes en études européennes, le campus de Natolin du Collège d'Europe s'est engagé à améliorer ses activités de recherche, ainsi qu'à encourager ses étudiants les mieux prédisposés dans une carrière d'enseignement. La chaire de civilisation européenne du parlement européen *Bronislaw Geremek* et la chaire de politique de voisinage européen en particulier, encouragent la recherche sur l'histoire et la civilisation européenne, respectivement, et sur le voisinage avec l'Europe de l'est et du sud.

Le programme EIS se termine par la rédaction d'une importante thèse de Master. Au Collège d'Europe, chaque étudiant doit, pour obtenir son diplôme, produire une thèse dans le cadre de l'un des cours qu'il a suivi au cours de son année d'enseignement. La recherche doit être originale et liée aux politiques et aux affaires européennes, sur un sujet choisi par l'étudiant, ou sur proposition du professeur chargé de la thèse. Souvent, l'étudiant choisit un sujet qui est important pour le déroulement ultérieur de sa carrière. Les thèses de master sont écrites en français et ou en anglais, les deux langues officielles du Collège d'Europe, bien souvent une langue différente de la langue maternelle de l'étudiant.

Un comité scientifique sélectionne les meilleures thèses de master parmi les 100 dossiers produits sur le campus de Natolin chaque année. En les publiant, nous sommes fiers de disséminer dans toute la communauté enseignante européenne quelques-unes des recherches les plus intéressantes menées par nos étudiants.

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## Introduction

If we were dropped by magic in the Stari Grad (Old Town) of Sarajevo and were not told where we were, we could probably think we are in a Turkish town. Wandering around the wonderful Baščaršija neighbourhood, we would feel that there is more Ottoman Turkish influence than just the name of such a neighbourhood<sup>1</sup>. The culture of drinking Turkish coffee and the coffee tasseography practice (i.e. reading its grounds afterwards), although not well seen by a segment of the conservative Muslim population, is still present in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) as well as in Turkey. These are just a few examples of the heritage that the Ottoman Empire, at that time ruling from Constantinople, left in BiH after four centuries of presence (1463-1878). That long and relatively recent experience has inevitably contributed to shaping the current situation of relations between the heir to the Empire, the Republic of Turkey, and some of its former members, notably with the Balkan countries. Within the Balkan countries, BiH has long been one of the jewels of the Ottoman Empire and is one of the countries toward which, Ankara, and in particular, the current government of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) has developed one of the most caring approaches. Not only are they taking into consideration their common Ottoman past, but also BiH's recent and traumatic past. The last decade of the past century ravaged the country and one of the most affected communities – if not *the* most- was the Muslim one. In the following pages, we will try to find out what are the underlying principles in Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis Sarajevo, what guides their actions, and we will try to determine whether Ankara's soft power approach will actually allow Turkey to spread its political agenda. It is interesting to see how active Turkey is in BiH despite it being in a very poor shape economically and politically, thus, in spite of it maybe not having too attractive material elements to offer. The choice of BiH for our thesis has to do not only with our personal interest, but also with the fact that we see that BiH is a perfect 'laboratory animal' where Turkey is testing its ever-growing foreign policy.

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1 It means 'main market' ('baš', written in Turkish 'baş' can be translated as 'main', 'principal', or 'head', whereas 'çarši', written 'çarşı' in Turkish means bazar, market).

To analyse these questions, we have divided our Thesis in four chapters. We will start our journey by retracing the bumpy relations between BiH and the Republic of Turkey in our first chapter. Then, in the second chapter, we will make a pit stop to deal with the theoretical lenses through which we will address the current state of relations, mainly through the lens of soft power and public diplomacy, although we will introduce other elements of the concept of power as well. In our third chapter we will hit the road again and analyse the manifestations and the development of Turkey's foreign policy in the sphere of culture and education, in the economic field, and in the political sphere. In the fourth chapter, we will take some curves as we examine the weaknesses of Ankara's foreign policy towards BiH. We will split this section into two: a) whether Turkey's foreign policy is consistent and the impact its domestic politics could have on its foreign policy, and b) how Turkey is dealing with the social heterogeneity existing in BiH, in particular with non-Muslim communities. We will reach our destination in the last section of our Thesis through the drawing of some conclusions.

Let us start the journey.

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## Chapter 1. Hand in hand for centuries: historical background

### 1.1. The Golden Era of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a dynasty that was to shape like few have done in the European continent, the North of Africa and the Middle East, was born. It emerged in the north-west of Anatolia, a region in the current territory of Turkey. Osman I (1281-1324) was the governor of the Seljuk principality that bordered the Byzantine Empire, an Empire that would be deadly wounded and then conquered by the Osmanlı, a group of allies of the Osman House known in most Western languages as the “Ottomans”. When Osman demanded the support of warriors from all over the Seljuk world to take part in the jihad -meaning, to spread the Muslim territories-,<sup>2</sup> he found the vital support that he was looking for, and his campaign was very successful. In two centuries and a half, the European Christians lost large parts of ‘their’ territories to the Ottomans.

In our Thesis we will narrow down the history of the Ottoman Empire to the events that took place in the Balkans, and in particular Bosnia and Herzegovina. The reason why we will hover over much of the twentieth century is twofold. On one hand because of the limitation of space within this Thesis, on the other, because it has not marked a milestone in the Turko-Bosnian relations as much as the Ottoman Empire has.

The Ottoman armies first entered ‘Europe’ in 1345 as mercenaries of the Byzantine emperor John IV Kantakouzenos who was submerged in a civil war (the second byzantine civil war) against John V Palaiologos. Although they went back to Anatolia after the war, when John IV requested the Ottomans’ help this time to help him fight the Serbs, they did so but this time they did not go back to Anatolia empty-handed: they decided to take over Gallipoli and established bases that would help them launch expeditions into the Balkans.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Dennis P. Hupchick and Harold E.Cox, ‘Les Balkans, Atlas Historique’, *Economica*, 2001 (2008 French translation), p.42.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*.

A crucial importance to these military campaigns that paved the way to the settlement of the Ottomans in the region were the Janissaries (from the Turkish ‘yeni çeri’, new soldier). This elite infantry created by Sultan Murad I was composed of former prisoners of war and slaves, and then later of young boys from Balkan Christian families, that through the process of devşirme (‘collecting’) were taken slaves and converted to Islam. In some occasions, the brightest among them, were also selected to work for the Ottoman Empire at the Palace Institution.<sup>4</sup> As we will see below, the Janissaries ever-growing power ended up challenging the Turkish aristocracy and shook up the foundations of the Ottoman Empire centuries later.

The Kingdom of Bosnia at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century suffered a political and social enfeeblement as well as battles that made it vulnerable and eventually led to its disappearance in the hands of Mehmet II (also known as Mehmet the Conqueror) in 1463. Bosnia had collapsed, and with it, what Ivo Banac called ‘a major regional power which, at moments, included sections of present-day Croatia and Serbia.’<sup>5</sup> Besides the Kingdom, independent feudal houses in Podrinje and Herzegovina ceased to exist.

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4 Ramiza Smajić, “Ottoman Tradition in Bosnia and Hercegovina, The Reality and Historiographic Generalisations in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”, speech at the conference ‘The Ottoman Legacy and the Balkan Muslim Communities Today’, Sarajevo, 16-18 October 2009, published in 2011 by the Balkans Civilisation Center (BALMED). Available at: [http://cns.ba/docs/osmansko%20naslijede%20i%20muslimanske%20zajednice%20Balkana%20odanas%20\(zbornik%20oradova\).pdf](http://cns.ba/docs/osmansko%20naslijede%20i%20muslimanske%20zajednice%20Balkana%20odanas%20(zbornik%20oradova).pdf), retrieved: 01/03/2014, p. 148.

5 Rabia Ali and Lawrence Lifschultz, “Why Bosnia?”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Sep., 1994), p.373.



**BOSNIA FROM THE 12<sup>TH</sup> TO THE 14<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY (PRIOR TO THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST)<sup>6</sup>**

Mehmet II had also conquered Constantinople in 1453, and under his mandate and that of the Sultan Suleyman I ('the Lawgiver', known in Europe as 'the Magnificent')<sup>7</sup> in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire reached its peak in splendour and size in Europe. Mehmet II, a very astute statesman, aware of the fact that in the Balkans the non-Muslim inhabitants equalled or outnumbered the Muslims<sup>8</sup> and that it could threaten the Empire, decided to establish the system of the *millets* ('nations').<sup>9</sup> The three largest non-Muslim

6 Wikimedia Commons, website: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/28/Medieval\\_Bosnian\\_State\\_Expansion-en.svg/941px-Medieval\\_Bosnian\\_State\\_Expansion-en.svg.png](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/28/Medieval_Bosnian_State_Expansion-en.svg/941px-Medieval_Bosnian_State_Expansion-en.svg.png)  
Retrieved: 02/02/14.

7 Between the reign of Mehmet II and Suleyman I, two sultans contributed to the consolidation of the Ottoman Empire in the North of Africa and Middle East: Bayezid II and notably Selim I. The latter, upon dominating Egypt, took the title of Caliph and established the Ottoman Caliphate.

8 It was not until the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> c. with the conquest of territories in Asia and Egypt, that the number of Muslims exceeded that of the non-Muslims. Dennis P. Hupchick and Harold E. Cox, p.48.

9 Despite "millet" being translated as "nation", the notion cannot be interpreted as it is usually interpreted in Western Europe, for the ethnic background or the *jus soli* didn't play any role.



populations of these new Ottoman territories, Greek Orthodox, Jewish and Gregorian Armenian were included in this system whereby their religious leaders would be granted some ruling rights.<sup>10</sup> The Ottomans gave those rights using a religious criterion and not an ethnic one for two reasons. First, because the Sharia (the body of law that governed the Empire) was not applicable to non-Muslim subjects, therefore, a different judicial and administrative apparatus was needed if the Empire were to be governed effectively. Second, because according to Islamic laws, the Christians and Jews (known as the People of the Book), had the right to live in the state and be protected by it.<sup>11</sup>

As a result, relations between Muslims and non-Muslims throughout the Empire were, for a long time, rather peaceful. Under the Ottoman rule, Bosnia, in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century notably, was blessed with a thriving economy. Sarajevo was one of the most benefited areas of the Balkans under the Ottoman rule and until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century it was the largest and most populous city in former Yugoslavia.<sup>12</sup> Bosnia, ‘that exotic country in the heart of Europe’<sup>13</sup>, turned into a refuge for the Jews that were expelled from Spain during the Inquisition. This contributed to a further cultural and social prosperity, making Bosnia a territory of great diversity that, although somehow altered after wars and migrations, has lasted until present time. Despite the bloody conflicts that tore apart Bosnia, it continues to manage to keep the essence of the multi-religious Ottoman times, perhaps more than Turkey, the cradle of the Ottoman Empire.

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10 Memet Yetişgin, “The Ottoman Way of Governing Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Religious Communities”, database Ankara University, available at: <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/19/1157/13616.pdf>, retrieved: 07/03/14. p. 141

11 *Ibid.*

12 Dino Mujadžević, “Surviving elements of Ottoman legacy in the Balkans in non-Muslim Communities and Cultures”. speech at the conference “The Ottoman legacy...” p. 111.

13 Danilo Kiš, seen in Rabia Ali and Lawrence Lifschultz, *op.cit.*, p.367.



## 1.2. The tempest hits the Empire

The golden era had an expiration date: the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Thereafter, the Ottoman Empire started to crumble slowly. To a certain degree, the decline had to do with the fact that the previous century Western countries had managed to develop their maritime trade with the Far East without the participation of Ottoman intermediaries, that up to then dominated that trade. This contributed to curbing the economic growth the Porte had been experimenting and led to domestic difficulties such as an enormous inflation and an increase on taxes.<sup>14</sup> In addition to that, the military technology in the West went through a modernization process that made the gap that separated the Western powers and the Ottoman Empire increasingly hard to bridge.

In order to obtain economic resources that would allow the Empire to tackle those issues, the authorities took a risky step that would result in catastrophic consequences. They sold the meritocratic right to occupy high ranks in the government and the army (until then in the hands of the slaves of the Sultan) to rich Muslims, regardless of their lack of preparation and experience.<sup>15</sup> From then on, the Sultan's subordinate military governments, who used to carry on their shoulders the support of the provincial armed forces, could no longer be controlled. This led to tensions and a worsening of the living conditions of the Ottomans in the Balkans.<sup>16</sup>

Moreover, in 1792, Sultan Selim III introduced a new military corps, the New Order, which tried to emulate the Christian European examples; however, this did not solve the problems, on the contrary. In the Balkans it seemed to accentuate them, as the reforms weren't targeted at what was really needed. Little by little, the seeds of the uprisings were sowed.

The Sultanate was not only being hit domestically by intestine tensions, but also by external wars, notably with the Habsburg monarchy and the Russian Empire. As a result, the Ottoman Empire faced important territorial loss, which paved the way for an even bigger loss of power of the central authorities of Constantinople to the *ayans* (local notables) of the Balkans. At first, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the term *ayan* was referred only to local notables, who had no influence on the administration. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century the term evolved to include those who not only exercised political influence, but whose status,

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14 Dennis P. Hupchick and Harold E. Cox, p.52.

15 *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.*

as such, was officially recognized.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, when Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) governed, he tried to recover the control of the Empire over the provinces, albeit without much success. In Bosnia, Muslims took up the arms against the central government for its inability to reform itself and for its use of disproportionate violence with every individual whose loyalty to the Sultan was unclear. Besides the reforms in the military sector, mainly through the abolishment of the powerful Janissaries that were seen as a threat by the central authorities, Mahmud started thinking about extending the reforms to other sectors. However, those reforms would not be implemented peacefully. In order to carry out the reforms and to fight the wars, the authorities increased the economic and financial pressure on the population. In addition to that, the extrajudicial killings and seizures of property, propagated the rage and spread the idea that the Porte had no interest in siding with the law anymore.<sup>18</sup>

The situation improved after his death in 1839, when the Sultan Abdülmecid I, Mahmud's son, launched a further programme of reforms (following his father's path) known as *Tanzimat-i Hayriyye*. These reforms aimed at creating an "ordered and established" Empire by means of "beneficent re-orderings" of both society and state.<sup>19</sup> For William Hale, almost the "sole goal" of these reforms was plainly the preservation of the state alongside the protection of the Muslim populations.<sup>20</sup>

In Bosnia, the reforms were implemented notably in the 1860s, despite the hostility that they awoke in the Habsburgs, who dreamt of having the area for themselves, as well as in the Slavic national groups that were becoming increasingly active.<sup>21</sup> Those groups, encouraged by Russian and Serbian actors, managed to spread the turmoil in Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite half the population there being Muslim of Slavic origin.<sup>22</sup> In this province, even though Muslim peasants suffered the feudal authoritarian yoke as much as the Christians did, only the latter enjoyed the support of France and Britain. These powers, together with the Pan-Slavic zealots instigated revolts aiming at the annihilation

17 Harold Bowen, "Ayan," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, CD-ROM ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2001), in Robert Zens, "Provincial Powers: The Rise of Ottoman Local Notables (Ayan)," *History Studies: International Journal of History*, Vol. 3/3 2011, p. 434.

18 Frederick F. Anscombe, "The Balkan Revolutionary Age," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 84, no. 3, September 2012, p.574.

19 Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*. Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, Cambridge University Press, 1977 (2005 digital edition), p.38.

20 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 3rd ed. Routledge, 2013, p.11.

21 Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *op.cit.*, p.65.

22 *Ibid.*, p.115.

or the expulsion of the Muslims in order to settle Slavic Christians in their place.<sup>23</sup> Some degree of temporary peace was achieved under the governorship of Topal Osman-paşa (1861-1869). Secular schools for both Muslims and Christians were opened, roads were built, facilities throughout the territory were modernized, etc.<sup>24</sup> However, the prosperity ended up mainly in the hands of the Serbian immigrants, who capitalized on their wealth to ignite the flame of the unrest against Ottoman administration.

As time passed by, the influence of Slavic Christians and foreign powers increased. Bosnia became a chessboard, where the big powers of that time played not only against the Ottoman Empire, but also against each other, in what became known as the “Eastern Question”.

Between 1872 and 1875 a severe drought and famine hit the Empire, most notably Anatolia and the Balkans. In addition to that, an increased taxation spread the discontent, leading farmers in Herzegovina in 1874 to demand full payment and to attack tax collectors. This, in turn, evolved into a civil strife that pushed the provincial army to act. After the imperial decree (*Hatt-ı Hümayûn*) of 1856, in which the Sultan committed himself to guarantee a good treatment of the Christians subjects, the peasants still did not feel satisfied with the situation; therefore they decided to act more violently.

Thus, from July 1877 onwards they began to receive weaponry from abroad and to ravage Muslim villages. The crisis soon escalated as the Muslims replied via bloody actions. Soon, all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina had fallen into a downward spiral of violence.<sup>25</sup> The mass migrations of Muslims to Anatolia and Rumeli accelerated not only as a result of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1888, but also, *inter alia*, as a consequence of the Austrian control of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Between 1827 and 1922, around 5 million Muslims, a large proportion of them in the Balkans, were murdered, while around 5.4 million were expelled and migrated to the Empire.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, the rate of Muslims to non-Muslims grew considerably.

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p.116.

<sup>24</sup> John R. Lampe, “Bosnia and Herzegovina”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, last updated 10/08/13, available at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/700826/Bosnia-and-Herzegovina/42681/Ottoman-Bosnia#ref749797>, retrieved: 30/04/14.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.158-9.

<sup>26</sup> Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995, in William Hale, p.11.

The foreign press was flooded with biased rumours about the massacres of the Christians in the hands of Muslims, which would be used as an excuse for a further foreign interference.



THE BALKAN PENINSULA BETWEEN 1878 AND 1910<sup>27</sup>

Thus, months after the Treaty of Saint Stefano,<sup>28</sup> which had stirred tension, in July 1878 Otto von Bismarck organized a conference in Berlin. One of the results of the conference was that Austria-Hungary was allowed to occupy militarily Bosnia-Herzegovina, albeit nominally it remained under Ottoman suzerainty. Years later, in 1908, the Ottoman presence would vanish definitely when Austria-Hungary, illegally, as it was not what had been agreed in Berlin, annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina. If the Serbian nationalists had

27 Sir Adolphus William Ward et al., *The Cambridge Modern History Atlas*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1912, Available at: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/ward\\_1912/balkan\\_peninsula\\_1878.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/ward_1912/balkan_peninsula_1878.jpg) Retrieved: 02/02/14.

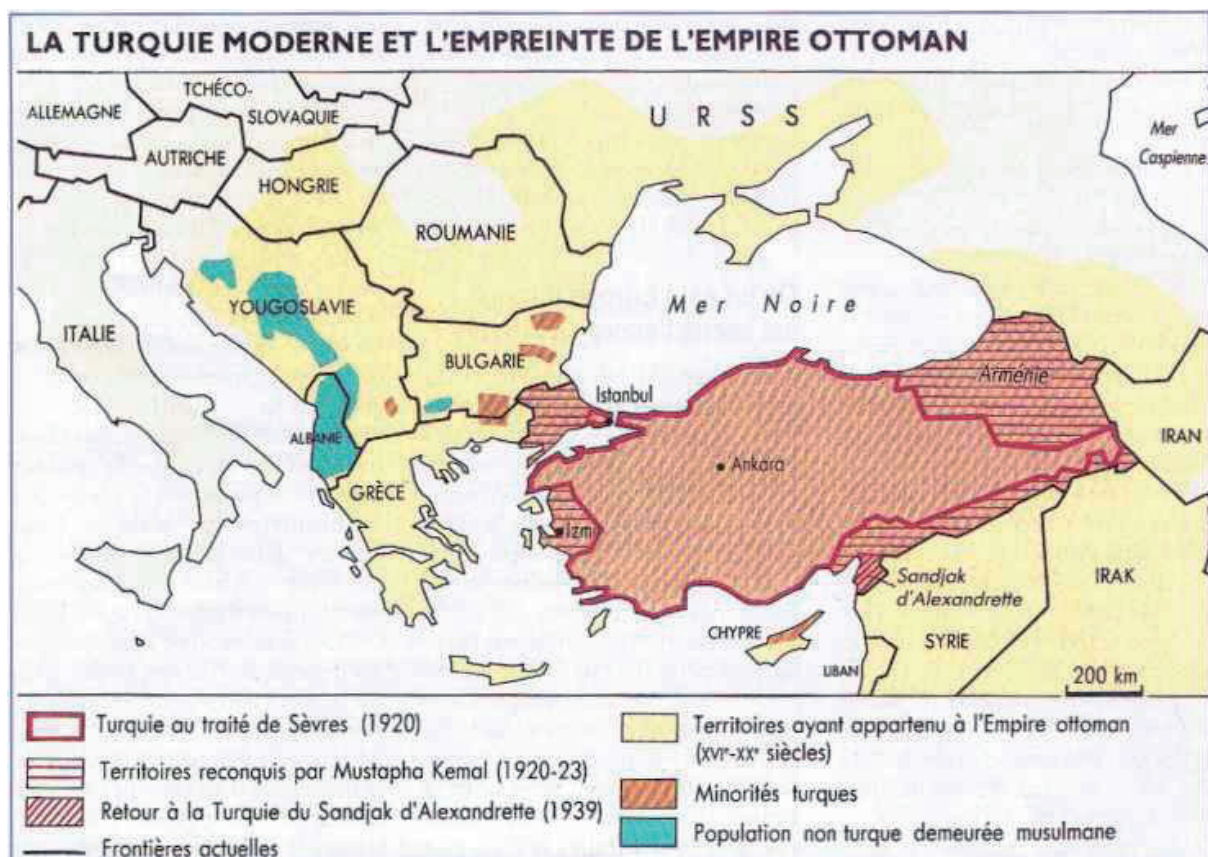
28 The goal of this Treaty was to rearrange the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire so as to end the effective Turkish role over the Balkan region. It was not accepted by all powers.



not taken well the result of the Conference of Berlin, which they considered a betrayal by their whilom Russian 'friends', the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 enraged them even more.

Meanwhile, in the cradle of the Ottoman Empire, the Committee for the Union and the Progress (CUP) was set up by the Young Turks, who were a group of Turkish revolutionaries that emerged when the Empire was walking on a tightrope. They launched an ultranationalist programme marked by a desire to achieve a Turkish hegemony. In 1909, the CUP and the Ottoman Empire saw no choice but to accept the loss of Bosnia-Herzegovina in exchange for compensations from the Habsburgs authorities.

After two wars in the Balkans in the 1910s, the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire in 1922 and the signature of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, the Republic of Turkey was born. Whilst the Republic of Turkey crawled and emerged as a new entity, Bosnia did so as a part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia first, and Yugoslavia from the 1940s onwards.



MODERN TURKEY AND THE LEGACY OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE<sup>29</sup>

29 La Jaune et la Rouge, website available at: <http://www.lajauneetlarouge.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Photos-Magazines/2001/563/563-ga-indjoudjian-turquie.jpg> Retrieved: 02/02/14.

How would the relations between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina be outside the Ottoman framework, which had ruled their interactions for so many centuries?

## Chapter 2. Soft power and public diplomacy: a coat of theory for the Turko-Bosnian building

As we have seen in the previous section, BiH and Turkey share a common past of several centuries under the aegis of the Ottoman Empire. In this chapter, we will present some theoretical and conceptual tools that will allow us to understand the current relations between both countries. In the remaining sections, those frameworks will be used to expose to what extent and how the legacy of the Ottoman Empire is shaping the relations as well as to show some elements that may hinder the development of Turkey's foreign policy vis-à-vis BiH.

In order to maintain good relations, governments resort, *inter alia*, to diplomacy, an instrument, whose value has been widely recognised by proponents of all the main schools of thought of International Relations. Prior to broaching some of the views on diplomacy we shall introduce the concept of diplomacy. This is a daunting task, as several meanings of both the term 'diplomacy' and 'diplomatic' have been diagnosed and even referred to as 'monstrously imprecise', signifying at the same time 'content, character, method, manner and art'.<sup>30</sup> For our research, we will only focus on two of the six meanings Marshall identified. On the one hand, diplomacy as the content of foreign affairs altogether, and, on the other, as the way foreign policy is conducted.

That said, as the English School adherent Martin Wight stated, diplomacy is 'the master-institution' of International Relations,<sup>31</sup> whereas the realist Morgenthau admitted that the quality of diplomacy is the principal ingredient for the recipe of power of a nation. To achieve a well-functioning diplomacy, he further emphasized the need of it being dependent "upon tradition and institutions rather than upon the sporadic appearance

<sup>30</sup> Peter Marshall, *The Dynamics of Diplomacy*, London, 1990. p.7 quoted in Christer Jönsson, *Theorising diplomacy, Routledge Handbook of Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Ed. B.J.C. McKercher, Routledge, 2012, p. 15.

<sup>31</sup> Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, Leicester 1978, p.113, quoted in Christer Jönsson, p.19.

of outstanding individuals”.<sup>32</sup> Is Turkey meeting this criterion? We will see below that it does not seem to.

Another way to contemplate diplomacy and its components is from the point of view of the neoliberal school of thought. One of its founders, Joseph S. Nye, coined the term ‘soft power’ that we have taken as the core theory for our Thesis, for we believe it is vital<sup>33</sup> in explaining the approach Ankara is displaying with Sarajevo; however, we should bear in mind that the praxis of soft power is far from the theory. In fact, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu, has pointed in several occasions that the developments his country has been (and is) experimenting show a new Turkey, a Turkey based on “on vision, soft power, a universal language, and implementation of consistent foreign policies in different parts of the world”.<sup>34</sup> Before discussing in the next chapter whether the discourse is well put into practice we should define what soft power is. For that, we have turned to Nye, who claims “soft power is the ability to affect others through the cooptive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes”.<sup>35</sup> The resources usually thought as being ‘soft’ are intangible, such as “institutions, ideas, values, culture, and the perceived legitimacy of policies”, however this is not a black- white dichotomy; there are also intangible resources that fit into the ‘hard power’ domain, for instance “patriotism, morale (...) [that] affect the military capacity to fight and win”.<sup>36</sup>

Akin to the idea of tangible and intangible resources, Arnold Wolfers’ differentiation between ‘possession goals’ and ‘milieu goals’ may also help us understand the way Turkey directs its foreign policy. If a country were focused on the attainment of the former, Wolfers asserts, it would try to reinforce or safeguard the things to which it attaches value (e.g. territory), whereas if it is considered more important the attainment of the latter, the country would aim at “shaping conditions beyond their natural boundaries”, meaning, it would not try to keep or increase its possessions by harming others (e.g. The attainment of peace).<sup>37</sup>

32 Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Brief Ed. Revised by Kenneth W. Thompson, McGraw Hill, 1993, p. 155-7.

33 We have chosen the concept of soft power and not others that could be also helpful in this task because it is the one that Turkish authorities claim to have, especially since the current party is in power.

34 Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Zero Problems Foreign Policy”, *Foreign Policy*. 20/05/10. Available at: [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/20/turkeys\\_zero\\_problems\\_foreign\\_policy?page=full](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/20/turkeys_zero_problems_foreign_policy?page=full), retrieved: 04/03/14.

35 Joseph S. Nye Jr., *The Future of Power*, PublicAffairs, 2011, p.21.

36 *Ibid.*

37 Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1962, Chapter Five, “The Goals of Foreign Policy,” pp. 73-4.



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Back to soft power, the key concept we will use, one must bear two elements. Firstly, soft power is a Western construction and this may complicate its utilization in other regions of the world. Secondly, that it can involve non-State actors as well, therefore, when analysing the manifestations of Turkey's foreign policy we will address their performance too. With reference to the role of the governments, the inclusion of the soft power as foundation of the foreign policy tends to be problematic. Nye identifies three main reasons for that: a) the influence of the target State to determine whether the action has been successful or not is bigger when dealing with soft power than with hard power; b) the outcome of soft power strategies is seen in the long term - and long term is usually the enemy of politicians, for they tend to work on an electoral calendar basis; and c) governments cannot fully control the tools of soft power.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to that, Nye throughout his book "The Future of Power" emphasizes the great relevance that is attached to the credibility in order for the soft power to work. Nevertheless, in the pages to follow we would like to verify whether the credibility is a 'must'. Whether the soft power in the relations Turkey-BiH functions in an autonomous way to the level of credibility or lack thereof.

Moreover, using Nye's scholarly production as our point of departure, we will try to show to what extent the Turkish authorities resort to soft power; to what degree (if any) of soft power-State Turkey is.

After a brief presentation of two of the concepts we will be using throughout our Thesis, namely diplomacy and soft power, we will introduce another term that is closely linked to them both: public diplomacy. Public diplomacy, as defined by Hans Tuch, is "a government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and policies".<sup>39</sup>

Public diplomacy is one of the tools that can be used to enhance the credibility, which Nye claimed necessary for the soft power to work. However, when using the notion of public diplomacy and when working to put it into practice, one must be cautious. Public diplomacy is not a mere instrument of foreign policy; in fact, it can be really dangerous to use it as an "immediate foreign policy tool" because it "exposes the public diplomacy

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<sup>38</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *op.cit.*, p.83.

<sup>39</sup> Hans Tuch, *Communicating with the World: US Public Diplomacy Overseas*, New York: St Martin's Press, p.3, seen in Jan Melissen, "Wielding Soft Power: The New Public Diplomacy", *Clingendael Diplomacy Papers* No.2, The Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, 2005, p.8.

to the contradictions, discontinuities, fads and fancies of foreign policy”.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the success of a public diplomacy action will depend on the utilisation the government makes of it, on whether it considers it a foundation, a ‘device’ of its foreign policy or not. Additionally, for the public diplomacy to be successful, non-State agents have to participate actively. Scholars like Jan Melissen have pointed out that it will be more effective if non-governmental actors of the sending country (in this case of Turkey), as well as local networks *sur place* (in Bosnia) engage in it.<sup>41</sup> Besides these features Efe Sevin propounded an idea to complement the concept of public diplomacy, an idea that we will explore throughout the pages to come: “high profile speeches/actions”, for it is nearly impossible to examine and understand Turkey’s soft power and foreign policy actions if we ignore the AKP’s officials’ speeches.<sup>42</sup>

Taking into consideration the theory presented above, let us apply it to the Turkish case in its relations with Bosnia-Herzegovina. Is Turkey following the postulates aforementioned? Is Turkey a good pupil in the application of the soft power and public diplomacy principles?

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40 Jan Melissen, *ibid.*, p.11.

41 *Ibid* p.12

42 Efe Sevin, “Bridge no more? Turkish public diplomacy and branding under the AKP government”, E -International Relations, 05/10/12, available at: <http://www.e-ir.info/2012/10/05/bridge-no-more-turkish-public-diplomacy-and-branding-under-the-akp-government/>, retrieved: 22/02/14.

## Chapter 3. Turkey on the ground

The fall of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent birth of states like the Republic of Turkey and Bosnia-Herzegovina – first under Yugoslavia and from the 1990s on as an independent state, transformed to a great extent the Balkans and the relations between the states therein.

In the eyes of some Turkish scholars, the loss of the Balkan lands was a “major trauma” and had a huge impact on the mentality of the Turkish authorities that, for a long time, feared for the survival of the young republic. The way they tried to face this trauma was through the “hunting the Balkans of the memory”, through a republican ideology of breaking up with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>43</sup> Although the relations between Ankara and Sarajevo were overall fine despite the disappearance of the Empire, it has not been until recently, that Turkey has become again aware of the importance of the Balkans and of the role it can play there. As Maria Todorova points out, that interest in the Balkans is widespread and is awakening in several sections of the population: conservative intellectuals, descendants of the Turks that migrated from Europe to Anatolia, but also at the left of the political spectrum and among the occidentalists, who are usually imbued in a “neo-Ottoman vision”.<sup>44</sup>

That awakening is especially seen in two key periods in which Turkey became closer to BiH (and former Ottoman territories in general). On one hand, during the years of the Turgut Özal government (1983-1993)<sup>45</sup> a politician that was widely considered as a “neo-Ottoman” and who had as a special adviser the expert on the Balkans, Cengiz Çandar. This Turkish writer suggested openly that Turkey embrace the idea of “neo-Ottomanism” by claiming that “Turkey is facing an historic mission (...) we must develop

43 Bora Tanıl, “Turkish national identity, Turkish nationalism and the Balkan problem”, in Özdoğan Günay Göksu and Saybaşı Kemâli (eds.), *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, Istanbul, EREN, 1995, pp.104, 110-112, quoted in Maria Todorova, *Imaginaire des Balkans*, Éditions de l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, collection “En temps&lieux”, Paris, 2011, p.85.

44 Maria Todorova, *ibid*

45 He was first Prime Minister (1983-1989) and then President of the Republic of Turkey (1989-1993).

an imperial vision...This has nothing to do with expansionism or adventurism. It means free movement of people, ideas and goods in the lands of the old Ottoman Empire.”<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, the awakening has been seen under the current government of the AKP. The conductor of the foreign policy *orchestra* in Turkey has been Ahmet Davutoğlu, one of the few scholars that upon the creation of the AKP joined its ranks.<sup>47</sup> Davutoğlu served first as the chief foreign policy advisor to Erdoğan, the Prime Minister of Turkey starting in 2002. In 2009 he was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs. Former Professor of International Relations, Davutoğlu is accredited with having sown the seeds of a new foreign policy of “strategic depth”<sup>48</sup>, “zero problems” and “maximum cooperation” with its neighbours, creating therefore, as Bülent Aras claims, a new rhetoric and praxis that interrupts both the former tendencies of envisaging foreign policies as a mere extension of domestic considerations, as well the praxis of searching for foreign enemies for they were considered *the* causes of security problems.<sup>49</sup>

Despite Davutoğlu’s approach having been considered by many scholars as a successful one,<sup>50</sup> we believe Turkey is overestimating its current means and capacity. In this section, taking into account the theory presented before, we will focus on the manifestations and development of Turkey’s foreign policy in Bosnia-Herzegovina under the AKP government. In the following section we will address those factors that in our opinion weaken the foreign policy project of the Turkish government in BiH, although those elements can be extrapolated to other neighbouring countries as well.

The structure that will be followed in this chapter is a thematic one. Recalling Nye’s words, the soft power of a country depends on the use of three resources, its political

46 Quoted in Sami Kohen, “Contacts with Central Asian States a foundation for “Pan Turkism”, *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, August/September 1992, pp.17-8, available at:<http://www.wrmea.org/wrmea-archives/142-washington-report-archives-1988-1993/august-september-1992/6864-contacts-with-central-asian-states-a-foundation-for-qpan-turkismq.html>, retrieved:08/04/14.

47 Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, “The Davutoğlu Doctrine and Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy* (ELIAMEP), Working Paper Nr 8/2010, 2010, Athens, p.4.

48 Doctrine Davutoğlu developed in a homonym book. According to him, his country belongs to the group of “central powers”. Thanks to its history and geographic position, Turkey enjoys a “strategic depth”, i.e. by being Turkey a Balkan, Caucasian, Mediterranean, Black Sea, Middle Eastern, Caspian country, it can have a say in all those regions and it can openly claim a stronger global role. See more in Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, *ibid*

49 Bülent Aras, “Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Today’s Zaman*, 30/06/09, available at: <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-179504-159-davutoglu-era-in-turkish-foreign-policy.html>, retrieved: 24/03/14.

50 See, for instance, *ibid* or Dr. Meliha Benli Altunışık, “La Política Exterior de Turquía en el siglo XXI”, *Anuario Internacional CIDOB*, 2011, Perfil País:Turquía, p.422.

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values, its culture and its foreign policies.<sup>51</sup> Thus, in this chapter we will deal first with the materialization of Ankara's foreign policy in the political sphere *per se* in BiH. We will then take a close look at the economic sphere, for "a robust and growing economy provides the basis for all instruments of power", as Nye admitted.<sup>52</sup> The last part of this section will address the ever-growing sphere of culture, education and religion.

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51 Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *op.cit.*, p.84.

52 *Ibid.*, p.80.

### 3.1 Political tutelage or sisterhood?

*“We want to solve all disputes in the Balkans through diplomatic means and reach for regional prosperity and stability...Balkanization will mean stabilization in the future”.<sup>53</sup>*

By these words, Ahmet Davutoğlu explicitly recognised the importance of diplomacy as the key element to improve the situation in BiH and its surrounding countries. In particular, and as we mentioned in the previous chapter, soft power is seen by the Minister of Foreign Affairs as the cornerstone. In addition to that, and since not long time ago, public diplomacy became, at least according to the view of the Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister, İbrahim Kalın, one of the “core elements of Turkish foreign policy”.<sup>54</sup> The need for a public diplomacy was further acknowledged by the creation of the Office of Public Diplomacy (OPD) in 2010, a body dependant on the Prime Minister. Interestingly, the justification the government gave for its establishment was the desire to clean its reputation and to increment “Turkey’s respectability in the international community”. The decree 27478 whereby it was created, stated as well that the Office aimed at explaining successfully Ankara’s position “in the face of accusations” of international actors and at “inform[ing] accurately the international community”.<sup>55</sup>

Kalın, in his paper, admits that the soft power a country has will contribute to the success of its public diplomacy, while adding that “integrity and efficacy of its policies” are also needed.<sup>56</sup> Is Turkey meeting these criteria? We will see that in the following pages. Another striking idea brought onto the table by Kalın is Turkey’s democratic experience as one of the foundations of its soft power.<sup>57</sup> It is striking in our opinion for two reasons. First, because it is contradicted at a later stage in his text, when he claims that Ankara’s soft power potential -which encompasses the Balkan region, among others- stems from the Ottoman heritage, from the historical and cultural past that Bosnians, Turks and others share.<sup>58</sup> As we have seen in the first section, the Ottoman rule was not precisely democratic. Second, because Turkey has been a democratic country (understood in loose terms) only a few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>

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53 Hürriyet Daily News, “Bosnia and Serbia repair diplomatic ties thanks to Turkey.” 09/02/10, available at: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=bosnia-and-serbia-repair-diplomatic-ties-thanks-to-turkish-mediation-2010-02-09> retrieved: 24/03/14.

54 İbrahim Kalın, “Soft Power and Public Diplomacy in Turkey”, SAM, Perception, autumn 2011, vol. XVI, no. 3, p.7.

55 *Ibid.*, p.8.

56 *Ibid*

57 *Ibid.*, p.9.

58 *Ibid.*, p.10.

century, and it seems that in the last years of the AKP this tendency is oozing away despite that party having been the one that pushed for the creation of the Office of Public Diplomacy and having been a clear advocate of a new foreign policy.

This contradictory rhetoric, as we will argue, undermines undoubtedly Turkey's foreign policy and is, in our opinion, a matter that the government should address if it wants to have a coherent and effective policy.

Going back to the idea of the growing attention paid by the Turkish authorities to the soft power and public diplomacy practices, let us proceed now to the presentation of some of those elements seen in the relations with Bosnia.

Often in the political field, Ahmet Davutoğlu has emphasized the need for unity in the region of the Balkans, alongside two elements: a) regional ownership of projects aiming at strengthening the cooperation and b) a "regional commonsense" based in a family approach.<sup>59</sup> This approach and the self-inclusion by Turkish authorities and scholars as a Balkan country deserves some attention before continuing, for it will allow a further understanding of the current situation.

We are of the opinion that identity is formed as a result of a fight between the labels imposed by others and by the will to differentiate oneself from 'the other' as well as the self-labelling. The identity of Turkey as a Balkan or non-Balkan state has been discussed in many occasions resulting in myriad positions of which only two will be presented, for they are representative enough for the purposes of this Thesis. Most historians, following a double approach based on history and culture, do not consider Turkey as a Balkan country.<sup>60</sup> However, how do Turkish authorities classify their country? - Plain and simple as a Balkan state.<sup>61</sup> Taking that into consideration, no wonder Ankara pays that much attention to that region and it does so adopting a tutelage-like discourse. This region, according to Davutoğlu, has been historically neglected except when it belonged to the Ottoman Empire (whose rulers "run world politics in harmony"), and it was only then, that the Balkans enjoyed a "golden age".<sup>62</sup> With a rather paternalistic tone, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has tried for a long time to reassure Bosnians (although

59 Ahmet Davutoğlu, "A Forward Looking Vision for the Balkans", *SAM*, no.1, October 2011 and Ahmet Davutoğlu, speech at the conference "The Ottoman Legacy..." *op.cit.*

60 One of the most comprehensive studies can be found in Maria Todorova's "Imaginaire des Balkans", *op.cit.* p.59 and chapter 1.

61 See e.g. Ahmet Davutoğlu "A Forward Looking ...", *op.cit.*, or Altin Raxhimi, "Davutoglu: I'm not Neo-Ottoman", *Balkan Insight*, 26/04/11, available at: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/davutoglu-i-m-not-a-neo-ottoman>, retrieved: 08/04/14.

62 Ahmet Davutoğlu, speech at the conference "The Ottoman Legacy ..." *op.cit.*

in the following section we will see the shortcomings of his approach) by saying that Turkey would address everything that happened in BiH as if it were a Turkish domestic issue, as an issue for which Turkey felt responsible.<sup>63</sup>

This perceived delicate situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the thirst of reviving the Ottoman heritage has prompted the Turkish government to shape its foreign policy in the neighbourhood around the need both to achieve security and to make the Ottoman Balkans and Turkey, the very centre of world politics in the future.<sup>64</sup>

Once introduced the rhetoric, how does it translate into practice? What political initiatives has Ankara encouraged in relation to BiH?

To trace back the origin of the closer relations between both countries we believe it is a *sine qua non* the fact that Turkey was one of the first countries that recognised BiH's declaration of independence in 1992. Back then, the Turkish president Turgut Özal (whose policies, for the first time, were widely considered neo-Ottoman), believed the end of the Cold War was a brilliant opportunity for Turkey to choose a different path to that of the two blocks and to forge *its* foreign policy. That policy is dubbed by some as neo-Ottoman because it was meant to be built on the shared history and culture of the former Ottoman territories, and in particular the Balkans. The AKP, as we have seen in the previous pages and will continue to see, has taken that helm.

When BiH declared its independence and the war started, the Turkish government repeatedly asked North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (to which it had belonged to for decades), to intervene whilst criticising the United Nations and the transatlantic organization's efforts as insufficient.<sup>65</sup> On the non-governmental side, the Red Crescent coordinated several campaigns and part of the Turkish civil society (notably immigrant associations) mobilized to raise money in order to support Bosnians fighting against Serbian paramilitaries.<sup>66</sup>

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63 *Ibid.*, p.17-8.

64 *Ibid.*, p.19.

65 İřtar Gözaydın, "Religion as Soft Power in the International Relations of Turkey", *Political Studies Association*, 2010, available at: [http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/Religion/Gozaydin\\_Religion%20as%20Soft%20Power%20in%20the%20International%20Relations%20of%20Turkey.pdf](http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/Religion/Gozaydin_Religion%20as%20Soft%20Power%20in%20the%20International%20Relations%20of%20Turkey.pdf) retrieved: 10/03/14, p.6.

66 Doęa Ulař Eralp, "Turkey and Bosnia-Hercegovina: A Future Reflecting on the Past", *SETA Policy Brief*, no.46, August 2010, p.4, and Esra Bulut "Friends, Balkans, Statesmen Lend Us Your Ears': The Transstate and State in Links between Turkey and the Balkans", *Ethnopolitics: Formerly Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 2006, vol.5, no.3, p.315.



Once the war was over, Turkey remained a cornerstone and a vital supporter of the territorial integrity and independence of a new Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ankara had the opportunity to deploy its soft power through its participation as a permanent member at the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), a body in charge of controlling the smooth and full implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Within the framework of the PIC, Turkey, keeping alive its Ottoman past, has called for the reconstruction of both the multicultural and the multi-ethnic status Bosnia used to enjoy.<sup>67</sup>

The re-establishment of that status, politicians thought, may be easier under the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), a regional stability initiative launched in 1996 by Bulgaria, or under the Multinational Peace Force for South East Europe (MPFSEE) or the South East Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG) led by Ankara. Through these and other initiatives, Turkey (that has been active also on the ground in BiH, serving under NATO missions prior to their participation in the EU mission “EUFOR-Althea” as the second contributor in terms of troops) is bridging the gap between NATO and EU and the region.<sup>68 69</sup>

In addition to that, the Turkish government, with the policy of “zero problems” with its neighbours and the will of creating a “strategic depth” as the spearhead of its foreign policy, managed to bring closer Sarajevo and Belgrade, but also offered to mediate between Pristina and Belgrade, by announcing that “if invited to offer support [they were] ready to contribute so that peace can reign in the Balkans”.<sup>70</sup>

These efforts on the side of the Turkish government, notably that of bringing Bosnia-Herzegovina closer to the EU, have been considered by some analysts as “convergent and complementary” to the policies developed by the EU in the region of the Balkans.<sup>71</sup> In some occasions though, they have been perceived as a struggle of Ankara to being taken into account as an indispensable actor the EU has to rely on in the region, thus providing Turkey with an added value that could facilitate its accession to the Union.<sup>72</sup>

67 Doğa Ulaş Eralp, *ibid.*

68 Gülnur Aybet, “Turkey’s long and winding road to the EU: implications for the Balkans”, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans Online*, 2006, Vol.8, no.1, p.78.

69 Thierry Tardy, “CSDP: getting third states on board”, ISS, *Brief ISSUE*, 2014, 6, available at: [http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Brief\\_6\\_CSDP\\_and\\_third\\_states.pdf](http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Brief_6_CSDP_and_third_states.pdf) Retrieved: 30/03/14, p.1.

70 Times of Malta, “Turkey ready to help with Kosovo-Serbia talks”, AFP, 27/08/11, available at: <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20110827/world/Turkey-ready-to-help-with-Kosovo-Serbia-talks.382041>, retrieved: 26/03/14.

71 Kemal Derviş et al., “The European Transformation of Modern Turkey,” *Center for European Policy Studies*, Brussels, 2004, p.55.

72 Ronald H. Linden and Yasemin İrepoğlu, “Turkey and the Balkans: New Forms of Political Community?” *Turkish Studies*, 2013, Vol.14, no: 2, p.236.

In the eyes of some researchers, however, Ankara's motivation to be more engaged in BiH and its neighbours since the break-up of Yugoslavia has to do also with the will of Turkey of becoming a pugilist to fight two influential actors in the region before they got too powerful: Greece and the Gulf countries.<sup>73</sup> Turkey, according to those analyses, feared that Greece's influence would continue to grow via the EU development aid in the Western Balkans. Concerning the Gulf countries Ankara wanted and still wants to preserve the weight of the Hanafi school of Islam in the Balkans, which dates back to Ottoman times, and curb the increasing presence of their version of Islam (notably neo-Salafism).

Regardless of the rationale behind Turkey's activity in the Balkan country, the support it gives to BiH in approaching the EU has been depicted as one of mutual benefit to Ankara and Sarajevo.<sup>74</sup> However, we do not think that the fact that Turkey is giving BiH a hand on that will change much in the eyes of the EU, as it would remain too scared of letting the Turkish giant inside the club. Not much would change despite the hypothetical accession of BiH -and other Western Balkan countries-before the Turkish one, because even if they advocate for Ankara's joining the EU, Brussels -or rather, many Member States would block it.

Leaving aside those hypotheses, we shall take into consideration two elements that help explain an approach the Turkish government seems to be developing at a fast pace: that of an alternative, at least temporary, to the EU. Firstly, we shall bear in mind the very delicate situation the Bosnian state has been going through since it was born, a situation that has aggravated in the past decade and that is bringing the country to the brink of becoming a "state failure"<sup>75</sup>. Secondly, we believe the EU has left a vacuum in BiH after, on one hand, the poor and disappointing result delivered by the Stabilization and Agreement Process (SAP), for it has not achieved the post-conflict stabilization that is needed like manna, and on the other, the blocking of the EU road for BiH.<sup>76</sup>

73 Dušan Reljić, "Die Türkei weckt alte Lieben und Feindschaften im Westbalkan". *SWP-Aktuell* 69, Berlin, September 2010, p.2 cited in Žarko Petrović and Dušan Reljić, "Turkish Interests and Involvement in the Western Balkans: A Score-Card", *Insight Turkey*, p.162-3.

74 Ronald H. Linden and Yasemin İrepoğlu, *op.cit.*

75 International Crisis Group, "Bosnia's Gordian Knot: Constitutional Reform", *Europe Briefing* no.68, 12/07/12, available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/balkans/bosnia-herzegovina/b068-bosnias-gordian-knot-constitutional-reform.aspx> retrieved: 25/03/14.

76 Claire Gordon, "The Stabilization and Association Process in the Western Balkans: An Effective Instrument of Postconflict Management?", *Ethnopolitics: Formerly Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 2009, Vol. 8, Nos.3-4, p.336.

Why do we believe Turkish-driven policies can become an (temporary) alternative to the EU in the medium-long term? What instruments can Turkey use to fill that vacuum in the political sphere? One of the main instruments is the aforementioned SEECp. In a 2011 essay written by Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, the SEECp was depicted as a body ready to come out of its shell and become a major organization that would tailor the future of the region. Although at present time that might be an exaggeration, the former Professor is undoubtedly proposing attractive ideas, namely that the SEECp adopt three principles of methodology: a) “having a vision-oriented approach as opposed to a crisis-oriented one”, b) embracing a “forward-looking rather than a backward-looking approach”, and c) “a value-based approach rather than an ideology-based approach to regional problems”.<sup>77</sup> The challenging issue, however, is -and we will come back to that in the following chapter- that he takes for granted that the Balkan nations share some common values, regardless of divergences on the grounds of ethnicity and religion.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, his approach and his avocation for the “regional ownership and inclusiveness” and “regional re-integration”, although occasionally paternalistic, may bear some fruit. In the upcoming section we will address some elements of soft power upon which Davutoğlu has put an emphasis in order to promote economic growth and cultural and intellectual interaction, two pillars indispensable in that re-integration.

In relation with the SEECp, two major successes achieved thanks to Turkey -albeit facilitated by a Europe-oriented Serbian government- should be presented. On the one side, the restoration of diplomatic relations between Sarajevo and Belgrade and the official apologies on behalf of the Serbian parliament for the massacres in Srebrenica in the 1990s. On the other, the signature in 2010 of the ‘Istanbul Declaration on Peace and Stability in the Balkans’ by Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, a Declaration symbolically very relevant, not only for it guaranteed the territorial integrity and sovereignty of BiH, but also for its contribution to spreading the idea of Turkey being a serious and committed partner.<sup>79</sup> Although in Istanbul the political leaders of those countries showed their interest in becoming members of the EU,<sup>80</sup> we believe that this was and is merely rhetoric because the period of reforms in BiH remains blocked and the

<sup>77</sup> Ahmet Davutoğlu, “A Forward Looking...” *op.cit.*, pp.5-6.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>79</sup> However, as we will see in the fourth chapter, the Turkish declarations in favour of a united BiH are not appreciated by Bosnian Serb authorities.

<sup>80</sup> Today's Zaman, “Balkan nations bury enmities in historic Istanbul summit”, 26/04/10, available at: <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-208502-102-balkan-nations-bury-enmities-in-historic-istanbul-summit.html> retrieved: 26/03/14.

reforms in Turkey -except for some in the economic field- under the current government, are for the most part, a thing of the past.

A second instrument that Turkey may use is its endeavour to accelerate the Bosnian constitutional process, a task on which the EU has, *de facto*, not been helpful as the Bosnian Deputy Minister and scholar Denisa Sarajlić Maglić admitted.<sup>81</sup>

Moreover, whilst the EU through the conditionality it uses, asks for burdensome reforms that a malfunctioning state like BiH with a wrecked economy and a political and administrative environment dominated by problems<sup>82</sup> can hardly deal with, Turkey arrives in BiH with hands filled with political, economic and cultural exchanges but without the feared mechanism of conditionality. Keeping in mind the failure of the SAP we have mentioned above, maybe it is time for a different approach, at least until BiH can walk on its own two feet and implement the reforms the EU asks for (if by then it still wants to become a member).

As Nye stated<sup>83</sup>, the outcome of the soft power strategies deployed is seen in the long term. However, one can analyse the discourses of the political leaders in order to foresee some trends and possible directions. Throughout this section and the previous chapter, we have seen that the current Turkish government is placing an increasing importance on diplomacy and soft power. The positions of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ibrahim Kalın, the Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister, have been introduced. These ideas show a great deal of self-confidence on the diplomatic practices and foreign policy of the Republic of Turkey. Turkish authorities, as it has been noted, consider that the new Turkey is based on “soft power, a universal language and implementation of consistent foreign policies in different parts of the world” along the democratic experience of Turkey.<sup>84</sup> At the same time, public diplomacy has been recognised as a part of the nucleus

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81 Denisa Sarajlić-Maglić, “BiH after the Elections—A Tale of Disillusioned Optimism” in *The Western Balkans and the EU: ‘The Hour of Europe’*, edited by Jacques Rupnik, 47–56. Chaillot Papers. Paris: Institute for European Studies, 2011, p. 58.

82 Just to mention one: the President of the Republika Srpska (RS), Milorad Dodik’s, has been in the eyes of some analysts, constantly trying to block the functioning of the institutions of the Bosnian state, so that both the international community and the Croats and Bosniaks, agree to grant RS independence, see more in: Steven Woehrel, “Bosnia and Hercegovina: Current Issues and U.S. Policy”, *Congressional Research Service*, 24/01/13. Available at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R40479.pdf> retrieved: 26/03/14, p.4.

83 Joseph S. Nye, *The Future...op.cit.*, p.83.

84 We have referred to these descriptions in the previous chapter (Davutoğlu and Kalin).

of the foreign policy of the country.<sup>85</sup> In this light, and after the topics addressed in this section, some remarks ought to be put on the map:

The soft power and public diplomacy could be undermined despite their importance having been acknowledged by the government and despite the creation of institutions whose mandates are the promotion of soft power and public diplomacy. The inconsistency and the fact that Turkey is basing them to a large extent on its democratic experience, notwithstanding it being a short one and the democratic credentials suffering setbacks in the last years.

The foreign policy crafted by Davutoğlu is too ambitious and it has been just recently that the government, and in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has started promoting soft power and public diplomacy openly.

In the political sphere, many regional initiatives are led or co-led by Turkey, and the authorities are especially active in issues closely related to BiH. Additionally, the Turkish authorities have been reacting fast to the weak performance of the EU in BiH. However, since most progresses in this field have been achieved under Professor Davutoğlu's direction, we fear that Turkey's diplomacy becomes – if it is not already- too dependent on him. As we saw in the previous chapter, Morgenthau said once that diplomacy wouldn't be successful if it depends on “the sporadic appearance of outstanding individuals” rather than upon “tradition and institutions”.<sup>86</sup>

Davutoğlu has had and still has the chance to be one of those scholars who is able to put into practice for the benefit of this government the theory he developed whilst in Academia. Moreover, the political experience he has been accumulating the past years has contributed to shaping his vision of a powerful foreign policy.

In this foreign policy, although the quest for security plays an important role, the “zero problems policy” launched by the AKP has been of a crucial importance in paving the way for an increase in trade and for the improvement of the business environment, and has allowed for the putting aside of the strict ‘security’ agenda.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Kalin, *op.cit.*

<sup>86</sup> Morgenthau, *op.cit.*

<sup>87</sup> Kemal Kirişci & Neslihan Kaptanoğlu, “The Politics of Trade and Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 2011, vol. 47,no:5, p.715-6.

### 3.2 Trade, business and the Anatolian tigers going wild

*“We sincerely believe that the Balkans has the necessary potential to emerge as the young, dynamic and energetic driving force of Europe and become a hub for infrastructure, transportation and energy projects.”*<sup>88</sup>

The former Professor Ahmet Davutoğlu, notably since he became Minister for Foreign Affairs, has depicted in several occasions the Balkans as a region of intense “geo-economic transactions” that can be traced back to the Greek civilization, and seems to attribute the richness and the heyday of many Ottoman cities to the heterogeneity existing within the Ottoman Empire.<sup>89</sup> Although Davutoğlu, in his 2001 seminal work “Strategic Depth” does not pay much attention to economics, he touches upon a key point that reflects what Turkey has been doing and that explains why economic interests end up becoming the core of a country’s diplomacy: the adoption of an export-oriented model at the expense of an import substitution one.<sup>90</sup> As time has passed by and his foreign policy vision has become more mature, Ahmet Davutoğlu has acknowledged the heavy weight of the economy in declarations like the following: “We have (...) adopted a multi-dimensional foreign policy based on maximum economic cooperation (...)”.<sup>91</sup>

As high-ranking officials have admitted, the trade vacuum caused by a reduction of EU-based investments in BiH since 2008, along “the European Union’s misgivings about enlargement have made Ankara’s mediating role more vital”.<sup>92</sup> However, to what extent are Turkish exports and investments really having an impact and will actually benefit Turkey’s foreign policy?

Bearing in mind the vision of some representatives of the Turkish state, let us now take on the adventure and start analysing the Turkish approach towards BiH in the economic and financial field and continue examining whether the praxis meets the rhetoric.

88 Ahmet Davutoğlu, Parallel Interview, Our South East Europe, *Regional Cooperation Council*, Newsletter 4/2010, available at: <http://www.rcc.int/interviews/o/13/parallel-interview-ahmet-davutolu-minister-of-foreign-affairs-of-the-republic-of-turkey> retrieved: 30/03/14.

89 Ahmet Davutoğlu, speech at the conference “The Ottoman Legacy...”, op.cit.

90 Kemal Kirişçi & Neslihan Kaptanoğlu, op.cit., p.711.

91 Oxford Business Group, “Multi-dimensional policy: OBG talks to Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs”, OBG, The Report: Turkey 2012, available at: <http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/news/multi-dimensional-policy-obg-talks-ahmet-davuto%C4%9Flu-minister-foreign-affairs>, retrieved: 31/03/14.

92 Turkish Ambassador to BiH, quoted in Neil MacDonald, “Turkey: business in the Balkans”, *Financial Times*, 26/04/11.



First we ought to say that under the AKP, the myriad actors both within the government but also belonging to the civil society, claiming a say in the foreign policy-making, has increased steadily, erasing thus the supremacy of the army and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As Joshua W. Walker found out the Ministries of Interior, Transportation or Energy had become more influential.<sup>93</sup> On the side of the civil society, several business-related groups have risen as actors to be taken into account. Some of the most visible and active ones are the Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK), the Union of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Maritime Trade and Stock Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), the Turkish Exporters Assembly (TİM), the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUKSON), the Islamically-oriented Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD) and the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TÜSİAD). These two last associations are probably among the most vocal ones in Turkey. MÜSİAD is made up of the so-called Anatolian tigers (also known as Anatolian Small and Medium Enterprises) that were born mainly after the 1980s, at a time when Turkey shifted from an agriculture-based economy to a manufacture-based (and increasing services) economy under the government of Turgut Özal. Given its open Islamically oriented character, it buoys a 'global Muslim business network', holds meetings with religious scholars and although not exclusively, it focus its business target in Muslim countries and countries with a large Muslim population.<sup>94</sup>

TÜSİAD, on the other hand, is composed of large firms settled in Istanbul and contiguous areas. Since the rise to power of the AKP, MÜSİAD and religiously conservative Anatolian businesses in general, have been getting more powerful and influential, which in turn has resulted in a key support of this Association to the current government and its foreign policy.<sup>95</sup>

In which sectors of the Bosnian economy do these and other Turkish actors invest? How are those investments received in the host country?

Seeing above the statements of high officials of the Turkish government one might think that BiH is the apple of Turkey's eye, in practice however, there is a big gap between

93 Joshua W. Walker's Interviews with ministers, officials, and high-level ministers who requested to be left anonymous in Ankara, Turkey August, 2008, cited in "Introduction: The Sources of Turkish Grand Strategy - 'Strategic Depth' and 'Zero-Problems' in Context" in Turkey's Global Strategy, *LSE Ideas*, May 2011, available at: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR007/introduction.pdf> retrieved: 20/02/14, p.11.

94 Evren Hosgör, "Islamic Capital/Anatolian Tigers: Past and Present", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 2011, Vol. 47, no.2, p.348.

95 *Ibid* p.354.

the economic dimension and the political one, the former weaker.<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, Turkish investments in BiH, even if lower than those coming from some EU countries are welcomed with open arms, for Bosnia and Herzegovina is hungry for capital. Even though the country is not too attractive a market, not only because of its population – only 3.8 million people – but also for the low Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is around 3.419 euro,<sup>97</sup> Turkish companies are active sur place. They are trying to make the most out of the positive aspects of the Bosnian market hoping that the free trade agreement between both countries will contribute, *inter alia*, to increasing the national income and social welfare.<sup>98</sup>

The positive aspects that may ease the access of Turkish firms to the Bosnian market and that have allowed Turkey to transmogrify its cultural soft power into an economic one, according to Oya Dursun-Özkanca, are the following: the geographical propinquity between both countries – which allows for cheaper transportation costs; the resemblance of the consumption habits, and the fact that by time, more and more Turkish companies win the bidding offers for privatization of the many state-owned enterprises that are spread throughout the region.<sup>99</sup>

In addition to that, the growing frustration that Turkish businesses suffer in entering the EU's internal market mainly due to the visa policy of the EU, has pushed them to encourage the government to change Ankara's own visa policies vis-à-vis its neighbours. The Turkish government acceded to that request and launched a policy of “zero visa” with its neighbours. In addition to those demands, the fact of being a country receiving increasing migration and the opportunity to create a framework of liberal policies in that field is seen by officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey as a kind of “soft power”.<sup>100</sup>

96 Žarko Petrović and Dušan Reljić, *op.cit*; p.164.

97 Foreign Investment Promotion Agency of Bosnia and Hercegovina, “Bosnia and Hercegovina at glance”, Official website, 25/10/13, available at: [http://www.fipa.gov.ba/dobrodosli/o\\_bih/default.aspx?id=22&langTag=en-US](http://www.fipa.gov.ba/dobrodosli/o_bih/default.aspx?id=22&langTag=en-US), retrieved: 30/03/14.

98 Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Turkey, “Turkey's Free Trade Agreements”, Official website: <http://www.economy.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=tradeagreements&bolum=fta&region=0>, retrieved: 30/03/14.

99 Oya Dursun-Özkanca, “Turkish Foreign Policy and the Balkans: Implications on Transatlantic Security”, Presentation at the London School of Economics, 14/05/13, available at: [http://www.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/research/LSEE/Events/PDF\\_Files/Oya-Dursun-Ozkanca-LSEE-Presentation.pdf](http://www.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/research/LSEE/Events/PDF_Files/Oya-Dursun-Ozkanca-LSEE-Presentation.pdf) retrieved: 30/03/14.

100 Interviews with high-ranking officials at the government and at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oct.2009 cited in Juliette Tolay, “Coming and Going: Migration and Changes in Turkish Foreign Policy”, Turkey and Its neighbours: Foreign Relations in Transition, Ronald H. Linden et al., Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder London, 2012, p. 134.



These “Evliya Çelebi”<sup>101</sup> export mainly textile, yarn and fabrics. The top three sectors into which their investments (foreign direct investment [FDI]) are poured are the banking, airline and education sectors.<sup>102</sup> Of these sectors, one of the most successful is the banking sector where the Turkish Ziraat Bank Bosnia was the first foreign capitalized bank established in BiH in 1997 and despite the global economic and financial crisis that hit the country, was one of the few banks that saw profits in 2010.<sup>103</sup> Regarding the sector of education, in the next section we will show how relevant it has become. Along the aforementioned targets of Turkish investments, another field that may actually have a very positive impact on the ground is the construction sector where joint Turko-Croatian investments on various development projects could appease the tensions in Mostar and the region, according to Doğa Ulaş Eralp.<sup>104</sup>

What conclusion can we draw from the economic performance of Turkish actors in BiH? What impact can it have? As the old saying goes, “all that glitters is not gold”. One may think at first sight that the investments in a devastated economy that has many commonalities with the Turkish market and that happens to be a country not very well taken care of by the EU would strengthen Turkey’s position in the region. However, there are some scholars that provide us with a different picture: those investments would be “sap[ping] resources without providing rewards to local communities”. Moreover, the growth that is experienced by Turkey, thanks to its economic ties with the countries in the region, is very dependent on fragile economies.<sup>105</sup>

We, nonetheless, consider that overall the situation in the economic sector is fairly positive. The fact that Turkish investments in BiH are on the rise, along with the participation of non-governmental actors and local networks – agents considered by

101 Evliya Çelebi was a very important Ottoman Turkish traveller of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, that wrote extensively about his trips and whose ‘book of travels’ became in 2013 part of UNESCO’s cultural memory. In 2010 a Turkish newspaper dubbed the new Turkish businessmen “Evliya Çelebi”. See: ‘İşadamları Gül’ün peşinde Evliya Çelebi’ye döndü’ [Businessmen have turned into Evliya Celebi in the steps of Gul], Radikal, 14 Oct. 2010, cited in Kemal Kirişçi & Neslihan Kaptanoğlu, *op.cit.*, p.712.

102 Year 2012 figures. Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Turkey, Country: Bosnia Hercegovina, Official website: <http://www.economy.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=countriesandregions&country=BA&region=9>, retrieved: 31/03/14.

103 Today’s Zaman, “Turkish Ziraat Bank Bosnia the best in Bosnia and Hercegovina”, 01/12/10, available at: [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action;jsessionid=FF4D45E3498AB468AA011F4E535DA7C9?newsId=228334](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action;jsessionid=FF4D45E3498AB468AA011F4E535DA7C9?newsId=228334), retrieved: 31/03/14.

104 Doğa Ulaş Eralp, *op.cit.*, p.7.

105 Rebecca Bryant and Mete Hatay, “Soft Politics and Hard Choices: An Assessment of Turkey’s New Regional Diplomacy”, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), PCC Report 2/2013, p.20.

Jan Melissen<sup>106</sup> as vital in order for the public diplomacy to be successful-, contributes to a favourable outcome of Turkish economic actors.

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<sup>106</sup> Jan Melissen, *op.cit.*, p.11.

### 3.3 Culture, religion and education: like mother like daughter?

*“Balkan history is not only a history of conflicts; on the contrary, between the 16th and the 19th, Balkan history was a success story. We can reinvent and reestablish this success by creating a new political ownership, a new multicultural coexistence and a new economic zone. (...) Anatolia belongs to you; and make sure that Sarajevo is ours. (...) Bosnia-Herzegovina (...) is our country”*<sup>107</sup>

After centuries of Ottoman presence in the Balkans, one of the most visible aspects if one goes to BiH is the cultural heritage in general, and Islamic architectonical reminiscences in particular. Mosques scattered throughout the country are a witness of the past, and the mosques being built now thanks to the financing of Turkish local and national authorities will be witnesses of the present and future of BiH. Will that future be marked by a pseudo-Ottoman comeback? To what extent is the present BiH being penetrated by Turkish culture (but a culture that emphasizes its Ottoman components), education and by the Hanefi school of Islam? Are these a proof of Turkey’s soft power? Is Turkey using its omnipresent capital in these fields with a view to increase its political leverage and to influence politically?

Even though culture, religion and education are closely intertwined in our case study of BiH, in order to structure this section we will proceed as follows: in the first place we will tackle certain aspects of the education, culture and kinships. Then, we will shed light onto the weight of religion in the approach of Turkey to BiH. At last, we will analyse the role of two key actors in the game: the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and briefly, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TİKA). In relation to the latter, we will address its role in the reconstruction of the tangible heritage of the Ottoman Empire, namely, the reconstruction of monuments and mosques.

However, before proceeding, we shall go back to the beginning of this section, to the words Davutoğlu pronounced in Sarajevo in 2009 and that prompted many journalists and academics to dub him “neo-Ottomanist”. That statement reflects how close both countries are, at least in the eyes of Turkey, but how is Turkey seen in the eyes of the Bosnian authorities?<sup>108</sup> In the same vein, the Bosnian Minister for Foreign Affairs on Turkey declared that every country in the Balkans “should be at least satisfied by the fact that such a great country – politically, economically, culturally, socially, such a great nation – is offering us to feel like at home, and asking them (Turks) to feel like at home

<sup>107</sup> Ahmet Davutoğlu, speech at the conference ‘The Ottoman Legacy ...’, *op.cit.*, pp.16-8. Emphasis added.

<sup>108</sup> In the next chapter we will address the perceptions in more detail.

when they are with us”.<sup>109</sup> The discourse of both sides is thus quite similar. The sharing of a common cultural heritage is in the forefront and has undoubtedly an impact in all spheres of relations, and although the Turkish government rejects the term neo-Ottoman, the way it deals with its kin peoples seems to be aimed at repairing some tiles of the Ottoman mosaic. This is more evident even since the AKP got to power for two reasons. The first, according to Gülnur Aybet, is that when Turkey, being cautious in the past not to present its foreign policy as one impregnated with Ottoman ink, left a historical vacuum that some Middle Eastern and Arab actors started to occupy, *inter alia*, via the construction of mosques.<sup>110</sup> The other has been the increasing importance attached to the protection and caring of kin and related communities by the Turkish government. In fact, in 2010 at a period of the restructuring of the foreign policy, a new political body, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, was established as a public institution dependent on the Prime Minister.

As the Chairman of that institution declared, the reason behind its creation is twofold. First, the “sense of historic responsibility” has played a role- something we have seen throughout this chapter in several occasions. Second, there is a strong willingness to “bolster Turkey’s public diplomacy efforts and soft power”.<sup>111</sup> That historic responsibility and the Ottoman experience is thus an intrinsic part of the discourse of the Turkish government and an asset that the authorities are trying to exploit in many fields, partly through activities organised by the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities.

One of the sectors in which the exploitation of the milieu goals of Turkey works is that of education, a sector in which the government “competes” with non-governmental actors such as Fethullah Gülen and his Hizmet (the ‘Movement’). This “competition”, notably nowadays, in a context of tensions between the AKP – in particular Prime Minister Erdoğan- and Gülen, could have a negative impact on the image of Turkey. Three manifestations of this “competition” are the following: first, the fact that students of Bosna Sema educational institutions (established by the Istanbul based Journalists and Writers Foundation, founded, among others, by Gülen) perform better on university

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109 Erol Avdovic, “Bosnian FM: Turkey is our home as well”, *Anadolu Agency*, 29/10/13, available at: <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/news/245242-bosnian-foreign-minister-turkey-is-our-home-as-well> retrieved: 01/04/14.

110 Gülnur Aybet, *op.cit.*, p. 81.

111 Kemal Yurtnaç, “Turkey’s New Horizon: Turks Abroad and Related Communities”, *SAM Papers*, October 2012, no.3, p.4.

entrance exams than Turkish state schools' students<sup>112</sup>; second, the ever-increasing influence of those schools in comparison to Turkish state schools; third, the very strong links Hizmet maintains with the elite of several countries in the region. If these tensions do not fade away any time soon, the image of Turkey will deteriorate, and it will be the Gülen schools and not the government of Turkey, the one seen as an educational leader in the region. In fact, the Turkish government is doing all it can to curb the power of Gülen schools and for that it has ratified recently a law closing all private preparatory schools (many of them run by Hizmet), which were a source of income, let alone influence, for Fethullah Gülen. Nevertheless, we do not think that this tactic could be replicated abroad. In BiH, where the "competition" in the field of education is probably most seen at the university level for within the two Turkish-run universities in the country, the International Burch University (close to Hizmet) is the fourth in the ranking of universities located in Bosnia and the International University of Sarajevo (backed by businessmen that support the AKP) the eighth. However, if we analyse the position of these universities in the world ranking, the International Burch University occupies position no.5408 and the International University of Sarajevo is the 7945<sup>th</sup> in the world.<sup>113</sup>

In the field of education, another movement on the side of the Turkish government -whose impact is yet to be seen, as most soft power initiatives- is the signature in 2013 of an agreement with the Bosnian Ministry of Education whereby Turkish will be offered as an elective language in several public elementary schools across the Bosnian capital, as it is done since 2011 in other regions of the country.<sup>114</sup> We expect that this trend of penetration of Turkish-run education institutions and the spread of the language will continue to grow. More so that members of the Bosnian tripartite presidency, like the Bosniak Izetbegovic, have acknowledged and praised the role of Turkish schools for they have "helped the country progress."<sup>115</sup>

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112 M. Hakan Yavuz, "Towards an Islamic Liberalism?: The Nurcu Movement and Fethullah Gülen", *Middle East Journal*, vol.53, no.4. Autumn 1999, p. 598.

113 Figures obtained by Cybermetrics Lab, a research group belonging to the largest research body in Spain (CSIC). "Ranking Web of Universities: Bosnia and Hercegovina", Webometrics.info, Official website, available at: <http://www.webometrics.info/en/europe/bosnia%20and%20herzegovina%20> retrieved: 30/03/14.

114 Menekse Tokyay and Ana Lovakovic, "Bosnian schools expand Turkish language classes", *South East Time Türkiye*, 24/09/13, available at: [http://turkey.setimes.com/en\\_GB/articles/ses/articles/features/departments/world/2013/09/24/feature-01](http://turkey.setimes.com/en_GB/articles/ses/articles/features/departments/world/2013/09/24/feature-01), retrieved: 30/03/14.

115 Ayten Çiftçi, "Izetbegovic praises Turkish schools and universities abroad", *Today's Zaman*, 25/09/12, available at: <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-293392-izetbegovic-praises-turkish-schools-and-universities-abroad.html>, retrieved: 04/04/14.

Leaving behind the field of education and continuing our journey through the *softest* soft power, a sub-sphere for which Turkey is increasingly known (probably more known for the wider public than the sub-sphere of education) and admired in the Balkans is for its TV series, which have been progressively replacing Latin American soap operas. While we believe TV series may help project Turkey abroad and connect audiences that share some cultural and historical elements, – something that Turkey does with the former Ottoman lands, and which is of the foremost importance, as Davutoğlu recognised in his book “Strategic Depth”- some members of the AKP consider Turkish TV series actually “hurt[ing] the image of Turkey abroad as they are so full of corrupt storylines and unacceptable behaviours”.<sup>116</sup> No wonder a deputy of the ruling party submitted a parliamentary petition for a law that would “show filmmakers how to conduct their work in compliance with Turkish family structure and moral values without humiliating Turkish youth and children”.<sup>117</sup>

In the Balkans, Turkish shows are most watched in BiH, and among the various TV series aired in that country, the most followed one in 2013 was “Magnificent Century” (*Muhteşem Yüzyıl*), which portrays the life of the Sultan Süleyman “The Magnificent”.<sup>118</sup> This success, however, has not been exempt from criticism both in Turkey and the host country. In Turkey, this show has been repeatedly excoriated by Erdoğan, who claimed he had alerted the judicial authorities to address the portrayal of Süleyman as a womanizer enjoying his life in the harem and not as someone who had “spent 30 years on horseback, not in the palace, [which is] not what you see in that series”<sup>119</sup>. On the other side of the screens, in BiH, the polemic turned around the negligence of some historical elements that have to do with Bosniaks, namely, the oversight that two of the main characters (one of which was Süleyman’s mother) were of Bosniak origin.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>116</sup> AKP deputy Halide Incekara, quoted in Cigdem Bugdayci, “The soft power of Turkish television”, *South East Time Türkiye*, 23/07/11, available at: [http://turkey.setimes.com/en\\_GB/articles/ses/articles/features/departments/society/2011/07/23/feature-02](http://turkey.setimes.com/en_GB/articles/ses/articles/features/departments/society/2011/07/23/feature-02), retrieved: 04/04/14.

<sup>117</sup> Hürriyet Daily News, “AKP deputy says ‘Muhteşem Yüzyıl’ will be off air in 2013”, 08/12/12, available at: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/akp-deputy-says-muhtesem-yuzyil-will-be-off-air-in-2013.aspx?pageID=238&nID=36404&NewsCatID=338>, retrieved: 05/04/14.

<sup>118</sup> Amina Hamzic et al., “Turks bewitch the Balkans with their addictive soaps”, *Balkan Insight*, 01/05/13, available at: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/turks-bewitch-the-balkans-with-their-addictive-soaps>, retrieved: 05/04/14.

<sup>119</sup> Ece Toksabay, “Turkish PM fumes over steamy Ottoman soap opera”, *Reuters*, 27/12/12, available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/27/us-turkey-show-suleiman-idUSBRE8AQ11H20121127>, retrieved: 05/04/14.

<sup>120</sup> Riada Ašimović Akyol, “Is Turkey’s ‘Magnificent Century’ a threat or asset?”, *Al Monitor*, 04/08/13, available at: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/08/magnificent-century-turkey.html#>, retrieved: 05/04/14.

Leaving aside the polemic in Turkey and the region, why are these series so appealing to Balkan audiences? Will their success ooze away in the near future?

According to Darko Brocic, the director of the AGB Nielsen, an agency that conducts media research in the Balkans, Turkish soap operas show no sign of a decline in popularity, on the contrary.<sup>121</sup> Regarding the features that make those series so appealing, in the eyes of some sociologists of the region and some viewers of the shows, we can identify two key elements.

On one hand, sociologists identify the depiction of an old patriarchal family model “that appears dead in the Balkans but which is still alive in Turkey – at least in TV shows”. To the Serbian sociologist Bozovic, the changes in terms of family life Balkan countries have undergone, and the fact that the “new model is not functioning yet”, makes them hungry for a value system, leaving a gap that Turkish soap operas seem to be filling by recalling those values that seem lost nowadays.<sup>122</sup> This theory is further reinforced by interviews conducted by Amina Hamzic and others in Bosnia, Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia. On the other hand, as those interviews as well as the work of Bozovic prove, spectators are drawn by the cultural similarities and by the original Turkish language, for it allows them to hear words that are also used in their mother tongue. This, in our opinion contributes to awakening the curiosity and interest in Turkey. Nonetheless, given the negative comments and actions from the side of the Turkish government vis-à-vis many series that are aired abroad, we think that the rhetorical (and increasingly de facto) witch-hunt undertaken by the authorities against one of the most successful Turkish products, will contribute to further polarising Turkish politics and society. This tide could cover and leave inoperative the alleged foundation of the Turkish soft power according to Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister, Kalın (to which we referred in section 3.1), namely the ‘democratic experience’.<sup>123</sup>

### **Religion through the hearts and eyes**

The return of religion to the front page has been widely discussed in the past decades and we believe this trend will continue in the near future and it will be used as a tool of soft power. In fact, religious groups have possessed soft power for centuries.<sup>124</sup> The

<sup>121</sup> Amina Hamzic et al., *op.cit.*

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> İbrahim Kalın, *op.cit.*, p.9.

<sup>124</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Public Affairs, 2004, Washington D.C., p.98.



Turkish government, well aware of the relevance of religion, has been pouring more and more money into the budget of the Diyanet.<sup>125</sup> While in 2012 the budget was of TL 3.8 billion, in 2014 it rose to TL 5.4 billion, an amount that corresponds to the budget of nine ministries put together, and is higher than that of crucial ministries like the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>126</sup> Interestingly enough, Diyanet's presence is not limited to Turkish territory, as one of its responsibilities is to provide religious services for those Turkish Muslims abroad. This task is carried out through immigrant organizations like the Turkish Islamic Cultural Federation and through civil servants based in Turkish Embassies and Consulates General throughout the world.<sup>127</sup>

In addition to that, Diyanet (and TİKA) annually carries out several initiatives of aid targeted at Muslims worldwide, although mainly at those in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Through these initiatives, Turkey is having a visible impact (i.e. construction and restoration of mosques), but also a silent impact that will probably help Ankara gain adepts in BiH and that might be paving the way for further penetration of Turkey in the region (*inter alia*, a programme of scholarships to receive religious education in Turkey and charity actions such as the sending of the *qurban*<sup>128</sup> to communities in need).<sup>129</sup>

Another interesting initiative under the umbrella of Diyanet, which is also having a visual impact in BiH is the sister city programme. In this programme, a local mufti in Turkey is matched to one in BiH (or other countries) and during the Ramadan and after Friday prayers they collect money which is then invested mostly in the construction of mosques, like in the case of the mufti office in Kayseri that raised money and helped build a mosque in Goradje (BiH).<sup>130</sup>

125 Diyanet was founded in 1924 to manage places of prayer and to supervise and carry out services related to Islamic faith (de facto, just Sunni) and practices.

126 Yavuz Baydar, "Diyanet tops the budget league", *Today's Zaman*, 20/10/13, available at: [http://www.todayszaman.com/columnists/yavuz-baydar\\_329311-diyamet-tops-the-budget-league.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/columnists/yavuz-baydar_329311-diyamet-tops-the-budget-league.html), retrieved: 06/04/14.

127 İştâar Gözaydın, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

128 Qurban is often translated as "sacrifice" and it takes place in the first three days of the Festival of Sacrifice (Eid-ul Adha), whereby goats, sheep, cows, buffalos or camels are sacrificed and their meat is distributed as follows: 1/3 for the poor and needy; 1/3 for family members and friends; 1/3 for the person doing the Qurban - and this portion can be given to non-Muslims. More information in Al-Huda Mosque, Singapore, website: <http://www.alhuda.sg/korban.html>, retrieved: 06/04/14.

129 Şenol Korkut, "The Diyanet of Turkey and Its Activities in Eurasia after the Cold War", *Acta Slavica Iaponica*, 2009, Tomus 28, p.134.

130 *Ibid*, p.133.

These actions Turkey has embarked on to foster closer ties with Muslims, notably with those with whom they share a common history, may have already bore results, at least in theory in the highest ranks. As Dr. Mustafa Efendi Cerić, grand mufti (reis-ul-ulema) of Bosnia and Hercegovina from 1993 to 2012 stated in a speech at a reconstructed mosque in his country, “we call ourselves Turks”, “we are Turks – by our historical memory, by our historical disposition, by the identity of Islam that Turks brought to us”.<sup>131</sup> Two years later, in 2008, the grand mufti, in line with the emotional discourses we have seen in previous sections, told Prime Minister Erdoğan: “Please convey to your people the following: Turkey is our mother; it has been so and it will remain so”.<sup>132</sup>

The links based on religion are quite strong – probably the strongest- and the role of religion in Turkish foreign policy is increasingly visible. We therefore believe that research, conducted in the early years of the AKP mandate, that acknowledged that this party had succeeded in keeping Islamic symbols and references away from Turkey’s public diplomacy are no longer applicable.<sup>133</sup> Taking into consideration the aforementioned return of religion to societies and world politics, Erdoğan’s past and his party’s Islamic roots<sup>134</sup>, along with the continuous electoral victories that have allowed the AKP to govern since 2002, it is no wonder the leaders of the party have decided to resort to the religious tool –or as, Mehmet Görmez, the President of Diyanet stated, to “religious diplomacy”. Diyanet has thus become a strong partner of the Office of Public Diplomacy in the diffusion of Turkey’s virtues.<sup>135</sup>

This section has presented many projects undertaken by the AKP government in the field of education, religion, culture and relations with kin-communities. As we have argued before, their impact will only be seen in the long term, and we fear that it will depend much on whether Erdoğan and Davutoğlu, as well as thinkers and politicians alike, keep

131 Hajrudin Somun, “Is Turkey Bosnia’s mother?”, *Today’s Zaman*, 11/11/08, available at: <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-158350-is-turkey-bosnias-mother-by-hajrudin-somun-.html>, retrieved: 06/04/14.

132 *Ibid.*

133 Interview with Murat Mercin, AKP vice-president for Media and Information, Ankara, 25 Sept. 2001, in: Philip Robin, “Turkish Foreign Policy since 2002: Between a ‘Post-Islamist’ Government and a Kemalist State”, *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 83, No. 2, Europe at 50 (March 2007), p.300.

134 Roots that the party tried to bury at the beginning in order to avoid the failure its predecessors experienced.

135 Burcu Sunar, “The Collateral of the Rising Public Diplomacy in Turkey: The Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Religious Diplomacy”, *International Conference on Economic and Social Studies (ICESoS’13)*, 10-11 May, 2013, Sarajevo, available at: <http://eprints.ibu.edu.ba/1553/8/Burcu%20Sunar-1.pdf> retrieved: 06/04/14.

on working and running these projects diligently. We are however slightly sceptical as to whether these initiatives will stand on their own two feet once their promoters no longer hold their posts.

To avoid the failure of the soft power and public diplomacy, which Turkey is putting into practice, consistent and strong institutions are needed. Conversely Turkey lacks both, partly because the latter are recent creations. The emotional discourses used on both sides that we have presented in the previous pages are not enough. They might be helpful when dealing with a part of the population, but a consolidation of the praxis as well as a reformulation of the rhetoric in order to be more inclusive, have become pressing desiderata.

Throughout this chapter, the active and ever-increasing participation of Turkish governmental and non-governmental actors has been presented. At first sight, one could indeed claim that BiH is a good ground for Turkey to test its new foreign policy given the similarities between both countries. However, as the following chapter will show us, there are some cracks in the wall that keeps BiH and Turkey together. The question here is: do those cracks constitute a major impediment in the development of Turkish foreign policy, and in particular, of Turkish soft power and public diplomacy vis-à-vis BiH?

## Chapter 4. All that glitters is not gold

As Robert Putnam highlighted, when conducting international relations, national governments play a two-level game in which they try to accommodate both domestic and foreign pressures.<sup>136</sup> Whereas in the previous chapter we analysed the manifestations and discourses of Turkish actors in their relations with BiH, in this chapter, bearing in mind this two-level game, we will first deal with some of the domestic shortcomings and weaknesses that, in our opinion, hinder Turkey's soft power and public diplomacy. Then, we will tackle some of the problems Turkey is encountering in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This linkage between Turkey's domestic and foreign policy has been repeatedly acknowledged by Davutoğlu who said that the first step of the "2023 vision" that will mark the Turkish Republic's centennial is "to integrate Turkey's foreign policy discourse into its national discourse" and "to integrate domestic political accomplishments into the vision of foreign policy (i.e. democratization and cultural respect" whilst breathing "self-confidence back into the domestic political scene".<sup>137</sup> In this vein, Davutoğlu adds, if there were any contradiction or contrast between the national and the foreign policy discourse, it would be difficult to execute a successful foreign policy. One of the reasons why we believe Turkey has not been able to capitalize on its soft power, public diplomacy and foreign policy potential in general is precisely for the lack of consistency and for the contradictions existing in Turkish politics.

Davutoğlu's and other high officials' declarations are, to a great extent, worthless scraps of papers. The "new Turkey based on soft power (...) and implementation of consistent foreign policy" Davutoğlu talks about,<sup>138</sup> is not yet a reality. The contradictions between the theory and the practice are numerous as we have seen and will continue to see.

<sup>136</sup> Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games", in *International Bargaining and Domestic Politics. Double-Edged Diplomacy*, Ed. by Peter B. Evans et al., University of California Press, 1993, p. 436.

<sup>137</sup> Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Zero...", *op.cit.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

## 4.1. In the meantime, at home...

### 4.1.1. Democracy yes, democracy no

Throughout these chapters we have highlighted in several occasions the importance of “democracy”, at least in theory, for the Turkish government. Turkey’s democracy was actually praised by Nye himself when he said that it was “the first Muslim country in the region to show that it is possible to reconcile Islam with democracy, modernity and success”.<sup>139</sup>

However, before we started writing this Thesis we thought that given the setbacks the Turkish democracy has been suffering in the past years, the authorities of the country would have changed their discourse so as to mitigate the key role of “democracy” in the foreign policy-making process, as well as in the domestic policy-making process. We thought that since they aimed at joining the EU –without entering the debate on how honest those purposes were–, their *conception* of democracy would not vary too much from that of an average EU member state.

At the beginning of 2014, Davutoğlu, whose party had been for months immersed in a downward spiral of accusations of corruption and curtailment of freedom of speech that led to the banning of websites like Twitter and YouTube,<sup>140</sup> did not hesitate to claim, “a strong democracy is a must in pursuing an active diplomacy”.<sup>141</sup> Since the AKP officials consider Turkey as a “source of inspiration for the countries in its region”<sup>142</sup> and it is widely admitted that its attractiveness and soft power depend, in the first place, on its “democratic outlook”,<sup>143</sup> we should then deal with what the authorities consider as “democratic”. This will enable us to see whether the soft power tools Turkey is resorting to are the most consistent and suitable. For Davutoğlu, “democracy [is] the basic backbone of everything”<sup>144</sup>, therefore it would be “wrong to claim there is a deficit of democracy in

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139 Declarations of Joseph Nye to Today’s Zaman, “Turkey’s soft-power on the rise despite challenges (1)”, 02/04/13, available at: <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-311464-turkeys-soft-power-and-attractiveness-on-the-rise-despite-challenges.html>, retrieved: 03/04/14.

140 This latter is still in force at the time of the writing (23/04/14).

141 Hürriyet Daily News, “No active diplomacy possible without strong democracy, FM Davutoğlu says”, 13/01/14, available at: <http://www.hurriyetailenews.com/no-active-diplomacy-possible-without-strong-democracy-fm-Davutoğlu-says.aspx?pageID=238&nID=60970&NewsCatID=338>, retrieved: 10/04/14.

142 Declarations of the Deputy Foreign Minister Naci Korum to Today’s Zaman, “Turkey’s soft-power on...” *op.cit.*

143 Today’s Zaman, *ibid.*

144 Speech entitled “Vision 2023: Turkey’s Foreign Policy Objectives” delivered by H.E. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey at the Turkey Investor Conference: The road

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Turkey (...) [because] we have viewed ourselves not as the rulers of a country, but as the servants of democracy chosen by and serving the people”.<sup>145</sup> However, this does not seem to be the rhetoric of Erdoğan, and even less the reality. When he was Mayor of Istanbul in the 1990s he declared that democracy was merely “a train that takes you to your destination, and then you get off”.<sup>146</sup> Erdoğan’s approach (and most probably of the AK party that he chairs) to democracy shows, as the Turkish opposition politician Osman Baydemir brightly said, that “Turkey’s democracy is not consolidated but partisan”.<sup>147</sup> Baydemir goes on accusing the AKP of inheriting from Kemalist times what he calls the “we know best” democracy, a top-down conception of democracy whereby “people do not know what is best for them, but we [politicians in power] do”.

So if Ankara “plans to deepen and strengthen its democracy”<sup>148</sup> resorting to their soft power capacity, which is one of the two core elements of Turkish foreign policy along public diplomacy,<sup>149</sup> the government should curb their tendencies to restrict democracy. These tendencies have even permeated the Friday sermons (written by the Diyanet) with topics such as the dangers of “too much democracy”.<sup>150</sup>

#### **4.1.2. A public diplomacy and soft-power wannabe’s institutional weaknesses**

Under the AKP’s conduction, Turkey has become aware of the need for institutional structures that aim at strengthening the country’s public diplomacy and branding practices, and that enhance the soft power the authorities claim to have. Thus, in the recent past, instruments like the Office for Public Diplomacy or the Presidency for Turks

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to 2023 organized by Goldman Sachs, London, 22/11/11, available at Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, official website: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/speech-entitled-\\_vision-2023\\_-turkey\\_s-foreign-policy-objectives\\_\\_delivered-by-h\\_e\\_-ahmet-Davutoğlu\\_-minister-of-foreign-affairs.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/speech-entitled-_vision-2023_-turkey_s-foreign-policy-objectives__delivered-by-h_e_-ahmet-Davutoğlu_-minister-of-foreign-affairs.mfa) retrieved: 22/04/14.

145 Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey: despite the protests, we represent all of our citizens”, *The Guardian*, 16/06/13, available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jun/16/protests-represent-turkey-democracy-akp>, retrieved: 01/03/14.

146 Benjamin Harvey et al, “Arabs battling regimes see Erdoğan’s Muslim democracy as model”, *Bloomberg*, 04/02/11, available at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-02-04/arabs-battling-regimes-see-erdogan-s-muslim-democracy-in-turkey-as-model.html>, retrieved: 23/04/14.

147 Osman Baydemir, “The “we know best” democracy”, in “What does Turkey think?”, Ed. Dimitar Bechev, ECFR, London, June 2011, p.45.

148 Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Zero...”

149 Ibrahim Kalin, *op.cit.*, p.7.

150 Rana Yurtsever, “A conservative Muslim’s new mission”, *Today’s Zaman*, 02/04/14, available at: [http://www.todayszaman.com/blog/rana-yurtsever\\_343693\\_a-conservative-muslims-new-mission.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/blog/rana-yurtsever_343693_a-conservative-muslims-new-mission.html), retrieved: 22/04/14.

Abroad and Related Communities have been created, and the budget of widespread and far-reaching bodies like the Diyanet or TİKA has been increased.

However, as Efe Sevin has argued, Turkey's public diplomacy initiatives lack the "structural and strategic understanding needed to improve Turkey's reputation in the international sphere".<sup>151</sup>

Taking into consideration that most public diplomacy and soft power-oriented projects yield results in the long term, it is hard to provide a fair balance of their impact until now; however, Sevin shows that if the OPD remains as it was created in 2010, it will not be as effective as it could. The reason for this pessimism is that this office was founded under the Prime Minister's Office –with some help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs– hence it is dependent on Erdoğan. This structural setting of the OPD deprives it of direct contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (and consequently with the Diplomatic body deployed worldwide). In addition to that, Sevin considers the OPD's lack of direct contacts with the government press and broadcasting agencies a major shortcoming. Precisely broadcasting agencies such as *Anadolu Ajansı* (Anatolian Agency) and TRT (*Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu*– Turkish Radio and Television Agency) are fairly active in BiH, but, as Sevin puts it, they are not connected to the OPD or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; they are not guided by Turkey's foreign policy goals and objectives.

Another weakness related to the field of the media that may make it harder for Turkey to exploit its soft power potential is the predominance of the mass communication approach (which, according to Zaharna is the "dominant approach in public diplomacy used by nation-states"). The main reason is that it is too focused on the production and dissemination of information, i.e. it is just "used to wield soft power".<sup>152</sup> However, if Turkey is not yet a consolidated soft power, this approach of wielding soft power might not be the best one. Ankara might therefore want to improve the "network communication approach". Zaharna defines it as a "relations-centred" approach focused on "message exchange, relationship-building and network creation", ergo as a way to create, not wield, soft power.<sup>153</sup> Turkey is just taking baby steps toward the latter approach, but it has a long way to go, not only because the OPD depends on the Prime Minister and it lacks direct access to the resources the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has, but also because, as Sevin notes, the "OPD seems to be more interested in broadcasting information than in listening". The OPD's twitter motto

<sup>151</sup> Efe Sevin, *op.cit.*

<sup>152</sup> Rhonda S. Zaharna, "The Soft Power differential: network communication and mass communication in public diplomacy", *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 2(3), 2007, p.221.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*



is self-explanatory: “Turkey has a message and a story to share”.<sup>154</sup> If we look at Twitter and Facebook, two of the most used social networks; we see that the OPD has quite a journey ahead. At the time of the writing,<sup>155</sup> the OPD’s Facebook account was only in Turkish language and had just 6,658 likes. Twitter achieves better figures, partly because the population target is larger, as there is an account in English, one in Arabic, one in French and one in Turkish, the latter being the most popular, albeit with 46,569 followers, and in the second place the English version, with just 9,690. Although we should not consider these figures as an automatic proof of the level of soft power and public diplomacy of the Republic of Turkey, they show undoubtedly a poor performance of the specific actions taken by the OPD online. Public diplomacy is surely not a popularity contest, as the former US Undersecretary for Public Affairs James Glassman stated. However when the tools used to be known (social networks *inter alia*) do not seem to have too much of an impact, and when public diplomacy is not a foreign policy instrument, as Glassman argued it should be, it would not be realistic to expect relevant and substantial outcomes from public diplomacy initiatives.<sup>156</sup>

#### 4.1.3. Erdoğan and his henchmen: a tool of public diplomacy?

Efe Sevin brought up the idea of adding “high profile speeches/actions” to the list of elements that contribute to expanding a brand, that have an impact on a country’s public diplomacy and soft power capacity.<sup>157</sup>

Although we believe it might be an overstatement to claim that “Turkish brand is embodied in the Erdoğan’s persona”, as Sevin does, his speeches as well as those of other charismatic members of the AKP do not go unnoticed. “The prime minister is an emotional man” Suat Kınıklıoğlu, a former AKP lawmaker said about Erdoğan when asked about his comments on Israel years ago<sup>158</sup>. Those comments, on one hand, marred the climate of fairly good relations between the two countries, but, on the other, they increased the popularity of Erdoğan in the Muslim Arab world. His “emotional” and polemical speeches can and do rally masses in his favour, however, they usually do also

154 OPD’s twitter account, available at: <https://twitter.com/TROfficeofPD>, retrieved: 24/04/14.

155 Data accessed on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

156 J.K. Glassman, “Public Diplomacy 2.0: A New Approach to global engagement”, 2008, quoted in Efe Sevin, *op.cit.*

157 Efe Sevin, *op.cit.*

158 Quoted in Mahir Zeylanov, “Turkey’s foreign policy:How exactly does it work?”, *Today’s Zaman*, 24/11/13, available at: [http://www.todayszaman.com/blog/mahir-zeynalov\\_332293\\_turkeys-foreign-policy-how-exactly-does-it-work.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/blog/mahir-zeynalov_332293_turkeys-foreign-policy-how-exactly-does-it-work.html), retrieved: 22/04/14.

go against him, taking that polarisation to a point where it could greatly affect Turkey's foreign policy. A few years ago he delivered a speech in BiH in which he said that "Sarajevo is today an exemplary city, a city of coexistence where people live in peace and friendship", words that Hajrudin Somun, the former Bosnian Ambassador to Turkey considered an "exaggeration" for "peace and friendship (...) are in fact lacking in present circumstances in Bosnia".<sup>159</sup> Those words, as Somun put it are a response to the criticism that Erdoğan and Davutoğlu faced in Serbia and in Republika Srpska (RS) when in an outburst of emotions they equalled Sarajevo and Istanbul.

These kinds of discourses, along those whereby Turkey conveys her self-confidence,<sup>160</sup> have awoken both fears in the former Ottoman lands as well as remarks of critics for Ankara's "self-confidence bordering on arrogance".<sup>161</sup>

To sum up, it is too risky for Turkey to base its public diplomacy practices on her leaders' actions and speeches, especially when they divide the population. In Sevin's eyes, there have been limited successes in the Turkish public diplomacy, and those are either circumstantial or caused by Erdoğan's rhetoric, a rhetoric style usually driven by anger.<sup>162</sup>

If the AKP leaders want to promote cultural respect as they claim in their speeches and if they wish to revive the good old Ottoman times of overall peaceful relations between Muslims and Non-Muslims, they should be more careful and invest themselves more into appealing the latter in the Balkans. As the 2010 Gallup Balkan Monitor survey showed, whereas a 60.2 % of the people in BiH or a 93.2% in Kosovo considered Turkey a friend, only an 18.2% in Serbia did.<sup>163</sup> As Žarko Petrović explained, if the Turkish authorities do not put more effort to appeal to the non-Muslims of the Balkans while dismantling the current rhetoric of many Turkish officials, the "buffet" cooperation (i.e. "there is something for everyone") they are offering to both Muslims and non-Muslims elites, will be a fiasco.<sup>164</sup>

159 Hajrudin Somun, "Sarajevo as seen by Erdoğan and Milorad Dodik", *Today's Zaman*, 07/10/12, available at: [http://www.todayszaman.com/news-294484-sarajevo-as-seen-by-Erdoğan-and-milorad-dodik-by-hajrudin-somun\\*.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/news-294484-sarajevo-as-seen-by-Erdoğan-and-milorad-dodik-by-hajrudin-somun*.html), retrieved: 22/04/14.

160 See previous pages and Hürriyet Daily News, "Graft probe targets Turkey's self-confidence: Foreign Minister Davutoğlu", 08/01/14, available at: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/graft-probe-targets-turkeys-self-confidence-foreign-minister-Davutoğlu.aspx?pageID=238&nID=60719&NewsCatID=338>, retrieved: 22/04/14.

161 Rebecca Bryant and Mete Hatay, *op.cit.*; p.3.

162 Daniel Steinvorth, "Erdoğan's Feeling for Rage", Spiegel Online, quoted in Efe Sevin, *op.cit.*

163 Quoted in Erhan Türbedar, "How is Turkish foreign policy perceived in the Balkans?", *Today's Zaman*, 30/04/12, available at: [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?newsId=279073](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=279073), retrieved: 22/04/14.

164 Žarko Petrović, "Turkey in the Western Balkans. Goals and means of the new foreign policy", Policy

## 4.2. And in BiH... We love them... we love them not

Let us turn around the game of the oxeye daisy and pretend the player chooses whether or not they love someone. Let us imagine Bosnians are playing and asking themselves whether to love Turkey or not. Religious and ethnic dividing lines are sometimes blurry in Bosnia-Herzegovina; nonetheless we will focus here on religion and ethnicity for we – as well as most scholars whose pieces we have utilized in our research- consider them as two earmarks that contribute to perceiving Turkey in one way or another. At the risk of simplifying the issue at stake we will consider that for historical reasons the image of Turkey existing among non-Muslims is overall more negative than the one Bosniaks (if they happen to have a negative image) have. As the foreign policy analyst Erhan Türbedar claims, Turkey's ever-growing interest in the Arab world is fostering a negative perception of Ankara among the "10 Balkan countries, where 88 percent of the people are Christian", an interest that reflects that Turkey has been pursuing the forming of "an alliance with the Islamic world", a major concern for large "segments of the population that hold biases against Islam".<sup>165</sup>

Thus, Gözaydın's assertion of Turkey's carrying out of an "all-inclusive policy and equal-distance policy" that fades away the concerns of international actors<sup>166</sup> might be just a fantasy, for the perceptions differ greatly within BiH. No doubt Turkey's foreign policy, and in particular the soft power and public diplomacy tools Ankara wants to deploy in BiH, have already encountered and will encounter serious difficulties given Bosnia's heterogeneous ethnic mix along the complex and failing institutional structure set up in Dayton. Turkey cannot consider BiH as a country where to apply just one approach. One-size-fits-all will not work there given the non-negligible differences between the perceptions Bosnian Serbs ruling in the Republika Srpska and that of the Croats and Bosniaks in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bearing that in mind, we will first present some of the weaknesses scholars and people on the ground perceive in Turkey's approach vis-à-vis BiH, and then we will address some elements Turkish authorities should consider when crafting their soft power and public diplomacy towards the Bosnian population. We will conclude with some remarks on the hardest nut to crack for Turkey in BiH when trying to use soft power and public diplomacy tools: the Republika Srpska and its authorities.

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Paper, *International Security Affairs Centre (ISAC) Fund*, Belgrade, 2011.

<sup>165</sup> Erhan Türbedar, *op.cit.*

<sup>166</sup> İftar Gözaydın, *op.cit.*, p.10.

### 4.2.1. Perceptions

*“Perceptions are more telling than ignorance: perceptions can certainly result from ignorance, but they express a relationship with ourselves and others that has to do with more than knowledge. Perceptions have to do with feelings, emotions, convictions and psychology”.*<sup>167</sup>

Perceptions are a crucial element in the developing of relations and yet the policy-makers sometimes ignore them. In the case of Turkey in BiH, there are two options. Either Ankara is overlooking them blatantly after a calculus of the costs and benefits, or, as we believe, they have simply been oblivious to the perceptions of the different ethnic and religious groups. It has been acknowledged in several occasions by scholars from the region but also by diplomats and think-tank representatives working in BiH that Turkey's allure works only with Bosniaks.<sup>168</sup> However, not with all Bosniaks, some authors stress, because the pro-European Muslim secular elites are increasingly alienated.<sup>169</sup> According to Šelo Šabić though, Turkey's reconstruction programmes, education programmes and soap operas are contributing to a positive evolution in the ideas people have about the inheritor of the Ottoman Empire albeit there are still obstacles that will not be overcome if the Turkish authorities do not acquire a deeper knowledge of the region.<sup>170</sup> Thus, Ankara has to take that into account and invest herself more in weaving closer ties with non-Muslims if she wants her foreign policy to be more effective in BiH. Mere remarks by the Turkish President denying the favouring of Bosniaks over Serbs and Croats<sup>171</sup> are not enough to bring everyone on board and convince them of Turkey's virtues. Nor is it enough for Turkey to act unilaterally to improve its image and calm the Bosnian Serbs who see Turkey's presence as a hurdle in their way to independence, or the Bosnian Croats who see it as impeding all “prospects of securing a “third entity” for themselves in that country”.<sup>172</sup> It will not be enough for Ankara because 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century national cultures of non-Muslim groups throughout the Balkans are largely dependent on an anti-

167 Tariq Ramadan, *The Quest for Meaning: Developing a Philosophy of Pluralism*, Penguin Books, 2012, p.ix.

168 Maja Šoštarić, “Bosnia, Revisited: Turkey's Gains, Challenges and Future Aspirations”, *Balkananalysis.com*, 12/07/11, available at: <http://www.balkananalysis.com/Turkey/2011/07/12/Bosnia-Revisited-Turkey%E2%80%99s-Gains-Challenges-And-Future-Aspirations/>, retrieved: 22/02/14 and Žarko Petrović and Dušan Reljić, *op.cit.*, p.160.

169 Žarko Petrović and Dušan Reljić, *ibid.*, p.168.

170 Menekse Tokyay, “Turkey plays key diplomatic role in Western Balkans”, *SES Türkiye*, 19/11/13, available at: [http://turkey.setimes.com/en\\_GB/articles/ses/articles/features/departments/world/2013/11/19/feature-01](http://turkey.setimes.com/en_GB/articles/ses/articles/features/departments/world/2013/11/19/feature-01), retrieved: 22/02/14.

171 Hajrudin Somun, “Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans and “Neo-Ottomanism”: A personal account”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.13, no.3, 2011, p.35.

172 Žarko Petrović and Dušan Reljić, *op.cit.*, p.161.

Ottoman narrative; they built their identities to a great extent on the opposition to the Ottoman “yoke”. Ever since, they have been perpetuating a historiography that brands the Ottoman times as a period that put an end to an “earlier (...) normal historical development”.<sup>173</sup> Ever since, most school books and these cultures’ main vernacular literary compositions along epic oral poetry have dealt with battles against the Turks and with a one-sided historiography that neglects positive influences of the Ottoman rule as well as the persecutions orchestrated by Christians against Muslims, contributing therefore to the protraction of negative stereotypes.<sup>174</sup> Since it is unlikely that the way history is told and taught will change in the near future in the region in general and in BiH in particular, partly because of the bloody conflicts of the 1990s that divided the population along ethnic and religious lines, Turkey might want to focus more on applying confidence-building measures and her public diplomacy and soft power tools with non-Muslim populations as we have stressed before. More precisely, these measures should be carried out paying special attention to the Republika Srpska, for it is the most wary and reluctant entity to Turkey’s policy towards BiH.

#### 4.2.2. The ‘contumacious’ Republika Srpska

At the core of the difficult relations between the authorities of the Republika Srpska and Turkey we can identify two elements -a political one<sup>175</sup> and a religious one- all covered by a halo of troublesome history. On the one hand, the political issue has to do with the way BiH was built as a state and the desire of the high officials in Banja Luka under the leadership of Milorad Dodik to take their entity along the path of independence, a desire that seems to have become stronger after Kosovo declared its independence in 2008. Turkey, however, is a resolute supporter of BiH’s unity and Turkish politicians reiterate that support every time they visit the country, an attitude that is met with criticisms on the Bosnian Serb side. When the Turkish President visited Sarajevo and Mostar in 2010 and voiced the need for a united BiH, Dodik accused Ankara of having a “hidden agenda” whilst alerting the leaders of Serbia about Turkey’s intentions.<sup>176</sup> Two years later, in 2012, Davutoğlu visited Banja Luka and in a speech he mentioned that the differences between Turkey and RS existed merely because of “a lack of mutual communication

<sup>173</sup> Dino Mujadžević, *op.cit.*, p.106-9.

<sup>174</sup> Dino Mujadžević, *ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> There are certainly more hot potatoes, such as the support Turkey is giving to BiH in its bumpy road towards NATO membership, something the leaders of the RS are opposed to, given the past interventions of the Alliance in the Balkans.

<sup>176</sup> *Today’s Zaman* 04/09/10 quoted in Hajrudin Somun, “Turkish Foreign Policy...”, *op.cit.*, p.35.

and information”, however Dodik imputed the problems to the “interference in the internal affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina”.<sup>177</sup> Even though the Turkish authorities have tried in the past years to meet Bosnian Serb leaders and they have invited them to Turkey, the efforts have not yet bore any fruit. As we have seen in the previous section the perpetuation of negative stereotypes of Muslims is the daily bread in the Balkan countries and it is carried out and disseminated by the authorities. One clear example of this is the promotion by Banja Luka’s authorities of the book on neo-Ottomanism written by the Serbian professor of Islamic sciences and former Ambassador to Turkey, Professor Tanasković, a man considered by many (including Serbian intellectuals) as a leading anti-Islamist figure in the Balkans.<sup>178</sup> During the presentation, Dodik declared that Ankara “exclusively supports Bosniak-Muslim interests” and that its final goal “is to create in Bosnia and Herzegovina an Islamic state in the Balkans”.<sup>179</sup> The government of the Muslim-Croat Federation is not spared from the criticism voiced by the authorities of RS, as it is accused of being an associate in the Turkish promotion of the interests of Muslims in the region via the establishment of good relations with Ankara.<sup>180</sup>

Despite this rhetoric of resentment against Turkey, some believe that the attitude of the elites of RS is based on *realpolitik* calculations by an isolated nationalist entity that tries to use its bargaining power at all times against the Federation government and that has seen how even the Serbian authorities under the mandate of President Nikolić (former member of the Serbian Radical Party) have not supported their opposition to Turkey.<sup>181</sup>

Be it as it may, even if RS’s manoeuvres were understood through the *realpolitik* lenses instead of through a feeling of self-sufficiency along a profound and honest disdain towards Turkey, if Ankara wants to have a stronger influence in BiH it needs to be more sensitive to the fears and perceptions existing in RS.

To sum up: the cracks that have been mentioned in this very last chapter do constitute a major impediment in the attainment of a ‘status’ of soft power and public diplomacy

177 Hajrudin Somun, “Why Ahmet Davutoğlu likes Sarajevo”, *Today’s Zaman*, 13/05/12, available at: [http://www.todayszaman.com/news-280161-why-ahmet-davutoglu-likes-sarajevo-by-hajrudin-somun\\*.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/news-280161-why-ahmet-davutoglu-likes-sarajevo-by-hajrudin-somun*.html), retrieved: 27/04/14.

178 Hajrudin Somun, “Turkish foreign policy...”, *op.cit.*, p.36.

179 “Turkey Searches for new Yanicheris”, *Politika*, Belgrade, 10/09/10, quoted in Hajrudin Somun, “Turkish foreign policy...”, *ibid*, p.36.

180 Laura Wise, “‘Neo-Ottomanisation’ and old narratives: representing modern Turkey in the Balkans”, *Asfar e-Journal*, no.3, August 2013, available at: <http://www.asfar.org.uk/neo-ottomanisation-and-old-narratives-representing-modern-turkey-in-the-balkans.html>, retrieved: 22/02/14.

181 *Ibid*.

leader according to the theory, i.e. to the Western standards at least. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that Turkey has potential in both aspects and meets certain criteria; this leads us to consider that they are developing a soft power and a public diplomacy toolbox *alla turca*.





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## Conclusions

We have reached our destination after a journey throughout the hills and valleys of the Turkish soft power and public diplomacy. However this is by no means a final destination as there is a long way to go in the research on soft power and public diplomacy applied to Turkey and other non-Western countries. Soft power and public diplomacy are Western constructions that many countries all over the world have incorporated to their policy-making with various degrees of success when comparing to the ideal model. Turkey is one of those countries. Ankara's awareness of the positive impacts the development of its soft power and public diplomacy potential is recent, which might help us understand partly the shortcomings its soft power and public diplomacy toolboxes have.

As we have seen in this Thesis, Turkey has incorporated in its rhetoric soft power and public diplomacy tools, probably to look more acceptable and sophisticated in the eyes of the Western world and other regions. However it has been struggling with its implementation as if two competing poles were pulling the country to different sides. This clash, the difficulties encountered in the Turkish policy-making process, can be found in all fields, not only in the foreign policy one. Bearing in mind, it is no wonder the contradictions between members of the AKP, but also the gap between rhetoric and praxis are this wide.

"We are a soft power and strong in public diplomacy" is the message that seems to be crying the Turkish authorities to the four winds. The government has indeed taken some steps to meet the general criteria of a soft power; however it has been understood and interpreted by the government in its own way. That is why we may talk about "soft power and public diplomacy *alla turca*." The characteristics of the soft power and public diplomacy *alla turca* are the following:

- Morgenthau claims that a strong diplomacy needs to be based "upon tradition and institutions rather than upon the sporadic appearance of

outstanding individuals”.<sup>182</sup> This is not the case of Turkey. This Thesis has presented throughout all the chapters the weight of the speeches and actions of few leaders of the AKP, how dependent Turkish diplomacy is on them, not on traditions and institutions. Nevertheless it cannot be denied that they have been working in the setting up of some institutions and traditions, although the outcome will not be seen in decades. It might also happen that the institutions and practices they are trying to consolidate do not come off because Turkey’s political climate is becoming increasingly polarised. It would not be too pragmatic to dismantle these structures if a new government were to rise to power, however it is an option that cannot be discarded.

- It is like a wannabe, an ugly duckling, but it might one day become a swan. The Turkish government has been – and is- very ambitious in the creation of soft power and public diplomacy tools, but lacks consistency and resources. One of the main issues is that even the pillar of the Turkish soft power according to the authorities, i.e. democracy, is suffering shortcomings and this trend of taking steps backwards will most likely continue under the current government.
- True, some structures have been set up, i.e. the Office for Public Diplomacy, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related communities; however their structural setting is very weak. They should be revamped if they want to be effective.
- Another proof of their inconsistency is that the Turkish government has criticised in several occasions tools like Twitter and Facebook, but they usually resort to them in order to disseminate information. This hypocrisy went as far as banning Twitter for some weeks in 2014, ban that was lifted when the Turkish Constitutional Court obliged the government to do so. The very same day the prohibition was lifted, on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Office of Public Diplomacy restarted tweeting,<sup>183</sup> and the following day the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>184</sup>
- As it has been shown in the last section, on the Turkish side there is either a lack of understanding or a blatant carelessness of the concerns of the Bosnian Serbs. According to Gözaydın, Ankara is carrying out an “all-inclusive policy and equal-distance policy”.<sup>185</sup> This is obviously not the case. Turkey should

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182 Hans J. Morgenthau, *op.cit.* p. 155-7.

183 OPD’s twitter, available at: <https://twitter.com/TROfficeofPD>, retrieved: 24/04/14.

184 MFA’s twitter, available at: <https://twitter.com/MFATurkey>, retrieved: 01/05/14.

185 İştah Gözaydın, *op.cit.*, p.10.

be aware of the perceptions of the Bosnians and special attention should be paid to the sensitivities surrounding Republika Srpska. Moreover, the AKP should not take for granted that all Bosnian Muslim are unconditioned and innate supporters of Turkey.

- While cultural products such as TV series, broadcasting agencies or the spreading of Turkish language may allure to other ethnic and religious groups, if Turkey wants to see an outcome in terms of foreign policy, the MFA should have some access to those activities, especially to the broadcasting agencies. However, careful planning is crucial for if it was turned into an “immediate foreign policy tool”,<sup>186</sup> the efforts would become a paper tiger. At the same time, the Turkish government might want to switch from the mass communication approach to the “network communication approach” for the latter contributes to the creation of soft power, as Zaharna claims.<sup>187</sup>
- Nye attached great importance to the credibility in the use of soft power in order to make it work. Turkey’s soft power, for the aforementioned characteristics lacks that credibility.<sup>188</sup>

Turkey has capitalized to some extent on the vacuum the EU has left in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However if the EU’s approach towards BiH improved and there were a truly common EU position and if Brussels managed to bring all Bosnian political leaders closer to a consensus on the very much needed new electoral legislation, Turkey would most likely lose ground in political and economic terms. Withal we do not think that the EU will get out of the Bosnian clueless well into which it is swimming anytime soon. In the meanwhile, Turkey will be able to test its soft power and public diplomacy tools in Bosnia more freely. Will it continue developing those tools *alla turca*? Or will they bridge the gap between the rhetoric and the praxis and get closer to the ideal type defined by Western scholars? Only further research and time will tell.

<sup>186</sup> Jan Melissen, *ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>187</sup> Rhonda S. Zaharna, *op.cit.*, p.221.

<sup>188</sup> Joseph S. Nye, “The Future...”, *op.cit.*

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