

BOOK REVIEW

Ebru TURHAN, *German-Turkish Relations Revisited: The European Dimension, Domestic and Foreign Politics and Transnational Dynamics*

(Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2019)

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German-Turkish Relations Revisited: The European Dimension, Domestic and Foreign Politics and Transnational Dynamics

Ebru TURHAN (ed.)

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The relationship between Germany and Turkey has a long history of ups and downs. The membership application of Turkey to the European Union (EU) brought a new dimension to the bilateral relations. The multidimensional nature of the relationship today is more controversial in political, social, and academic spheres. The book edited by Ebru Turhan revisits the German-Turkish relationship through the eyes of leading German and Turkish scholars. The book is divided into three main sections consisting of ten chapters discussing the most prominent topics in multidimensional bilateral relations.

The introduction, written by Turhan, offers a broader picture of the bilateral relations touching upon the turning points of recent years. The relationship is conceptualized as ‘conflictual cooperation’. Cooperation in some areas is accompanied by the simultaneous conflictual situations in other areas. On the other hand, the ‘intermestic nature’ of the relationship helps us to understand how the foreign policy formulations of one country affect the domestic policy of the other one and vice versa. These notions give the reader clues to a better reading of the book.

The first section focuses on the European dimension of the relationship. Funda Tekin and Mirja Schröder elaborate on the process of Turkey’s accession from a historical institutionalist perspective and the role of Germany during that process. In this vein, they put an emphasis on institutions such as the Association Council/Committee, the Customs Union Joint Committee and the Joint Parliamentary Commission in light of EU-Turkey relations on one hand, against the German-Turkish Strategic Dialogue vis-à-vis German-Turkish Relations on the other. Ebru Turhan examines the stance of Germany on the relationship between Turkey and the EU. The changes of Germany’s attitude towards Turkey on its way to the EU membership is examined in the shadow of current global challenges like the Arab Spring, the refugee crisis and the economic crisis. In the history of the Turkish membership process, there are obvious parallels between German-Turkish and the EU-Turkey relations. When the ‘Red-Green coalition’ had a Turkey-friendly stance, Turkey enjoyed a

candidate status with the support of the German government. However, the situation altered slightly with the 'grand coalition' under the chancellorship of Merkel.

For the analysis of the future relationship between Germany and Turkey, Thomas Krümm takes into consideration the Brexit process and underlines the shift of the power axis in the EU in favor of Germany. In this regard, the future of the relationship is drawn with a 'bi- and multilateralistic' approach. Turkey has mainly a bilateral policymaking tradition, whereas the policymaking processes inside the EU is more multilateral. Therefore, it seems plausible that a new form of a partnership can be a good alternative to Turkish membership in the EU. As Krümm states, "Brexit opens doors for a broader variety of 'special relations' between the EU and a range of peripheral non-member states, including Turkey" (p.109). Consequently, this section shows that Germany is a dominant actor in the relationship between Turkey and the EU while also shaping the EU-Germany-Turkey triangle.

The second section deals with the foreign and domestic politics within the framework of German-Turkish relations. Ludwig Schulz uses the concept of 'central power,' developed by Hans-Peter Schwarz (1994), and analyzes the foreign policies of both Germany and Turkey. Germany is aware of its importance for its neighbors and is always ready to take the responsibility as a central power. However, Turkey's role as a central power is more discursive. Simply, as Schulz concludes, "the notion of 'central power' is also what governments make of it" (p.140). Moreover, Ebru Turhan examines the domestication of German foreign policy. Germany acted as a 'reluctant hegemon' to deal with the repercussions of the Eurozone crisis, which was a turning point for the domestication of Germany's European Policy. Instead of making policy from the top down, Merkel preferred a bottom-up formulation with the participation of societal actors and interest groups. The leadership of Germany during the Eurozone crisis has implications for the refugee crisis. Given the EU-Turkey refugee deal, the influence of Germany cannot be denied with regard to the formulation of policy within the EU. The domestication of Germany's European policy goes hand in hand with the domestication of the policy adopted by Germany concerning Turkey. As for the domestication of policies triggered by public opinion, Yaşar Aydın indicates that "68 percent of Germans [are] against a Turkish accession to the EU" (p.182). He outlines several areas of cooperation between two countries including energy, investment, and migration as well as bilateral disputes over various issues. Taking the domestic/foreign policymaking into account, this section demonstrates the intermestic nature of the bilateral relations.

The third section revolves around the transnational space. Deniz Kuru delves into the transnational election campaigns of Turkish political parties in Germany and wider Western Europe, mentioning a 'practice turn' in international relations. Elif Posos Devrani illustrates Germany's integration policy towards Turkish migrants with the help of the media. She provides the theoretical framework to have a better understating of the issue if integration policies can lead to multiculturalism or assimilation. Education is one of the tools used by Germany to integrate Turkish migrants into German society. The educational performance of Turkish immigrants in Germany, with a focus on the second-generation, is examined by Çetin Çelik. The structural conditions, namely the German educational system coupled with socioeconomic challenges, lay behind the low educational performance of the second generation of Turkish migrants. Additionally, in this section, Defne Kadioğlu Polat shows us how the neoliberal urban policies in Berlin have had negative consequences on the Turkish migrants living in Berlin, particularly in the Neuköln area.

Although a variety of issues vis-a-vis German-Turkish relations are examined throughout the book, some issues are repeated in different chapters. This is mainly because each chapter is written by different scholars. Nevertheless, this edited volume consists of different theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the analysis of German-Turkish relations. It addresses not only the domestic/foreign politics of both countries but also offers a broader understating to illustrate the European dimension and the Turkish immigrants in Germany within the framework of global challenges. In this sense, this book has a unique place among academic publications on German-Turkish relations in recent years.