

Netzwerk Turkey Working Paper No. 6:

**Beitrittsprozess - ergebnisoffen oder präjudiziert?
Zur Funktionslogik und Pfadabhängigkeit des Integrationsprozesses der
Türkei in die Europäische Union**

by Johannes Wanner (johannes.wanner@web.de)

Abstract

Johannes Wanner's thesis, entitled "The Accession Process - Open-Ended or Predetermined? On the Functional Logic and Path-Dependency of Turkey's Integration Process in the European Union", is a valuable contribution to the vast literature on Turkish-EU relations. Rather than examining the potential outcome of the accession process, something that countless other works have already done, Wanner examines the workings of the process itself. In examining how both actors and institutions interact to form and guide integration, Wanner offers a convincing and predictive explanation for how the negotiations between Turkey and the EU have developed and how they will continue to develop.

Wanner argues that a combination of actor-oriented institutionalism and path-dependency is the best theoretical framework to understand the integration process. Actors are both constrained by and influence institutions, and the decisions they make constrain the negotiation framework, or "path." This argument is strongly developed from a critical theoretical standpoint and is also illustrated empirically by milestones throughout the 50-year history between Turkey and the EU.

The thesis is recommended for reading, very well organized and optimistic. Wanner concludes by arguing that Turkish accession is nearly inevitable unless a very large external "shock" intervenes in the process. Based on the predictive skills of Wanner's analysis, this outcome seems highly plausible.