# Chapter 12
# Diplomatic Transformation of Series Narrative:
## Velvet Evolution of Representation From Valley of the Wolves to Valley of the Wolves-Ambush

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## ABSTRACT

*In addition to what the studies on the discourse and character modeling of the Valley of the Wolves series say, this chapter argues that there has been a Neo-Ottomanization and religiosity evolution in terms of the discourse and the hero's semiosis. The thesis of this section is that Valley of the Wolves series has evolved in terms of narrative and character since it began to appeal to international target audiences. It is the main assumption of the section that there is a parallel transformation with the public diplomacy practices of the Republic of Türkiye in the process following the fact that the audience groups, especially in Arab geography, Afghanistan and Pakistan, where Islamic influence is dominant, become fans of the Valley of the Wolves. In this section, it is aimed to explain the velvet evolution, which exemplifies the transition from the Republican ideology to the Neo-Ottoman ideology in diplomatic media narratives, through the historical rupture of the Valley of the Wolves.*

## INTRODUCTION

This text reinterprets the process of diplomatic transformation in the narrative/discourse of a television series as 'velvet evolution' with reference to the velvet effect of 'soft power' instrument. Because the narrative of *Valley of the Wolves*, which is constructed with the aim of appealing to the Turkish market as a 'Mafia Series', becomes more politicized as its sphere of influence expands to cross-border areas and the discourses of its new versions begin to resemble the dominant diplomatic discourse. The narrative transition takes place in 'soft' tones and phases, just as it is an instrument of soft power. The series

*Valley of the Wolves: Ambush*, which constructs a political semiology of the world according to the narrative representations of the 'Neo-Ottoman' discourses around which the government's discourse policies have orbited in the last few decades, epistemologically breaks away from the early *Valley of the Wolves* narrative and acts as a trans-media instrument that paves a diplomatic context of consent to Neo-Ottomanist policies. However, the smooth transition that causes us to call this rupture a velvet evolution is the preference for a gradual transition rather than a sharp transition from the *Valley of the Wolves* series to the *Valley of the Wolves: Ambush* series. Because in the narrative/discourse structure of the first seasons of the *Valley of the Wolves* (before *Valley of the Wolves: Iraq*), codes of violence and killing, nationalism, flag, identity, family order, masculinity, respect for traditions, good and bad women were dominant (Gültekin, 2006), while in the last seasons the discourse mode of nationalism shifts from the Republican narrative to the Neo-Ottomanist narrative. Although there is a discourse shift in the deep state-mafia dichotomy that covers the Middle East order, a new discourse is constructed in the series The *Valley of the Wolves: Ambush* that focuses on capital and terrorism, which becomes evident in the state-global order dichotomy. This discourse construction maximizes the political salience of the series and makes it clear that the narrative cannot be reduced to a mafia story. Günerbüyük (2009), as claimed in this text, attempts to confirm the thesis that the *Valley of the Wolves* legitimizes a discourse parallel to the state/government policy, dominant public nationalist discourse and ownership structure.

The influence of *Valley of the Wolves* in the Arab, Balkan and Near Asian geography, which constitutes the scope of nostalgic emulation in the historical hinterland of neo-Ottoman discourses, makes the diplomatic discourse construction of this series more valuable. This text, which aims to explain the relationship between the discourse of the series and the organizations of political discourse through the story of this politicization and 'velvet evolution' towards the diplomatic instrument, also attempts to provide a critical commentary on the trans-mediatic structure and multi-semiotic collaborations of the dominant public discourse.

The main issue of this text is that soap opera narratives/discourses work as ideological devices that reshape/represent historical, geopolitical and diplomatic realities in line with hegemonic purposes and biasedly. The signifiers in the representational world of TV series control the masses' consciousness of historical reality as they are the contexts in which reality is encoded and codified. Therefore, this paper also aims to analyze ideology through a systemic functional approach. While investigating the meaning that emerges through the use of linguistic and visual images in representation, O'Halloran (2008: 443) defines the work of creating layers of content and expression as a system. The dominant discourse, organized by the semiosis in each layer, is assembled as an ideological system assembly in which the parts work in coordination with each other. This text also examines the working principle of multimodal signs by comprehending the systemic construction of the discourse transformed in the transition from *Valley of the Wolves* to *Valley of the Wolves: Ambush* with a systemic functional approach. As an audio-visual cultural force (Jabbour, 2015), *Valley of the Wolves*, which appeals to its viewers over a wide period of time like all TV series due to its genre characteristic, controls the way audiences experience reality and can cause irreparable ruptures in the way the instrumental reason it creates perceives reality. These ruptures, in turn, may cause unpredictable problems in the future of Türkiye's public diplomacy and foreign policy. After all, just as Türkiye has changed its diplomatic discourse in the last quarter century, there is always the possibility of a new paradigm shift according to realpolitik.

Neo-Ottomanism, which is of ideological interest in the *Valley of the Wolves* versions of the text, is a system of historical thought first articulated by David Barchard. Defined as a consciousness of the Ottoman past, which is assumed to be a more influential force in Türkiye than Islam, this ideological

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