

A Constructivist analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy in 1980s and 2000s: The example of Turkey- U.S. Relations

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ABSTRACT

In this study, Turkish foreign policy (FP) during the Özal (1983-1993) and Erdoğan eras (2003-2012) is comparatively analyzed. There are two main motivations in conducting this research. The first one is related to the arguments that the Erdoğan leadership has been pursuing a novel FP line compared to the past experiences of the Turkish Republic. This study suggests that even if it is an advanced form based on a serious theoretical and conceptual ground, the Erdoğan leadership's FP is an extension of Özal leadership's FP line. Considering their common goals to make Turkey first a regional and later a global actor, it is hypothesized that both leaderships have pragmatically evaluated Turkey's potential in accordance with their identity definitions and shaped their FP approaches and practices according to their identity perceptions and paradigms. It is also hypothesized in this respect that similar identities bring about similar FP understandings and practices.

Therefore, the second goal of the dissertation is to employ constructivism with its identity-oriented brand so as to explain Turkish FP in two different time periods. In this context, the social construction processes of both leaderships' identities have been particularly highlighted. Subsequently, the FP approaches and the corresponding FP principles in both eras have been discussed and the impact of identity on their FP understandings as well as policy practices has been studied. With a view to analyzing the reflection of these FP approaches and principles to the practical level, bilateral relations between the USA and Turkey are elaborated with an eye to these two allies' common interests in the Middle East, Balkans and Central Asia. In this manner, while this study seeks to demonstrate the similarities in terms of FP approaches and policy practices of both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships, it aims to explain the differences at the practical level again from a constructivist point of view.

The last goal of this thesis is to make an academic contribution to the literature by suggesting the accuracy of the holistic constructivist approach to explain the FP practices and find out their roots. Holistic constructivism seeks to take the domestic and international as two faces of a single social order and underlines the importance of accommodating all factors affecting the identities and interests of state. Thus, this dissertation proposes that FP of a country, like Turkey, cannot be analyzed only with the role of agents. Even if these agents might be extraordinarily influential, other factors such as structure might be also determining. However, the bottom line here is how the agents see and perceive the structure as well as other determining factors of FP and define the course of FP of their countries.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AK Party or AKP, Justice and Development Party (JDP)
RPP, Republic People's Party (Cumhuriyet HalkPartisi, CHP)
TBMM, Turkish Grand National Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi)
TFP, Turkish Foreign Policy
NO, National Outlook (Movement)
ICO, Islamic Conference Organization
OIC, Organization of the Islamic Conference or Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (since 2011)
EU, the European Union
EC, the European Community
PKK, Kurdistan Workers' Party
PJAK, Free Life Party of Kurdistan
NSC, National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu)
TGS, Turkish General Staff
USA, the United States of America,
NGO, Non-governmental Organizations
SU, the Soviet Union
USSR, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UK, the United Kingdom
UNO, United Nations Organization
UNSC, United Nations Security Council
NATO, North Atlantic Treaty Organization
EOKA, Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (Greek for National Organization of Cypriot Struggle)
DECA, Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement
TRNC, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
PM, Prime Minister
FM, Foreign Minister
FP, Foreign Policy
CM, Council of Ministers
RDF, Rapid Deployment Force
BSEC, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation
ECO, Economic Cooperation Organization
ISAF, International Security Assistance Force
GMEI, Greater Middle East Initiative
KRG, Kurdish Regional Government
TPAO, Turkish State Petroleum Corporation
BTC, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (Pipeline)
BTE, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (Pipeline)
TANAP, Trans Anatolian Gas Pipeline (Project)
NOM, National Outlook Movement (Milli Görüş)
T.b.A., Translated by the Author
ed. edited
Eds. editors
No. number
Vol. volume

INTRODUCTION

Introductory remarks

Election results on 4 Nov 2002 excited many people from various backgrounds for different reasons. Justice and Development Party (or AK Party) won the election and gained a great majority in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM). After a decade-long rule by coalition governments, Turkey was to be administrated finally by a single party government. That was judged by many people as an important opportunity in terms of economic and political stability. Moreover, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the leader of the AK Party, was compared to Turgut Özal, former Prime Minister and the President of Turkish Republic, in many respects in the immediate aftermath of the November election by some prominent figures (like Sakıp Sabancı, a very well known businessman in Turkey) in terms of his expected economic and political performance.¹ After all, between Özal and Erdoğan, along with Adnan Menderes, some parallels have also been drawn by some circles in terms of their strong public support, their democratic election and their significant steps they took on the way of democratization of Turkey, and they have been regarded by many as the chains of democratic tradition in Turkey.² However, since the leader of the newly established AK Party along with its cadres had Islamist credentials in the past, there were deep tensions and questions marks in the minds of many people as to what was going to happen in the aftermath of the November 3 election. Acts and attitudes of some power centers against the AK Party government were themes of curiosity.

Today, long time has passed since the November 3 general election and Turkey has been experiencing a transformation process in many fields, and some even have named it "silent revolution."³ In domestic policy, while reform process has continued speedily with the European Union alignment packages, significant steps have been taken on the way of democratization and de-militarization. Even more importantly, a "settlement process" has been commenced in 2013 by the government with a view to solving Turkey's chronic "Kurdish question." On the other hand, with 5.45 percent average annual growth rates between 2002 and 2012,⁴ an economic boom has been experienced in which, inter alia, the single party government has played a primary role. With high growth rates (in 2004 with 9.9% passed even China⁵), Turkey has been among the fastest growing economies of the

¹ "2. Özal dönemi başlıyor" [The second Özal era begins], **Türkiye**, 04.11.2002, accessed 05.01.2012, <http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/haberdetay.aspx?haberid=157890>

² Taha Akyol, "Menderes ve Özal" [Menderes and Özal], **Hürriyet**, 20.06.2013, accessed 07.07.2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/23545909.asp>. "Menderes'i astınız, Özal'ı zehirlediniz, Erdoğan'ı yedirmeyiz," **Türkiye**, 03.06.2013, accessed 07.07.2013. Taha Uğur Türkmen, *Milletin Adamları*, (İstanbul: Brifing Yayınları, 2008). Hüseyin Yayman, "Turgut Özal ile Tayyip Erdoğan arasındaki on fark," **Vatan**, 06.05.2014, accessed 06.06.2014, <http://haber.gazetevatan.com/turgut-ozal-ile-tayyip-erdogan-arasindaki-on-fark---/634644/4/yazarlar>

³ "Turkey's quiet revolution," **Guardian**, 14.09.2010, accessed 14.7.2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/sep/14/turkey-quiet-revolution-editorial>. Murat Yılmaz and Hamit Emrah Beriş, *Türkiye'nin Demokratik Dönüşümü 2002-2012* [Turkey's Democratic Transformation 2002-2012], Institute of Strategic Thinking, (Ankara: Başak Matbaacılık, 2012). "Erdoğan: Sessiz devrim yaptık" (Erdoğan: We have accomplished a silent revolution), **Hürriyet**, 06.10.2004 accessed 13.07.2014, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=262910>

⁴ "Output&Growth," Association of Treasury Controllers, accessed 26.02.2013, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3432.htm>

⁵ "Dünya büyüme rekoru," **Sabah**, 01.04.2005, accessed 14.07.2014, <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2005/04/01/eko106.html>.

world and attracts attention of international capital as an emerging and developing market. Besides domestic policy and economy, foreign policy field also constitutes another important side of the transformation process in Turkey.

Unlike its traditional “reactive” foreign policy line shaped traditionally and basically around three principles; namely, westernization, maintaining the status quo and legality,⁶ Turkey has been pursuing a relatively more active and diversified foreign policy in the recent decade. In this respect, AK Party's foreign policy in the 2000s has been regarded by a number of observers as a "new" policy line.⁷ Despite the serious novelties in the AK Party foreign policy however, the situation must be judged carefully. If someone qualifies it "new" by considering the Kemalist era⁸ of Turkish foreign policy (TFP) as a point of reference, this can be a consistent argument. However, since there are serious similarities of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships⁹ foreign policy understandings, it seems hard to make the same assessment, if one takes the Özal era as a reference point. Moreover, one might judge that foreign policy approach of the Erdoğan leadership seems in a great sense the extension of the Turgut Özal period. Undoubtedly, it is not possible to claim that both leaderships pursued exactly the same foreign policy. Yet, considering their paradigms, foreign policy principles, their strong leaderships and even their foreign policy practices, there are a number of commonalities leading to the perception that they both are nourished from the same source, namely similar identity definitions. Hence, it seems in this sense difficult to describe the current TFP "new." Consequently, today's multidimensional and active foreign policy reminds the foreign policy characteristics of the Turgut Özal's era, who played essential roles in the foreign policy making process of Turkey as Prime Minister between 1983 and 1989 and particularly as President between 1989 and 1993.

The AK Party government, which has been pursuing a policy to improve the collaboration, first with the neighboring states and with the states with which it has regionally, economically, and historically important connections, considers that Turkey's economic and political problems can be tackled by following a reconciliation oriented multidimensional

⁶ Baskın Oran, “Türkiye Kabuk Değiştirirken AKP'nin Dış Politikası” (AK Party's foreign policy while Turkey alters her crust) *Birikim* 184-185 (2004), accessed 14.07.2014, <http://www.birikimdergisi.com/birikim//dergiyazi.aspx?did=1&dsid=167&dvid=2865>

⁷ Graham E.Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey As A Pivotal State in The Muslim World*, (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2008). Mesut Özcan and Ali Resul Usul, " Understanding The ‘New’ Turkish Foreign Policy: Changes Within Continuity, Is Turkey Departing From The West?" *USAK Yearbook of International Politics and Law* 4 (2011): 159-185.

⁸ The term "Kemalists" in this study is used for the elite groups of Turkey who place Atatürk's, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, principles and reforms in the center of their state philosophy and who ideologically adopt Atatürk's principles such as Westernization, secularism and peace at home, peace in the world (non-interferenism) also in the field of foreign policy. Represented predominantly by the bureaucracy, the military, the judiciary and the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP), this group sees secular nationalism as the main vehicle for Turkey's modernization. See Hakan Yavuz, "Turkish-Israeli Relations through the Lens of the Turkish Identity Debate," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXVII/1 (1997): 23

⁹ The concepts of "Özal leadership" and "Erdoğan leadership" refer not only to the personal foreign policy understandings of Turgut Özal and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Even though both leaders have played major roles in determining TFP in their respective periods due to their strong leaderships and their special interest in the foreign policy field, their foreign policy approach and practices have been affected by their close political environment as well as by their advisors. For instance, in shaping and practicing the foreign policy of the Erdoğan leadership, the Davutoğlu factor has had an undeniable role. Likewise, Özal preferred to work with a group of advisors in defining and applying his foreign policy approach. Therefore, the "leadership" concept refers in this dissertation to the leader and his close working group regarding the FP field, such as FM, advisors, the close associates in politics and the chief of intelligence.

foreign policy and by opening Turkey to the world.¹⁰ Whereas, due to fundamentally security concerns and the threat perceptions stemming especially from the neighboring countries, TFP was security oriented and conflictive in the 1990s,¹¹ the AK Party government has endeavored in the new millennium to develop its relations with neighbors both economically and politically (which was condensed in the slogan of “Zero Problem Policy with Neighbors”).¹² Moreover, the AK Party government demonstrates an effort to cooperate more closely with China, Russia and Japan, which have important places in the world regarding their economic and military powers, first in economy and in every field within the framework of multidimensional foreign policy. Additionally, with new foreign policy openings, there have been endeavors to improve and deepen the relations with the countries in the Black Africa and South Asia, which had been neglected before by Turkish diplomacy.¹³

Even though it has been occasionally stalled, European Union (EU) membership perspective still remains at the top of the TFP priorities.¹⁴ Furthermore, the EU membership perspective had strong influences on the foreign policy behaviors of Turkey until recently. The EU process which encourages the “good neighborhood” perspective to solve the problems with neighbors in peaceful ways played a crucial role in Turkey’s behavior to stay away from conflictive policies and normalize its relations with neighbors. In addition, Turkey strove to fix its image in the international arena as a “solution” producing country, but not crisis.¹⁵ Signs of this policy were simply visible in the attitudes of Turkey towards the Cyprus issue. Despite the strong impact of the EU norms on TFP making until recently, how they began to be eroded will be in this dissertation's concern.

On the other hand, Turkey experienced tension in its relations with the US. While Turkey had strong relations with the US and Israel in 1990s, bilateral ties deteriorated after the Turkish Parliament's refusal in 2003 to allow American troops to pass through its territory for the invasion of Iraq and the intensity of the relations has weakened. This occasion showed that assumptions about Turkey should have been reevaluated and Turkey’s assumed role as anchor of NATO’s southern flank cannot be taken for granted any longer.¹⁶ Furthermore,

¹⁰ Kemal İnat and Burhanettin Duran “AKP Dış Politikası: Teori ve Uygulama” (AKP Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice,” in Doğudan Batıya Dış Politika AK Parti’li Yıllar, (Foreign policy from the West to the East: AK Party years) ed. by Zeynep Dağı, (Ankara: Pozitif Matbaacılık, 2006), 15-16.

¹¹ In the most part of 1990s, Turkish foreign policy was dominated by the military and civil bureaucracy, namely Generals and the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They were viewing Turkey’s foreign relations through the lenses of national security and perceiving threats to Turkey’s territorial integrity and unity emanating from neighboring regions, including Northern Iraq. “During this period, Turkey came close to a military confrontation with Greece in 1996, as well as with Syria in 1998. Furthermore, Turkey threatened Cyprus in 1997 with military action if Russian S-300 missiles were to be deployed on the island. There were also threats of use of force made against Iran, and relations with Russia were particularly strained. Relations with an important part of the Arab world were foul, aggravated by an exceptionally intimate military relationship with Israel.” Kemal Kirişçi, “The transformation of Turkish foreign policy: The rise of the trading state,” *New Perspectives on Turkey* 40, (2009): 31.

¹² Oleg Svet, “Turkey’s “Zero Problem” Foreign Policy: An Untenable Balancing Act,” *The Institute for Global Leadership, Tufts University, NIMEP Insights. Vol.2. (Spring 2006),* accessed 09.10.2010, http://www.tuftsgloballeadership.org/NIMEP/insights/II/INSIGHTS06_Svet.pdf.

¹³ İnat and Duran, *AKP Dış politikası*, 16. For a short review of recent developments in Turkish foreign policy see also: *The Economist* “Turkey: International relations and defense,” last modified June 8, 2005.

¹⁴ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkish Foreign Policy and the EU in 2010,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Volume 8, Number 3, (Fall 2009): 11-17.

¹⁵ Dağı, *Doğudan Batıya*, 9. İnat and Duran, *AKP Dış Politikası*, 16.

¹⁶ For detailed information concerning Turkey’s foreign policy opportunities and their risks see: F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, “Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty,” Santa Monica, CA, RAND National Security Research Division, (2003).

strategic partnership was questioned in Ankara and Washington and both sides embarked on a new process to define mutually the meaning both allies have for each other.¹⁷ Fight against the separatist terrorist organization PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party), the northern Iraq problem, and the civil war in Syria as well as the so-called “Armenian genocide” issue in the American Congress seems the most influential factors on the Turkish-US relations in the mid-term.

Today, one of the major figures concerning TFP making, Ahmet Davutoğlu¹⁸ gives some clues with regard to the paradigm change in TFP. He gathers the new strategy on foreign policy under two titles¹⁹. Firstly, he defines Turkey as a “Central State” which is neither in the periphery of the European Union nor in the periphery of the Middle East. Accordingly, Turkey is in the crossroads of the continents, but it is also a centre mainly due to its geographical and historical links (stemming from basically its Ottoman heritage).²⁰ Contrary to other states in the region, Turkey is Middle Eastern and Balkan, Caucasus, Black Sea and Mediterranean state. For instance, Greece’s history or Serbia’s history or Iraq’s history cannot be written without Turkey. Moreover, anything around Turkey cannot be understood without it.²¹ Its cultural, political and economic borders are far wider than its political borders and it cannot be confined to its current political boundaries. Therefore, it has to develop transfrontier policies.²²

Secondly, today, Turkey cannot be defined any more with the regional power discourse of the Cold War era. It is a “central state” and moving forward on the way of becoming a global power. Globalization and external factors have changed Turkey’s position so dramatically that Turkey cannot survive any longer with the status quo. It cannot follow an isolation policy. This is why Turkey has to follow an active and multidimensional foreign policy. If it tries to isolate itself, it might encounter the danger of separation with internal discussions and tensions.²³

¹⁷ Michel Rubin, “Shifting Sides? The problems of neo-Ottomanism,” National Review online, August 10, 2004 accessed 14.07.2014, <http://www.meforum.org/628/shifting-sides>.

¹⁸ Formerly the chief foreign policy advisor to Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and today the Foreign Minister of Turkey

¹⁹ Speech of Ahmet Davutoğlu “New Horizons and New Opportunities in Turkish Foreign Policy, Industrialists and Businessmen’s Association (MÜSİAD), Istanbul, accessed 06.05.2011, <http://www.musiad.org.tr/detay.asp?id=156>

²⁰ Some sport events provide good examples with respect to the historical ties between Turkey and some Balkan nations which remained under Ottoman governance for centuries. For instance, when Turkey beat Croatia in Euro 2008 quarter-finals, conflicts occurred in the city of Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) between Croatians and Bosnians who supported Turkey. "Bosna'da Hırvatlar Türkleri tutan Müslümanlara Saldırdı," **Sabah**, 22.06.2008, accessed 23.06.2008, http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2008/06/22/haber_D35C05255273436D91BCA024A115813C.html. Likewise, when Turkey beat Serbia in 2010 World Basketball Championship, this time conflicts took place in Kosovo between Serbians and Albanians who favored Turks against Serbians. “Ethnic clash in Kosovo after Serb basketball defeat,” **BBC**, 12.09.2010, accessed 13.09.2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11274357>. In fact, these two and other similar examples are interestingly illustrating the historical and cultural ties between Turkey and Bosnians, Albanians and Kosovans who favors Turkish national teams in international sports events passionately.

²¹ Ahmet Davutoğlu Küresel Bunalım (Global Depression), (Istanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2002), 191. For more detailed information on the paradigm change in Turkish foreign policy see also: Ahmet Davutoğlu Stratejik Derinlik (Strategic Depth), (Istanbul: Küre yayınları, 2001).

²² *Ibid.*, 178-179.

²³ *Ibid.*, 156

In fact, the "central state" concept and Ahmet Davutoğlu's vision which have been adopted by the AK Party government to a great extent reveal a paradigm shift in TFP understanding in comparison to the Kemalist era. One of the basic aims of this dissertation is to explain the reason of this change in Ankara's foreign policy approach with a constructivist approach. In doing this, while not denying the importance of the external factors, such as international political context and norms, it is argued with a constructivist approach that AK Party's identity definition as well as its definition of interest which is described in conformity with identity definition has a very decisive role in the definition of the course of current TFP.

On the other hand, considering the history of Turkish diplomacy, one would realize that the foreign policy of the AK Party government is quite analogous to the foreign policy pursued during the Turgut Özal era. Özal followed also a rather active and diversified foreign policy, despite the established foreign policy practices of his predecessors to the contrary. His approach to foreign relations was characterized by his willingness to depart from traditional policies, to take calculated risks and to search for new alternatives and options.²⁴ Unlike his predecessors, he followed a peaceful policy with Turkey's historical, geographical and cultural connections. A considerable part of ethnic elements composing the Ottoman Empire and their connections abroad returned to the TFP. Thus, his special interest to the territories formerly ruled by Ottomans reminded "neo-Ottomanism."²⁵

Furthermore, just like the AK Party leadership, he was the first Turkish statesman who did not hesitate to stress the "Islamic" dimension of the Turkish national identity. He evaluated Turkey, besides European, as a Middle Eastern country and tried to improve relations with the Muslim world as well as with the Middle Eastern states. Özal sought to improve relations with, as the AK Party government has been doing recently, the neighboring countries mostly out of economic concerns. In this respect, despite the strong objections from opposition groups, he started a dialogue with Greece in Davos, in 1989. Moreover, he pursued a very active and pro-US foreign policy during the Gulf War in 1991²⁶, and did not hesitate to take initiative and use Turkey's influence so as to reshape the Middle Eastern politics.²⁷

One should also note that economic concerns played a crucial role in the foreign policy decisions of Özal who adopted liberal foreign trade and aimed at opening Turkey to the world. He viewed the foreign policy as an element serving to the economic interests. Hence, his attempts to pursue an active and multidimensional foreign policy and efforts to improve relations with neighboring states and other states ranging from the US to the EC/EU as well as to the Muslim countries can be judged, in part, within this context. Besides, according to the foreign policy paradigm of Özal, Turkey should have firstly enhanced the economic cooperation in its region, increased "the mutual dependence" and in this way minimized the risks of conflict. Within that framework, he pioneered some regional economic cooperation

²⁴ Sabri Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," *The Middle East Journal* 46/1 (Winter 1992): 18.

²⁵ Sedat Laçiner "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," *The journal of Turkish Weekly*, January 2011, accessed 11.09.2012, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/turkce/makale.php?id=7>.

²⁶ With "Gulf Crisis" and "Gulf War," I mean throughout the study the crisis and the subsequent war between the US-led coalition forces and Iraq. The crisis started in August 1990 with the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq and ended on 28 February 1991 with the liberation of Kuwait by coalition forces. The term should not be mixed with another war took place also in the Persian Gulf region between Iraq and Iran and lasted from September 1980 to August 1988.

²⁷ Berdal Aral, "Dispensing with tradition? Turkish politics and international society during the Özal decade, 1983-93," *Middle Eastern Studies* 37/1, (Jan 2001): 84.

organizations such as Black sea Economic Collaboration Organization (BSEC).²⁸ Likewise, AK Party government set also the economic concerns at the top of its foreign policy priorities. Therefore, it has been a significant common point for Özal and Erdoğan leaderships that they both attach great importance to the economic concerns in foreign relations.²⁹ Consequently, in view of these and other qualities of Özal leadership's foreign policy approach, Erdoğan leadership's foreign policy seems an extension of the Özal era.

In sum, contributing to an understanding of current TFP, which has been recently shaped in accordance with the “Central State” concept, “multidimensional-diversified foreign policy”, “zero problem”, active versus passive foreign policy, reconciliation oriented versus conflict oriented foreign policy and “win-win” concepts, is an important concern of this dissertation. It is argued at this point that the transformation viewed in TFP in the last decade can be more easily comprehended with constructivism, particularly with its identity-oriented brand. Besides, as I argue that foreign policy understandings of Özal and Erdoğan eras seem quite analogues, a comparison of current foreign policy with Özal’s period will provide a good chance for better understanding of the prevailing foreign policy of Turkey as to whether AK Party foreign policy is really new or in the quality of being an extension of the Özal's foreign policy approach. In doing this, I also hope to show the explanatory power of constructivist arguments in foreign policy making.

Assumptions

I assume in this study that TFP makers' foreign policy paradigms and their policy practices are deeply influenced how they see the world through their lenses. One cannot understand properly the new Turkish government’s foreign policy choices without examining its identity and the process of identity construction which provides the lenses to the government executive through which they are seeing the world. From a constructivist point of view, while their identities and their corresponding interests are constructed by social structures, they reproduce also those structures with their interactions.

Some scholars, such as Hüseyin Bağcı and Ahmet Davutoğlu, persuasively suggest that transformation of international diplomacy, globalized world and the changes in the international structure have a primary role in the “active” foreign policy practices of current Turkish government. Accordingly, the unusual activity in the Turkish diplomacy stems from the international conjuncture and Turkey has had to adapt itself to the new conditions in the international environment. In the face of the accelerated world diplomacy, Turkey would not be able to pursue its usual ‘passivist’ and status quo oriented foreign policy.³⁰ Though this might explain the issue in part, it fails to see the whole picture.

At this stage, one should not forget that in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, Turkey initially tried to adapt itself to the post-Cold War international structure mostly with the efforts of President Turgut Özal. However, when he died in 1993, Turkey came once again under the influence of a reactive political understanding instead of a "visionary" one owing to, along with other domestic economic and political problems, the new Turkish policy

²⁸ Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi," see the title of “Ekonomi Merkezli Dış Politika.”

²⁹ Kirişçi describes Turkish foreign policy in both Özal and Erdoğan eras with the concept of “trading state.” Kemal Kirişçi, “The transformation of Turkish foreign policy: The rise of the trading state,” *New Perspectives on Turkey* 40, (2009): 29-57.

³⁰ Hüseyin Bağcı, “Dünya Gündemi Programı” (World Agenda Program), TV5, 30.3.2007. See Davutoglu, *Küresel Bunalım*.

makers' "weltanschauung"³¹ who received their trainings under the circumstances of the Cold War. Here the main thing to be considered, in spite of the changes in the international conjuncture, how the ruling elite perceive and interpret the world is quite significant in the definition of foreign policy of a country.

Therefore, one should not neglect the effect of TFP makers' identity, its construction process and its impacts on Turkey's foreign policy. One should count on the identity formation process of the AK Party leadership, whose origins lie mostly in the Islamist Welfare Party. Notwithstanding the transformation process they went through, in which they "have taken off their National Outlook hat"³² and adopted western values such as democracy and free market economy as an integral part of their identity, I still propose that their "Weltanschauung" is not totally value free from their past. In contrast, it is to a certain extent influential, and their view towards the Islamic world as well as the Middle Eastern countries is not the same as the Kemalist TFP makers. Actually, it is hard to claim that they clearly prioritize the Islamic world in TFP, however, they contact with them at least without prejudices.³³ Therefore, without examining the lenses through which the Turkish government see the world and perceive it, one cannot grasp the whole issue.

To illustrate the point with an example, whereas there is no significant change in one of the main principles of TFP, westernism, to observe, there is a clear shift in the meaning attributed to it. For instance, while the AK Party government has not stepped back from Turkey's westernization project, it has not perceived westernization project as turning its back to the Muslim and Middle Eastern countries as it was mostly the case in the periods when the Kemalist foreign policy understanding was dominant in Ankara. Instead, while maintaining Turkey's westernization, it has sought to foster Turkey's ties with Muslim and Middle Eastern countries by pursuing a multidimensional foreign policy. Looking from a different angle actually, in terms of material elements, neither Turkey's neighbors, nor the Muslim world have changed. However, along with the change in the international conjuncture, the ruling AK Party's identity definition and its lenses through which it has been seeing the world has brought about the consequence of regarding these countries with a different paradigm. For instance, whereas Iran had been a neighbor to be distanced from in the Kemalist era owing to its potential regime export to Turkey, it has been regarded by the AK Party government yet as a neighbor with which the Turks has been sharing a common border and cultural elements for several centuries. Moreover, rewards of a potential cooperation for both countries have been appraised well and with this understanding a significant progress has been achieved in bilateral relations of Turkey and Iran particularly in the economic field. From a constructivist point of view, while Iran has remained nearly the same considering its material power, the ideational meaning attached to it has changed. The main reason of this change lies mostly in the new identity definition of the new foreign policy makers and the new interest perceptions described in accordance with their identities.

Regarding the question of why I have chosen as the time frame Erdoğan and Özal leaderships' eras, in fact, it is evident that there were in Özal leadership's era as well as Erdoğan government's time some deviations from traditional "passivist" (status quo oriented) TFP. With respect to the AK Party foreign policy approach, as noted above, although some

³¹ This originally German word is substituted for "world-view" in English.

³² Yusuf Kanli, "AKP puts on the 'national shirt,'" **Hürriyet Daily News**, 03.05.2009, accessed 05.04.2010, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/opinion/11568446.asp?yazarid=311&gid=260> . Ekrem Dumanlı, "Is the AKP a follower of (Erbakan's) National View?" **Today's Zaman**, 23.08.2007, accessed 25.08.2009, http://www.todayszaman.com/columnistDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=120138.

³³ Bülent Aras and Pınar Akpınar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Davutoğlu Dönemi: 2009 Değerlendirmesi," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yılığ* 2009, ed. Burhanettin Duran et.al, (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011): 24.

claim that it is highly relevant to the structure; I assume that besides structure, it is also heavily influenced by AK Party executive's identity and interest definitions which has been shaped throughout their interactions with national and international society.

Furthermore, those who follow Turkish media and public discussions might easily see that analogies are commonly drawn between the Özal and Erdoğan eras, including the foreign policy field. Their common points might be summarized as follows:

- Özal and Erdoğan are both known as “devout Muslims.”
- Turkey experienced substantial reforms in the Özal’s era and similarly has been experiencing considerable reforms in the Erdoğan’s era too. For instance, liberalization of Turkish foreign trade, opening to the world and export oriented development model were initiated by Özal and they have been increasingly adopted by the Erdoğan leadership. Likewise, both leaderships have advocated the boldest democratic arguments that Turkish history ever witnessed on the Kurdish question.
- It seems that there is certain continuity between Özal’s and Erdoğan’s foreign policy approaches. For instance, they both share multidimensional-diversified and proactive foreign policy understanding,³⁴ and aim to establish good relations with the neighboring states.³⁵ Furthermore, both leaders aimed to make Turkey first a regional and later a global actor. In order to achieve this goal, both leaderships have pragmatically evaluated Turkey's potential in accordance with their identity definitions and shaped their foreign policy approaches and practices accordingly. In this respect, they have sought pragmatically to utilize Turkey’s geopolitical, cultural and historical affinities as well as its existing ties with the west to make Turkey a global player.
- During both leaderships' eras, Turkish economy indicated considerable growths and TFP was characterized in both eras as a policy of a "trading state".³⁶ Furthermore, there is a very important common point in the foreign policy vision of both leaderships: creating a welfare circle by strengthening the economic ties in the region and thereby contributing to the peace and stability in the region. In this manner, they both aim to provide assistance to the economic development of Turkey and having a voice in world politics.³⁷

³⁴ As it will be discussed in the coming chapters, just like for Erdoğan leadership, multi-dimensional foreign policy lies at the heart of Özal leadership's foreign policy understanding. Özal articulated this fact while he was reading the 45th governmental program in the Turkish Parliament in 1983: "We regard our existing ties with the West and our close relations with the Middle East and the Muslim World as complementary elements of our foreign policy. Turkey's geographical location which forms a natural bridge between the West and the Middle East on the one hand and its common historical and cultural legacy on the other, requires it to attach a great importance to the Islamic world. In this respect, we will demonstrate a special effort to develop good relations with the Muslim world based on reciprocity and further enhance an efficient cooperation." (T.b.A.) 45th Government Program headed by Prime Minister Turgut Özal, T.B.M.M.gov.tr., 13.12.1983, accessed 18.09.2010, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/kutuphane/e_kaynaklar_kutuphane_hukumetler.html

³⁵ Kirişçi argues that one of the reasons behind Turkey’s foreign policy change during the 2000s was “The legacy of Turgut Özal’s policies, which emphasized the importance of interdependence and economic relations as well as the interests of a growing vibrant export-oriented sector in Turkey...” Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," European Union Institute for Security Studies, Chaillot Paper: 92, (Paris, September 2006): 29., accessed 29.10.2010, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp092.pdf>

³⁶ Kirişçi, “The transformation”

³⁷ Özdem Sanberk, retired ambassador and the Director of International Strategic Research Organization (USAK), articulated a common point of Özal and Davutoğlu visions in a TV program with these sentences:

- Both leaders attached a great importance to personal relationships as it was materialized in the relations between Turgut Özal-George W. Bush (the father) and R. Tayyip Erdoğan-Barack Obama.³⁸

- Both Özal and Erdoğan are the leaders with high self confidence. With respect to this self confidence, the common point of reference for both leaders is largely Turkey's history, particularly the glorious periods of Ottomans-Seljuks. As a matter of fact, this self-confidence has reflected to their foreign as well as internal political understandings. In terms of domestic politics, both leaders have viewed Turkey's Ottoman past as a point of reference for the settlement of internal troubles, the Kurdish question and the minority rights in particular. Accordingly, neither the Kurds nor the other minority groups were faced with a problem or blockade while they learn and teach their mother tongue and cultures.³⁹ As the descendants of such a nation, Turkey should also enjoy the self confidence that the Ottomans carried and should not abstain from granting their cultural rights to the ethnic and minority groups living in the country.⁴⁰ In terms of foreign policy, due to the common history with the nations which live in the territories once dominated

"Year 1985, 1986. What (Turgut Özal) himself said and I personally witnessed was entirely the same what today foreign minister (Ahmet Davutoğlu) says. He (Özal) said that political borders did not matter much; the matter is removing the economic borders. Then Turkey had not yet applied for the EU membership. The Soviet Union had not been dissolved and the Cold War had been continuing. This removal of borders issue is actually a vision and this vision has been existing in Turkey for a long time..." (T.b.A.) İskele Sancak TV Program, Kanal7 (Channel 7), 29.03.2013. On the other hand, Ahmet Davutoğlu articulated Turkey's historical ties and what they mean today with these words: "If we are going to be among the first 10 economies of the world in 2023, we must overcome the border walls around us. Why is it necessary to meet with those that we share a common history? If we are going to be among the top 10 economies of the world and the remaining nine countries are 7-10 times bigger than Turkey, how are we going to get out of them? What we need to do is to remove the borders around Turkey. Turkey should integrate with its own hinterland." (T.b.A.) "Ahmet Davutoğlu 'nun büyük hayali" [The big dream of Ahmet Davutoğlu], **Haber7**, 31.03.2013, accessed 14.07.2014, <http://www.haber7.com/ic-politika/haber/1008559-ahmet-davutoglundun-buyuk-hayali>

³⁸ Bülent Aliriza and Bülent Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning of the Third Decade of the Post-Cold War Era," A Joint Report by Center for Strategic Research (SAM) and Center for Strategic&International Studies (CSIS), (November 2012): 7.

³⁹ For detailed information about the Ottoman Nation System see, İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Barışı (Pax Ottomana)*, (Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2007)

⁴⁰ A widely used expression by Prime Minister Erdoğan on this subject is "those who are confident of their belief would not be afraid of freedom of religion." In this context, PM Erdoğan has made a call for return to the minority groups such as Greeks, Assyrians and Armenians who were forced to live Turkey through the ways like population exchange in the aftermath of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. This call gets its reference from the "Ottoman tolerance." PM Erdoğan explains his self-confidence with these sentences: "We are a great nation... And a great nation should easily do the honorable thing itself. I always say. In terms of freedoms, we will not be afraid of freedom of religion, if we trust our belief. If we trust our thought, we won't be afraid of freedom of thought.... We are on a good track. Whatever they say, we are a big country. We must read the history well. And we (will) stand up with the vigour given to us, to our mental roots by our history from the same point where we fell." (T.b.A.) Interview with R.Tayyip Erdoğan by Taha Akyol et al. in Turkish TV Channel CNNTÜRK, 29.03.2013, "Erdoğan son noktayı koydu: 'Silahsız çekil', **CNNTÜRK**, 30.03.2013, accessed 01.04.2013, <http://www.cnnturk.com/2013/guncel/03/29/erdogan.noktayı.koydu.silahsız.çekil/702199.0/index.html>

PM Erdoğan expresses in his address of "on the way of serving the nation" the motive of the self-esteem that Turkey should possess with the following words: "We are not an ordinary nation. We are the citizens of the Republic of Turkey which was established on the remnants of the Great Seljuk as well as the Ottoman World Empires, which carry the legacy and experience of Seljuks and Ottomans, and most importantly carry their soul and excitement in the hearts." (T.b.A.) "Erdoğan: Serimden dahi geçmeye hazırım," **CNNTÜRK**, 31.03.2013, accessed 01.04.2013, <http://www.cnnturk.com/2013/turkiye/03/31/erdogan.serimden.dahi.gecmeye.hazirim/702388.0/index.html>

by the Ottoman Empire, Turkey carries a responsibility towards these nations and thus it is obliged to take care of their troubles.⁴¹

- In order to solve some of the chronic problems of Turkey, both leaders took 'bold' steps and took big risks. This actually indicates that neither Özal nor Erdoğan hesitate to assume risk if they deem it necessary with regards to deviating from the accustomed/tabooed policies.⁴² For instance, considering Turgut Özal's era, he was the person who started the controversial 'Davos spirit' with Greece, who displayed a strong pro-United States approach in the Gulf War, who was eager to "liberate" Turkey from the Cyprus question "impediment" in foreign relations and who wanted to use hard-power instruments in the Armenian-Azerbaijani war. Considering Erdoğan's era on the other hand, the Annan Plan which was prepared with the aim of solving the Cyprus question, Erdoğan leadership's pro-U.S. attitude when Washington demanded to use Turkish territory to invade Iraq and the "Armenian opening" were the politically risky steps taken by the Erdoğan leadership. Last but not least, the most radical steps with respect to the settlement of the Kurdish question were taken under the administration of these leaders. Both leaders' personal traits in question reflected also to their political approaches and their words. Özal's foreign policy understanding was based on his determination "to depart from established policies, to take calculated risks, and to search for new alternatives..."⁴³ Erdoğan, on the other hand, says: "Doing politics is taking risk. I go even further, life itself is a risk. Unless you take this risk, it is not possible to reach a conclusion."⁴⁴

Theoretical framework

This study argues that constructivism and its arguments are considerably explanatory for the comprehension and explanation of Turkish FP in 1980s and 2000s. Throughout the study, constructivism and its arguments will be utilized to explain the developments in TFP more generally and in the relations between Turkey and the United States of America more specifically. Therefore, in order to provide a theoretical frame, while leaving the details of it to the next chapter, a brief introduction to constructivism would be useful for the progress of the study. In doing this, I hope also to provide a basis why I have chosen constructivism for my study.

Since the end of the Cold War, the debates in the international relations field⁴⁵ have

⁴¹ See Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*. For Özal's feelings of responsibility towards the nations which share a common Ottoman history with Turkey, e.g. Bosnians, see: Cengiz Çandar, "Kentler ve Gölgele Belgeseli, **TRTTÜRK**, 14.03.2013, accessed 05.06.2013, <http://kentlervegolgeler.tumblr.com/page/5>

⁴² When Hüsnü Doğan, who served as a close colleague of Turgut Özal and worked as Minister in Özal governments, was asked to draw a comparison between Turgut Özal and R. Tayyip Erdoğan, he answers: "Özal was bold. So is Mr. Tayyip. They both do whatever they set their mind on. Yet Özal used to give more initiative-authority to his colleagues. Mr. Tayyip on the other hand exhibits a "one-man" image more than Özal." (T.b.A) Yavuz Donat, "Özal ve Tayyip Bey," **Sabah**, 18.04.2011, accessed 01.04.2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Yazarlar/donat/2011/04/18/ozal-ve-tayyip-bey>.

⁴³ Sayari, "Turkey," 18. Mehmet Barlas, *Turgut Özal'ın Anıları* (Turgut Özal's Memories), (İstanbul: Birey Yayıncılık, 4.Baskı, 2001), 128-130.

⁴⁴ "Erdoğan'dan önemli açıklamalar," **Hürriyet**, 25.02.2013, accessed 26.02.2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/22680640.asp>

⁴⁵ For the general lines of the debates among the IR theorists see: Junita Elias and Peter Sutch, *International Relations: The Basics*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 7-21. Yosef Lapid, "The third debate: on the prospects of international theory in post-positivist era," *International Studies Quarterly* 33 (3) (1989), 235-254.

been replaced by two novel debates: between rationalists and constructivists, and between constructivists and critical theorists. In the end, Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane and Stephen Krasner suggested that the main division in the field of international relations is likely to be between rationalists and constructivists.⁴⁶ The reason for that shift was the strong ascendance of constructivist approach (whose basic concern was about how world politics is socially constructed) to international relations theory.⁴⁷ Eventually, in the constructivist sense, the centre of discussions shifted from objects to meanings. That is, on behalf of discussing states and interstate structures, debates commenced to focus on how key concepts such as 'states', 'structures', and 'patterns' are constructed.⁴⁸

Constructivism as a term was initially introduced in the international relations literature by Nicholas Onuf in his work of "World of our making" (1989). In fact, constructivists do not define constructivism as a new theory trying to understand international relations; instead, it is called a new approach to the description of the world. It is simply a re-description of the world, an alternative ontology.⁴⁹ As Onuf puts it⁵⁰: "Constructivism does not offer general explanations for what people do, why societies differ, how the world changes. Instead, constructivism makes it feasible to theorize about matters that seem to be unrelated because the concepts and propositions normally used to talk about such matters are also unrelated".

Constructivists focus basically on the issue of human consciousness in international life: the role it plays and the implications for the logic and methods of inquiry of taking it seriously. They consider that international reality is both material and ideational; that ideational factors have both normative and instrumental dimensions; that ideational factors depict not only individual but also collective intentionality; and that the meaning and significance of ideational factors are not independent of time and place.⁵¹

The following "rock-bird" metaphor provides an excellent framework with respect to the utility of constructivism which defines things neither fixed nor given, but views them changeable according to their intersubjective formation. Throwing a rock and a bird into the air will have distinctive implications. Whereas the rock will make only a simple response to the external physical forces acting on it, the bird's behavior (where it flies) will, despite the same physical forces acting on the bird as on the rock, will be dependent on the internal information processing which takes place inside the bird. As such, if a nation or a group of people, metaphorically, tossed in to the air, where they go, why, how and when will be neither just a result of physical forces or constraints; nor an outcome of individual preferences. Their behavior will be also determined by their shared knowledge, the collective meanings, norms, rules and so forth.⁵²

⁴⁶ Fearon, James and Alexander Wendt, "Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View." In *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. by Walter Carlsnaes et al. (London: Sage, 2002), 52.

⁴⁷ Christian Reus-Smit, "Constructivism," in *Theories of International Relations*, ed. Scot Burchil et al., (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 188. Torbjorn L. Knutsen, *A History of International Relations Theory*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 278-279.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 278.

⁴⁹ Vendulka Kub'alkov'a, Nicholas Onuf and Paul Kowert, *International Relations in a Constructed World*, (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), XII.

⁵⁰ Nicholas Onuf, "Constructivism: A User's Manual," in *International Relations in a Constructed World*, ed. Vendulka Kub'alkov'a et al., (New York, M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 58.

⁵¹ John Gerard Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," *International Organization* 52, 4 (Autumn 1998): 878.

⁵² Emanuel Adler, "Siezing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol 3, no:3 (September 1997): 320-321.

Thus, the main divergent features of constructivism seem in the realm of ontology (what is that we know?), the real-world phenomena. Constructivists deal first with the identities and interests of states and endeavor to show how they have been socially constructed. They argue that identities and, consequently, interests are constituted in part by international interaction-both the generic identities of states qua states and their specific identities.⁵³

In a nutshell, in terms of the structures of the states system, there are both material and cultural elements. In very general terms, constructivists give priority to cultural over material structures on the grounds that actors act on the basis of meanings that objects have for them, and meanings are socially constructed. For instance, a gun in the hands of a friend would have a divergent meaning from a gun in the hands of an enemy and enmity is a social relation, not material.⁵⁴

Hypotheses and focus of the research

Considering the foregoing theoretical framework, it is argued in this dissertation that identity is a significant point of reference to comprehend the foreign policy of a country appropriately. It is suggested in this connection that in order to fully understand the transformation of TFP in the last decades, an analysis of the changes in the identity definition of the governments is also necessary as it is closely related to the formulation of interest and foreign policy. In doing this, the role of the ideational and material change of international structure, such as the end of Cold War, the reconfiguration of domestic politics and correspondingly changing norms influencing TFP has not been denied. However, this study attaches a particular importance to how the agents see and perceive the structure as well as other determining factors of FP which is considerably important in the definition of the course of foreign policy.

This dissertation comparatively analyzes the ruling Erdoğan leadership's foreign policy from 2002 up to 2012 and the Turgut Özal leadership's FP from 1983 until early 1990s. Therefore, while the impact of identity on foreign policy is analyzed, identities of the Turgut Özal and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan leaderships, both of whom come from Islamist backgrounds, are analyzed and the "middle way" they have developed in their political lives with respect to Islamist and Western values and the reflection of these "middle ways" to the TFP are discussed. It is argued in this context that AK Party foreign policy in the 2000s is the extension of Özal leadership's foreign policy in the 1980s and early 1990s. This hypothesis is explained with the similar identity definitions of both leaderships which combine Islamic-conservative values and the values of Western origin. Considering their common goals to make Turkey first a regional and later a global actor, it is hypothesized that both leaderships have pragmatically evaluated Turkey's potential in accordance with their identity definitions and shaped their foreign policy approaches and practices according to their identity perceptions and paradigms. It is also hypothesized in this respect that similar identities bring about similar FP understandings and practices.

As it is argued that foreign policy of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships pursued a different path from the Kemalist era, with a view to analyzing and explaining the reasons of this difference, the determinants of TFP are also discussed with special references to Özal and Erdoğan eras. Subsequently, foreign policy paradigms of both leaderships and their common and different points are studied. In the end, examining Turkey-United States relations during

⁵³ Ibid., 879.

⁵⁴ Wendt, identity, 1996, 50.

both leaderships in detail, how these similar foreign policy approaches of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships reflected to the policy field are analyzed, and finally the causes of differences are handled.

At this point, one should note that I distance myself from numerous other writers who emphasize Erdoğan leadership's Islamist identity for an ideological explanation of the recent TFP.⁵⁵ Instead, I underline that Erdoğan leadership's identity incorporates both Islamic and modern values such as democracy and market economy and present a unique identity definition. Thus, I regard Erdoğan leadership's Islamist identity as a facilitator with regard to its booming relations with the Middle East and Islamic world in general. As it will be explained in the next chapters, this Islamist identity paves the way for improving economic as well as political relations with the Muslim countries. By the same token, as the architect of AK Party foreign policy, Ahmet Davutoğlu's identity definition of Turkey as a "central country" which highlights Turkey's historical and geographical assets and regards them significant and presenting Turkey opportunities, are of great importance. Likewise, the other part of Erdoğan leadership's identity, composed of basically modern European values play a central role in its several foreign policy principles as well as in its foreign policy practices, such as "zero-problem with neighbors" policy and Turkey's pro-democracy and human rights policy during the Arab spring.

In this connection, the main research question of this study is "is the Erdoğan leadership's foreign policy seriously "new" as it is discussed by several authors⁵⁶ or it represents a continuity considering a foreign policy line which already exists in the past of the Turkish Republic⁵⁷ and how could it be explained with an identity based approach. To find an answer to these questions, some complementary questions will be also in the concern of this study: Which determinant factors do lie at the root of the shift of new government's foreign policy paradigm (identity, economy, domestic factors, international structure or personality of leaders)? While searching for answers to these questions, foreign policy paradigms as well as principles of Özal and Erdoğan terms will be compared at theoretical level by emphasizing the impact of the identities of both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships. Finally, Turkish-U.S. relations will be in the concern of this study in order to see how the foreign policy paradigms of both leaderships have reflected to the policy field at the practical level. As Ankara-Washington relations cover a wide area and similar subjects retain their places in Turkish-U.S. agenda in both Özal and Erdoğan eras, this long-standing alliance relationship offers a good opportunity for comparison. Hence, Turkish-U.S. relations have been selected as the case study.

In a nutshell, it is aimed to prove the thesis that the distinctive policy line observed in the AK Party era, albeit it was conceptualized and described more systematically, is actually

⁵⁵ Svante E. Cornell, "What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy? Changes in Turkey," *Middle East Quarterly*, (Winter 2012):13-24. Baskın Oran, "Turkey: Ideology in Foreign Policy: 'Kurd' and 'Islam', *Radikal*, 28.07.2013, accessed 27.08.2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/radikal2/dis_politikada_ideoloji_kurd_ve_islam-1143556

⁵⁶ Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic*. F Stephen Larrabee, "The New Turkey and American-Turkish Relations," *Insight Turkey* Vol.13, No:1, (2011): 1-9. Mustafa Kutlay, "Economy as the 'Practical Hand' of 'New Turkish Foreign Policy': A Political Economy Explanation," *Insight Turkey* Vol.13, No.1 (2011)

⁵⁷ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "İki Yüzyılın Hikâyesi: Türk Dış ve Güvenlik Politikasında Süreklilikler," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yılı 2009*, Burhanettin Duran et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 623. Gülistan Gürbey, "Wandel in der Türkischen Aussenpolitik unter der AKP-Regierung?", *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen*, (February 2010). Ahmet Sözen, "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges," *Turkish Studies* 11:1 (2010): 103-123. In my interview with Muhittin Ataman in 2011, international relations professor in Abant İzzet Baysal University who is known with his studies on Özal's foreign policy, he described Erdoğan and Özal leaderships as neo-Islamists and qualified their foreign policies also as neo-Islamist foreign policy line.

an extension of the foreign policy line of the Özal era. It is also intended to prove that just like in the Özal period, along with exogenous reasons, indigenous factors like the identity of the groups coming to power in the country and their identity and interest perceptions have an essentially explanatory power for someone who seeks to comprehend the current distinctive foreign policy understanding and practice of Turkey.

Methodology

In order to investigate my propositions, I rely on an empirical method in respect of the related developments and their analysis under the light of existing literature on TFP. Special attention will be paid to the relevant texts and discourses. The data to be involved in this study will be derived from a historical case study. In this respect, an empirical analysis of the present TFP, from November 2002 general elections up to 2012, and the foreign policy of the Özal era, roughly from 1983 to 1993, will be in my concern. Özal's period has been chosen because his foreign policy attempts and practices bear a considerable analogy to the AK Party government's foreign policy principles as well as practices.

Discourse analysis, which is a quite popular method of analysis among constructivist analysts many of whom reached their findings within the scope of discourse analysis,⁵⁸ is a general term for a number of approaches to analyze, roughly, signed, written or spoken language use.⁵⁹ Discourses are examined mainly on two levels. First, they are examined on the level of speech and conversation (as humanitarian) practices in which fundamental rules and patterns of linguistical communication and linguistically communicated interactions are in the centre of analyses. Second, they are investigated on thematically certain, institutionalized form of text production. This might be either public discourse of some certain themes mediated by media or some specific, socially differentiated forms of knowledge production in certain negotiation contexts. Discourse analyses are often carried out simultaneously on these two levels. On each level, analysis is not directed at an individual speaking event, rather at the paradigm behind it, which is realized in the speaking act and at discovering its rules. The focus is not (only) on the level of linguistical systems, but on the level of speaking acts in concrete speaking actions. Moreover, discourses include the speakers, their assertion as well as relevant audience. Main concern of discourse analysis is to analyze the social construction process of reality, to construct their communication and legitimation on distinctive levels (individual and collective actors, institutions) as well as to analyze the effect of this process on society.⁶⁰

Discourse analysis focuses on talk and texts as social practices, and on the sources that are drawn on to enable those practices. The concern of discourse analysis is based on the turn towards stronger interpretative action, upon which the meaning of linguistically and symbolically mediated construction of reality is detected with the linguistic turn in social sciences.⁶¹ Fairclough advocates that discourse analysis concerns with the properties of texts, the production, distribution, and consumption of texts, sociocognitive processes of producing and interpreting texts, social practice in various institutions, the relationship of social practice to power relations, and hegemonic projects at the societal level.⁶² Furthermore, discourse analysts' interest has been in how mentalist notions are constructed and used in interaction,

⁵⁸ Cornelia Ulbert, "Konstruktivistische Analysen der internationalen Politik, Theoretische Ansätze und methodische Herangehensweisen," in *Konstruktivistische Analysen der internationalen Politik*, ed. Cornelia Ulbert and Christoph Weller, (Wiesbaden: Vs Verlag, 2005), 24.

⁵⁹ Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 225–226.

⁶⁰ Ulbert, "Konstruktivistische Analysen," 25.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁶² Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, 225–226.

rather than try to explain actions as an outcome of mental processes or entities.⁶³

One ought to notice that, taking into account of the special emphasis of constructivists, such as Onuf who stresses⁶⁴: “saying is doing”, on the significance of linguistic practices, discourse analysis seems the most appropriate method for this research. Since language is action -that is “it does not reflect meaning but is in fact practice and behavior.”-they attach a particular importance to language. For instance, threatening statement of a state another one involves also an act, because it is not only using words but also committing an act.⁶⁵

Considering the wide spectrum of data, another question arises with respect to source selection and determination of texts which is one of the basic problems of discourse analysis. At this point, a significant primary source for the study is governmental and AK Party documents including the protocols of the TBMM and news. A second source of data is contained in PM's and his foreign policy advisers' statements, statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its officials, as well as the statements of some influential figures from the AK Party executive on the foreign policy making contained in the public record. In line with that, the foreign political developments of the periods in my concern will be reviewed by using Turkish and foreign press including daily newspapers Milliyet, Hürriyet, Radikal, Zaman and Yeni Safak, along with Turkey's two English daily newspapers, Hürriyet Daily News and Today's Zaman. Furthermore, valuable secondary data is available in a variety of published studies and journals as well. In addition to these written sources of data, I have arranged a few expert interviews with scholars who are expert on TFP as well as with the influential names of the AK Party on foreign policy making.

In addition to the selection of speakers, selection of time period emerges as another important issue. The reconstruction of processes of meaning allocation and the pervasion (Durchdringung) of complex relationships between actors and structures make a process analysis necessary. A process analysis will help to discover the causal mechanisms in certain events. Thereby, the probable explanation factors will be both inductively revealed (process induction) and also their explanation power will be verified (process verification).⁶⁶ Though it is possible to choose relatively longer or shorter time periods or even some certain time points in discourse analysis for investigation, in this dissertation two relatively longer periods were chosen, namely Özal and Erdoğan eras.

On the other hand, among international relations and foreign policy theories, constructivism described in very general terms as ‘lenses’ which enable studying any kind of social relation seems the most appropriate tool in explaining the foreign policy behavior of the Erdoğan leadership. As also emphasized above, according to constructivism, there is a mutual construction relationship between social structures and actors. While social structures build actors by giving them social identity, actors can reproduce and change those structures with their daily lives and interactive actions.⁶⁷ Constructivist approach pays significant attention to the norms and emphasizes the mutual construction process between the norms and actors. Within that context, it can be suggested that in the construction of the Erdoğan leadership's political identity and formation of its foreign policy, social and international norms have a

⁶³ Jonathan Potter, “Discourse Analysis and Constructionist Approaches: Theoretical Background,” in Handbook of qualitative research methods for psychology and the social sciences, ed. John T.E. Richardson, (Leicester: BPS Books, 1996), 4-5.

⁶⁴ Onuf, “Constructivism, A User’s Manual,” 58-78.

⁶⁵ Ngaire Woods, Explaining International Relations since 1945, (New York: Oxford University Pres, 1996), 27.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.26.

⁶⁷ Gert Krell, Welt Bilder und Weltordnung, Einführung in die Theorien der Internationalen Beziehungen, (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2004), 349-350, 357.

significant role.⁶⁸ Hence, for further explanation efforts of AK Party foreign policy, constructivist approach might be guiding to a large extent.

Review of chapters

In the first chapter, constructivism which has been briefly introduced above will be examined in detail. In doing this, the constructivist critiques about the mainstream international relations theories will be also outlined. After summarizing the variants of constructivism and discussing their common points, the focus will be on Wendt's constructivism. As a core constructivist, Alexander Wendt differs from other forms of constructivism at some points. After elaborating "Wendtian" constructivism, I will seek to establish a connection between constructivism and the foreign policy paradigms/practices of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships.

The second chapter will focus on the determinants of TFP from a constructivist point of view. While repeating the traditional determinants such as geographical location, historical, cultural and external factors, special effort will be demonstrated to show how these determinants are perceived and interpreted by Özal and Erdoğan leaderships. In other words, while some of the determinants of TFP remain constant such as geography, history and the westernization project of Turkey, they have been interpreted by Özal and Erdoğan leaderships differently from the Kemalist establishment and this has brought about distinctive FP principles and practices. Moreover, indicating the "new" or the "transformed" determinants of recent TFP is also in my concern. As it is widely known, Turkey has gone through a substantial transformation process both in social and political terms. Here, the another goal of this chapter is to try to manifest the changing dynamics of foreign policy in parallel with the changing social and political structure of Turkey, and to stress the role of identity and psychological factors on the behaviors of the new actors.

The third chapter analyzes TFP during the Özal and Erdoğan eras at paradigm and principles levels and consists of two main parts. In the first part, considering their substantial contribution to the formation of Özal's identity, initially Turgut Özal's family structure, his social environment in which he grew up and the socialization processes he went through as well as his psychological features are mentioned. Subsequently, considering Özal's separate roles in TFP as PM and President, Özal leadership's foreign policy paradigm and principles which were developed with a significant contribution of identity are discussed. The second main part focuses on the Erdoğan era and suggests that Erdoğan's foreign policy line is actually an extension of the Özal era. In order to stress the role of Erdoğan's social identity on his foreign policy paradigm, a comprehensive analysis of the roots of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's identity is also included to this part. Additionally, while foreign policy paradigm of the Erdoğan leadership is discussed, ideas of very prominent figures who contributed to the foreign policy understanding of the Erdoğan leadership, such as Ahmet Davutoğlu, are also not disregarded. After explaining the foreign policy principles of the AK Party government, the last part concludes with the question of to what extent is the foreign policy of Erdoğan era an extension of the Özal period.

In the fourth and fifth chapters, implementation of Özal and Erdoğan governments' foreign policy approaches are empirically analyzed and the theses of this dissertation are tested. In this connection, Turkey-United States relations which have a deep and comprehensive network of relationship are studied. Ankara-Washington relations have been selected for a case study as bilateral diplomacy revolved both in Özal and Erdoğan terms

⁶⁸ İnat and Duran "AKP Dış Politikası," 24.

around similar titles, such as Iraq, Iran, Syria and so forth. Thus they provide a good basis for comparison.

Final chapter includes a general appraisal of the dissertation. In doing this, the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the constructivist approach in explaining TFP will be also in my concern. In this chapter, along with identity, I will highlight also the material/structural factors and the ideational meanings attached to them with a view to bringing an overall explanation to some different policy practices of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships. Eventually, I will put an end to the study with a comprehensive conclusion.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Constructivist critiques of Mainstream¹IR Theories

Despite their assertive arguments, failure of the mainstream theories to predict the end of Cold War and their trouble to explain the changes in the international system intensified the critiques against them. Constructivism might be counted *inter alia* one of the most important critical approaches to the mainstream theories. At this point, constructivists criticize neorealism² and neoliberal institutionalism³ for overemphasizing anarchy and power and referring solely to material factors- power, interest and sometimes even institutions- and ignoring other variables, like ideas, which might be more crucial than power and anarchy to explain state behaviors. They claim that focusing mainly on interests and the material distribution of power does not lead to a sufficient explanation of international phenomena and that social construction of state identities must be added to the analyses which might even explain the inception of state interests.⁴ The materialist approach of neorealism defines the international system as the distribution of material capabilities in terms of anarchy and excludes the ideational properties or relationships that may constitute a social structure, e.g. enmity or friendship.⁵ On the other hand, neoliberals have shown that international outcomes cannot be explained solely by material base and added the ideational base in a cooperative

¹ Following Steve Smith, with the concept of “mainstream,” I refer to the dominating international relations theories, i.e. realist/neorealist, liberal/neoliberal, pluralist and globalist models, characterized by an empirical epistemology, that is a philosophy of knowledge based on the understanding of positivists who seek to apply the methods of natural sciences to the social sciences. James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfalzgraff, Jr., *Contending Theories of International Relations*, (New York, Longman, 2001), 38.

² For the details of neorealism see: Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Comp. 1979). Kenneth N. Waltz, “Neorealism: Confusions and Criticisms,” *Journal of Politics & Society*, vol. 15, no. 1, (2004). Kenneth N. Waltz, “Evaluating theories,” *The American Political Science Review* 91, 4, Academic Research Library, (Dec 1997). John Glenn and Darryl Howlett, “Neorealism,” in *Neorealism versus Strategic Culture*, ed. John Glenn, et al. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004). John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Charles W. Kegley and Eugene R. Wittkopf, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, (New York: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006). Faruk Sönmezöglü, *Uluslararası Politika ve Dış Politika Analizi (International Politics and Foreign Policy Analysis)*, (İstanbul: Filiz Kitabevi, 1995). Joseph Grieco “Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation,” in *Neorealism and Neoliberalism The Contemporary debate*, David A. Baldwin, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993)

³ For the details of neoliberalism see: Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Joseph M. Grieco, *Cooperation Among Nations: Europe, America and Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1990). Eileen M. Doherty, *Beyond Boundaries? A Tentative Appraisal in Beyond Boundaries: disciplines, paradigms, and theoretical integration in international studies*, Rudra Sil and Eileen M. Doherty, (New York, State University of New York Press, 2000). Tayyar Arı, *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri, Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2002). Eric K. Leonard, *The Onset of Global Governance: International Relations Theory and the International Criminal Court*, (Aldershot, Ashgate 2005). Robert Jervis, “Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate,” *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999): 42–63. Alexander Siedschlag, *Neorealismus, Neoliberalismus und Postinternationale Politik: Beispiel internationale Sicherheit-Theoretische Bestandaufnahme und Evaluation*, (Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen 1997). Joseph S. Nye, *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization*, (New York, Routledge, 2004)

⁴ Yücel Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity, A Constructivist Approach*, (New York: Routledge 2003), 15. Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1999), 92.

⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 16.

sense to their analysis. However, since neoliberals conceded the base to neorealists, they accepted the “materialist” nature of power and interest; and are-with Wendt’s words, “caught in a realist trap.”⁶

Wendt argues that to what extent is the “material base” is constituted by ideas is a significant issue in international relations and this question was ignored by mainstream theories.⁷ However, he stresses several times in his writings that he does not deny the impact of brute material forces on the constitution of power and interest, and his thesis is not that ideas are all the way down. Rather, he claims that behaviors of actors are built on the meanings that objects have for them and meanings are socially constructed.⁸ Of course, in a confrontational system, power and interest are of importance, but “what makes a system confrontational is an underlying structure of common knowledge.” For instance, British and Korean nuclear weapons do not have the same meaning for the United States, since one is a friend and the other is an enemy, and enmity and amity are social, not material.⁹ In other words, Wendt views material forces less important and interesting than the contexts of meaning that human beings construct around them.¹⁰ This implies that the material forces do have some effects in state action but this is a result of the meaning of the material forces -like human nature, technology, geography etc. - referred to them.

Furthermore, Wendt argues that Waltz’s definition of political structure -based on mainly three dimensions; namely, ordering principles (anarchic nature of international system), the character of the units (sameness of functions performed by states: internal order and external defense) and the distribution of capabilities- says little about state behavior.¹¹ It does not take into consideration of intersubjective factors. For instance, it does not imply how states will treat each other, as friends or enemies. It is also not clear whether they recognize each other’s sovereignty, they will have dynastic ties, and they will be revisionist or status quo powers. Contrary to neorealist understanding, states sharing similar security interests would not regard each other as a militarily potential threat even if one is militarily hopeless against the other.¹² These intersubjective factors are deeply related to the security interests of states and the character of their relations in an anarchical environment. Developing the concept of a “structure of identity and interest”, Wendt claims that Waltz makes insufficient assumptions with respect to interests of states. Therefore, “without assumptions about the structure of identities and interests in the system, Waltz’s definition of structure cannot predict the content or the dynamics of anarchy.”¹³

In this context, constructivists do not agree with the neorealist assumption that structure is an unintended by-product of rational, self interested efforts to survive. They argue that structure is not a constant factor; rather, some part of it will be reproduced or transformed by any given action. They further claim that preexistence of rules and norms becomes the indispensable prerequisite for social action even in an anarchical environment. Structure is not alone a sufficient factor to direct the behavior. Hence, a link between environment and action

⁶ Ibid., 137.

⁷ Ibid., 95.

⁸ Alexander Wendt, “Identity and Structural Change in International Politics,” in the Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory. ed. Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, (London: Boulder, Lynne Rienner publishers, 1996), 50. Wendt, Social Theory, 96, 135-136.

⁹ Alexander Wendt and Daniel Friedheim “Hierarchy under Anarchy: Informal Empire and the East German State” International Organization, Vol. 49, No. 4. (Autumn, 1995): 692

¹⁰ Ibid., 136.

¹¹ Ibid., 98-99.

¹² Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics,” International Organization 46, 2, (Spring 1992): 396. Krell, “Welt Bilder und Weltordnung, 358.

¹³ Wendt, “Anarchy,” 396.

is necessary. While this link is formed through the rationality conjecture in neorealist thinking as well as in the rationalist theories of IR, constructivists contend that even the rationality conjecture of neorealism presumes the existence of rules, norms and practices in IR. Because, it involves not only the “manner” in which nations calculate and act, but also means (media of norms and practices) through which those actions are performed. Hence, structure must have means through which rational action is affected.¹⁴

Actors administer their relation with others through the means of norms and practices. Since structure is meaningless without some intersubjective set of norms and practices, the most significant element of mainstream theories is senseless. This point leads us to a substantial distinction between constructivists and mainstream theories. Neorealists do not refer any causal force to norms in international relations. Neoliberals grant some roles to norms only in certain issue areas. Constructivists, on the contrary, claim that norms have impacts on the behaviors of states to a great extent. “They constitute actor identities and interests, and do not simply regulate behavior.” In other words, institutions can constitute the identities of actors and hence shape their interests.¹⁵

Constructivists criticize neorealists and neoliberals also due to their neglect of social construction and identity formation of actors which is one of the most significant factors to explain a structure¹⁶ and offer a sociological approach versus economic approach of neorealism to systemic theory. As such, they object also that rationalists neglect the formation of state interests. National interest and its formation process matter for constructivists to a great extent, however, unlike rationalists, they do not take “national interest something materially or inevitably defined by objective conditions”; alternatively, they take it a product of socially constructed identity forms. This implies that national interest should not be taken for granted, “It must be studied as part of a more broadly socially constructed world.” It also implies that just like agents and structures intermingle in social constructivism, identity and interest are closely linked.¹⁷

Neorealists define the international system structures in terms of the observable properties of their member states and refer these structures a constraining role for the choices of preexisting state actors.¹⁸ Besides, they treat the attributes of state actors exogenously given to the system. By contrast, constructivists have argued that “states are not structurally or exogenously given but constructed by historically contingent interactions.”¹⁹ On the other hand, constructivists highlight a mutual constitution between agents and structures and point out that neither agent (e.g. states) nor structure (e.g. international system) can be reduced to other, and one cannot be fully comprehended without invoking the other. While the structure of the states system influences and in a sense constitutes the properties of states, states affect the structure with their actions.²⁰

Wendt criticizes neorealism on three basic points: its weakness in explaining structural change, its imperfection to generate falsifiable hypotheses, and the uncertainty that neorealism

¹⁴ David Dessler, “What is at stake in the Agent Structure Debate?” *International Organization* 43 (Summer 1989): 459

¹⁵ Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, 15-16

¹⁶ Wendt, “Identity and Structural Change,” 48. Wendt, *Social Theory*, 16

¹⁷ Dougherty and Pfalzgraff, *Contending Theories*, 96. Reus-Smit, “Constructivism,” 192-193.

¹⁸ Alexander E. Wendt, “The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory” *International Organization*, Vol. 41, No. 3. (Summer, 1987): 335.

¹⁹ Alexander Wendt, “Collective identity formation and the international state.” *American Political Science Review* 88.n2 (June 1994): 384-397

²⁰ Wendt, “Identity and Structural Change,” 49-50

explicates sufficiently even some of the basic issues referred to it²¹.

First, neorealism regards the changes in structure purely material, that is, transitions from one distribution of power to another. However, structural change in international politics is social rather than material: the transition from feudalism to sovereign states and the end of the Cold War are results of social dynamics rather than material. For neorealists, since such changes do not shift the distribution of power or transcend anarchy, they do not recognize them as “structural” change and the logic of anarchy remains for them constant.

Another weak side of neorealism is that “neorealism’s theory of structure is too underspecified to generate falsifiable hypotheses”. For instance, there is an ambiguity with respect to the balancing behavior of states. Accordingly, any foreign policy can be interpreted as evidence of balancing. Neorealists might argue that Soviets balanced the West through confrontational policies during the Cold War, but they did so after the Cold War by means of conciliatory policies. Likewise, while in the past states balanced each other militarily, today they do so through economic means. In short, “if any policy short of national suicide is compatible with balancing, then it is not clear in what sense “states balance” is a scientific claim.”²²

Moreover, there is doubt that neorealism can explain some crucial things like power politics and balancing, which are explained merely by the structural fact of anarchy alone. However, Wendt highlights at this point the assumption that anarchy is a self help system which is a result of states being egoists about their security and not of anarchy. Since states are not necessarily constantly egoist, this variation might change the logic of anarchy. Therefore, though Wendt acknowledges the accuracy of neorealist predictions regarding the character of international system, he does not agree with them with respect to the reasoning.²³

It should also be noted that critics of constructivists are not limited what we mentioned above. Constructivists invoke rationalist theories in a number of issues and, they develop their own approach mostly by criticizing rationalist theories. Therefore, whenever necessary, the critics of constructivists on rationalist mainstream theories will be mentioned in the next section as well. Given the different forms of constructivism, in what follows I firstly outline the forms of constructivism, summarize the common points of constructivists and focus on the constructivism in a “Wendtian” sense.

1.2. Constructivism

1.2.1. Introduction and variants of constructivism

Failure of neo-realism and neo-liberalism to predict the end of the Cold War, weaknesses of mainstream theories to comprehend the systemic transformations reshaping the global order, and globalization were among the influential factors prompting the ascendancy of constructivism. While the end of Cold War gave rise to new questions regarding world politics, such as the dynamics of international change, the nature of basic institutional practices, the role of non-state actors and the issue of human rights, the failure of rationalist theories to illuminate recent systemic transformations encouraged new generation scholars to re-read the old questions and re-assert the old issues which had been grasped through neo-realist and neo-liberalist paradigms.²⁴ At this point, the role of ideas acquired an exclusive

²¹ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 17

²² *Ibid.*, 18.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Reus-Smit, “Constructivism,” 196.

significance in international relations. The recent scholarship commenced a theoretical debate between rationalists and the followers of interpretive epistemology concerning the nature of international reality and how should it be explained. Constructivist approach ascended here and influenced the debates considerably.²⁵

Constructivism cannot be regarded as a counter approach aiming to undercut existing approaches and methods of study of international relations, nor do constructivists completely strive to form an emancipatory theory.²⁶ Instead, they are concerned what neorealist and neoliberal scholars neglect, for instance, the content and sources of state interests and social construction of world politics, but not what the scholars do and say.²⁷ They point out that there are more possibilities for change in world politics than more state-centered perspectives contend on IR.²⁸ Constructivism is not a fully fledged theory, and it does not advance generalized explanations about the world. Rather, it is a way of studying any kind of social relation²⁹ and in terms of international relations; it is a theoretically informed approach.³⁰ Therefore, constructivist thinking in IR forms a bridge between those who take international relations as a set of facts (i.e. exogenously given) and those who claim that social and political life in international domain is totally constructed,³¹ that is, between the majority of IR theorists and postmodernists. From this aspect, evaluating constructivism as a middle-ground between strictly rationalist, material-individualist approaches and strictly structural-ideational, reflectivist approaches seems a more appropriate understanding.

On the other hand, constructivism has a more strict connection with the developments in sociology and as many of constructivists drew explicitly on employing the insights of critical theory to illuminate the distinctive aspects of world politics, some scholars claim that constructivism should be seen as an outgrowth of critical theory.³² Despite the fact that constructivism is regarded as a part of critical theory,³³ as Adler (2002) puts, it has its own qualities granting it a particular place in international relations theories.³⁴

Indeed, though, as Krell points it out, constructivist thinking existed also before, yet it was not labeled as “constructivism”. For instance, it could be said that the “English school” anticipated constructivism, or if normative institutionalist Hedley Bull lived today, he would be called constructivist.³⁵ Examples in this respect might be extended. As J. Checkel states;³⁶ “reaching back to earlier traditions (the English school, some versions of liberalism) and reaching out to new disciplinary foundations (sociology) constructivists seek to expand theoretical discourse.” However, constructivist approach became popular only towards the end of 1980s; and, starting from the construction of social world, concerned mainly with the

²⁵ Emanuel Adler, "Siezing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* Vol 3, no:3, (September 1997): 319-321.

²⁶ Ngaire Woods, *Explaining International Relations since 1945*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 27

²⁷ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50/2, (1998): 324.

²⁸ Woods, *Explaining International Relations*, 27.

²⁹ Nicholas Onuf, "Constructivism: A User's Manual," in *International Relations in a Constructed World*, ed. Vendulka Kub`alkov`a et al., (New York, M.E.Sharpe, 1998), 58.

³⁰ John Gerard Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity, Essays on international institutionalization*, (New York: Routledge, 1998), 34.

³¹ Woods, *Explaining International Relations*, 27.

³² Reus-Smit, *Constructivism*, p. 194-195.

³³ Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security*, 23 (1) (1998): 181.

³⁴ Hasan Ulusoy, "A Constructivist Analysis of Turkey's Foreign and Security Policy in the Cold War Era," (PhD diss., Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 2005), 42.

³⁵ Krell, "Welt Bilder und Weltordnung, 347.

³⁶ Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn," 325.

ontological issues. On the other hand, epistemologically, constructivism is based on the idea that not only world but also knowledge about world is socially constructed. Some constructivists admit that there is a world out of cognition. However, they highlight the reality that this world is not accessible, not knowable as long as it is not symbolically and linguistically mediated through discursive practices.³⁷

Constructivists utilize social theory, and do not attack the foundations of mainstream international relations theories. However, for instance, they oppose the rationalist proposition that identity and interest formation are taken as exogenously given and their constitution processes are ignored.³⁸ Furthermore, though Wendt agrees with rationalists that states system is anarchical and self-help, he does not share the rationalist explanation as to why states system is anarchical.³⁹ Constructivists agree that world politics occur not only in an international system but also in an international society which is constituted by rules and norms. By examining the rules and norms, constructivists seek to grasp how social and political worlds of international relations are constructed.⁴⁰

Constructivists problematize state identity and thus structural change, and constructivism has a more sociological approach to systemic theorizing rather than economic.⁴¹ The core assumption of constructivists is that our understanding of the world and the intellectual tools utilized to view the world are not objectively acquired, instead they are the result of socially constructed concepts.⁴² That is, how we see and perceive the world is influenced by the lenses through which we see the world, and these lenses are not derived objectively but as a result of social interactions. In other words, conceptualization precedes observation and the meaning of empirical facts heavily depends on the conceptions that frame them.⁴³ The proponents of constructivism advance that “the world is in the eye of the beholder” and try to figure out where these interpretations stem from and how they affect the acts of actors, i.e. states and individuals.⁴⁴ As Wendt points it out, besides other factors, people treat objects on the basis of the meanings that objects have for them. For instance, since enemies threaten and friends do not, states act differently towards enemies than they do towards friends. Self and other conceptions constituted by intersubjective understandings and expectations gain a particular meaning at this point. If society forgets ontological meaning of university, powers and practices of professors and students can no longer exist. Hence, “it is collective meanings that constitute the structures which organize our actions.”⁴⁵

At this stage, before elaborating the ontological and epistemological premises of constructivism in detail, reviewing relatively different forms of constructivism existing in the literature seems useful. In IR literature, there are a number of classification efforts of relatively distinctive constructivisms. There exist state centric and non-state centric approaches, second image and third image theories, pessimistic and optimistic theories.

³⁷ Cornelia Ulbert, “Konstruktivistische Analysen der internationalen Politik, Theoretische Ansätze und methodische Herangehensweisen,” in *Konstruktivistische Analysen der internationalen Politik*, ed. Cornelia Ulbert and Christoph Weller, (Wiesbaden: Vs Verlag, 2005), 13, 19.

³⁸ For instance, Wendt, in parallel with rationalists, articulate that in the medium run sovereign states will remain dominant political actors in the international system. Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it,” 424.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 396.

⁴⁰ Woods, *Explaining International Relations*, 26.

⁴¹ Wendt, “Identity and Structural Change,” 48.

⁴² Dougherty and Pfalzgraff, *Contending*, 166.

⁴³ Torbjorn L. Knutsen, *A History of International Relations Theory*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 281.

⁴⁴ Dougherty and Pfalzgraff, *Contending*, 166.

⁴⁵ Wendt, “Anarchy,” 396-397.

Furthermore, there is no agreement among constructivists on substantive issues.⁴⁶ The difference between them lies basically on their distance or closeness from/to critical approaches or from/to mainstream approaches methodologically and epistemologically as well as on their levels of analysis.

J. G. Ruggie gathers constructivists under three main titles: 1) *neo-classical constructivism*; rooted in the classical tradition of Durkheim and Weber and based on the intersubjective meanings,⁴⁷ 2) *postmodernist constructivism*; whose intellectual roots go back to Nietzsche, Foucault and Derrida, points out an epistemological break with the modernist principles and practices, and where linguistic construction of subjects are emphasized, 3) the one between the former two, so called *naturalistic constructivism*, which is based on the philosophical doctrine of scientific realism. Alexander Wendt and David Dessler are two major figures of that art of constructivism.⁴⁸

On the other hand, Reus-Smit' argues on the ground of analysis level that three distinctive forms of constructivism evolved during 1990s: *systemic*, *unit-level* and *holistic* constructivism. Accordingly, in the *systemic level constructivism*, focus is directed only to the interactions between unitary state actors, the most prominent representative of it is Alexander Wendt.⁴⁹ *Unit-level constructivism*, unlike the systemic one, focuses on the relationship between domestic social and legal norms and the identities as well as interests of states and it is represented prominently by Katzenstein.⁵⁰ The last form, holistic constructivism, seeks to mediate the former forms of constructivism. Holistic constructivists hold the domestic and international as two faces of a single social order and engage in accommodating all factors affecting the identities and interests of state.⁵¹

Wendt describes three mainstreams of constructivist international relations theory; namely, *modernist stream*, whose major representatives are John Ruggie and Friedrich Kratochwil, *postmodernist stream* represented by Richard Ashley and Rob Walker, and finally, *feminist stream* associated with Spike Peterson and Ann Tickner.⁵² Epistemologically, Wendt speaks of three positions: 'positivist', 'interpretivist' and 'postmodern' moving on a line from the point of a conventional towards a radical stand point.⁵³

E.Adler, on the other hand, divides constructivists into four groups based on their methodological disagreements.⁵⁴ The first group is modernists (Wendt) who focus essentially on ontology and see no reason not to use the standard positivist methods along with interpretive methods. The second group (Onuf and Kratochwil) tends to invoke a non-positivist epistemology and highlights that historical change cannot be grasped through one or several causes but through an analysis of conjectures. The third group stresses narrative knowing and the fourth group utilizes the techniques developed by post-modernists.

⁴⁶ Fearon, James and Alexander Wendt. "Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View." In Handbook of International Relations, ed. Walter Carlsnaes et al., (London: Sage Publications. 2002), 56.

⁴⁷ Ruggie categorizes E. Haas, Kratochwil, Onuf, Adler, Finnemore, Katzenstein and himself under this title.

⁴⁸ Ruggie, "Constructing the World Polity," 35-36. John Gerard Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," International Organization 52, 4, (Autumn 1998): 850-852.

⁴⁹ Reus-Smit, Constructivism, 199.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 200.

⁵¹ Ibid., 200-201.

⁵² Wendt, Social Theory, 3-4.

⁵³ Fearon, and Wendt "Rationalism v. Constructivism," 57

⁵⁴ Adler, "Siezing the Middle Ground," 335-336

Leaving aside this ‘classification bombardment’, Checkel makes a useful distinction between conventional, interpretative and critical/radical variants of constructivism.⁵⁵ Whereas conventional constructivism is popular in the US and explores the role of norms and identity in shaping international political outcomes, the interpretative and critical/radical variants are dominant in Europe.⁵⁶

Their convergences notwithstanding, -e.g. mutual constitution of actors and structures, anarchy as a social construct, power as both material and ideational, and state identities and interests as variables- conventional constructivism arises in the realm of methodology and epistemology.⁵⁷ Critical constructivists seek to uncover the meaning of state action, thereby advance an interpretivist epistemology, generally, utilizes discourse method techniques⁵⁸ and criticize positivist social science. On the other hand, conventional constructivists adopted many of the methodological assumptions of positivist social science, and hypothesis testing, process tracing, and stressed the significance of interpretivism, causality and constitutive theorizing.⁵⁹ Consequently, conventional constructivists are close to positivist mainstream theories with respect to epistemology, whereas they are close to postmodern critical theories regarding many substantive concerns –e.g. discourse and role of identity- and a similar ontological stance.⁶⁰ Furthermore, unlike critical constructivists, conventional constructivists neither intend to reconstruct the world nor seek to replace one reality with another. Instead, they investigate how the current reality evolved.⁶¹

Albeit the distinctive approaches to constructivism, there are some basic common points as to which most of constructivists converge. In what follows, first, the main lines of constructivism will be repeated, and subsequently, given the lack of an agreement among constructivists concerning a common comprehensive constructivist approach and even about a common definition of constructivism,⁶² approach of a modern non-radical constructivist author, Alexander Wendt, whose arguments widely used in empirical studies,⁶³ will be reviewed. It must be noted that in this dissertation, rather than focusing on a radical constructivist approach, which regards the outer reality only as construction,⁶⁴ a moderate constructivism will be in concern.

1.2.2. Common characteristics of constructivists

Constructivism might be regarded as a new form of “idealism”. However, one should not be confused about the famous and well-known idealist theory in international relations that emerged as the first theoretical approach among other traditional theories. Idealism means here that constructivism grants explicitly more value to ideas in international relations than rational theories do.⁶⁵ Idealism in social theory is not normative and is not interested in how

⁵⁵ Jeffrey T. Checkel, “Social Constructivisms in Global and European Politics: A Review Essay, *Advanced Research on the Europeanisation of the Nation-State (ARENA)*, Working Papers, WP 15 (2003): 2

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Hopf, “The Promise of Constructivism,” 171-200.

⁵⁸ Theo Farrell, “Constructivist Security Studies: Portrait of a Research Program” *International Studies Review* (2002): 56.

⁵⁹ Ulusoy, “A Constructivist analysis,” 47.

⁶⁰ Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn,” 327.

⁶¹ Farrell, “Constructivist Security Studies,” 59

⁶² Maja Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations: The politics of reality*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University press, 2002), 8-9.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11-12

⁶⁴ Krell, *Welt Bilder*, 369.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 348.

world ought to be, but interested in how the world is. It does not assume that human nature is inherently good or bad, or social life inherently cooperative. Rather, there are pessimistic as well as optimistic idealist theories. It does not presume that social change is easy or even possible in a socially constructed context. Actors have the obligation to overcome institutionalization and power asymmetries to realize social change and this is actually even more difficult in social structures than material structures. Moreover, it does not contend that power and interest are insignificant, but claim that ‘their meaning and effects depend on actors’ ideas’. For instance, material power of a state does not have the same meaning for an ally and enemy. Idealist social theory’s basic claim is that ‘the deep structure of a society is constituted by ideas rather than material forces’. Therefore, most modern social theory is idealist in this respect, contrary to materialist mainstream IR theories.⁶⁶

Furthermore, constructivism is classified by some scholars⁶⁷ as a structural theory of international politics. The underlying reasons promoting this suggestion are that constructivists stress the effect of non-material structures on identities and interests and the role of practices of actors in maintaining as well as transforming these structures.⁶⁸ In the end, constructivism is ‘one form of structural idealism or idea-ism.’⁶⁹ In sum, constructivism is “idealist” in the sense that it highlights the ideal factors in international relations, and it is “structuralist” in the sense that it is interested in the impacts of structure on agents and vice-versa.

Constructivism objects neorealism particularly on an ontological ground.⁷⁰ It claims to provide a more comprehensive ontology than rational mainstream theories and also claims to provide a more promising basis for progressive theoretical research.⁷¹ Neorealism identifies “structure” as the unintended, by-product arrangement of system actors/units. In constructivist ontology, however, structure refers to the social forms that pre-exist action. Whereas the basic entities comprising neorealist ontology are actors, action and the arrangement of actors, in constructivist ontology, they are actors, actions and the materials for action. Two important assumptions of constructivists with respect to the connection between action and materials (structure) are: 1) structure both enables and constraints action and 2) structure is the result and the medium of action.⁷² An actor can act socially merely via a social structure pre-existing action and in turn, social structure is reproduced solely through the actions of agent. In sum, “all social action presupposes social structure, and vice versa.”⁷³

Before starting to elaborate the common characteristics of constructivists, providing a definition of constructivism may be useful. E. Adler describes constructivism as follows: “Constructivism is the view that the manner in which the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world.”⁷⁴ Constructivists assume that world is accessible to the actors only

⁶⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 24-25.

⁶⁷ For instance, Wendt, “Identity and Structural Change in International Politics,” 48. Reus-Smit, *Constructivism*, 197.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Wendt, “Identity and Structural Change,” 48.

⁷⁰ “Ontology refers to the concrete referents of an explanatory discourse.” In relation to a theory, ontology is made up from the real-world structures, i.e. things, entities, and processes. As Dessler puts it: “Ontology is a structured set of entities; it consists not only of certain designated kinds of things but also of connections or relations between them.” Thus, if one suggests that “a system consists of a structure and interacting units” in international relations theory, this would be an ontological claim. Dessler, “What’s at Stake,” 445.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 444.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 452.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 452.

⁷⁴ Adler, “Sizing the Middle Ground,” p.322.

through cognition and meaning that this world is shaped on the basis of ideas (generally as collective knowledge and institutionalized practices) and interpretations. In constructivism, ideas enable and exculpate the actions and provide room for maneuver. Interests will be defined in accordance with ideas, i.e. actors construct themselves and their interests with and through ideas. Ideas might be understood as knowledge about reality. That includes not only “hard data” but also norms, esthetic opinions and ideas about identity of an actor in relation to other actors.⁷⁵ Stated differently, main constructivist assumption contends that there is a material world ‘out there’ (free from our knowledge) which is not completely determined by physical reality⁷⁶ and that our understanding of the world and the intellectual means through which the world is viewed are not objectively derived, but instead are the outcome of socially constructed concepts. Proponent constructivists inquire the sources of those interpretations and how they affect the behavior of individual state actors.⁷⁷ Hence, a great deal significance is attached to the “lenses” through which actors see the world, to their perceptions about the world as well as to the influences of those perceptions on actors’ behaviors.

In spite of the fact that there is little agreement among constructivists, they converge in some basic points. Constructivists are interested in how the objects and practices of social life are constructed.⁷⁸ Thus, unlike rationalists who concern with ‘why’ question, constructivists deal with ‘how’ question. Biersteker and Weber (1996) summarize the common points of constructivists as follows:⁷⁹ “They (constructivists) all agree that the structures of international politics are outcomes of social interaction; that states are not static subjects, dynamic agents; that states identities are not given, but (re)constituted through complex, historical, overlapping practices- and therefore volatile, unstable, constantly changing; that the distinction between domestic politics and international relations is tenuous.”

In this context, constructivists all strive to explore three main ontological propositions on social life. These propositions were claiming to illuminate more on world politics than rationalist assumptions. They hold the following ontological propositions: emphasis on normative structures besides material structures, on socially constructed nature of agents, on the role of identity in shaping political action and the mutually constitutive relationship between agents and structures.

First (1), normative or ideational structures are as important as material structures in shaping the behaviors of social and political actors, e.g. individuals or states.⁸⁰ While acknowledging the importance of material resources in international politics, constructivists put special emphasis on social structures, i.e. intersubjectively shared ideas, norms, and values held by actors in global politics. Since they want to stress the social side of human existence, and ‘the role of shared ideas as an ideational structure constraining and shaping behavior’, constructivists highlight the intersubjective dimension of knowledge.⁸¹ However, this does not mean that material sources are entirely excluded by constructivists. Instead, impact of material sources is always mediated by the ideas that give them meaning.⁸²

⁷⁵ Krell, *Welt Bilder*, 348.

⁷⁶ Adler, "Siezing the Middle Ground," 324.

⁷⁷ Dougherty and Pfalzgraff, *Contending*, 166.

⁷⁸ Fearon and Wendt. "Rationalism v. Constructivism," 57.

⁷⁹ Knutsen, *A History*, 281-282.

⁸⁰ Reus-Smit, *Constructivism*, p. 196.

⁸¹ Dale C. Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism: A review essay," in "Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his critics" ed. Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 3.

⁸² Fearon, and Wendt. "Rationalism v. Constructivism," 57.

According to constructivists, a comprehensible conduct of IR is not possible ‘without mutually recognized constitutive rules, resting on collective intentionality.’ Depending on the issue field, these rules/norms might be relatively ‘thick’ or ‘thin’. But, in any issue field, ‘these constitutive rules pre-structure the domains of action within which regulative rules take effect.’⁸³

Rules/norms refer to collective understandings, “intersubjective beliefs about the social world that define actors, situations and the possibilities of action.”⁸⁴ They are collective understandings that are rooted in social practice and they are reproduced through social practices. In terms of international relations, the practice of diplomacy constitutes and reproduces accepted international norms. By placing actors and meaningful action in social roles such as modern state and social environment like modern world system, norms constitute actors. Furthermore; norms have impacts on the behaviors of actors. They define what appropriate is (logic of appropriateness) given the social rules and what effective is given the rules of law.⁸⁵ Whereas realists refer no causal force to norms and neoliberals view them just as regulative in certain issue areas, constructivists regard them as collective understandings having behavioral influences on actors.⁸⁶ However, the effects of norms are not restricted to regulative terms, rather they reach deeper. Namely, in addition to regulation of behavior, norms constitute actors’ identities and interests.⁸⁷ For example, “international law not only defines legitimate state practice, it also legitimates state and allows them to behave in ways that have meaning for other international actors.”⁸⁸

Constructivists advocate that actors would act in accordance with their identities and their status, and they would perform the behaviors that their social environment and their cultural structure approve. Put it differently, constructivist subjects search for answers to the questions of “what would and should a person in my position do under the current social circumstances?” According to constructivists, individuals seek compliance with social values and norms (logic of appropriateness).⁸⁹ Logic of appropriateness constitutes in the constructivist foreign policy theory the basic link between the independent variable norms and the foreign policy behaviors of states. The impact of norms on foreign policy is related to the number of actors who share them. Attaching a considerable significance to norms, unlike the rationalist-utilitarian institutionalism, constructivism argues that norms are constitutive, not regulative.⁹⁰

Second (2), state identities and interests are constructed to a great extent by social

⁸³ Ruggie, “Constructing the World Polity,” 33. Constitutive and regulative rules are extensively discussed by Dessler. Accordingly, constitutive rules are standardized, more or less unchanging practices that constitute a set of meanings for international communication. These meanings make some behaviors or signals comprehensible in some certain ways. Therefore, constitutive rules enable signals of support, friendship, hostility and so forth. “Violating” constitutive rules will give rise to misunderstandings or incomprehensible situations. Regulative rules, on the other hand, are defined ‘as public claims, backed by sanctions that prescribe, proscribe or permit specified behavior for designated actors in defined circumstances’. In short, whereas constitutive rules are viewed in the form of “X counts as Y in context C” regulative rules are regarded “Do X in context C.” Dessler, “What's at Stake,” 454-458.

⁸⁴ Farrell, “Constructivist Security Studies,” 49.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 49-50.

⁸⁶ Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn,” 327.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 328.

⁸⁸ Farrell, “Constructivist Security Studies,” 50.

⁸⁹ James G. March, and Johan P. Olsen, “The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders. International Organizations, 52(4) (1998), 949-952.

⁹⁰ Filiz Cicioğlu, “Sivil Toplum-Dış Politika İlişkisi Çerçevesinde Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarının Türkiye’nin Avrupa Birliği Politikasına Yaklaşımı,” Sakarya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Avrupa Birliği Bakanlığı Akademik Araştırmalar Serisi-2, (Ankara: Milimetrik Grup, 2011), 29.

structures, rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics.⁹¹ In the socialization process of actors (process of interacting), actors are led to redefine their interests and identities. Hence, contrary to rationalist theories which take interests and identities exogenously given and fixed so as to isolate the causal roles of power and international institutions, constructivism focuses on how ideational structures shape actors' identities (how actors define themselves), their goals, and the roles they believe they should play in international politics.⁹² Besides, identities inform interests and, in turn, actions. Unlike rationalists, who hold actors' interests as exogenously determined and are not interested in where these interests/preferences come from but how they are followed strategically, constructivists contend that understanding how actors develop their interests (the process of developing interest) is substantial to explain a great part of international political phenomenon. In order to explain the interest formation, constructivists refer a very significant role to the social identities of individuals or states.⁹³ For instance, Turkey is defined and also defines itself as a regional power and it adopts this identity. This definition has some certain effects on the interests of Turkish Republic, e.g. Turkey cannot turn its back on the issues occurring in its region. Hence, as a regional power, it is encouraged to interfere in the issues happening in its region.

Finally (3), agents and structures are mutually constituted.⁹⁴ Constructivist concerns about norms led constructivists to reach substantially different results in comparison with rationalist mainstream theories of international relations. Whilst realism and neoliberalism describe a world where unified, undifferentiated rational actors whose relations are structured by the balance of material power; constructivists highlight the social structure which constitutes the actors and is constituted by their interactions.⁹⁵ Put it differently, 'structures constitute actors (states) in terms of their interests and identities; however, discourse practices of actors also shape, reproduce and modify structures (global norms). Structures are not fixed; they can be altered through the acts of agents. They do exist only through the reciprocal interactions of actors and open to the effects of actors.'⁹⁶

Along with these arguments, two concepts employed by some constructivists, societal socialization and transnational socialization, provide a very useful tool for the explanation of foreign policy behaviors of actors. Unlike the process of an individual's socialization into his social environment, socialization processes of foreign policy decision makers occur at two different levels. The first level, societal socialization, is associated with the domestic society of the decision makers, whereas the second level, transnational socialization, is associated with the international society. With the words of Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner:

*"Transnational socialization signifies a process whereby government's decision makers internalize international norms, i.e. value-based expectations of appropriate behavior that are shared among states. Societal socialization refers to a process whereby government decision makers internalize societal norms, i.e. value based expectations of appropriate behavior that are shared by the citizens of their state."*⁹⁷

⁹¹ Wendt, "Identity and Structural Change," 48. For the core features of constructivism, see also : Ruggie, "Constructing the World Polity," 32-35.

⁹² Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism," 3.

⁹³ Reus-Smit, "Constructivism," 197.

⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 196-198

⁹⁵ Farrell, "Constructivist Security Studies: Portrait of," p. 50

⁹⁶ Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism," 3.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 111

Should these international and societal norms converge, they would be more influential. In this case, the converging international and societal expectations of appropriate behavior would be more strongly internalized by foreign policy decision makers, and thus the degree of influence on the behavior of decision makers would be wider.⁹⁸

With the above mentioned core assumptions, constructivism contrasts with the rationalist assumptions in three respects. Firstly, while constructivism takes actors as deeply social in the sense that their identities are constituted by the institutionalized norms, values and ideas of the social environment in which they act, rationalists hold that actors are atomistic egoists in the sense that their identities and interests are autogenous. Secondly, constructivists hold actors' interests as endogenous to social interaction, as a consequence of identity acquisition. By contrast, realists treat interests as exogenously determined, as given before social interaction. Finally, whilst realists characterize society as a 'strategic realm', a site where actors behave rationally and pursue their interests, constructivists view it as a 'constitutive realm'. Accordingly, it generates actors as knowledgeable social and political agents and makes them who they are.⁹⁹

1.2.3. A "Wendtian" approach to constructivism

Alexander Wendt's work has been tremendously influential in the field of international relations theories and gained a particular and prominent place among constructivist approaches.¹⁰⁰ He drew particularly on the work of Antony Giddens and Roy Bhaskar and utilized an epistemology of scientific realism.¹⁰¹ He also sought to apply the claims made by integration theorists as well as the general tenets of identity formation in "structurationist" and symbolic interactionist social theory. Though he agreed with scientific realists,¹⁰² he wrestled with rationalist theories, in particular with neorealism in his works in terms of ontology (especially throughout his book of *Social Theory of International Politics*, 1999). In this respect, it is regarded that whereas he is closer to critical theories ontologically, he drew on epistemological and methodological insights of scientific realism to a large extent.

Given the prominence of meta-theoretical matters in Wendt's form of constructivism, it is viewed as one of the most abstract version of constructivism which concerned little with empirics or politics.¹⁰³ He takes Waltz's neorealism as a starting point and deals with it in his works. The reason is not the "great" explanation power of neorealism, but from the 'political effects of providing common language in which world politics takes place. Realism is a social fact in world politics'. These shared understandings in IR and their connection with practice led Wendt to reconsider about the basic assumptions of power politics.¹⁰⁴ While realists highlight anarchy and the distribution of power as the driving forces behind international politics (material sources), constructivists, and also Wendt, challenge realist ignorance of the social structures and intersubjectively shared ideas which, accordingly, play crucial roles in shaping the behaviors of actors by constituting identities and interests.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 113-114

⁹⁹ Reus-Smit, "Constructivism," 196.

¹⁰⁰ Mark Neufeld, "What's Critical about Critical International Relations Theory?" in *Critical Theory and World Politics*, ed. Richard Wyn Jones, (Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 131.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 132.

¹⁰² Wendt, "Collective identity formation," 384-397.

¹⁰³ Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, *Constructivism and International Relations*, Alexander Wendt and his Critics, (New York, Routledge, 2006), xvii-xviii.

¹⁰⁴ Guzzini and Leander, *Constructivism and International Relations*, xviii

Among other versions of constructivism, Wendt develops a modernist constructivism. Accordingly, whereas radical constructivists contend that ‘all aspects of human reality are shaped by socialization through discursive practices’, Wendt finds this view too extreme and objects the idea of “ideas all the way down.”¹⁰⁵ Instead, he suggests that material forces do exist and might have causal impacts on the behaviors of actors. Besides, prior to interaction with other states, the state has already some certain interests. According to Wendt, constructivism is too extreme if it claims that “ideas all the way down” as well as too limited if it only tests ideas as causal forces against realist variables like power and interest without examining to what extent these material variables are constituted by ideational structures.¹⁰⁶

Following Waltz, Wendt adopts a “system theory” approach to international relations. He stresses the structure and the effects of states system.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, he accepts the reality that state identities are not constructed primarily by international structures but by domestic factors; and for a complete theory of state identity, a domestic research is considerably needed. However, ‘these identities are made possible by and embedded in a systemic context’¹⁰⁸ therefore, Wendt’s focus lies at the systemic level.

On the other hand, Wendt agrees with positivists with respect to epistemology and with post-positivism concerning ontology.¹⁰⁹ With this approach, he tries to build a via-media between positivist epistemology, which argues that ‘science is an epistemically privileged discourse through which we can gain a progressively truer understanding of the world’¹¹⁰, and post-positivist ontology, which contends that what we see out there depends on our lenses, - how we see it- and that constitutive as well as interpretative process matter in social life.

Hereafter, I will attempt to elaborate some points which grant Wendt a significant place among other constructivists. In this respect, I will focus first on the structure and subsequently on agent in a Wendtian sense.

1.2.3.1. Wendt’s approach to structure

In a re-conceptualization effort regarding the components of international structure, Wendt grants nearly a priority to social over material. The following statement summarizes his position in relation to international structure:¹¹¹

“The character of international life is determined by the beliefs and expectations that states have about each other and these are constituted largely by social rather than material structures. This does not mean that material power and interests are unimportant, but rather that their meaning and effects depend on the social structure of the system, and specifically on which of three “cultures” of anarchy is dominant – Hobbesian, Lockean, or Kantian. Bipolarity in a Hobbesian culture is one thing, in a Lockean or a Kantian culture quite another. On a social definition of structure, the concept of structural change refers to changes

¹⁰⁵ see: Wendt, Social Theory, Chapter 3

¹⁰⁶ Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism," 4.

¹⁰⁷ Wendt, Social Theory, 11.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 21.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 90-91.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 38.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 20.

in these cultures – like the end of the Cold War in 1989 – and not to changes in material polarity – like the end of bipolarity in 1991.”

In this context, Wendt does not neglect the material structure as the post-positivists do, but he disagrees with rationalist mainstream theorists concerning the weight of material power and interest in international arena. Wendt argues that since the meaning and impacts of material structure is deeply bound up in the social structure of the system, social structure is relatively more important.

Wendt postulates that any social structure will consist of three elements:¹¹² namely, *ideas* - which ‘constitute the actors in a situation and the nature of their relationships, whether cooperative or conflictual,’¹¹³ *material conditions* – in which ‘actors act on the basis of the socially constructed meanings that objects have for them-’¹¹⁴ and interests. The point is that these elements are significantly interrelated and equally necessary to explain social outcomes. "Without ideas there are no interests, without interests there are no meaningful material conditions, without material conditions, there is no reality at all."¹¹⁵

Distribution of interests: Contrary to explicit explanatory factors of neorealism, i.e. anarchy and distribution of power, Wendt argues that neorealism is underspecified and the conclusions in Waltz’s neorealism depend on the “distribution of interests.”¹¹⁶ That is, assumptions of neorealism with respect to the motivations of states acting in the system are not stated explicitly.¹¹⁷ Accordingly, Waltz would not be able to explain variations in international outcomes without keeping in mind distinctive types of states, i.e. pro-status-quo states and revisionist ones.¹¹⁸ The extent of anarchy constituted by pro-status-quo states and revisionist states are different. Pro-status-quo states make up a relatively more stable and peaceful system in comparison to revisionist states which seek to change the system by means of force.¹¹⁹ Therefore, anarchy in international relations does not have just one underlying principle. As Wendt concludes; “the effect of anarchy and material structure depend on what states want. The logic of anarchy among revisionist states takes the form of a fight to the death; among status-quo states, arms racing and some brawls; among collectivist states, perhaps heated but ultimately non-violent arguments about burden sharing.”¹²⁰

Therefore, describing Waltz’s neorealism underspecified, Wendt highlights the distribution of interests. Accordingly, distribution of interests, a hidden variable, is most crucial to explain international politics. Material structure would be meaningful only if it interacts with the ideational structure.¹²¹ “The distribution of power in international politics is

¹¹² Ibid., 139.

¹¹³ Wendt, “Constructing International Politics,” 73.

¹¹⁴ Wendt, “Identity and Structural Change,” 50.

¹¹⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 139. On the other hand, in a former writing in 1995, Wendt defines as the third element of social structure the “practices”. Accordingly, ‘social structures exist, not in actors’ heads nor in material capabilities, but in practices. Social structure exists only in process.’ Social structures continue as long as they are reproduced through the recurring practices. For instance, the Cold War was a social structure and this structure governed great power relations for forty years. However, ‘once they stopped acting on this basis, it was “over.”’ Wendt, “Constructing International Politics,” 73.

¹¹⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 103-104.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 105.

¹¹⁸ Copeland, “The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism, p.5-6

¹¹⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 105.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 106.

¹²¹ Alexander Wendt and Daniel Friedheim, “Hierarchy under Anarchy: Informal Empire and the East German State,” *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 4. (Autumn, 1995), 692.

constituted in important part by the distribution of interests, and the content of interests is in turn constituted in important part by ideas.”¹²² Furthermore, concrete interests are not exogenously given; rather, they are shaped by norms as to what sort of goals are worth pursuing or avoiding. Hence, though individuals and states might have some basic needs (e.g. security, esteem and so on which will be elaborated below), their manifestation in certain actors will be a product of social discursive practices.¹²³

Anarchy: For Wendt, anarchy -i.e. absence of a hierarchical government- is not something given in nature but a social conception that constructs reality. His focus lies in the analysis of how anarchy is constructed and how power politics arises.¹²⁴ For him, “anarchy is an empty vessel without meaning. What gives anarchy meaning is the kinds of people who live there and the structure of their relationships.”¹²⁵ So Wendt characterizes anarchic structures as a function of social structures. Unlike Waltz’s claim that power politics and the self help system are the result of the structure of anarchy, Wendt argues that power politics and self-help are products of state actions.¹²⁶ In this respect, power politics and self help are not automatic system effects, but consequence of how states interact with each other. At this stage, attacking Waltz’s “logic of anarchy”, he claims that how states interact with each other depend on the type of international political culture under which states live.¹²⁷ For instance, if states are revisionists and do not hesitate to use power to achieve their goals, then we get power politics. Therefore, power politics is not a function of anarchic structure; instead, it is a function of process of learning,¹²⁸ which constitutes identity and interest of states. Behavior in anarchy is not predetermined and the dominant roles in the system –enemy, rival and friend- determine the kind of structure at the macro-level.¹²⁹ In this sense, based on different role relationships, Wendt describes three kinds of cultures (shared ideas), namely Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian, which define for states what their social identity or role should be.

International structures: These macro-level structures are developed primarily out of “self” and “other” conceptualizations (role identities) and ensuing practices.¹³⁰ These three cultures of anarchy have characterized the past two thousand years of international relations at different times. Roles performed by states have a crucial structural significance for Wendt. In a Hobbesian culture, which, according to Wendt, lasted until the seventeenth century, states attribute each other the role of “enemy” and view no limits to use violence. Therefore, violence is the basic tool for survival in this culture. In a Lockean culture, which refers to the modern states system since the treaty of Westphalia in 1648, states see each other as “rivals” and use violence to advance their interests without intending to eliminate each other. In a Kantian culture, however, which has appeared in relations between democracies, the role performed by states is a “friendly” one. They prefer peaceful methods to settle disputes and work together against security threats.¹³¹

¹²² Wendt, *Social Theory*, 135.

¹²³ Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge," 6.

¹²⁴ John A. Vasquez, "The Power of Power Politics From Classical Realism to Neorealism," (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 197.

¹²⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 309.

¹²⁶ Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it," 394

¹²⁷ Hidemi Suganami, "Wendt, IR, and Philosophy, A Critique," in *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his critics*, ed. Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 57

¹²⁸ Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it," 391

¹²⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 247.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 109.

¹³¹ Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism," 6

For each culture the behavioral norms are known by the actors and are “shared” at least to a minimal degree. To what extent are these norms internalized is of importance for any given structure. For Wendt, norms can be internalized to three degrees.¹³² Accordingly, in a Hobbesian world norms are to be followed since they are coerced by a credible enforcer (first degree, ‘Coercion’). If norms are better internalized, the system turns into a Lockean structure in which “rivalry” and “calculations” channel conflicts (second degree, ‘self-interest’). In the highest degree of internalization of norms, “legitimacy” of norms is the dominant motive not force or price calculations (third degree, ‘legitimacy’). This culture is named as Kantian by Wendt¹³³. At this level, in accordance with constructivist thinking, ‘states have internalized the behavioral norms as legitimate, as part of who they are’. Norms “construct” the actors only at this level by shaping their identities and interests.¹³⁴ Though Wendt writes that a transformation of those cultures is difficult and does not concede that a progressive evolution in the political culture of the international system will necessarily occur, he argues that it will not move backward unless a big exogenous shock happens. So, if a Lockean culture internalized, it is hard to see that it degenerates into a Hobbesian one.¹³⁵

For Wendt, crucial for any cultural form is its role structure, ‘the configuration of subject positions that shared ideas make available to its holders.’¹³⁶ In the constitution of subject positions, Self and Other perceptions play a significant role and constitute first the logics and later reproduction requirements of different cultural forms. Therefore, a subject position lies at the centre of each kind of anarchy: while the subject position is “enemy” in a Hobbesian culture and “rival” in a Lockean culture, it is “friend” in Kantian cultures. Each culture contends different stand of Self towards Other concerning the use of power. In a Hobbesian culture no limits is observed regarding the use of violence; in a Lockean culture actors use violence to acquire their interests but avoid eliminating each other; in a Kantian structure, on the other hand, actors use no violence to settle their disputes.¹³⁷ In this respect, a macro level change depend above all on a redefinition of the posture of the Self to the Other regarding the use of violence as a strategy of following one’s goals.¹³⁸

Consequently, in addition to constitutive attribute of social structure, in parallel with neoliberals, Wendt accepts the regulative quality of it. Here, he refers to the ‘logic of appropriateness’. Accordingly, agents are “rule-followers” “who act out of habit or decides what to do by posing the question ‘how is a person in my role (or with my identity) supposed to act in this circumstance?’”¹³⁹ But Wendt highlights also a constitutive relationship since he believes and seeks to show that the agents’ identities and interests are product of social structure (except for corporate identities and basic interests of states which will be elaborated below); “and because for his purpose, it is imperative that the relationship could be demonstrated to be of a constitutive kind as he defines it.”¹⁴⁰

In short, social structures/cultures (either Hobbesian, Lockean or Kantian) not only causally influence the lives of states and regulate their behaviors, which live under them or

¹³² Wendt, *Social Theory*, 250.

¹³³ Friedrich Kratochwill, "Constructing a new orthodoxy?," in *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his critics* ed. Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 31-32.

¹³⁴ Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism," 7.

¹³⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 311-312.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 257.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 257–258.

¹³⁸ Kratochwill, “Constructing a new orthodoxy?” 32.

¹³⁹ Fearon, and Wendt “Rationalism v. Constructivism,” 58.

¹⁴⁰ Suganami, “Wendt, IR, and Philosophy,” 67.

come into contact with them, but also that they each constitute the identities and interests of states or their roles. Therefore, for Wendt, whereas the Hobbesian culture constitute states as 'enemies', Lockean culture as rivals and the Kantian culture as friends.¹⁴¹

1.2.3.2. Wendt's approach to Agent

Wendt's approach is state centric like Waltz's neorealism; he views states as the primary actors and basic units of analysis in international politics.¹⁴² Whilst Wendt believes that the identity of the state informs its interests and, in turn, its actions, he ignores everything that exists or happens in the domestic realm, and seeks to illuminate the world politics simply by theorizing how states relate to one another in the international arena.¹⁴³ Since Wendt focuses on the system level and how the states system functions, he takes the existence of states as given and neglects the domestic construction of states. In this sense, Wendt comes closer to rationalist theories by assuming state identities and interests partly exogenous to the system. However, he argues that state identities and interests are still constructed by system structures to a great extent contrary to rationalist mainstream theories which assume 'all' state identities and interests are exogenously given.¹⁴⁴

For Wendt, states are self organized units which are constructed from within by the discursive practices of individuals as well as groups.¹⁴⁵ As a self-organized entity, some properties of states are intrinsic and exogenous, whereas others dependent on cultural structures at the systemic level. Wendt draws here a distinction between the corporate and social identities of the state.¹⁴⁶ Corporate identity is a 'site' or 'platform' for other identities, such as type, role and collective identities and pre-exists the social interaction of states.¹⁴⁷ This corporate identity and its implications cause a major difference between Wendt and other extreme constructivists. "Corporate identity refers to the intrinsic, self-organizing qualities that constitute actor individuality...for organizations, it means their constituent individuals, physical resources, and the shared beliefs and institutions in virtue of which individuals function as a "we."¹⁴⁸

Unlike other constructivists, Wendt postulates that states have some basic needs emanating from their nature as self-organized political units: needs for physical survival, autonomy, economic well-being, and collective self esteem.¹⁴⁹ These needs are evaluated under the framework of corporate identity which is always related to material base (e.g. territory or people of a state). Besides, a perception of Self as a 'separate locus of thought and activity' has a distinguished place in corporate identity,¹⁵⁰ whose roots are in domestic politics and which is ontologically prior to the states system and provides motivational energy for

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Wendt, *Social Theory*, 8-10.

¹⁴³ Reus-Smit, "Constructivism," 199.

¹⁴⁴ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 246.

¹⁴⁵ Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism," 4.

¹⁴⁶ Wendt, "Identity and Structural Change," 50.

¹⁴⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 224-230.

¹⁴⁸ Wendt, "Collective identity formation," 384-397.

¹⁴⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 224-226.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 225.

interaction.¹⁵¹ In short, corporate identity of the state refers to the factors constituting a state what it is.¹⁵²

Social identity, on the other hand, concerns the status, role or personality that international society ascribes to a state.¹⁵³ Social identity arises only through interaction. Wendt utilizes here the concept of “I” and “me” in symbolic interactionism. That is, the process of definition of an interest and its application depends in part on the notion of self vis-à-vis others, that is, on social identities or roles.¹⁵⁴ These are sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others—that is, as a social object. Unlike corporate identity’s singular character, actors have many social identities changing in salience. “Social identities have both unit-level and social structural properties, being at once cognitive schemas that enable an actor to determine “who I am/we are” in a situation, and positions in a social structure of shared understandings and expectations.”¹⁵⁵ Finally, social identities are dependent on interaction with others and always in process. Therefore, they are a key link in the mutual constitution of agent and structure.¹⁵⁶ Identities lead actors to view situations and redefine their interests in certain ways.¹⁵⁷ In other words, social identities provide for lenses to agents through which they see the world and hence define their interests in certain ways.¹⁵⁸ What Wendt concerns in terms of identity is indeed social identity rather than corporate identity.

At this point, highlighting the concept of ‘identity’ in Wendt’s approach would provide a valuable content to proceed the argumentation of the dissertation. Following Zehfuss, I also consider that identity has a particular place in Wendt’s approach,¹⁵⁹ and as such, I attribute it an essential role in international politics as well as in foreign policy making.

“Identities refer to who or what actors are. They designate social kinds or states of being.”¹⁶⁰ Actors gain their identities through interaction and participating in collective meanings, that is, “relatively stable, role specific understandings and expectations about self.”¹⁶¹ Individuals and also states have many identities which are constructed to different degrees by cultural forms as to who individuals or states are and how they act in a certain context, and salience of an identity hinges on the specific social context.¹⁶² For instance, in a class environment, students and professor have different roles but outside of this exclusive institutional environment, these roles have no meaning. Likewise, sovereignty of a state makes sense solely in a system of mutual recognition from other states with certain competencies.¹⁶³

¹⁵¹ Wendt, "Collective identity formation," 51.

¹⁵² Reus-Smit, "Constructivism," 199.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 199.

¹⁵⁴ Maja Zehfuss, "Constructivism and identity A dangerous liaison" in *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his critics*, ed. by Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, (New York: Routledge, 2006) 99.

¹⁵⁵ Wendt, "Collective identity formation," 51.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 383-387.

¹⁵⁹ Zehfuss, "Constructivism in International Relations," 12. Zehfuss, "Constructivism and identity," 93-94.

¹⁶⁰ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 231.

¹⁶¹ Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it," 397.

¹⁶² Wendt, *Social Theory*, 230.

¹⁶³ Jepperson, Ronald L., Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* Peter, ed. J. Katzenstein, (New York: Columbia University Press. 1996), 42.

Identities provide the basis for interests. Whereas they refer to who or what actors are, interests refer to what actions they want. Identities precede interests, since one has to know first who he is in order to determine about his interests. However, identities alone do not explain action. "Without interests identities have no motivational force, without identities interests have no direction. Identities belong to the belief side of the intentional equation (desire+belief = action).¹⁶⁴ Having an identity means having certain ideas who an actor is in a given situation, and likewise "the concept of identity fits squarely into the belief side of the desire plus belief equation. These beliefs in turn help constitute interests.¹⁶⁵ For example, politicians have an interest in their re-elections because they view themselves as "politicians."¹⁶⁶

This powerful role of identity in the definition of states' interests grants it a great deal of explanatory power in foreign policy analysis.¹⁶⁷ States, as individuals, have not a set of interests (a 'portfolio' of interests) that they play accordingly, independent of social context. Rather, "they define their interests in the process of defining situations."¹⁶⁸ If actors face an unprecedented situation, institutionally defined roles come into issue and actors define these kinds of situations as well as their interests according to these defined roles. Lack of role or its failure leads either to difficulty in defining situations and interests or to an identity confusion.¹⁶⁹

As mentioned above, identities are not given but constituted, sustained and transformed by interaction.¹⁷⁰ Here, Wendt defines a simple model as to the acquisition of identities by "imitation" and "social learning (two mechanisms of cultural selection or socialization) with a particular emphasis of the latter."¹⁷¹ Through imitation, actors gain identities and interests when they "adopt the self-understandings of those whom they perceive as "successful"..."¹⁷² Social learning, the second mechanism, is stressed in terms of its constitutive effects on identities and interests (complex learning).¹⁷³

Wendt writes that "self" and "other" conceptions arise from interaction between states. State actors already possess certain qualities prior to interaction such as territory, people, sovereignty and so forth.¹⁷⁴ Besides, once state actors encounter, "they are not blank slates and what they bring to their interaction will affect its evolution."¹⁷⁵ This argument points out the corporate and personal identities of states. These identities, on the other hand, have some basic needs that actors (states) must satisfy if they want to survive: namely, physical security, autonomy, economic well-being and collective self-esteem.¹⁷⁶ In order to grasp the quality of identities (egoistic or collective), one has to look, beyond basic needs, at social interaction. Identities and interests are learned and reinforced in response to how actors are treated by

¹⁶⁴ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 231.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 170.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, 18.

¹⁶⁸ Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it," p. 398.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 398-399.

¹⁷⁰ Zehfuss, "Constructivism and identity," 95.

¹⁷¹ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 324-336.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 325.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 327.

¹⁷⁴ Zehfuss, "Constructivism and identity," 97.

¹⁷⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 328.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 328.

significant others.¹⁷⁷ This principle is called as “reflected appraisals” or “mirror” because it hypothesizes that actors come to see themselves as a reflection of how they think others see or “appraise” them, in the “mirror” of other’s representations of the Self.”¹⁷⁸ For instance, if the other characterizes self as an enemy, in accordance with the principle of reflected appraisals, self will probably internalize that characteristic in its respective role identity vis-à-vis the other. However, significance of all others is not equal but related to power and dependency relations.¹⁷⁹

Identities and interests are not only constituted but also sustained in interactions.¹⁸⁰ Stable identities and expectations concerning each other are created through repeated interactive processes. Process develops as follows: “initially forming shared ideas about self and other through a learning process, and subsequently reinforcing these ideas causally through repeated interaction. Ego and Alter¹⁸¹ are at each stage jointly defining who each of them is.”¹⁸² In this way, social structures are produced and maintained by actors and in turn, structures confine actors’ choices.¹⁸³

When structures of identity and interests are developed, their transformation is not easy since the social system becomes an objective social fact to the actors.¹⁸⁴ Actors might have an interest in sustaining stable identities because of external factors like the motives caused by existing structures and also internal sources such as commitment to constructed identities.¹⁸⁵ Concerning this process, Wendt invokes the “logic of self-fulfilling prophecy” which proposes that once a culture is produced, it will tend to reproduce itself which maintains also the identities and interests produced in interaction.¹⁸⁶ Nonetheless, identity transformation is probable not only in first encounters but also possible when a culture already exists. Its transformation requires social learning. Thus, the interaction between Ego and Alter again carries the transformative potential for an identity change.¹⁸⁷

Constructivism takes identities and interests as endogenous to interaction, i.e. defined in social processes.¹⁸⁸ While states tend to define their interests in egoistic terms,¹⁸⁹ whether they adopt “selfish” or “collective” identities hinge on the self-other dichotomy, i.e. on “manner in which social identities involve identification with the fate of other. Identification is a continuum from negative to positive-from conceiving the other as anathema to the self to conceiving it as an extension of the self.”¹⁹⁰ Whereas a negative identification will result in a competitive security system, in a positive identification, states will view each other’s security

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 327.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 331.

¹⁸¹ Ego and Alter are two actors widely used by Wendt to illustrate how the international structures emerge and how the ideas are constructed.

¹⁸² Wendt, *Social Theory*, 335.

¹⁸³ Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it,” 405.

¹⁸⁴ Zehfuss, “Constructivism and identity,” 98.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 98.

¹⁸⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 339, 331.

¹⁸⁷ Zehfuss, “Constructivism and identity,” 100.

¹⁸⁸ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 336.

¹⁸⁹ Wendt, “Identity and Structural Change,” 54.

¹⁹⁰ Alexander Wendt, “Collective identity formation and the international state” *American Political Science Review* 88.n2 (June 1994), 386.

“as responsibility of all.” Rather than self-help, interests of the community will be prevailing and in a sense national interests will transform into international interests.¹⁹¹

Given the interaction-dependent quality of state identity and interests, and states’ tendency to define their interests in egoistic terms, states might define their interests in collectivist terms by creating new definitions of self and other during interaction.¹⁹² At this point, Wendt introduces three familiar factors: interdependence, common fate, homogeneity, which would help a more individualistic culture transform into a collectivist one.¹⁹³

Interdependence means that “the outcome of an interaction for each depends on the choices of the others.”¹⁹⁴ It would probably result in forming a collective identity, if someone had the ‘bright’ idea of characterizing the situation as interdependence. This idea might be followed by a discourse of what “we” should do.¹⁹⁵ Density of interaction will affect the likelihood of transformation of interdependence into collective identity. Where interdependence highest is, “concentric circles of identification might then develop.”¹⁹⁶ For instance, in terms of security issues, these may be named as “primary” security dilemmas like France-Germany and India-Pakistan.¹⁹⁷ However, the potential of interdependence to induce cooperation and collective identity formation is limited where a fear of exploitation exists. Fear of exploitation constraints interdependence to be an adequate condition for collective identity formation among states in anarchy.¹⁹⁸ However; given the cooperation level of modern states, Wendt claims that today’s Lockean culture reduces the self-help character of the system and creates a more appropriate environment for cooperation.¹⁹⁹

“Common fate” arises mostly against a third actor or actors who threaten others as a whole in terms of survival, fitness or welfare.²⁰⁰ Wendt notes on this issue that where the threat is not so acute, to induce a common fate perception, much more ideological labor might be necessary.²⁰¹ Here, the “entrepreneurs” and /or “epistemic communities” step in the issue who take the initiative to reframe how actors understand themselves, as in the case of global warming.²⁰²

With respect to “homogeneity” as another factor promoting collective identity, Wendt hypothesizes that “objective “homogeneity (being democratic state etc.) pushes actors to re-categorize others as being like themselves. Though he acknowledges that homogeneity does not always lead to collective identity (as in the case of European states until near history) and juxtaposes a number of reasons to depict why it is not by itself adequate to develop collective identity, he writes that homogeneity reduces conflict and increase the potential “to see Self and Other as members of the same group.”²⁰³

¹⁹¹ Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it,” 402.

¹⁹² Bozdağlıoğlu, Turkish Foreign Policy, 20.

¹⁹³ Suganami, “Wendt, IR, and Philosophy,” 58.

¹⁹⁴ Wendt, Social Theory, 344.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 347.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 348.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 349.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 352.

²⁰² Ibid., 352-3.

²⁰³ Ibid., 353-7.

These efficient causes of collective identity formation and structural change increases actors' incentive to engage in social behavior.²⁰⁴ When cooperation and collective identity begin to prevail in interactions of state, they will be regarded as the feature of the system over time. This process points out the way how Kantian culture arises.²⁰⁵

However, these master variables are conditioned by a "reciprocity" problem. The process of collective identity formation would fail if a prosocial behavior would not be reciprocated by others. Self-restraint, i.e. "knowledge that the other is not to resort force"²⁰⁶ is crucial for collective identity formation. Wendt introduces here three scenarios as to how states come to know that others will be self-restraining.²⁰⁷ The first scenario is if through repeated compliance with the norms states gradually internalize the institution of the pluralistic security community. By observing each other's habitual compliance, states will acquire over time the knowledge that others can be trusted. The second scenario is associated with domestic politics and its reflections to foreign policy. Accordingly, some states – particularly democratic ones- tend to settle their disputes with each other by peaceful means and become self-restraining. The final pathway to self-restraint might be self-binding. A state might conclude that the reason why others treat it in a hostile manner lies in its respective hostile attitudes towards others. As a result, the state at issue might unilaterally resort to policies of self-binding or sacrificing and succeed to persuade the others that it could be trusted. The Soviet New Thinkers' engagements in unilateral peace initiatives might be regarded in this context.

Wendt describes one of the mechanisms of identity transformation based on conscious efforts to change identity. Accordingly, actors can involve in critical self-reflection and transform or transcend role. Ego might involve in new actions. The new behavior of Ego will have certain influences on the practices of Alter. This process includes changing identity in addition to changing behavior. Since Alter's identity reflects Ego's practices, any change in Ego's practices will affect Alter's conception of self.²⁰⁸ Ego's ideas about Alter are not passive perceptions existing independent of Ego, rather, they are actively and continuously "constitutive" of Alter's role against Ego.²⁰⁹ In this respect, when Ego represents itself with a new role definition to Alter, this behavior of Ego is also an attempt to induce Alter to adopt a new identity by treating Alter as if it already had that identity.²¹⁰ However, this process will be meaningful only if Alter confirms the new role. For instance, if one presents his identity as "the president", this will have no meaning until others share this idea.²¹¹

1.2.3.3. Critique of Wendt's Constructivism: Identity and domestic politics in Wendt's analysis and the insufficient emphasis of psychological qualities of policy makers

Notwithstanding the fact that Wendt stresses several times that "domestic" politics matters and points out that states are self-organized entities which are constructed from within by the discourse practices of individuals as well as groups,²¹² he excludes it from his analysis

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 357.

²⁰⁵ Suganami, "Wendt, IR, and Philosophy," 59.

²⁰⁶ Kratochwill, "Constructing a new orthodoxy?" 33

²⁰⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 360-3

²⁰⁸ Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it," 421

²⁰⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 335

²¹⁰ Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it," 421

²¹¹ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 335

²¹² Wendt, "Identity and Structural Change," 50

out of systemic concerns. However, since this study is not a systemic analysis but an attempt of foreign policy analysis which aims to analyze Turkey's foreign policy, Wendt's systemic approach remains insufficient to explain the reorientation of TFP. Indeed, foreign political orientation of a country is seriously influenced by a country's political system, the dynamics inherent to competition for domestic political power as well as the changes of governments (e. g. level of democracy, participation of interest groups and civil society actors in decision making processes, and institutionalized power relations).²¹³ Therefore, excluding domestic politics from the analysis would hinder to see the whole image and would prevent to account for the transformation in the foreign political behaviors of states.

One of the main arguments of this dissertation is that identity-based explanations offer a better understanding of states' foreign policy behaviors. Therefore, my concentration will be on the identity and on foreign policy preferences and interests of Turkey. Yet, unlike Wendt, I do not restrict the study to the international realm with regards to the constitution processes of state identities. Wendt aims to develop a theory of the states system, not a theory of the state and therefore he treats states' identities and interests to a certain degree exogenous to the system. Thereby, in parallel with rationalist thinking, he takes the existence of states as given.²¹⁴ Here, "the state itself is treated as a 'black box' the internal workings of which are irrelevant to the construction of state identities and interests."²¹⁵ Hence, Wendt has explicitly bracketed state identities and interests to be explained by mutual constitution,²¹⁶ that is, identities and interests of states are assumed to be formed through inter-state interaction. Consequently, "social construction at the level of individual agents, or more generally, at any domestic level is neglected."²¹⁷

However, neither the political and historical context in which national interests are shaped nor the intersubjective meanings which define state identities and interests can be limited to those meanings constructed solely in inter-state relations. Ultimately, states are, only analytically, unitary actors.²¹⁸ "The meanings which objects, events and actions have for 'states' are necessarily the meanings they have for those individuals who act in the name of the state. And these state officials do not approach international politics with a blank slate on which meanings are written only as a result of interactions among states. Instead, they approach international politics with an already quite comprehensive and elaborate appreciation of the world, of the international system and of the place of their state within it. This appreciation, in turn, is necessarily rooted in meanings already produced, at least in part, in domestic political and cultural contexts."²¹⁹

Given the fact that foreign policy makers (individuals, institutions or domestic groups) come from varying political and cultural contexts, they will engage in different actions when faced with different situations. Culture as socially shared and transmitted ideas and beliefs has a decisive role in actors' perceptions in the process of defining the world around them and in their actions.²²⁰

²¹³ Asiye Öztürk, "The Domestic Context of Turkey's Changing Foreign Policy towards the Middle East and the Caspian Region," Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Discussion Paper, (Bonn: 10/2009), 5.

²¹⁴ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 246.

²¹⁵ Jutta Weldes, "Constructing National Interests," *European Journal of International Relations* 2 (1996), 280.

²¹⁶ Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn," 341.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ Weldes, "Constructing National Interests," 280.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, 25.

In pluralistic societies, a state identity and its interests will be a product of a struggle among varying domestic groups seeking to affect the state's foreign policy in accordance with their identity conceptions.²²¹ Once an identity is constructed, states institutionalize it at both domestic and international levels and form the institutions to protect their identities in the domestic realm.²²² Simultaneously, when the newly defined identities step in the international realm, they are shaped by the international system and as such actor behaviors are also affected by it.²²³

On the other hand, state identities are not constant. "They can change as a result of interaction with others due to international developments"²²⁴ Domestically, identities might transform as a result of several political developments. Firstly, "drastic political developments such as revolutions can change a state's identity and replace it with a new one as happened in Iran after the Islamic Revolution in 1979."²²⁵ Secondly, the role of domestic actors in foreign policy making (be individuals, groups or institutions) might shift as a result of domestic institutional arrangements or elections. "In this case, the foreign policy discourse can be dominated by entirely new organizations or individuals with different identity conceptions that may perceive the national interest in a different way."²²⁶

Identities are sustained in interaction with others.²²⁷ However, depending on its nature, systemic interaction might be transformative or confirmative in relation to the already held identities. The point here is that since identities are also relevant to domestic politics, systemic interactions will be interpreted differently by varying domestic actors with different cultural backgrounds and identities, and consequently, systemic interaction will be either confirmative or transformative concerning the identity.²²⁸

In systemic interaction, "identities and interests are learned and then reinforced in response to how actors are treated by significant others."²²⁹ This is the so called "reflected appraisals." Accordingly, it is hypothesized that actors come to see themselves as a reflection of how they think others see or 'appraise' them in the 'mirror' of Others' representations of the Self.²³⁰ Here the significant others do not encompass all others; power and dependency play an important role. However, if as a result of a change in a state's internal or external environments, a state's identity is disconfirmed by significant others, lack of a clearly defined role may culminate with an identity crisis.²³¹ For instance, rejection of Turkey's bid for a full EU membership in 1997 led Turkey to an identity crisis.

Another point attracting attention is the prominent role of individuals in foreign policy making. At this point, psychological factors influencing foreign policy decisions might be complementary to the constructivist thinking. Although Wendt and more generally constructivists are not interested in the personalities of decision makers, they play a determining role in foreign policy making processes. Decisions at the highest levels of

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 21.

²²⁴ Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, 25.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 331.

²²⁸ Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, 26.

²²⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 327.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, 26.

government are usually made either by small groups or powerful individuals. Other foreign policy determinants (such as international material or social structure or domestic balances) are mediated by the images, attitudes, values, beliefs, doctrines and ideologies of policy makers. Thus their personalities play essential role in the definition of FP.²³² Here, the personality refers to a combination of agent leadership traits and perceptions that mediate the ultimate role of power and material aspects of international relations as well as the role of global norms in shaping state behavior.²³³ In addition to their paradigms, perceptions or images of the real world, their personal characteristics would be crucial in understanding foreign policy preferences. Especially, if the decision making occurs during a crisis or under certain conditions such as high stress and high uncertainty the impact of psychological factors would be greater.²³⁴ For example, Winston Churchill had a dominant position as a decision maker during World War II.²³⁵ Likewise, President Özal also played a dominant role during the First Gulf War who virtually dominated the TFP. PM Erdoğan's reaction in the Davos Forum in January 2009, which will be elaborated in the next chapter, might be also associated with psychological factors. Consequently, without taking the psychological qualities of the decision makers into consideration, it would be misleading to consider the identities of the actors entirely constructed

At this stage, touching on the socialization processes of individuals, which were neglected by Wendt, would provide considerably explanatory tools to account for current TFP. In fact, it is socialization processes which render norms effective on foreign policy. In sociological terminology, 'socialization is a process in which a person grows into the society and culture surrounding him and, by learning social norms and roles, becomes an independent, competent social being.'²³⁶ In this process, individuals internalize the modes of thought and behavior of their social environment, and shape their interests and preferences accordingly. However, socialization process is not a one-way process in which the actor being socialized assumes a completely passive role. 'Rather, the actor being socialized may well reflect on what he internalizes during the socialization process and may even modify its content.' Thus, socialization is a process which is never complete but a continuous one.²³⁷

In short, while acknowledging and appreciating the usefulness of Wendt's systemic constructivism in analyzing TFP, in view of foreign policy making processes and the issues studied in this dissertation, a holistic approach to TFP which seeks to take the domestic and international as two faces of a single social order and engages in accommodating all factors affecting the identities and interests of state seems a more useful method to make a comprehensive foreign policy analysis. Moreover, considering the qualities of TFP in the 1980s and 2000s and the considerable role of individuals in foreign policy making processes, an exclusion of the psychological features of the policy makers from the analysis seems not as a reasonable option.

²³²Sita Ramachandran, *Decision-Making in Foreign Policy*, (Delhi: Northern Book Centre, 1996), 15

²³³ Vaughn P. Shannon, "Toward a Social Psychological Theory of International Politics," (paper presented at ISA, New York City, 2009), 34-35
http://wright.academia.edu/VaughnShannon/Papers/84970/Toward_a_Social_Psychological_Theory_of_International_Politics

²³⁴ Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, *Foreign Policy: theories, actors, cases*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 20

²³⁵ Alex Mintz and Karl DeRouen, *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 97

²³⁶ Henning Boekle, Volker Rittberger, Wolfgang Wagner, *Constructivist Foreign Policy Theory*, in *German Foreign Policy since Unification*, ed Volker Rittberger, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 110

²³⁷Ibid

1.3. Constructivism and foreign policy of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships

This dissertation suggests that the theses of constructivist thinking have a significant explanatory power in terms of TFP conducted during the Özal and Erdoğan eras. In this respect, the common points of constructivism have been introduced. Additionally, given the multi-forms of constructivist approaches, Alexander Wendt's constructivism has been specified. Yet, whereas he does not take into account the domestic politics on behalf of a systemic approach, this study attributes it a considerable significance. Therefore it is argued that a holistic approach for the purpose of this work would provide more consistent conclusions. Within the constructivist approach, the terms of identity in explaining foreign policy are highlighted. As I have attempted to demonstrate in figure 1 very simply, identity is a function of domestic politics as well as international politics. Though the roots of state identity lie at domestic politics, it engages in international politics and is shaped by it. However, by contrast with Wendt, I see a considerable necessity to highlight the changes in domestic politics along with the changes in international politics.

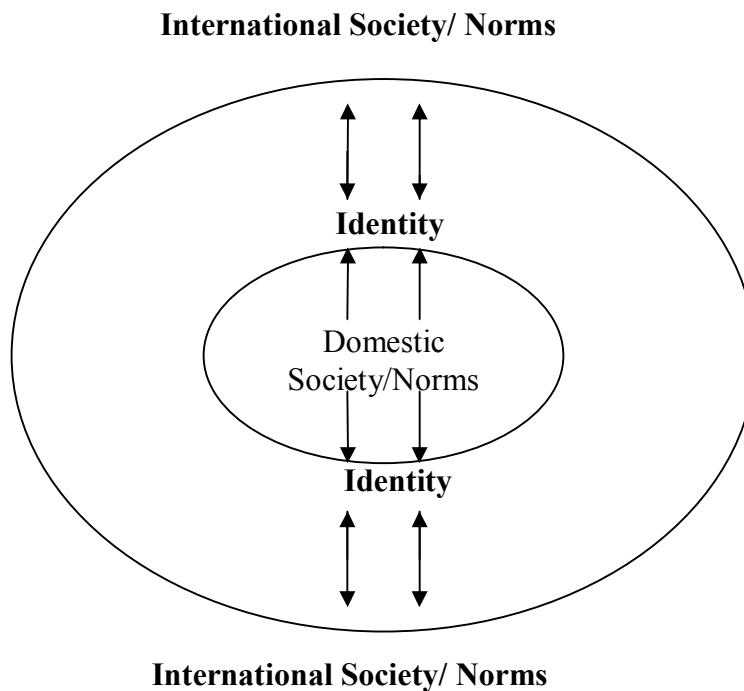


Figure 1: Identity formation

I advocate at this point that both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships which came to power in 1983 and 2002 respectively have added a new dimension to Turkey's identity. I also underline that their identity definitions, *inter alia*, have played a significant role in their new foreign policy approaches in comparison to their predecessors. As it was mentioned above, revolutions or elections might lead to changes in the perceptions of identity. In this regard, in the wake of their acquisition of the office, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships' paradigms and world-views began to be reflected to the policy field. They have defined Turkey's interests in accordance with their identity definitions and thereby began to follow a distinctive foreign policy line compared to their predecessors. In other words, they intellectually propounded a

new Turkish identity definition, and they have followed a relatively more multidimensional policy in accordance with their own identity perceptions.²³⁸ This mechanism of identity change in domestic politics and its reflection on foreign policy might be illustrated as follows:

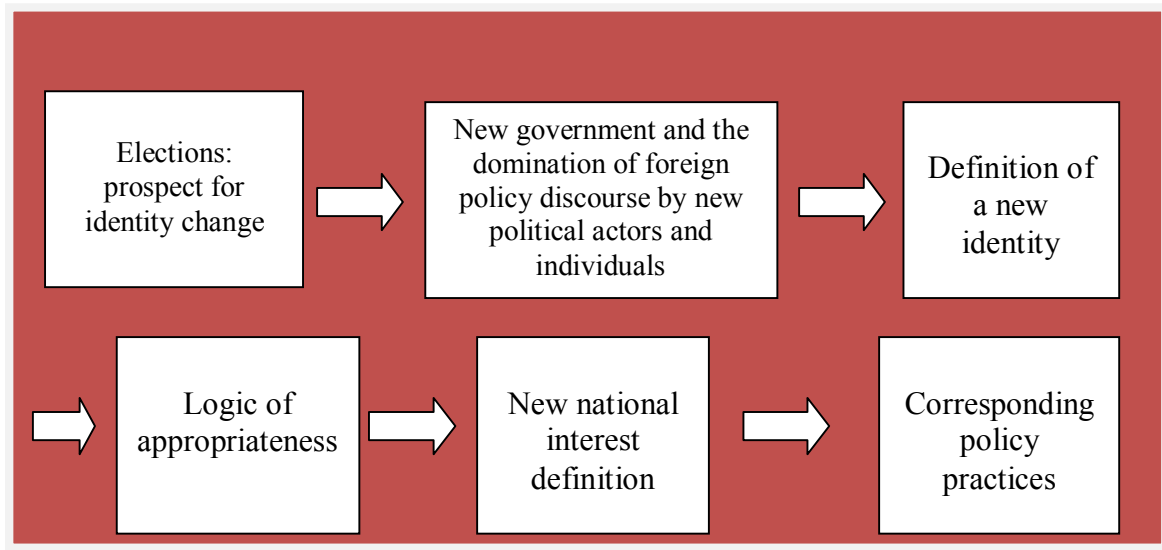


Figure 2: Identity change and its reflection to the FP practices

Considering the importance the constructivists attach to the role of identity in the formation of interests, it seems at this stage necessary to handle the construction process of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships briefly. Here, two constructivist concepts which were not emphasized by Alexander Wendt, societal socialization and transnational socialization, seem considerably explanatory. Accordingly, individuals internalize norms as a result of socialization processes both domestically and internationally. These norms become an integral part of their identities and they are advocated in various platforms by these individuals. Once a connection is established between the concepts of socialization and Turkish policy makers, such as Özal and Erdoğan, one might conclude that they have gone through a two-dimensional socialization process.

In terms of societal socialization process of current Turkish PM Erdoğan, it should be noted that he comes from a religious-conservative family and social environment with a strong religious tradition. He graduated from a religious high school. He had been one of the most popular students of Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the Islamist National Outlook movement. However, when the political parties coming from the National Outlook tradition were closed several times and this tradition faced a strong resistance from the Kemalist establishment, some prominent figures in the National Outlook, such as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Abdullah Gül and Bülent Arınç, experienced a transformation process. The most recent chain of this transformation was the February 28 process.²³⁹ After Erdoğan was

²³⁸ See Nasuh Uslu, *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Period*, (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2004), 10-11

²³⁹ "February 28 Process" refers to the period which began in mid-1990s and peaked on February 28, 1997 when the legitimate Turkish government was forced to resign and continued until early 2000s. In this process, non-democratic practices became quite widespread and the Islamic Welfare Party (WP)-led government, which had

sentenced to jail, because he publicly read a poem and served a ten months sentence, his world view has changed substantially and this has been clearly articulated by him. Erdoğan declared repeatedly that he took off his "National Outlook hat" and his political priorities have changed.²⁴⁰ Consequently, as a result of their experiences throughout their political lives, Erdoğan and his colleagues have made the norms like democracy, free market economy and human rights an integral part of their political identity. With this new identity definition, they have founded the Justice and Development Party (or AK Party) in August 2001 and have arisen as a strong political actor in the Turkish political landscape.

Similar to Erdoğan, Turgut Özal comes also from an Islamic-conservative family structure.²⁴¹ He joined also the National Outlook (NO) movement in the early years of his political career, yet his NO adventure did not last as much as Erdoğan's. Özal witnessed several military interventions into Turkish politics as well and these interventions have had a significant role on his socialization process as well as on the configuration of his political identity. Both Özal and Erdoğan grew up in social environments with strong religious references and adopted similar values in consequence of societal socialization processes.

Secondly, considering the issue from the transnational socialization perspective, one might comment that Erdoğan and his close circle were under strong influence of the soft power oriented norms advocated by the European Union especially until 2006. Because, whenever the Turkish army intervened in politics, contrary to the United States, Europe defined its attitude in favor of the re-establishment of democracy as soon as possible. In the face of the pressure stemming from the Kemalist establishment against the Islamists in the

come democratically to power in 1996, was overthrown on February 28, 1997 at the end of a process led by many prominent Generals from the Turkish army. In this period, "despite the Erbakan government was relatively successful in economy; it gradually lost the control over civil and military bureaucracy. The army became publicly an opposition power. The bureaucratic opposition was accompanied by a strong media campaign against the government. An unprecedented political chaos dominated the Turkish politics. In 1997, Turkey was on the eve of a military intervention. The daily public warnings to Erbakan-led government by the Turkish army became a normal part of politics. Finally, the military increased the harshness and forced the government to resign in 1997 after a famous National Security Council meeting on 28 February. On 18 June 2007, Erbakan resigned; but it did not stop the army activism. In the same year, the National Security Policy Document was amended and Islamic threat was declared as the number one threat replacing the former Kurdish separatism. Although the parliament was not dissolved, the WP was closed down by the Constitutional Court for being anti-secular and its leadership cadre including Erbakan was banned from politics. The other coalition partner the True Path Party was divided due to the strong military pressure and a new government was formed to cohabitate with the de facto military rule till 1999. As "the military entrenched itself deeper in the political system while ingeniously maintaining a façade of democracy, including multiparty politics, on-time local elections," the 28 February was a different military intervention. Instead of direct rule, the army preferred a rule through civilian associates such as the media, the bureaucracy, the army backed government and even the courts, which was thus named as the post-modern coup." Gökhan Bacık, "The Rise of Identity Politics in Turkey," UNISCI Discussion Papers, (May 2010), 53. Kemal İnat and Burhanettin Duran "AKP Dış Politikası: Teori ve Uygulama" (AKP Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice," in Doğudan Batıya Dış Politika AK Parti'li Yıllar (Foreign policy from the West to the East: AK Party years), ed. Zeynep Dağı, (Ankara: Pozitif Matbaacılık, 2006), 23. On this subject, researcher and author Mehmet Metiner argues that political Islamists discovered democracy in the wake of the February 28 process. Interview by Neşe Düzel with Mehmet Metiner, **Radikal**, 23.02.2004, accessed 11.09.2010,

<http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalHaberDetayV3&ArticleID=701706&Date=28.02.2011&CategoryID=97>.

²⁴⁰ Yusuf Kanlı, "AKP puts on the 'national shirt," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 03.05.2009, accessed 11.09.2010, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/opinion/11568446.asp?yazarid=311&gid=260>. Ekrem Dumanlı, "Is the AKP a follower of (Erbakan's) National View?" **Today's Zaman**, 23.08.2007, accessed 25.07.2010, http://www.todayszaman.com/columnistDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=120138.

²⁴¹ Korkut Özal, *Devlet Sırrı (State Secret)*, (İstanbul: Yakın Plan yayınları, Ekim 2010).

country, Erdoğan and his colleagues on the other hand did not have much choice to survive politically, but clinging to the western values such as democracy and human rights which have been advocated by Europe more strongly. Though the density of the relationship between Turkey and the EU has shifted over time, Erdoğan leadership continues to define norms like democracy and human rights as integral parts of its political identity.

As a person coming from the Islamist political line who also suffered from the military pressure on the occasion of military interventions into politics, a similar comment can be made for Turgut Özal as well. Additionally, Özal was educated in the United States and worked in the World Bank, thereby had a closer contact with the western society as well as with the western values. Therefore, one might conclude that Özal's transnational socialization process had a different path from Erdoğan's, but their outcomes seem similar. Both leaderships have attached a considerable importance to both Turkey's cultural and historical assets as well as the western oriented norms such as democracy, respect for human rights and free market.

Furthermore, both leaderships have similar civilization understandings, that is, they represent an analogous line which does not deny Turkey's historical legacy stemming from the Ottoman past and share a similar, self-confident point of view vis-à-vis the West. They are westernist indeed, yet in a different sense. Both consider that just as the Eastern, the Western civilization has positive as well as negative sides. This distinctive standing signifies also a self-confident attitude towards the world rooted in Turkish history and culture.²⁴² Therefore, without ignoring the "virtues" of their respective civilization, they adopt the modern/western values. Furthermore, a combination of their self-confident stances towards the West and their Muslim identities pave the way for a multidimensional foreign policy, i.e. without changing the conventional direction of Turkey; they develop alternative relations with the Islamic world and other countries. Consequently, their common Muslim identities as well as their unique self-confident posture bring them to a distinctive position in the history of TFP.

In short, as a result of their socialization processes, Özal and Erdoğan have made conservatism and modern western values an integral part of their identities. Hence, when Özal and Erdoğan came to power, they had a conservative/liberal-democrat identity which takes Turkey's historical, cultural and religious ties into account in foreign policy making along with Turkey's existing ties with the West, and this has had significant reflections on their foreign policy approaches and practices.

Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have adopted a proactive and -albeit to different degrees- multi-dimensional foreign policy and associated it also to Turkey's historical, cultural and geographical responsibilities. One of the main foreign policy elements of the Erdoğan era is that Turkey carries a responsibility in its region stemming from the Turkish history. That is, AK Party leadership is of the opinion that Turkey has had responsibilities in its region owing to its historical (the Ottoman history in particular) and cultural ties. It regards this opinion as one the basic reference points for its proactive foreign policy approach that Turkey has been supposed to pursue in its region. This view in fact seems to a considerable extent in parallel with one of the basic arguments that Özal was advocating in the aftermath of

²⁴² Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu claims in an interview that the AK Party government achieved a number of revolutions among which the best revolution it has ever succeeded is the "self confidence revolution." Interview with Ahmet Davutoğlu by Oğuz Haksever, NTV Channel, 07.01.2014, available at **haber7.com**, accessed 08.01.2014, <http://www.haber7.com/partiler/haber/1113942-davutoglundan-onemli-aciklamalar>.

the Cold War in the face of the emerging conflicts in Turkey's region.²⁴³ It is easily realizable at this point the value of identity on the foreign policy approaches and practices of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships.

The identity definition taking Turkey's historical and cultural ties into consideration and the corresponding active and multidimensional foreign policy understanding of both leaderships is also in line with the role that constructivists refer to the identities of individuals and states to explain interest formation. As constructivists argue, identities inform interests and, in turn, actions. In this context, TFP makers' decisions are deeply influenced how they see the world through their lenses which is closely connected to their identity definitions. Özal leadership defined Turkey as a bridge between the east and west, and believed that its weigh in the west would be proportional to its weigh in the east. Ahmet Davutoğlu (ambassador and former head of the Prime Minister's advisers on foreign affairs and currently Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey) defines Turkey as a 'central state' which is neither in the periphery of the European Union nor in the periphery of the Middle East.²⁴⁴ Accordingly, Turkey is in the crossroads of the continents, but it is also a centre mainly due to its geographical and historical links (stemming from basically its Ottoman heritage). Contrary to other states in the region, Turkey is simultaneously Middle Eastern and Balkan, Caucasian, Black Sea and Mediterranean state.²⁴⁵ In other words, Turkey is a multi-dimensional state in terms of its foreign policy agenda and its responsibilities²⁴⁶ as well as its identities. The Erdoğan leadership seems to have adopted 'central state' concept and this new definition of Turkey requires a multi-dimensional foreign policy.²⁴⁷ Pursuant to multi-dimensional foreign policy, rather than choosing one big actor or axis against others, Ankara seeks to establish friendly and balanced relations with all parties.²⁴⁸ This new definition of Turkey brings about new interests and preferences.²⁴⁹ Accordingly, instead of a defensive foreign policy line which adopts a reactionary approach, the Erdoğan leadership aims to make Turkey an actor which is capable of directing the developments with its regional as well as global vision. In this direction, it embraces a pro-active and dynamic foreign policy.²⁵⁰ With this attitude, in accordance with the mutual constitution thesis of constructivism, the Erdoğan leadership aims to increase Turkey's influence as a regional power in the constitution of international system and its norms, and to make it a global player. Consequently, considering Turkey's identities and its geopolitical location, both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have advocated a multidimensional foreign policy for Turkey. Nonetheless, they do not consider developing relations with the east as an alternative to the west, yet as complementary to Turkey's traditional foreign policy orientation. As such, they have regarded the end of Cold War as a chance for Turkey and agree that isolation is not a policy option for Ankara.

²⁴³ Cengiz Çandar, Kentler ve Gölgele Belgeseli, **TRTTÜRK**, 14.03.2013, accessed 05.06.2013, <http://kentlervegolgeler.tumblr.com/page/5>.

²⁴⁴ Interview with Ahmet Davutoglu, "İş Dünyası Artık Dış Politikanın Öncülerinden" *Turkishtime*, (15 April/15 May 2004).

²⁴⁵ Ahmet Davutoglu "Küresel Bunalım" [Global Depression], (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2002), 191.

²⁴⁶ "60.th Government Program," see the Official Website of the AK Party, accessed 11.10.2011, <http://www.akparti.org.tr/>.

²⁴⁷ "AKP Party Programme," see the Official Website of the AK Party, accessed 11.10.2011 <http://eng.akparti.org.tr/english/partyprogramme.html#6>.

²⁴⁸ "Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy," Official Website of the Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed 12.11.2010, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Synopsis/SYNOPSIS.htm>.

²⁴⁹ As Wendt points it out identities have a determining role on the interests, i.e. "...an actor cannot know what it wants until it knows who it is..." Wendt, *Social Theory*, 231.

²⁵⁰ "60.th Government Program."

Considering another connection between identity and interest formation, the "logic of appropriateness" thesis of constructivism seems explanatory. Accordingly, it has been argued that a central country attaching a significant role to its historical, cultural and geographical assets does not have the luxury to remain indifferent about the events in the former Ottoman geography on which Turkish Republic was built. Thus, a proactive foreign policy is inevitable for Turkey.²⁵¹ In other words, the new identity definitions of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships and their foreign political aspirations have constituted the main reason of the argument that Turkey should not remain indifferent to the developments around it; instead it should follow an initiative taking foreign policy. In a nutshell, the legacy of the Ottoman past has provided both responsibilities and opportunities from the Turkish rulers' perspective.²⁵²

Identity definitions of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships and their corresponding foreign policy goals and practices have been influential on Turkey-United States relations as well. Yet this influence has not been independent from the norms as well as the domestic and external circumstances of the day. In this connection, aiming to pursue an active policy in the region, Özal placed gaining the backup of the United States, which had been the leader of the western block during the Cold War and became the unipolar of the world after the dissolution of the blocks, at the center of his foreign policy approach. Intending to increase firstly Turkey's influence in its region and subsequently to make it a global player, AK Party leadership on the other hand has built its foreign policy on establishing a balanced relationship with all global actors instead of regarding them alternative to each other. In this context, while establishing relations with Washington whose position as the only super power of the world began to be eroded as of 2000s, it has sought to defend Turkey's interests and responsibilities in its region more strongly and not to disregard other global actors such as European Union, Russia and China. Stated differently, instead of strictly following a block or an actor and indexing its foreign policy to it, Erdoğan leadership has aimed to follow a foreign policy approach which gives priority to its own interests and places Ankara at the center of its foreign policy understanding. This approach might be interpreted also as a demand for a more equal relationship model with the U.S. instead of the hierarchical one during the Cold War. This demand however has brought about a fluctuating relationship model which has included from time to time very well going relations and hitting the bottom when it is deemed that the mutual interests do not overlap.

On the other hand, as the constructivist theory argues, ideas are as important as material structures in shaping the behaviors of social and political actors, e.g. individuals or states. As mentioned above, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships stressed the common historical and cultural past with the nations from the Balkans, Caucasus and the Middle East with whom the Turks lived together for centuries under the Ottoman rule. Both of them have regarded this shared history and culture both as a ground for cooperation and as a reason to deal with the problems of the former Ottoman subjects. This approach has signaled an active foreign policy approach by contrast with the traditional reactive and non-interference oriented diplomatic strategy of Turkey. Therefore, the ideational change in the perception of "friend" occurred in

²⁵¹ Prime Minister Erdoğan expressed in his visit to Malaysia on January 10, 2014: "We as Turkey have preferred not to follow the silence of the dominant powers but preferred the legacy that our history, civilization and ancestors impose us. (T.b.A.)" In this manner, he explicitly declared how his identity definition attaching importance to Turkey's historical and cultural ties reflected on foreign policy approach. "Özgürlüğün olmadığı yerde...!" *Zaman*, 10.01.2014, accessed.11.01.2014, http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_ozgurlugun-olmadigi-erde_2192689.html.

²⁵² Meliha Altunışık, "World Views and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no.40 (Spring 2009): 186.

the wake of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships' rise to power has paved the way for a multi-dimensional foreign policy understanding. Additionally, this ideational shift led also to the rise of a new foreign policy understanding which has sought to become a global power by settling its chronic problems with the countries in the region like the Cyprus question as well as to contribute to the solution of chronic problems in the surrounding regions such as Arab-Israel question. Consequently, as the constructivists underline, one should note at this point the importance of ideas and its effects on the new and multidimensional orientation of TFP.

In accordance with Wendt's approach, the self and other perceptions ought to be stressed here. As noted also above, the AK Party government has come to power with its different identity conceptions and has perceived Turkey's national interest in a different manner. Moreover, its administrative elite have assumed exclusive roles both in the definition of "new" Turkish foreign political identity and national interests as well as in the definition of new direction of Turkey's foreign policy. This has had reflections on Turkey's self-other understandings in some certain issue areas and subsequently affected its interests and foreign policy preferences. For instance, while Iran had been perceived by conventional TFP makers with suspicion and as a neighbor to be distanced, Erdoğan leadership has regarded it as a significant neighbor to cooperate in economy and security issues.

It has been an important foreign policy priority for Özal and Erdoğan leaderships to get rid of the impediments narrowing Turkey's field for maneuver in diplomacy with a view to paving the way for multi-dimensional foreign policy and to augment foreign policy alternatives. Their main credential at this point has been their self-confidence based on the brilliant past of Turkey. By solving the chronic problems, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have aimed to facilitate Turkey's attempt on the way of being a global power. To this end, both leaderships have sought to bring peace and stability to the region by increasing interdependencies and, with Wendt's words, they have aimed to create a Kantian culture. Likewise both leaderships have demonstrated a considerable effort to solve Turkey's chronic problems. Turgut Özal tried to settle the problems with Greece with the "spirit of Davos" in the 1980s. He took initiatives also in the Cyprus question, sought to solve the water question with Syria, signed protocols with the Damascus regime and pledged to release 500m3 per second water to Syria. He desired to be a mediator in the Arab-Israel question and even suggested to this end the "peace water pipeline project." It was also PM Özal who applied to the European Community for full membership with a view to fostering the relations with Europe and to diversify Turkey's alternatives in foreign policy making. Considering that developing trade and economic ties would contribute to the peace and stability, Özal leadership tried to a considerable extent to increase the interdependencies with neighbors. In this framework, it was again the Özal leadership who firstly attempted to solve the visa problems with other countries and concluded agreements to this end.

Coming to the Erdoğan leadership's era, one would realize that foreign policy practices are predominantly reminiscent of the Özal era. The relations with Greece have continued to develop in the AK Party era as well, which had been entered into a détente process in the wake of the earthquakes in 1999 both in Turkey and Greece respectively. Erdoğan leadership showed a considerable effort for the solution of the Cyprus question by providing a serious support for the "Annan Plan." Relations with Syria reached until 2011 to an unprecedented level and the relations with Iran gained momentum particularly in the economy field. Additionally, protocols were signed with Armenia with a view to settling the problems with it. Turkey assumed also a mediator role in the problems between Arabs and Israelis, Pakistan and Afghanistan and in the ethnic conflicts in Iraq. Erdoğan leadership shared Özal's view

that developing interdependencies in the region would both contribute to the peace and stability of the region and provide new markets for the emerging Turkish industry. In this connection, economy and trade have secured their places at the top of TFP agenda. Again in this context, Erdoğan leadership has also attached a great importance to lifting visas between Turkey and other countries mutually and has taken giant steps to this end. Similarly, it has given weight to developing relations with the European Union. As a matter of fact, the negotiations for the full EU membership between Ankara and Brussels could begin in 2005 upon the AK Party government's intensive efforts.

Again in this context, just like the Özal leadership, the Erdoğan leadership views strengthening the economic, cultural and political ties with the neighboring countries and constituting a welfare circle as the precondition of Turkey's economic and political development and its ascendancy as a global player.²⁵³ In this respect, these endeavors of government might be evaluated in terms of collective identity formation in the region which would contribute to a possible emergence of a Kantian culture. By improving interdependence with the neighboring countries, the AK Party government seeks to establish a collective identity with them particularly in security issues. Once the cultural and especially economic ties are developed, actors in the region are expected to define themselves in a number of issues collectively. Furthermore, with the beginning of the Arab Spring and the civil war in Syria in 2011, the structural culture has begun to shift and this has forced Ankara to review its foreign policy. This time, along with economic concerns, with Wendt's conceptualization, a possible "homogeneity" of political regimes has been regarded useful for the construction of collective identity. As a matter of fact, Turkey has defined its policy together with the United States in favor of the democratic demands of the Arab peoples and supported the emergence of democratic regimes around Turkey. In doing this, it has considered that democratic regimes would pave the way for the construction of a new collective identity in its neighborhood.

Considering the TFP in the context of another basic argument of constructivism that agents and structures are mutually constituted, it might be argued that the Erdoğan leadership has been seeking to play a more active role than the Özal leadership did. In fact, both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have demonstrated effort to spread the values such as democracy, human rights and free market economy model all over the world that they have adopted as a result of their socialization processes. In this respect, while Özal leadership closely cooperated with the United States for the establishment of these values in the Turkic republics emerged in the Central Asia and Caucasus after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Erdoğan leadership defined its attitude together with Washington in favor of the demands of the Arab peoples during the Arab Spring and tried to make democracy, human rights and free market economy more commonly shared norms in the Middle East too.

However, the Erdoğan leadership has gone one step further in terms of contributing to the constitution of international norms. It has sought to contribute to the constitution of international norms through the vision it has specified for TFP. Considering the post-September 11 world, North-South, East-West and Muslim-Christian tensions attract attention. Turkey stands out at this point as a unique actor which might contribute to the global peace and ease these tensions. Considering its geographical position and historical depth, Ankara has been endeavoring to assume an "order establishing" role in the formation of the new world order.²⁵⁴ Furthermore, on the global scale, Turkish government's efforts concerning the

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Bülent Aras and Pınar Akpınar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Davutoğlu Dönemi: 2009 Değerlendirmesi," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yılığ 2009*, Burhanettin Duran et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 22

“Alliance of Civilizations” project might be assessed also in this regard.²⁵⁵ With this project - which was established in 2005 at the initiative of the governments of Spain and Turkey under the auspices of the United Nations²⁵⁶- the AK Party government objects the “clash of civilizations” thesis represented by Samuel Huntington. As such, by utilizing Turkey’s position in the meeting point of the West and East, the government has been endeavoring to contribute to the constitution of cooperation and reconciliation oriented norms. While the Erdoğan leadership contends that the world does not have to conflict as realist/neorealist tradition claims, it nearly confirms Wendt’s “anarchy is what states make of it” thesis.²⁵⁷ As such, AK Party government's efforts to make "Islamophobia" recognized at the global scale as a crime against humanity might be regarded in the context of its efforts to constitute international norms as well.²⁵⁸

In addition to the domestic factors, international norms have also had influence on foreign policy of Turkey. In this regard, it might be suggested that EU membership perspective has a particular influential role on TFP. Once the membership of Turkey to the EU gained a more serious perspective, this has given Turkey a stronger incentive to define its interests in line with the EU. Hence, it might be claimed that reconciliation and cooperation oriented “soft power policy” of the EU has had a constitutive influence in the constitution of Erdoğan leadership's identity. Therefore, in terms of foreign policy, Turkey has adopted a relatively more EU norms oriented foreign policy until 2007 particularly regarding the relations with its neighbors. In this respect, there are some analogies and parallelism in neighborhood cooperation paradigms of Turkey and the EU.²⁵⁹ Thus, it seems that international norms represented by the EU have had a certain impact on the constitution of Erdoğan leadership's identity and, indirectly, on its foreign policy preferences.

Together with domestic and external factors, international social environment was also appropriate to a great extent for new policy goals of the government especially until the beginning of the Arab spring. As mentioned above, reciprocity matters for Wendtian constructivist approach. In this sense, Turkey’s good neighborhood and zero-problems policy attempts received positive response out of distinctive reasons like the political conjuncture in the region (e.g. the existence of the USA in Iraq pushed Syria and Iran to have good relations with Turkey). For instance, when Syria deported Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the terrorist PKK organization, and Turkey-Syria signed the Adana agreement, October 1998, their relations gained a new momentum. After the agreement, the enmity between the two states began gradually to disappear which stemmed mostly from Syria’s support for the outlawed PKK. Consequently, a Syrian president, Bashir al-Assad, visited Turkey in 2004 for the first time since 1946 and the high level relations with Syria was depicted as the cornerstone of Turkey’s zero-problems policy. Concerning the relations with Iran, similar things might be said also due to the common threat of the PKK until the eruption of the Syrian civil war. The bottom line is that whereas Turkey commenced a new policy, it could not have been successful without a positive response from its neighboring countries, and the international social

²⁵⁵ İnat and Duran “AKP Dış Politikası,” 25.

²⁵⁶ See the Official Web site for Alliance of Civilizations, accessed 10.06.2014, <http://www.unaoc.org/>

²⁵⁷ İnat and Duran, “AKP Dış politikası,” 26.

²⁵⁸ “PM Erdoğan: Islamophobia should be recognized as crime against humanity,” Today's Zaman, 16.09.2012, accessed 17.09.2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-292579-pm-erdogan-islamophobia-should-be-recognized-as-crime-against-humanity.html>. “Turkish PM Erdoğan: Islamophobia, anti-Semitism same,” **Hürriyet Daily News**, 28.02.2013, accessed 17.09.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pm-erdogan-islamophobia-anti-semitism-same.aspx?pageID=238&nid=42019>.

²⁵⁹ Seyfi Taşhan, “Can Turkey be Associated with ENP,” Foreign Policy Institute, articles & speeches, (22.01.2008), accessed 13.06.2013, www.foreignpolicy.org.tr.

environment as well as political conjuncture was suitable for new peaceful policies of Turkey. As a matter of fact, Arab spring has changed the composition of the Middle East so substantially that Turkey's zero problems policy has received severe injuries.

After summarizing TFP in the Özal and Erdoğan eras from a constructivist point of view, in the following chapters, first the determinants of TFP will be discussed from a constructivist point of view with special focus on 1980s and 2000s. Subsequently, foreign policy paradigms of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships will be analyzed comparatively and most of the arguments introduced above will be elaborated. In order to analyze the practical level of foreign policy approaches of both eras, the last chapters are devoted to the detailed analysis of Turkey-United States relations.

CHAPTER 2: A CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH TO THE DETERMINANTS OF TFP AND THEIR TRANSFORMATION/RE-INTERPRETATION IN ÖZAL/ ERDOĞAN ERAS

2.1. Geographical location

As Wendt highlights it, geopolitical location is one of the most important elements of the corporate identity of a country whose change is not within the bounds of possibility through usual ways. However, geopolitics might be interpreted ideationally differently by individuals in accordance with their foreign policy paradigms. Considering Turkey's political history, this can easily be observed. The prevailing foreign policy paradigm which was dominant among the Turkish bureaucracy and elites for decades was based on non-interference principle as to especially the conflicts between the Middle Eastern nations.¹ In addition to the structural reasons like the Soviet threat during the Cold War, this case might be regarded as result of an identity definition which adopts the Kemalist ideology and stipulates a strict westernization effort at the expense of the relations with the eastern countries. The advocates of this identity viewed Turkey's geopolitical location as a risk generating factor and tried to avoid the vortexes of the region, of the Middle East in particular. However, in accordance with their identity definitions, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships which came to power in 1983 and 2002 respectively interpreted Turkey's geographical location differently from the traditional foreign policy line. Hereafter the impact of geopolitics on Turkish foreign policy (TFP) will be retrospectively analyzed and subsequently the approaches of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships will be summarized on this subject.

In fact, Turkey's unique geographical position has been one of the most decisive factors in the formulation of its foreign policy. Turkey lies at the crossroads of two continents, Europe and Asia, and borders the Balkans, Caucasus, Middle East and Central Asia. It is also at the crossroads of major air, land, and sea routes of modern times joining the industrialized European countries with the oil/natural gas-rich regions of the Middle East as well as the Central Asia. Moreover, Turkey stands at a critical juncture where various cultures, civilizations and religions meet. This multifaceted position of Turkey gives it European, Balkan, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Asian identities all at the same time. This critical position has both positive and negative implications for Turkey. While it has been able to play a role in world politics far greater than its size, population and economic power would indicate, its geography makes Turkey two-fold sensitive to international developments near and far and, thus, greatly susceptible to changes in the international and regional political balance.²

The fact that Turkish territory lies at the traditional and current migration channel brings about the sense of insecurity and urges Turkish policy makers to attach an exceeding importance to the security factor. Additionally, it has been proved by the quantitative analyses that there is a strong link between the number and quality of neighbors and security of a country. The more borders a country has, the more likely that it would be attacked or

¹ Kemal İnat, "Türkische Nahostpolitik am Anfang des 21. Jahrhunderts," (PhD Diss., Universitaet Siegen, Siegen, 2000), 21.

² Mustafa Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish foreign policy: Historical Framework and Traditional Inputs," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 35: 4, (1999): 165.

threatened or it enters into war in many fronts.³ Turkey has bordered many neighbors with different characteristics, ideologies and regimes. Whereas Turkey bordered seven states in the early years of the Republic (namely Greece, Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, Iran, Great Britain - mandatory in Iraq and possessor of Cyprus-, France -mandatory in Syria- and Italy -possessor of the Dodecanese Islands-), in the wake of the Second World War this number dropped to six (Greece, Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, Iran, Iraq, Syria and the Republic of Cyprus after 1960) and in the aftermath of the Cold War the Soviet Union was replaced by three Caucasian states (Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan).⁴ This composition of neighbors has intensified the sense of insecurity and this fact has had repercussions on TFP. In view of historical and self-interest related controversies with most of these neighbors, Turkey has sought alliances with both regional states and outside powers.

Turkey's control of the Straits of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus has been another significant factor for TFP. Dependence of Russia on these straits for direct maritime access to the Mediterranean Sea, the fact that they are the only waterways that Russia could be challenged by other major actors and the reality that they are the sole waterways connecting the Black sea and the Mediterranean enhance the Straits to an extraordinary status.⁵ Whereas the Straits grant Turkey great potential to exert influence on international issues, simultaneously, they pose a threat to the security of Turkey by opening it to the effects of international developments as well as by attracting potential aggressors.⁶ Traditionally, Russians always aimed at having their outlet to the Mediterranean unimpeded and the Ottoman Empire, predecessor of the Turkish Republic, had been the main obstacle before them. Therefore, the history witnessed many conflicts between the Russians and the Turks.⁷

During the first two decades of the Republic, Turkish-Soviet relations were positive and the Soviet Union did not deprive Turkey of its political and material support. Relations between the two countries were strengthened by the Treaty of Neutrality and Nonaggression of 1925.⁸ However, in the wake of the Second World War, the Soviet Union which emerged as a new world power wanted to utilize its power to implement its plans with respect to Turkey. Thus, Moscow refused Turkey's bid to extend the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality, delivered an ultimatum and demanded territorial concessions in the northeast of Turkey, military bases on the Bosphorus as well as some changes of the Montreux Strait Convention.⁹ These Soviet demands strongly concerned Turkish policy-makers and caused substantial changes on TFP attitudes. Since Turkey was able to resist these demands only with the backing of the United States, it turned its face entirely to the West.¹⁰ The geographical location of Turkey played the most important role in its post-World War II foreign policy and had had a direct impact for several decades on the orientation of TFP. It might be also concluded at this point that as it was explained in the mutual constitution thesis of the constructivists, the hostile attitude of the Soviets consolidated Turkey's already existing

³ Oral Sander, *Türk Dış Politikası*, (Turkish Foreign Policy), (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1998), 178, 182.

⁴ Baskın Oran, "Giriş: Türk Dış Politikasının Teori ve Pratiği," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Vol.I*, ed. Baskın Oran, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 24-25.

⁵ William M.Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), 7.

⁶ Oran, "Türk Dış Politikası," 25.

⁷ For a summary of Russo-Ottoman wars since 1676, see Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1943-1945, Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973) 22-29.

⁸ Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish foreign policy," 168.

⁹ İnat, "Türkische Nahostpolitik," 21.

¹⁰ Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish foreign policy," 168. For a detailed analysis of how Turkish control of the Straits and bordering on the USSR effected Turkish foreign policy, see. Haluk Ülman, "Türk Dış Politikasına Yön Veren Etkenler" (Factors Influencing Turkish Foreign Policy), *SBF Dergisi*, C.XXIII, No:3 (September 1968): 256-266.

identity which had already been inclined to be on the western side and constituted one of the main reasons to define its foreign policy for decades in line with the west.

The fact that Turkey stands at the nexus of three conflict regions, namely the Balkans, the Caspian region and the Middle East, has had a considerable influence on the course of TFP as well. Contemplating these regions together, Turkey is located at the center and since the early years of the Republic, it has always tried to stay away from the constant conflicts of these three regions.¹¹ This situation led Turkey to follow a traditional passive foreign policy which continued until 1980s with some exceptional deviations. As such, roots of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's famous motto for TFP 'peace at home, peace in the world' deeply embedded in this stance of Turkey. In order to ensure its security in an instable geopolitical environment, it sought alliances with regional states as well as outside powers. Between 1920 and 1955, Turkey joined several pacts and alliances, signed friendship declarations and bilateral security treaties with the neighboring countries as well as other states. Participation into the NATO in 1952, the Balkan Pact of 1953 and Alliance of 1954 and the Baghdad Pact of 1955 might be assessed in this context.¹² Furthermore, in addition to cultural aspirations and ideological, economic and political factors, lack of stability in the Middle East encouraged Turkey to remain in the Western camp.¹³ In other words, Turkish policy makers regarded at the ideational level Turkey's geopolitical location as risk generating factor and tried to stay away from this risk as much as possible, and this understanding has underlay the reactive policy of Turkey towards the region until recent decades.

This understanding has constituted also one of the main reasons of Turkey's aspiration for the EU membership, which has been one of the primary foreign policy goals of Turkish policy makers. Firstly, need for stability in its instable region has been one of the driving forces behind Turkey's desire to join the European Union.¹⁴ On the other hand, whereas Turkey has always claimed to be considered part of Europe both geographically and politically, opponents of Turkey's EU membership do not share this view and claim that only 3% of Turkish territory lies within the geographical boundary of transcontinental Europe. Moreover, they contend that EU membership of Turkey would make the EU neighbor to the instable regions of the Middle East and the Caucasus. This would mean an incalculable threat to the security of the EU.¹⁵

2.1.1. Re-interpretation of geopolitical location by Özal and Erdoğan leaderships

In view of the above noted facts, whereas Turkey's geographical location interpreted by some Turkish policy makers as a disadvantage in terms of security and foreign policy, this critical geographical environment is considered as an advantage by others, like Turgut Özal and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Özal, who enjoyed a considerable weight in the direction of TFP until his death in 1993 first as a Prime Minister and then as a President, viewed Turkey's

¹¹ Inat, "Türkische Nahostpolitik," 21.

¹² Mustafa Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis," Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, (Ankara: December 2004): 25, accessed 01.03.2009, <http://www.sam.gov.tr/perceptions/sampapers/mustafaaydin.pdf>.

¹³ Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis," 30.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Kemal Inat, "Republic of Turkey," in Foreign Policy of States, Wolfgang Gieler et al., (İstanbul: Tasam Publications, 2005), 501. See also, Berit Rinke, "Gehört die Türkei zu Europa," POLITICS-Working paper, University of Oldenburg, No.5, (2006), accessed 11.04.2012, http://www.politis-europe.uni-oldenburg.de/download/WP5_Rinke_Turkey2006fin.pdf

geographical location no longer as a disadvantage for the security of the country, but as a chance to be a regional power. Geographically, he viewed Turkey as a country in the midst of Pacific-Atlantic axis and equidistant between both the Atlantic and Pacific basins.¹⁶ Furthermore, according to Özal, Turkey was located at the centre of East-West and North-South axes, and with this pivotal position, it should have been an active and decisive actor, not a passive one.¹⁷ Therefore, he left aside the traditional passive foreign policy of Turkey and aimed at utilizing some features of Turkey on the purpose of an active foreign policy, such as ethnic and religious identities of Turkey which had been considerably ignored by that time.¹⁸ In this context, PM Özal assumed initiatives to solve Turkey's chronic problems with Greece and Syria and developed projects to find a solution to the Arab-Israel problem through "peace water project." Thereby, he aimed to decrease the risks that geopolitical location posed to Turkey and increase the possibilities of cooperation with the neighboring countries. Furthermore, having defined Turkey as a "bridge country", Özal argued that with its historical and cultural responsibilities, Turkey was supposed to establish relations with the Western as well as with the Eastern Worlds simultaneously.¹⁹ As a result, in compliance with the "bridge" definition, Özal prescribed a "balanced relationship" between the East and the West.²⁰

Similarly, President Özal red the geostrategic structure emerged after the end of Cold War as a positive development for TFP and 'saw the emergence of a Turkic world and the developments in the Balkans as an opportunity to expand the Turkish influence in international politics.'²¹ He developed the slogan 'From Adriatic to the Chinese Wall' (Adriyatikten Çin Seddi'ne) and claimed that the 21st century would be a 'Turkish century.' Özal's policies, which carried Turkist, Islamist and Westernist features all at the same time,²² did not aim at an aggressive or expansionist policy, but cooperation with the newly established Turkic republics, above all, on economic domain but also on cultural and political fields. He wanted to replace the security oriented and passive foreign policy with an active one, to make Turkey a 'big Brother' for the new Turkic states of the Caspian region and to make it a political Mecca. From Özal's aspect, the new post-Cold War geostrategic environment offered a good opportunity to realize his vision.²³

¹⁶ Gülistan Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı" (Özal's Foreign Policy Understanding), in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality), eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı, 2003), 291.

¹⁷ Ramazan Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı: İdealler ve Gerçekler Açmazında Dış politika" (Turgut Özal and the Gulf War: Foreign Policy in the Dilemmas of Ideals and Realities), in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality), eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı, 2003), 314.

¹⁸ Burak Başkan, "Turgut Özal gerçeğini yeniden okumalıyız," **Yeni Şafak**, 19 April 2009, accessed 10.16.2011, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/yorum-haber/turgut-ozal-gercegini-yeniden-okumaliyiz-19.05.2009-181659>.

¹⁹ Hasan Mor, "Türk dış politikasında belirleyici faktörler ekseninde Özal'ın dış politika konsepti" [Özal's foreign policy concept on the axis of determinants in Turkish foreign policy], (PhD diss., Selçuk Üniversitesi, Konya 2002), 187.

²⁰ Ibid., 182, 180-188.

²¹ Berdal Aral, "Dispensing with tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society During the Özal Decade 1983-93" *Middle Eastern Studies* 37, 1 (Jan 2001): 77-78.

²² Sedat Laçiner, "Özalizm (Neo-Ottomanism): An Alternative in Turkish Foreign Policy?" *Journal of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 1, No.1-2, (2003): 185-186.

²³ Inat, "Türkische Nahostpolitik," 23.

On the other hand, Ahmet Davutoğlu,²⁴ foreign minister of the AK Party government, argues that Turkey's geography gives it a specific central country status. Accordingly:

“In terms of geography, Turkey occupies a unique space. As a large country in the midst of Afro-Eurasia's vast landmass, it may be defined as a central country with multiple regional identities that cannot be reduced to one unified character. Like Russia, Germany, Iran, and Egypt, Turkey cannot be explained geographically or culturally by associating it with one single region. Turkey's diverse regional composition lends it the capability of maneuvering in several regions simultaneously; in this sense, it controls an area of influence in its immediate environs.... Taking a broader, global view, Turkey holds an optimal place in the sense that it is both an Asian and European country and is also close to Africa through the Eastern Mediterranean. A central country with such an optimal geographic location cannot define itself in a defensive manner. It should be seen neither as a bridge country which only connects two points, nor a frontier country, nor indeed as an ordinary country, which sits at the edge of the Muslim world or the West.”²⁵

In other words, by emphasizing Turkey's geographical and historical identities Davutoğlu advocates an active policy to take advantage of these identities.²⁶ Turkey should act like a central state rather than a peripheral one and provide security and stability not only for itself, but also for its neighboring regions.²⁷ Davutoğlu's vision has been shared by Erdoğan leadership. For instance, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of Turkey, articulated that “Istanbul is not only a center combining the continents but also a central symbol combining and synthesizing the civilizations.” By placing Istanbul in the center of a vast geography, Erdoğan attach importance to Turkey's geography and cultural heritage.²⁸

To sum up, even though geographical location might be viewed positively or negatively by FP makers, it has been virtually the most significant factor influencing the foreign policy course of Ankara. This has been the fact from the past to the present. However, while it was perceived in a big part of Turkish history as a burden on Turkey jeopardizing its security, some policy makers regarded it in a different manner. As Özal and Erdoğan leaderships did, some Turkish actors viewed it ideationally as an important asset both offering great opportunities as well as responsibilities to Turkey. Therefore, while the geographical location had constituted the most important reason of traditional reactive foreign policy approach, the same factor constituted one of the most significant motivations for an active foreign policy for Özal and Erdoğan leaderships. These distinctive approaches have also reflected to the policy field and replaced the traditional defensive/passivist foreign policy with a more active one.

²⁴ Ahmet Davutoğlu was the chief advisor to the Prime Minister between 2002 and 2009 and has been foreign minister since May 1, 2009. He is known as the intellectual architect of Turkish foreign policy under the AK party government.

²⁵ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey's New Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007,” *Insight Turkey* 10, No.1 (2008): 78.

²⁶ Nicholas Danforth, “Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Atatürk to the AKP,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, (Fall 2008): 90-91.

²⁷ Davutoğlu, “Turkey's New Foreign Policy Vision,” 79.

²⁸ Bülent Aras, “Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *SETA* (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research), Brief No: 32, (May 2009): 6.

2.2. Historical and cultural dimensions

“Despite the republican leaders’ contention that Turkey was a “new” country that had nothing to do with the Ottoman Empire and its history, the truth is that the republic is heir to Ottoman cultural, strategic, historical, and religious legacies, both negative and positive, and these have haunted the country’s culture, its policies, and its people to a much degree than its leaders’ prescription for the republic.”²⁹

As it was implied under the preceding title, having formed a new state on the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish elites preferred to isolate TFP agenda from historical and cultural bonds of the Turks by following a strict westernization policy. Having constructed their identities on "Kemalism" and "Westernization" principles, these Kemalist elite regarded Turkey's Ottoman past as a burden on the young Republic and sought to disregard it as much as possible. This ideational approach reflected to the policy field as a reactive and non-interventionist foreign policy understanding. However, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have interpreted Turkey's historical and cultural ties not as burden, but as factors presenting opportunities as well as saddling with responsibilities. They have also viewed Turkey's Ottoman past as a point of reference for Turkey's domestic and foreign political troubles and attached it significance for the re-calibration of foreign policy. In the following paragraphs, after summarizing the historical origins of the Kemalist foreign policy approach and touching from a general perspective on the role of historical and cultural ties on TFP, the importance attached to these factors by Özal and Erdoğan leaderships in terms of their foreign policy understandings will be briefly explained.

Even though the leaders and the ruling elite of the young Turkish republic rejected the Ottoman legacy and did not want to hear anything about the past, the Ottoman legacy has been one the most important factors influencing TFP. The fact that the Turks constantly advanced towards the West and dominated the Christian nations brought about negative and unfriendly attitudes of their western neighbors. This unfriendly stance exists, albeit to a lesser degree, among some Muslim nations too.³⁰ Undoubtedly, while inheriting a six-hundred-year, huge and multi-national empire has granted Turkey great potentials to be used, Ottoman legacy carried security risks with it for Ankara due to wrong policies and disuse of potentials,. For instance, until nearly a decade ago, Turkey was at loggerheads with virtually all of its neighbors. To account for this situation, it is important to keep in mind the fact that all of Turkey’s neighbors, except for Russia and Iran, lived under the rule of Ottoman Empire. For instance, as a consequence of the reality that these countries struggled for independence against the Ottomans, these countries reveal them as the source of most of their problems, even in their school textbooks. Turkish Republic did not take the necessary measures to counter these mental blocs and this anti-Turk-Ottoman tendency continues to exist particularly in the educational systems of these countries, such as Greece, Bulgaria, Syria, Iraq, Armenia and recently Egypt.³¹

²⁹ Kemal H.Karpat, *Turkish Foreign Policy: Recent Developments*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 1.

³⁰ Haydar Çakmak, *Türk Dış Politikası, 1919–2008* (Turkish Foreign Policy, 1919–2008), (Istanbul: Platin Yayınları, 2008), 39.

³¹ İdris Bal, “Türk Dış Politikasının 87 Yıllık Analizi” (87 years Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), stratejikboyut.com, 22.02.2010, accessed 25.03.2011, <http://www.stratejikboyut.com/haber/turk-dis-politikasinin-87-yillik-analizi--31850.html> This anti-Turk-Ottoman tendency has been trying to be constituted in some countries for political purposes. One of the latest examples of this case was seen in Egypt. Against the backdrop of the growing Turkish influence in the Middle East, Egyptian government implemented radical

On the other hand, struggles of these countries for independence and nation building and especially their cooperation with the enemies of Ottomans are largely perceived by the Turks as disloyalty and example of betrayal.³² This prevailing viewpoint among the Turks particularly against Arabs³³ constructed a tendency to regard its former subject people as “other.” Furthermore, belonging to a nation which has a historical depth, had established empires, won great victories and had been master of a world empire brought with it a sense of greatness and pride in the common Turkish mind. Even though these brilliant days are matters of the past, the Turks have been immensely sensitive about their independence and it is frustrating for them to be regarded as a second-rate power which is dependent on great powers.³⁴ This pride was one of the reasons launched Turkish war of independence. The fact that Izmir was invaded by a state in 1919 which had been ‘subject people’ who lived under the rule of Ottomans for centuries triggered a great reaction among the Turks and started the national struggle.³⁵ In this context, in the definition of TFP, these senses originating from the history have played an essential role.

It will be useful at this point to make a reference to the historical construction process of Turkey's traditional status quo oriented reactive foreign policy paradigm. With the treaty of Karlowitz (1699), the Ottoman Empire experienced for the first time a large scale territorial loss and the decline stage began in the Ottoman history. In the wake of this treaty, Ottoman statesmen changed the foreign policy strategy from advancing into Europe to retrieval of the lost territories and defending the current borders.³⁶ Later on, this strategy shift gave rise to domination of balance and status quo oriented foreign policy approach in Turkish diplomacy. In order to realize this strategy, the most influential and practical policy choice was playing great powers off against each other. Consequently, from a constructivist point of view, historical experiences imposed a balance oriented, skeptical, passive and defensive foreign policy tradition for the Ottomans. Republic of Turkey was also founded by the Ottoman statesmen and Ottoman general staff out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. Even though the ruling elite denied it, Republic of Turkey is substantially a continuation of the Ottoman

changes in the school textbooks. Accordingly, the Ottoman advancement into Egypt was called “ghazw,” ‘meaning invasion, instead of “fateh,” meaning conquest, which had been used for decades in all school textbooks in reference to Ottoman and Islamic presence in the country and the rest of the region.’ Mustafa Suleiman, “Change to counter Turkish Influence: Observers, Egypt Books Refer to Ottoman Rule as Invasion” *Alarabiya.net*, 20.09.2010, accessed 29.09.2010, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2010/09/20/119764.html>

³² Bal, “Türk Dış Politikasının 87 Yıllık Analizi” Though they share a common religion, on the one hand, Turks cannot forget how Arabs fought against them together with the British and French troops. On the other hand, Arabs cannot forget how Turks tried to quell Arab independence movements. Ülman, “Türk Dış Politikasına Yön Veren Etkenler” I, p.269. Even though to a lesser extent than before, today (in September 2010) traumas living in the minds of Turks and Arabs still shadow their relations.

³³ In this regard, Fuller argues that “decades of Kemalist-oriented history instruction indoctrinated the country to think negatively about the Islamic world in general and the Arab world in particular. Turks have been socialized to associate the Muslim world only with backwardness and extremism. Yet these Turkish views are based more on ideology and prejudice than on genuine knowledge of the areas.(...) As a result, even among Turkey’s highly professional diplomatic class, the Middle East has been viewed negatively. Many Turkish diplomats are uncomfortable serving in the region and see postings there as an unfortunate reality of diplomatic life. For them, most ‘real’ diplomacy is conducted with the West. Indeed, Turkish diplomats -highly educated, professional, and polished in European languages- know virtually no Arabic, nor are they taught it. In the face of growing cataclysms, however, such a situation may be on the threshold of change; ...” Graham E.Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in The Muslim World*, (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2008), 13.

³⁴ Aydın, “Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis,” 21-22.

³⁵ Oran, “Giriş: Türk Dış Politikasının Teori ve Pratiği,” 23.

³⁶ Ahmet Davutoglu “Stratejik Derinlik” (Strategic Depth), (İstanbul: Küre yayınları, 2001), 66.

Empire³⁷ and took over naturally most of its features from its predecessor. Diplomatic tradition is also one of them, i.e. Turkish diplomacy is a natural extension of the Ottoman diplomacy. Therefore, TFP did not experience any verdancy and trouble that newly formed states do.³⁸

After centuries-long hostilities and a number of wars with their neighbors as well as with other powers, Ottoman FP makers became extraordinarily wary about their environment and suspicious about other states' intentions. Therefore, relying on another state became an exceptional case for the Turks and this reality reflected in the common Turkish saying "water sleeps, the enemy never sleeps".³⁹ Moreover signs of previous traumas, such as the Ottoman - Russian War of 1877 - 1878 (the infamous 93 War), the first Balkan War of 1912 and Sèvres syndrome,⁴⁰ have always existed somewhere in the minds of Turkish statesmen of the new Republic. These and other similar traumas have had a considerable influence on the decisions of Turkish diplomats and foreign policy makers⁴¹ who focused, virtually after every loss of territory, on building new defense lines and defending them. Moreover, owing to such traumas, a number of prominent statesmen and intellectuals lost their self-confidence vis-à-vis the West and became the pure admirer of it. Thus, Turkish policy makers who has been in the dilemma of 'absolute sovereignty or absolute abandoning',⁴² (with some exceptions e.g. the joint of the Province of Hatay to the mainland in 1939 and the Cyprus Peace Operation of 1974) followed a status quo and balance oriented foreign policy as well. As a matter of fact, Turkish diplomacy has always been considerably successful in preserving the status quo. The situation in Cyprus, where the status quo has not changed for over 30 years is a proof of this fact.⁴³ As a result, Turkish diplomacy has always carried the historical fear of partition as well as the historical anxiety of protecting the existing territories to a certain extent and refrained from aggressive and adventurist policies.⁴⁴ After all, as from the Treaty of Karlowitz until their independence, the Turks continuously had lost territory, had been invaded and tried to be

³⁷ İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Barışı (Pax Ottomana)*, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2007), 63.

³⁸ Oran, "Giriş: Türk Dış Politikasının Teori ve Pratiği," 23.

³⁹ Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis," 19

⁴⁰ The Treaty of Sèvres (10 August 1920) was the peace treaty between the Ottoman Empire and Allies after the end of World War I and it is profoundly important in Turkish history. The treaty stipulated immensely heavy conditions for the Turks which were detrimental for Turkish independence and destructive for Turkish homeland. With respect to this Treaty and its impact on Turks and their attitudes against foreign powers, Aydın argues that "Nonetheless, the fact that the sovereign rights and independence of Turkish people had been disregarded by the Entente powers, and that the Turks were forced to fight to regain their independence and the territory they considered as their 'homeland' after rapidly losing an empire, was to have an important effect upon both subsequent Turkish attitudes vis-à-vis foreign powers and on their nation-building efforts." Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis" p.14, For the impacts of the Sèvres phobia/syndrome on Turkish foreign policy, see also, Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," European Union Institute for Security Studies, Chaillot Paper: 92, (Paris, September 2006): 32-33, accessed 29.10.2010, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp092.pdf>

⁴¹ Nasuh Uslu, *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Period*, (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2004), 15.

⁴² Following the decline stage of the Empire, Ottomans abandoned the lost territories entirely and were alarmed to defend the new lines. Put it differently, they tried to retrieve the lost territories, if not possible, left these territories absolutely. (In fact, large scaled emigration movements from these lost lands illustrate this fact.) However, this prevented development of interim tactical formulas such as formation of spheres of influence between absolute dominance and absolute abandoning, defending the boundary lines with cross-border diplomatique maneuvers or tactical maneuvering by utilizing interest conflicts among big powers. The most important exception of this argument in the last term of the Ottoman Empire is the colonial policy of Sultan Abdulhamit the Second who created effect on Muslims of colonies by using caliphate. Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 52-56.

⁴³ Ahmet Davutoglu "Küresel Bunalım" (Global Depression), (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2002), 184, 155.

⁴⁴ Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 69. See also, Kirişçi, "Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," 32-33

partitioned. This is why security became the most primary element of TFP.⁴⁵ In other words, the foreign policy paradigm which was based on not losing territory and securing the future of the regime dominated the last two centuries of the Ottoman Empire and brought about a timid and defensive paradigm among the state elites. This situation continued also during the republican era. The foreign policy paradigm of the Ottomans based on the defensive and reactionary reflexes was sustained by the republican elite as well.⁴⁶ This fact has constituted one of the reasons why the Turkish Republic followed a passive and defensive foreign policy for a long time and focused on protecting the status quo.

Another source of this diplomatic tradition constructed as a result of the centuries long historical interactions and experiences is the approach aiming to get rid of the foreign political problems rooted in the Ottoman history. As a matter of fact, the problems with Greece are closely connected to the historical traumas,⁴⁷ mutual mistrust,⁴⁸ and "other" perceptions of both nations as well as the minorities residing in both countries as the legacy of Ottoman Empire.⁴⁹ Turkish-Bulgarian relations tensed also at most because of Turkish Minority in Bulgaria which is also a legacy of the Ottoman history.⁵⁰ The Ottoman past has been decisive on Turkish-Arab relations too. The fact that a considerable part of the Arabs see the Turks as imperialists due to the Ottoman past affected Turkey-Syria and Turkey-Iraq relations negatively and brought about these countries to approach each other skeptically.⁵¹ Another major problem between Turkey and Syria in connection with history was on Hatay province (Formerly Alexandretta). Joining of Hatay to Turkey in 1938 rankled in Damascus until a few years ago.⁵² Syrians depicted Hatay in their official maps within their borders⁵³ and this problem constituted one of the most important reasons for mutual mistrust and prevented the improvement of bilateral relations until the end of 20th century. Additionally, as a result of the borders drawn after the First World War irrespective of the historical, sociological, religious

⁴⁵ Erol Kurubaş, "Türk Yunan İlişkilerinin Psikopolitiği ve Sorunların Çözümü Üzerine Düşünceler (Psychopolitics of Turkey-Greece relations and Remarks on the Solution of Problems)," in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Ankara Global Araştırmalar Merkezi-Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 313.

⁴⁶ Bülent Aras and Pınar Akpınar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Davutoğlu Dönemi: 2009 Değerlendirmesi," in Türk Dış Politikası Yılığ 2009, Burhanettin Duran et al. (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 17.

⁴⁷ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, "Değişen Dünya Dengelerinde Türk Yunan İlişkileri" (Turkish-Greek Relations in the Changing World Balances) in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Ankara Global Araştırmalar Merkezi-Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 274.

⁴⁸ Şaban Çalış and Birol Akgün, "Çatışmadan Uzlaşmaya: 21. Yüzyıla Girerken Balkanlar'da Türk Yunan Rekabeti" (From Conflict to Reconciliation: Turkish-Greek Competition in the Balkans entering the 21st Century) , in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Ankara Global Araştırmalar Merkezi-Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 297.

⁴⁹ Inat, Türkische Nahostpolitik, 25. For an Analysis of the psychological roots of mutual mistrust between Turkey and Greece such as 'other' perception, rituals and selected traumas, see. Kurubaş, "Türk Yunan İlişkilerinin Psikopolitiği, 314-325.

⁵⁰ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in The Post-Cold War Era: The Exemplary Relationship in the Balkans," The Turkish Yearbook, Vol. XXXII, (2001), 27–28. Nurcan Özgür, "1989 sonrası Türkiye-Bulgaristan İlişkileri (Post–1989 Turkish-Bulgarian Relations)" in Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), ed.Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 388.

⁵¹ Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis," 58.

⁵² Robert Olson, "Turkey-Syria Relations since the Gulf War: Kurds and Water," Middle East Policy, Volume 5, issue 2, (May 01, 1997): 169–171. Konuralp Pamukçu, "Su Sorunu ve Türkiye Suriye/Irak İlişkileri (Water Question and Turkey Syria / Iraq Relations)," in Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 183.

⁵³ Tayyar Arı, "Geçmişten Günümüze Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu Politikasının Analizi ve İlişkileri Belirleyen Dinamikler" (From Past to Present Analysis of Turkey's Middle East Policy and Dynamics Determining Relations)," in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Ankara Global Araştırmalar Merkezi-Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 274.

and political features of the region, the Kurdish population remained within the borders of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria pushed these four countries to cooperate at least until recently against a potential Kurdish state and has influenced TFP from a different perspective.⁵⁴

It would not be an overstatement to express that Turkey has been feeling the burden of history utmost on the Armenian problem. Armenian claims that genocide was committed against the Ottoman Armenians in the course of the First World War and their efforts for international recognition of these claims across the world are today two significant obstacles in front of good neighborly relations between Turkey and Armenia.⁵⁵ The dispute on the verity of these claims burden not only Turkish-Armenian relations but also relations of Turkey with the USA, France and several other western countries.⁵⁶ Furthermore, in the eye of many Europeans, history plays a significant role with respect to the EU prospect of Turkey.⁵⁷ As Mayer and Palmowski connote, historical experiences of Europeans with the Muslim world (i.e. the two sieges of Vienna by Ottomans, crusades-confrontation of Christians with the Muslims) still have contemporary influence in the minds and hearts of the peoples of Europe. For more than five centuries Europe defined itself partially in opposition to the Ottoman Empire and they have been the dominant ‘other’ in the constitution of European identities.⁵⁸

2.2.1. Re-interpretation of history by Özal and Erdoğan leaderships

Advocating that Turkish Republic was a new country, the Turkish ruling elite desired to eliminate the above introduced problems rooted in the Ottoman past. In doing this however, they adopted a holistic approach and while trying to avoid the problems stemming from the Ottoman history, they neglected also the opportunities as well as responsibilities offered by Turkey's historical connections. Özal and Erdoğan leaderships on the other hand have begun to take into account of the other side of the medallion as well. That is, despite the challenges rooted in the Ottoman past; this historical heritage offers also a variety of opportunities for cooperation. Hence, albeit to varying degrees, Turkey's historical and cultural assets returned to the TFP agenda to a large extent in comparison with the past.

In the face of Kemalist policy line which rejected Turkey's Ottoman legacy and embraced a firmly nationalist and westernist attitude, Özal developed his own approach,

⁵⁴ Ramazan Gözen, "Kuzey Irak Sorunu" (Northern Iraq Question), in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Ankara Global Araştırmalar Merkezi-Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 798–799.

⁵⁵ İdris Bal, "Türkiye Ermenistan İlişkileri ve Ermeni Sorunu" (Turkish-Armenian Relations and Armenian Problem) in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Ankara Global Araştırmalar Merkezi-Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006) 429. On the Armenian problem see also: Sedat Laçiner, "What is the Armenian Problem," the Journal of Turkish Weekly, (October 2006), accessed 15.07.2013, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/article/153/what-is-the-armenian-problem.html>

⁵⁶ Birol Akgün and Murat Çemrek, "Türk Dış Politikasında Ermeni Sorunu" (Armenian Problem in Turkish Foreign Policy), Institute of Strategic Thinking, (Ankara: April 2010): 5.

⁵⁷ According to a research made by Standard Eurobarometer in 2006, 45 percent of EU citizens do not agree that Turkey partly belongs to Europe by her history. Meltem Müftüler Baç and Evrim Taşkın, "Turkey's Accession to the European Union: Does Culture and Identity Play a Role?" Review of European Studies, (Ankara: Volume: 6, No:2 (Spring: 2007): 47.

⁵⁸ Iver B.Neumann, "Uses of the Other: 'East' in European Identity Formation," (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 39-40. See also, Erhan Akdemir, "Avrupa Aynasında Türk Kimliği" (Turkish Identity in the mirror of Europe), Ankara Avrupa Çalışmalar Dergisi, Cilt: 7, No:1 (Güz: 2007), 131-148.

which has been later named by some as neo-Ottomanism,⁵⁹ and directed TFP in accordance with it.⁶⁰ Özal regarded Turkey's historical, cultural and geographical assets not as a burden but as assets presenting opportunities, particularly in economic terms. In this respect, unlike his predecessors, Özal tried to capitalize on Turkey's historical and cultural "depth" in favor of Turkey's interests. For instance, by making use of Turkey's historical and cultural ties, he wanted to open to the Middle East and the Balkans, and by employing Turkish identity, he wanted to open to the Central Asia.⁶¹ Likewise, Özal's interest in the Arab-Israel question and his projects to find a solution for this problem should be viewed in this context. His great endeavour to end the persecution that the former Ottoman subject nation, Bosnians, suffered from and Özal's strong backup for the Azerbaijanis throughout the Nagorno-Karabakh war cannot be fully comprehended without understanding the value that Özal attached to Turkey's historical and cultural ties.

In this respect, Turkey's historical and cultural links played a remarkable role after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The cultural, ethnic and linguistic affinity with the Central Asian successor states of the Soviet Union was in 1990s one of the most important landmarks of TFP. After the end of Cold War, owing to its cultural, religious and ethnic affinity with the newly established states of the Caspian region, Ankara assumed a new role and it was seen as a bridge between the Western countries and the Turkic republics in the Caspian region.⁶²

In the current foreign policy, Turkey's cultural and historical ties are frequently stressed by the Turkish government as well. For instance, PM Erdoğan highlighted the cultural and historical ties in regard to Turkish stance towards Palestine.⁶³ Likewise, current foreign minister of Turkey, Davutoğlu also stresses historical assets with respect to new foreign policy understanding of the AK Party government.⁶⁴ Accordingly, due to its geographical and historical depth, Turkey has both responsibilities and rights, and has to follow a proactive foreign policy.⁶⁵ PM Erdoğan agrees with the proactive policy approach of his foreign minister and states that "the real hazard for the countries like Turkey which have cultural and political depth and have historical relations with many regions of the world is

⁵⁹ Mehmet Gönlübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 1919-1995 (Turkish Foreign Policy with Events, 1919-1995), (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 1996), 650-653. Hakan M. Yavuz, 'Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism', Critique, (Spring 1998), 19-41. Originally, founders of the Republic of Turkey had rejected Ottoman legacy and traditional Kemalist policy line consciously abstained from seeing Ottomans as a reference point. Towards the end of 1980s, Ottomans returned to Turkey's and Özal's agenda in the face of discussions on two distinctive subjects. The former discussion related to a national identity crisis and forms of social belonging which had emerged as a result of "Kurdish question". In order to ensure the social consensus, Özal and some other Turkish intellectuals suggested Ottomans as a point of reference. The latter discussion stemmed from the oppression and assimilation problem against the Turks in Bulgaria. But the real return of Ottomans to Turkey's agenda in the form of "Neo-Ottomanism" occurred in the wake of developments such as the dissolution of Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia. Çalı, "Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler," 395-397, 400.

⁶⁰ Muhittin Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış" (Özalist Foreign Policy: An Active and Rational Understanding), Bilgi, Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, No:7, (2003/2): 50.

⁶¹ Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 291-292.

⁶² Inat, "Türkische Nahostpolitik," 29-30.

⁶³ "Turkey has always stood by the Palestinian people and will continue to do so. We have historical and cultural ties, above all we have tie of affection with Palestine" (T.b.A.) R.Tayyip Erdogan, **Star**, 06.01.2009, accessed 10.07.2010, <http://www.stargazete.com/politika/erdogandan-barak-ve-livniye-cok-sert-sozler-haber-160271.html>

⁶⁴ Davutoğlu, "Turkey's New Foreign Policy Vision," 79.

⁶⁵ İş Dünyası artık Politikanın Öncülerinden," (interview with Ahmet Davutoglu), Turkish Time Gazetesi, (15 Nisan-15 Mayıs 2004), accessed 15.01.2012, <http://kitapyorumu.blogcu.com/is-dunyasi-artik-politikanin-onculerinden/1023766>

remaining indifferent to the developments.”⁶⁶ Consequently, historical and cultural ties of Turkey have been re-interpreted by the Erdoğan leadership distinctively and have constituted one of the most important motivations of proactive foreign policy paradigm.

To sum up, historical and cultural factors have so far played a considerably determining role in the formulation and implementation of TFP. Enormous historical and cultural legacy of the Ottoman Empire, which controlled over 20 million square kilometers acreage and dominated over numerous peoples, was interpreted by Turkish elites negatively and it was regarded as a burden on TFP. Therefore, while seeking to refrain from intervening in the problems of the nations ruled formerly by the Ottoman Empire, they tried to turn Turkey's face to the West. However, Özal leadership during 1980s and early 1990s and Erdoğan leadership during 2000s have re-evaluated Turkish history from a different perspective and regarded it as one of the most important motivations of their active and multi-dimensional foreign policy approaches. This case demonstrates how the re-interpretation of the history factor can at the ideational level influence and transform the main FP line of a country, even if the history is an unchanging factor in the short run.

2.3. Ideological and internal factors

2.3.1. Kemalism

Kemalist ideology designated by the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, during the war of independence and constituted the main building blocks of modern Turkey's foreign policy. According to Atatürk, the main goal of TFP should have been assuring “the continuation of welfare, happiness and presence of the Turkish nation and state.”⁶⁷ In relations with other international actors, Kemalism stipulated that Turkey was to seek recognition as a sovereign entity and seek to be an equal member of international society. The famous slogan of Atatürk “peace at home peace in the world” pointed to ‘Atatürk's rejection of the pursuit of power and glory as distinct from security.’⁶⁸ Hence, in regard to the foreign policy understanding of Atatürk two principles come into prominence: 1) priority of peace and sovereignty over all expansionist-revisionist aims and adventurist policies (in implication noninterventionism), and 2) western orientation.⁶⁹ TFP developed in line with the changes in the world but has remained remarkably committed to these principles since its foundation, at least until recent decades. Handling these two principles and their historical construction processes:

1) In the wake of the war of independence, Turkish nation was tired of interminable wars. As the founder and the leader of the Republic of Turkey, Kemal Atatürk intended to embark upon radical reforms in administrative, social and cultural domains. Achieving these reforms required a peaceful internal as well as international environment. Moreover, since Turkish statesmen considered that they managed to realize the National Pact substantially, in

⁶⁶ R.Tayyip Erdoğan's address at USAK House, 04.02.2010, accessed 03.04.2011, <http://www.usak.org.tr/duyuru.asp?id=88>

⁶⁷ M. Bali Aykan, "Türkiyenin Dış Politika Anlayışı" (Foreign Policy Understanding of Turkey), in *Türk Dış Politikası, 1919–2008* (Turkish Foreign Policy, 1919–2008), ed. Haydar Çakmak, (Istanbul: Platin Yayınları, 2008), 31–32.

⁶⁸ Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1943–1945*, 7–8.

⁶⁹ F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, Santa Monica CA: RAND, National Security Research Division, (2003): 18-19. Asiye Öztürk, "The Domestic Context of Turkey's Changing Foreign Policy towards the Middle East and the Caspian Region," *Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DİE), Discussion Paper*, (Bonn: 10/2009): 8.

the period after the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey was largely satisfied with the status quo and (unlike the other losers of the World War I like Germany) opted for staying away from revisionist and adventurist policies.⁷⁰ After all, Atatürk had established a nation state out of the ashes of the multi-religious and multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire, made nationalism and secularism an integral part of his ideology and thereby left aside ideologies such as pan-Islamism or pan-Turkism. This realist view of Atatürk was also a result of limited power of Turkey which exhausted its resources after long wars. Thus, it might be noted that the Kemalist ideology is closely relevant to real politics. Expressed another way, priority of peace and sovereignty over all expansionist-revisionist aims was also a requirement of real politics and this was adopted by Atatürk as a political choice. Long and exhausting war experiences of the last century and the regime change in the country brought about the dominance of a shared idea encouraging for staying away from taking risks. Subsequently, this noninterventionist approach maintained its characteristic to be one of the basic elements directing TFP until the end of 1980s. As a matter of fact, since the foundation of the Republic in 1923, (apart from Hatay's annexation in 1939 and Cyprus Peace Operation of 1974) TFP had remained loyal to this noninterventionist and pro-status quo norms of Kemalist ideology.⁷¹ However, as Turkey enters the 21st century, nonintervention is no longer a meaningful description of Turkish policy. Despite the fact that Ankara is still a relatively cautious player on the international scene and preserves a strong preference for multilateral action in most areas, it has become a far more assertive actor in the new millennium with respect to its foreign and security policies.⁷²

2) Even though Turkey fought against the western powers during the First World War, after independence Atatürk made westernization one of the components of his ideology.⁷³ In the Republic of Turkey, westernization began at first in cultural and, after World War II, in political and military areas. However, thinking of Turkish westernization separately from history would be misleading. In the face of a series of Ottoman defeats at the hands of the western powers, modernization in western sense had already started.⁷⁴ When the Ottoman Empire began to decline and retreat against Russia and Austria, it was obliged to search for the support of the western powers and pursue a balance policy. As the Ottoman administration intensified its relations with the western states; western culture and European way of thinking spread gradually in intellectual and bureaucratic circles of Ottoman society. Pro-Western groups such as the Young Turks advocated westernization of the Empire in political, cultural and economic domains.⁷⁵ Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti) which left its mark on the recent history of the Ottoman Empire in a most powerful manner was also pro-Western and nationalist. It is a fact that Turkish Republic was essentially founded by those people who were sympathizer of the westernist ideas of the Unionists and the country basically maintained in a sense the same westernism applications of the

⁷⁰ Oran, "Giriş: Türk Dış Politikasının Teori ve Pratiği," 46-48.

⁷¹ Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1943-1945*, 8. See also: Andrew Mango, "Reflections on the Atatürkist Origins of Turkish Foreign Policy and Domestic Linkages," in *Turkey's New World, Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy*, eds. Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, (Washington: 2000,) 9-19.

⁷² Larrabee and Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," 19.

⁷³ Atatürk emphasized frequently that Turkish national struggle was against western imperialism not against western ideals. Sander, *Türk Dış Politikası*, 74.

⁷⁴ Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis," 16-17, 18. See also, Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Barışı*, 64.

⁷⁵ Inat, *Türkische Nahostpolitik*, 24.

Unionists.⁷⁶ However, the distinction between the Ottoman period westernization movements and the Republican western orientation was that the purpose of Ottoman reforms was to vitalize the empire without altering it politically and to return it to its powerful and glorious days.⁷⁷ Atatürk, on the other hand, aimed at founding a strong and secular nation state in western sense. To this end, starting from the constitutional structure of the state, many state institutions and laws were re-arranged by following western counterparts, and the Ottoman sultanate and caliphate were abolished.⁷⁸ The ‘West’ became a target to be achieved and a party to be cooperated. After the establishment of the Republic, Westernization became an integral part of the identity of the newly founded state.⁷⁹

As of the initial days of the Republic, the most fundamental feature of Turkey in connection with foreign politics has been its western orientation.⁸⁰ Since its decision makers viewed the western values as the key of development and modernization, the new Turkish Republic adopted a westward-looking foreign policy.⁸¹ Though it tried to follow a neutral foreign policy against the big powers of that time throughout the first 20 years of the Republic, it became a member of Europe even in this era in both political and economic terms. After the WW II, this basic orientation unchangingly and even more strongly continued and Turkey soon became not only a sympathizer of the western states but also a strict ally of them. However, as Karpat argues “...as Turkey entered increasingly into the western sphere after the end of World War II, it began to distance itself more and more from its Muslim neighbors –except in those cases when its NATO membership dictated that greater contact be maintained (e.g., the CENTO alliance with Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan).⁸²

Laicism/secularism, one of the main principles of Kemalism, was also decisive in the orientation of TFP. Turkish elite interpreted this principle radically and disregarded a common ground for cooperation with other Muslim nations. Thus, Ankara refrained conventionally from establishing an Islam-oriented foreign policy. Therefore, for example, Turkey sustained a low profile relationship with the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) and never participated in the summits of it at the presidential level until 1984 Casablanca Islamic Summit.⁸³

2.3.1.1. Re-interpretation of the principles of Kemalist ideology by Özal and Erdoğan leaderships

Having influenced TFP for decades, the impact of the Kemalist ideology on FP makers began relatively to decline in the 1980s and 2000s. The basic principles of Kemalism which have been reflected to the policy field as non-interventionism, westernization and secularism re-interpreted in different ways by Özal and Erdoğan leaderships. Being the first statesman

⁷⁶ Oran, "Giriş: Türk Dış Politikasının Teori ve Pratiği," 50. For a detailed analysis of Mustafa Kemal-Committee of Union and Progress relations see: Fethi Tevetoğlu, "Atatürk – İttihat ve Terakki" (Atatürk – Union and Progress), Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi, Sayı 15, Cilt V, (Temmuz 1989).

⁷⁷ Weisband, Turkish Foreign Policy 1943–1945, 13–20.

⁷⁸ Ömer Taşpınar, Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism," Carnegie Middle East Center, Carnegie Papers, 10, (September 2008): 4.

⁷⁹ Bal, "Türk Dış Politikasının 87 Yıllık Analizi"

⁸⁰ Sander, Türk Dış Politikası, 71.

⁸¹ Ibid., 79.

⁸² Karpat, Turkish Foreign Policy: Recent Developments, 1. Similarly, Taşpınar argues on this issue that, "the official ideology of the Republic, Kemalism, turned its back on the Islamic world and pursued an exclusively Western path." Taşpınar, Turkey's Middle East Policies," 1–2.

⁸³ Laçiner, "Özalizm (Neo-Ottomanism)," 178.

who acknowledged that Islam is a significant part of Turkish identity and developed policies accordingly,⁸⁴ Turgut Özal re-interpreted secularism differently from the Kemalists. Having not defined secularism as strictly as the Kemalists did, Özal leadership attached importance for example to the ICO, made contributions to its activities and sought pragmatically to make use of this organization for Turkey's interests. As a matter of fact, Turkey attended for the first time the meeting of the ICO in 1984 at Presidential level during the Özal era.⁸⁵

Similarly, constructing an alternative identity structure by combining the Islamic-conservative values of his society with the values of the West, Özal leadership interpreted the westernization principle also in a different manner. Accordingly, westernization should not have been perceived as turning its back on the east. In this regard, Turgut Özal sustained close relations with the West and he was aware of the differences between Turkey and the West saying:

*"We are an Islamic country. We have differences from the West. (...) We are the bridge between the West and the East. We need to take the science, technology, thinking, understanding, and compromise of the West. But we have also our own values that the West does not have."*⁸⁶

As a matter of fact, Turkey is a bridge between the east and the west and its efficiency in the west is a positive function of its efficiency in the east. Therefore, instead of a unilateral westernist foreign policy approach just like during the Cold War, Özal adopted a multilateral foreign policy.⁸⁷

Another principle of Kemalism, non-interventionism, began to cease to be a FP option for the Özal leadership as well. As noted above, along with his identity and corresponding interest definitions, Özal's expectation to increase Turkey's importance in the eyes of the west through proactive policy in its region was a significant factor to leave non-interventionism principle aside. Moreover, Turkey's export oriented economic model was also a significant motivation for Ankara to cooperate with the neighboring countries more closely.⁸⁸ The need for peace and stability for the economic development of the country was also another factor pushing Özal to take initiatives to form a peaceful international environment. Additionally, the new international structure arose in the wake of the end of Cold War opened a new horizon for the Özal leadership to make Turkey a global actor by cooperating with the emerging Turkic republics in the Central Asia. In short, Özal leadership re-interpreted the norms of the Kemalist ideology and gave them new senses. Accordingly, it preferred a multilateral and proactive policy instead of a unilateral and non-interference oriented one which implied taking foreign policy initiatives and giving weigh to the east and the west simultaneously not at the expense of one of them.

Similar arguments might be suggested for the Erdoğan era as well. Erdoğan leadership has also re-interpreted the principles of Kemalism like non-interventionism, westernization and secularism differently from his predecessors and has driven the TFP out of its traditional

⁸⁴ Berdal Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş" (Domestic and Foreign Policy in Özal Era: Continuity or Rupture) in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality) ed. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 244.

⁸⁵ "İslam dünyası Türkiye'yi artık yanında görüyor," *Milliyet*, 18.01.1984, 8.

⁸⁶ Muhittin Ataman, "Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Volume 1, Number 1, (Spring 2002), 120-153, accessed 11.12.2012, <http://www.alternativesjournal.net/volume1/number1/ataman.htm>

⁸⁷ Mor, "Özal'ın dış politika konsepti," 187.

⁸⁸ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 57-58.

line. In this context, Islam has been regarded once again an important part of Turkish identity and the secularism principle has not been considered as strictly as the Kemalist establishment did. Turkey assumed for example an active role in the OIC during the Erdoğan era too and even a Turkish bureaucrat, Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, took the helm of the Organization with the assistance of the Turkish government for the term of 2004-2013.⁸⁹ On the other hand, being aware of the disastrous consequences of possible sectarian conflicts in the region, the AK Party government considered in the face of rising sectarian conflicts in the 2000s that a possible Shiite-Sunni conflict would be very dangerous and declared that it would not be a part of such conflicts.⁹⁰

Interpreting also westernization in parallel with Özal's line, Erdoğan leadership has advocated that Turkey's historical and cultural connections would not be ignored in foreign policy making. As Turkey has been directly affected from the crises occurring around it and in the former Ottoman territories, in the Balkans or Caucasus for example, Erdoğan leadership has argued that Turkey could not escape from its own history. Thus it has to take the historical and cultural ties into consideration in foreign policy strategies.⁹¹ Additionally, Erdoğan leadership also claimed that there was a positive correlation between Turkey's weigh in the east and the west which was accordingly imposing strategically to adopt a multi-dimensional approach. Briefly, believing that non-interventionism ceased to be an option for Turkey in view of Turkey's historical and geographical depth, just like Özal, Erdoğan leadership preferred also an active and multidimensional foreign policy approach.

All in all, the principles of the traditional foreign policy line have been re-interpreted by both leaderships differently from the traditional TFP makers and this has led to an active and multi-dimensional foreign policy understanding which is closely associated with their distinctive identity definitions. Consequently, it would not be wrong to state at this stage that albeit in a different sense, the determining role of Kemalist ideology on TFP still continues, particularly in terms of westernization. On the other hand, today, a non-interventionist approach in TFP is a matter of past. Turkish policy makers indicate a great interest in the issues around Turkey and seek to conduct an active foreign policy in the region.⁹²

⁸⁹ "İKÖ'ye ilk Türk Genel Sekreter," **Radikal**, 16.06.2004, accessed 10.08.2008, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=119549>.

⁹⁰ "PM Erdoğan warns of sectarian clashes in Syria," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 15.05.2011, accessed 10.08.2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=pm-erdogan-warns-of-sectarian-clashes-in-syria-2011-05-15>. "Gül warns against sectarian war in Muslim world," Today's Zaman, 28.05.2013, accessed 11.08.2008, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-316781-gul-warns-against-sectarian-war-in-muslim-world.html>.

⁹¹ Davutoğlu, Küresel Bunalım, 180-184.

⁹² Larrabee explains Turkey's new activism in terms of Middle East affairs and denies the 'axis shift' claims with these words: "Turkey's greater engagement in the Middle East is part of the broader process of the country's gradual diversification of its foreign policy since the end of the Cold War. In effect, Turkey is rediscovering a region to which it historically has had strong political and cultural ties. Under the Ottomans, Turkey was an active actor—indeed, the dominant power—in the Middle East. The Republican period, during which Turkey essentially turned its back on the Middle East, was an anomaly in Turkish history. Thus, in many ways, Turkey's more active policy in the Middle East of late represents a return to a more traditional pattern of foreign-policy behavior." F. Stephen Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership, U.S.-Turkish Relations in an Era of Global Geopolitical Change," RAND Project Air Force, (2010): 33-34, accessed 10.08.2008, www.rand.org.

2.3.2. Internal politics

2.3.2.1. Socially constructed ideas about the role of military in Turkish Politics and its transformation in the 1980s and 2000s

Undoubtedly, there are several internal actors influencing TFP. Turkish military has always had a prominent position among them and it has had a considerably decisive role in Turkish politics, particularly as of 1960s.⁹³ Until recently, a military intervention into politics had been perceived among the Turkish elite and the Kemalist circles as a normal and even sometimes as a necessary norm when it became a widespread conviction that the governments moved away from secularism.⁹⁴ This norm had been historically explained with the role of military in Turkish political history and in Turkish traditions. As a matter of fact, Turkish army was the most invested and the best trained institution in the decline stage of the Ottoman Empire with a view to preventing the dissolution of it. The founders of the Republic of Turkey, including Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and İsmet İnönü, are also of military origin,⁹⁵ and six out of ten presidents of the Turkish Republic were high-ranking military officers.⁹⁶ Furthermore, some of the military officers openly express that the military founded the republic. Thus it is an important institution in the Turkish political landscape.⁹⁷ The impact of the army on foreign policy has been associated with its exclusive place in domestic politics.⁹⁸ Traditionally, it has always been one of the most influential actors of Turkish politics.

After the ten-year Democrat Party government, the Turkish army intervened in politics on different excuses in nearly every ten years as of 1960. The army has regarded itself as the guardian of the unitary Republic and viewed its mission as not only to defend the territorial integrity of the state against external threats but also to protect it against internal challenges.⁹⁹ Moreover, it has seen itself superior to the civilians,¹⁰⁰ and did not abstain from intervening in politics when it deemed it necessary (i.e. when it considered that the Republican regime was in danger). This happened several times either by way of traditional and direct methods (e.g. coup d'états of 1960, 1971 and 1980) or of indirect and postmodern methods such as the February 28, 1997 post-modern putsch. The latest military attempt in this respect took place on 27 April 2007 by posting a digital memorandum in the process of presidential election.

As it happened during the 28 February 1997 process, the military sought also civil society support in recent decades and did not hesitate to resort to manipulative vehicles to

⁹³ For an analysis on the role of the military in Turkish politics see: Larrabee and Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," 27-30.

⁹⁴ "Ordu göreve' pankartı Ergenekon dosyasında," *Zaman*, 23.04.2008, accessed 23.06.2009, http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_ordu-goreve-pankarti-ergenekon-dosyasinda_680295.html. "Genç subaylar tedirgin," *Cumhuriyet*, 23.05.2003

⁹⁵ Metin Heper and Joshua R Itzkowitz-Shiffrinson, "Civil-Military Relations in Israel and Turkey," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, 33, 2 (Winter 2005): 237-238.

⁹⁶ Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, 27.

⁹⁷ İlhan Uzgel, "Between Praetorianism and Democracy: The Role of the Military in Turkish Foreign Policy," *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol.XXXIV, (2003): 182

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 178.

⁹⁹ Larrabee and Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," 27. For the critiques of a retired vice admiral of Turkish army, Atilla Kıyat, as to how the military interfered in governmental issues see: Hasan Cemal, "Asker her şeye maydanoz olunca," *milliyet.com.tr*, 17.09.2011, accessed 23.06.2012, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/asker-her-seye-maydanoz-olunca-siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/17.09.2011/1439453/default.htm>

¹⁰⁰ Yucel Bozdaglioglu, "Turkish Military and Foreign Policy: A Cultural Approach," (Paper presented at the 66th MPSA (Midwest Political Science Association) Annual National Conference, Chicago, 03/04/2008).

affect Turkish politics.¹⁰¹ These direct or indirect interventions of the military in politics gave rise to the construction of a norm which has been shared mostly among Kemalist/elitist groups and indicate the central role the army plays in Turkish political life.¹⁰² Even though these interventions were against a number of circles in the country and were unwelcome for them, such undemocratic activities of Turkish generals have found a certain support among the Kemalist elite. Owing to the norms constructed especially as a result of the process began with the military putsch in 1960 and gained a certain acceptance among the Kemalists, some groups have indirectly encouraged the Turkish army to intervene the administration once they did not like the direction of the country.¹⁰³

Following the 1980 coup d'état, the putschist generals stayed in power from 1980 until 1983 without a parliament. Originally, today's Turkish constitution came into existence with the initiative of these generals in 1982. Since these generals wanted to exert influence in politics also through legal mechanisms, they had formed a high Security Council with the new constitution through which they could intervene in the politics statutorily.¹⁰⁴ As a matter of fact, even though the elections were held in 1983 and a civilian government was established by Turgut Özal, the military retained its impact on overall matters relating to Turkey's internal and external security and foreign affairs matters through the constitutional powers of President Kenan Evren and the National Security Council (NSC).¹⁰⁵

As a democrat and Muslim leader who had personally suffered from military interventions and realized their negative impacts on both Turkish democracy and Turkish economy, Özal always favored the prominence of politics over all kinds of tutelages, be military or bureaucratic ones. As the supremacy of any kind of tutelage over national will is unacceptable in democracies, Özal's stance was also a requirement of a democrat identity. He was of the opinion that it was politicians who were carrying the political responsibility, thus the decision-making authority should have been in their hand. Özal objected the decisive position of the bureaucracy in the state affairs which carried neither economic nor political responsibility.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, he struggled with the military tutelage and sought to increase the weight of politics in Turkey. In parallel with the democratization of the country, Özal

¹⁰¹ Şule Toktaş and Ümit Kurt "The Impact of EU Reform Process on Civil-Military Relations in Turkey" SETA Policy Bf, No: 26, (November 2008): 1-2. Heper and Itzkowitz-Shifrinson, "Civil-Military Relations In Israel and Turkey," 237.

¹⁰² Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis," 87.

¹⁰³ "Ordu göreve" pankartı Ergenekon dosyasında," **Zaman**, 23.04.2008, accessed 25.01.2009 http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_ordu-goreve-pankarti-ergenekon-dosyasinda_680295.html. "Genç subaylar tedirgin," **Cumhuriyet**, 23.05.2003

¹⁰⁴ Gencer Özcan, "The Changing Role of Turkey's Military in Foreign Policy Making," UNISCI Discussion Papers, No:23, (May 2010): 26. Inat, *Türkische Nahostpolitik*, 31. Though the National Security Council initially formed in the 1961 constitution, its role and weight in Turkish politics was gradually increased along with military interventions. For instance, in the 1961 constitution, the decisions of the Council were only reported to the Cabinet and the Cabinet had no obligation to implement these decisions. Yet the 1982 Constitution had prescribed that NSC decisions would be primarily taken into consideration by the Cabinet. Gencer Özcan, "Türkiye'de Siyasal Rejim ve Dış Politika: 1983-1993" (Political Regime and Foreign Policy in Turkey:1983-1993), in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy)*, ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 516.

¹⁰⁵ Gerassimos Karabelias, "Civil-Military Relations: A Comparative Analysis of the Role of The Military in The Political Transformation of Post-War Turkey and Greece: 1980-1995," (Final Report submitted to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, June 1998)

¹⁰⁶ Philip Robins, *Suits and uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War*, (London: Hurst & Co, 2003) 55.

accomplished a certain success too.¹⁰⁷ For instance, he ignored the military customs, which have been conventionally very strong, and appointed Necip Torumtay as the Chief of Military Staff instead of Necdet Öztörün in 1987. This kind of interventions of the civilians into the promotion procedures of the military occurred considerably rarely in Turkish history.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, President Turgut Özal was the primary Turkish actor during the First Gulf Crisis who was able to steer TFP which caused the resignation of the Chief of Staff in 1990.

However, Turgut Özal's considerable success in curbing the military tutelage fell short of constructing a strong enough norm to prevent the generals from dealing with the political issues. As a matter of fact, in the course of the 1990s, along with the Kurdish separatism; the rise of the political Islam, the fragmented political structure and the coalition governments provided again an appropriate ground for the dominance of the military in Turkish politics.¹⁰⁹ Though the NSC has been composed of military and cabinet members and its resolutions have, according to the constitution, only a consultative character, the armed forces used it as a means of intervention in the politics and consequently the NSC was de facto the highest decision mechanism in Turkey.¹¹⁰

The Kurdish separatism and the activities of the terrorist organization of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) contributed to the dominance of the military in foreign political issues as well. After 1984, as the PKK began to operate more effectively within and outside of Turkey, the military's role in curbing armed insurgence gradually increased and the armed forces played a central role over this issue until a few years ago. Moreover, along with many politicians, the military was inclined to see this matter as a military problem, rather than a political one. In view of some neighboring states' support for the PKK, the problem was often "portrayed as conspiracy of hostile states that aim to disintegrate Turkey. Therefore, the issue is transformed into a national security problem that increases the military's influence on foreign policy."¹¹¹ After all, the issue was military in nature; hence the military naturally came to the forefront as the key player.¹¹² For instance, in order to cut the support of some neighboring countries, Turkey followed an aggressive policy during 1990s in particular. In order to stop Syrian support for the PKK, Turkey threatened the Syrian government with waging a war. It is known today that the plans had been made by soldiers to put pressure on Syria and interestingly these plans had contained not only military measures but also political and economic measures. Profoundly booming relations with Israel had also something to do

¹⁰⁷ Korkut Özal, Devlet Sırrı (State Secret), (İstanbul: Yakın Plan yayımları, Ekim 2010), 58-59. See also: Yasemin Çelik, Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 87.

¹⁰⁸ Murat Yetkin, "Ordunun en uzun günü (ve gecesi)" (the longest day (and night) of the army), **Radikal**, 05.08.2010, accessed 10.11.2010, <http://www.haber10.com/makale/20508/>

¹⁰⁹ Uzgel, "Between Praetorianism and Democracy," 184.

¹¹⁰ Inat, Türkische Nahostpolitik, 31. Mehmet Ali Birand, "How, when and where the military made mistakes," **Hürriyet Daily News.com**, 30.08.2010, accessed 10.11.2010, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=the-military-made-a-mistake-when-where-how-and-lost-2010-08-30>. Until the 7th harmonization package with the EU, the NSC possessed such great powers which in no way would comply with the contemporary democratic standards. For instance, Articles 9 and 14 of the Law on the NSC and the Secretariat General of the NSC empowered the Secretariat General to follow up, on behalf of the President and the PM, the implementation of any recommendation made by the NSC. Besides, the Law on the NSC article 19 read that "the Ministries, public institutions and organizations and private legal persons shall submit regularly, or when requested, non-classified and classified information and documents needed by the Secretariat General of the NSC ". Ayşe Nilüfer Narlı, "Aligning Civil-Military Relations in Turkey: Transparency Building in Defense Sector and the EU Reforms," 9th Workshop of the PfP Consortium Study Group „Regional Stability in South East Europe" (April 2005):165, accessed 21.11.2011, http://www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/10_wg9_taf_110.pdf.

¹¹¹ Bozdaglioglu, "Turkish Military And Foreign Policy," 11.

¹¹² Özcan, "The Changing Role Of Turkey's Military in Foreign Policy Making," 26.

with the Turkish generals. "Ankara gave further momentum to its alignment with Israel, and the military played a key role in the forging of intimate military cooperation with the Israeli Defense Forces."¹¹³

Just like the Özal leadership, the Erdoğan leadership has also been a victim of military coups and these putsches have played significant roles in the construction processes of its identity. Thus, Erdoğan leadership also embarked on a struggle with the military tutelage and took significant steps to eliminate it. Undoubtedly, Erdoğan leadership has enjoyed in its struggle an anchor that the Özal leadership did not: the European Union and Turkey's membership perspective to it. In fact, the privileged position of the armed forces in Turkish politics affected until recently Turkey's dialogue with Europe and with the U.S. on a series of issues. It was a major subject of criticism by many EU officials until a few years ago who "have consistently stressed that the military's prominent role in Turkish politics casts doubts on Turkey's democratic credentials and demanded a host of legal and political reforms from Turkey to bring it in line with Western Europe's democratic standards, which include an empirical separation between civil and military authorities."¹¹⁴ In conformity with these demands, several judicial as well as constitutional reforms were undertaken to fulfill the standards of the western European democracies.¹¹⁵ Through these reforms, the NSC was transformed into an advisory body with no executive powers and with a majority of civilians. Furthermore, NSC representatives were removed from the civilian boards, the military became fully accountable to the parliament and the competency of military courts was limited.¹¹⁶ Eventually, owing to these reforms and the changing structure of Turkish politics,

¹¹³ Ibid., 26-28. With regard to another striking example, Özcan writes that "When the Welfare Party and True Path Party formed a coalition (in 1996), the military effectively put pressure on the government on account of its Islamic inclinations and finally forced it to resign. In this process, the military cultivated ad hoc modalities with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by-passing the government in a number of cases, and most notably imposing its own policy as regards Northern Iraq. Furthermore, against the background of fragmentation in domestic politics, military encroachment on cases under the Foreign Ministry's jurisdiction was increasingly considered legitimate. For instance, in a briefing given to the diplomats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy CGS Çevik Bir, who was known as "the foreign minister of the military," was able to publicly blame Foreign Minister Tansu Çiller for not being active enough abroad. In some cases, the military authorities declined to give the government sufficient information about cross-border operations." Ibid., 27.

¹¹⁴ Bozdaglioglu, "Turkish Military And Foreign Policy," 1. See also. Nilüfer Narli, "Civil-Military Relations in Turkey," Turkish Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring, 2000): 107-127.

¹¹⁵ There is no doubt that the membership process has not been the sole impetus towards the demilitarization project of Turkey. International conjuncture, strong one party government since 2002, its will to demilitarize and democratize Turkey, powerful support of civilian groups for the government on this way and the pluralized structure of Turkish politics might be regarded as further factors behind Turkey's demilitarization process. Özcan, "The Changing Role Of Turkey's Military in Foreign Policy Making," 25. Additionally, M.A.Birand, a prominent Turkish journalist, argues regarding the place of the military in Turkish politics that the 1 March Deployment Note of 2003 was a breaking point for armed forces' exclusive place in Turkish politics. Accordingly, due to the circumstances of the Cold War, the Turkish army was given the utmost support by Washington, as they started to influence governments. From 1950 onwards, Turkish-American relations were begun to be managed via Pentagon and the Turkish General Staff. Due to this order, the military received the full support of Washington during the three coups. However, along with the end of the Cold War, things began to change in the 1990s. March 1 Deployment Note marked the end of the "golden tie" between the Pentagon and the Turkish General Staff. "On that day, the Turkish Parliament disapproved the use of Turkish territory by U.S. troops on their way to Iraq. Washington reacted fiercely. And the TSK (Turkish Armed Forces) paid the price." During an interview, Assistant Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz criticized Turkish commanders for not supporting the deployment note in the National Security Council and not pressuring the government sufficiently. This statement of Wolfowitz indicated how furious the Pentagon was with the then Turkish policy as well as with Turkish commanders. The Deployment Note issue also revealed that the military lost its biggest foreign supporter. Birand, "How, when and where the military made mistakes."

¹¹⁶ Narli, "Aligning Civil-Military Relations in Turkey" 163-173.

influence of the armed forces over the formulation of domestic as well as foreign policy has largely been limited.¹¹⁷

It might be argued that whereas the military was considerably decisive in TFP until early 2000s, the influence of generals on Turkish politics has been diminished to a large extent as a result of a range of reforms. However, by no means the military influence on Turkish politics entirely disappeared in the first decade of the new millennium. The military continued to intervene in politics by resorting to new techniques.¹¹⁸ It preferred to make recommendations and convince the governments so as to implement policies in line with its security concerns. For instance, “in areas where the military plays a key role in the formulation of policy, i.e. the Kurdish issue and political Islam, the military tend(ed) to use both official instruments like the NSC, and informal channels such as behind-the-scenes influence on politicians and bureaucrats. These informal mechanisms range(d) from public pronouncements and briefings to journalists, to informal contacts with bureaucrats and politicians. Statements by the military (were) perceived as warnings to the civilian government; as such, they pressur(ed) the public to take necessary action against the government.”¹¹⁹ However, in the wake of the referendum held in September 2010, the impact of Turkish army on Turkish politics and by implication on foreign policy has visibly decreased.

Consequently, Özal and Erdoğan, whose identities have been shaped also as a result of the military coups and the practices of the tutelage regimes, are known as two important leaders who fought at most with the military and the bureaucratic tutelages in the Turkish political history and made the most important contributions to the construction of norms directed to hinder the intervention of bureaucrats and generals into politics. This case seems in parallel with the mutual construction thesis of the constructivists. In other words, as the victims of military coups and tutelages, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships which aimed to sustain their existences within the political system found the remedy to make the western values such as democracy and human rights integral parts of their identities. Their Islamic-conservative and democrat identities influenced and shaped their interest perceptions both in domestic and foreign politics. For example, while they have made a considerable contribution to the norms against the military tutelages in domestic politics, they have added Turkey's historical and cultural ties to TFP agenda.

However, Özal leadership's success against the military regime was eroded due to the chaotic political and economic structure of 1990s and provided space for the military members to intervene again in politics. In the new millennium on the other hand, Erdoğan leadership has accomplished a serious success in limiting the military interventions by making use of the EU membership anchor and has made significant contributions to the construction of norms against military tutelages. In comparison to 1990s when Turkey followed a relatively conflict oriented foreign policy,¹²⁰ today Turkish army's effect on foreign political issues has relatively been undermined. In this case, democratization process of the country, harmonization process with the EU, one party government with a large majority in the

¹¹⁷ Özcan, "The Changing Role Of Turkey's Military in Foreign Policy Making," 25.

¹¹⁸ For the critiques of a retired vice admiral of Turkish army, Atilla Kıyat, as to how the military interfered in governmental issues see: "TSK Bir Dönem Herşeye Maydanöz Oldu," **aktifhaber.com**, 13.09.2011, accessed 06.10.2011, <http://www.aktifhaber.com/tsk-bir-donem-herseye-maydanoz-oldu-490937h.htm>

¹¹⁹ Toktaş and Kurt "The Impact of EU Reform Process on Civil-Military Relations in Turkey," 4.

¹²⁰ Uzgel calls the 1990s the "golden age" of the military's involvement in domestic and foreign policy. Uzgel, "Between Praetorianism and Democracy," 178.

parliament since 2002 and its new foreign policy understanding (i.e. establishing a welfare circle around Turkey and pursuing a zero-problem policy with neighbors instead of a conflict oriented foreign policy of 1990s) have significant roles.¹²¹ However, the weight of the Turkish armed forces on foreign political decisions has continued for many decades.¹²² Nevertheless, even though since 2011 the Turkish army has been careful not to interfere into political issues and displayed a relatively more democratic image, it might be concluded that Turkey has still been undergoing a transformation process in terms of civil-military relations, there is still need for time until the reforms would fully put into practice, and until civil-military relations come in line with the contemporary democratic standards.

2.3.2.2. Evolving role of non-governmental organizations and civil society

In recent decades, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have increased their weight on TFP making in parallel with the democratization process in the country. As a result of the export-oriented economic model introduced in early 1980s, Turkish/Anatolian people began to open up to the world and started so to speak to undergo a transnational socialization process. They have begun to learn the world and the internationally shared norms have exerted influence on the construction of their identities. Through the NGOs, this new and economically stronger social class has vocally started to demand more saying in the administration of the country. Additionally, this Muslim-conservative social class attached importance also to the education of their youth. Thanks to the mounting educational level of these conservative people, they have increased their capacity to affect the foreign policy makers.¹²³ This situation was a result of the economic and social transformation of the Turkish society that it has undergone in the recent decades. In terms of economic structure, a very dynamic and diverse private sector, with a range of perceptions about politics and foreign affairs, has emerged in Turkey and it has constituted further “power centers” outside the military and outside the state.¹²⁴ These power centers have played crucial roles in the process of the re-definition of the country's identity; they have become a leading vehicle for change in Turkey and have contributed to the definition of foreign policy. Moreover, the non-governmental organizations such as business associations, human rights organizations, think tanks and trade unions have increased the participation in the political processes and have supported or criticized the decision makers at the intellectual level. While this process began in the Özal era, it has more intensively continued during the 2000s.

In parallel with the improvement of Turkish economy and the democratization process, other civil society groups also gradually consolidated their place and alongside

¹²¹ Özcan, "The Changing Role Of Turkey's Military in Foreign Policy Making," 25.

¹²² In fact, the political culture in Turkey attaches to the Turkish generals a value that they do not deserve in a normal democratic system. Even if they were not very eager to interfere in the political issues, they were seriously inspired and encouraged by some political, business and press circles to take initiative in the political matters. This case was clearly observed in the process leading to both the May 27, 1960 military putsch and February 28, 1997 post-modern military intervention. Live TV broadcasts of press conferences of the heads of General Staff and the over-value attached to their statements by the Turkish press might be also regarded as the reflection of this political culture.

¹²³ Turgut Özal possessed only a limited civil society and academic support for his revolutionary policies both in domestic and in foreign politics. The well-educated conservative circles on the other hand have supported the Erdoğan government at academic and civil society levels and made contribution to the shaping of foreign policy. As a matter of fact, considering the shortage of cadre of Özal, Korkut Özal, Turgut Özal's brother and former state minister, uttered that Erdoğan has been more fortunate about a qualified staff with these words: “Erdoğan's team is stronger than Özal's.” Interview with Korkut Özal by Derya Sazak, 21.04.2003, *Milliyet*, 18.

¹²⁴ Larrabee and Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," 31.

national security interests, commercial, economic and other more technical interests rose to prominence in Turkish policy-making.¹²⁵ Since Turkey has adopted a semi-export-oriented economy and a special significance is referred to the private sector in this system, it began to acquire a growing say in addition to the traditional foreign policy actors such as the military and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹²⁶ Through the institutions such as business associations and a small number of independent “think tanks,” private sector began to engage in discussions, analyses and ultimately lobbying on questions of concern. “These institutions are beginning to play a role in articulating the policy interests of particular circles, and they are among the most interested in building international ties and tend towards a liberal, reformist outlook, and encourage a more activist but multilateral approach to Turkey’s foreign policy interests.”¹²⁷ For instance, NGOs such as the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (TUSIAD) and the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) strongly backed the government regarding its anti-status quo-oriented Cyprus policy by organizing brain-storming sessions, publishing regular reports and by organizing meetings.¹²⁸ Furthermore, the media, which had come under the direct control of industrialist and financial circles, also sided with the government and espoused an anti status quo stance on Cyprus.¹²⁹ Accompanied by the support of many NGOs and the media, the government enabled to succeed “in persuading both the President as well as the NSC to unequivocally support a solution on the island based on the Annan Plan” which was initially contested by the military and pro-status-quo powers in Turkey.

An unprecedented instance with regard to the impact of NGOs on Ankara’s foreign policy occurred on May 31, 2010. The Free Gaza Movement and the Turkish Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief (IHH) organized an aid flotilla for Gaza which has been suffering from the Israeli blockade. The flotilla was carrying humanitarian relief to the people of Gaza and also aiming to break the siege of Gaza by the sea. However, the Israeli raid in the Gaza Flotilla paved the way for a serious tension between Turkey and Israel. This incident has set one of the most striking and actual instances of how an NGO could exert influence on the foreign policy of a country. This six-ship freedom flotilla consisted of the Mavi Marmara, along with two other vessels from Turkey, two from Greece, and individual ships from Ireland and Algeria which were carrying solely humanitarian aid.¹³⁰ “The participants on the flotilla included artists, academics, doctors, lawyers, journalists, and lawmakers from dozens of countries, including parliamentarians

¹²⁵ Kirişçi, "Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," 30-32.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 32.

¹²⁷ Larrabee and Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," 33.

¹²⁸ Kirişçi, "Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," 45-46.

¹²⁹ Özcan, "The Changing Role Of Turkey’s Military in Foreign Policy Making," 11.

¹³⁰ After the raid, Israel broadcasted to the world the kitchen and pocket knives, metal and wooden poles and wrenches found in the vessels as weapons ‘threatening’ fully armed Israeli commandos and tried to justify its brutal raid on the flotilla. “Photos of the Mavi Marmara’s Equipment and Weapons, 1 June 2010,” Israeli Defense Forces Blog, accessed 07.12.2010, <http://idfspokesperson.com/2010/06/01/photos-of-the-mavi-marmaras-equipment-and-weapons-1-jun-2010/>. Notably, the flotilla carried only humanitarian aid, such as iron for reconstruction, children playgrounds, medical equipments and electric patient beds and civilian activists. Above all, the ships had been already carefully inspected at all points of departure of any weapons, and none were found. Moustafa Bayoumi, *Midnight on the Mavi Marmara*, (New York: OR Books, 2010), 2. Furthermore, with respect to the Israeli army’s claims that activists shot an Israeli commando in the stomach, *Hürriyet Daily News*, a daily Turkish newspaper, reported that “A recent U.N.-commissioned report into the raid said there was "no evidence to suggest that any of the passengers used firearms or that any firearms were taken on board the ship." It said that doctors on the vessel who examined three injured soldiers noted no firearm injuries, and that Israeli allegations of gunshot wounds to soldiers are "inconsistent and contradictory." “Israeli army chief defends flotilla raid at inquiry,” *Hurriyetaidailynews.com*, 25.10.2010, accessed 26.10.2011 <http://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/n.php?n=israel-army-chief-defends-flotilla-raid-at-inquiry-2010-10-25>

from Israel, Egypt, Sweden, and two members of the German Bundestag.”¹³¹ Additionally, there were passengers from 32 countries in the vessels. However, despite the fact that the flotilla posed no security threat to Israel, it was stormed by Israeli commandos about 72 miles away from Israel, in international waters.

Though there could be some other ways to prevent those ships, Israel opted for assaulting the civilian ships in international waters and killed 9 civilian activists (eight Turks and one American of Turkish descent) whereas wounded 60 of them. The Turkish government, all political parties, and people were shocked by the Israeli attack. Over the assault, mass demonstrations occurred in Ankara and Istanbul, and officials made repeated statements about the Israel’s actions.¹³² Foreign Minister of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu, noted that "psychologically, this attack is like 9/11 for Turkey." He demanded from Israel a "clear and formal apology," to accept an independent investigation, to release all passengers immediately, to return the bodies of all dead passengers, to lift what he called the "siege of Gaza and to pay compensation to the victims."¹³³ FM Davutoğlu also pointed out that citizens of the Republic of Turkey were for the first time killed by the soldiers of another country.¹³⁴ Furthermore, Turkish President Abdullah Gül declared after the Israeli attack that, “Turkish-Israeli relations can never be as before...”¹³⁵

In fact, relations between Turkey and Israel were strained over the Israeli offensive on Gaza in early 2009 and further deteriorated when Israel's deputy FM, Danny Ayalon, humiliated the Turkish ambassador by deliberately placing him in a low seat and told the TV cameramen in Hebrew that it was important that people saw the ambassador lower "while we're up high". Subsequently, upon Turkey’s harsh reaction, Ayalon sent an initial apology but Ankara threatened to recall ambassador Celikkol if no second, formal apology would be issued. Eventually, the deputy minister was obliged to declare a formal apology for his inappropriate behavior.¹³⁶ Against this background, however, the Mavi Marmara raid was, so to say, the straw that broke the camel's back in Turkish-Israeli relations and signaled the end of a period of almost 20 years close relationship.¹³⁷ Turkey recalled its ambassador from Tel Aviv, scrapped plans for joint military exercises, barred Israeli military aircraft from Turkish airspace after the incident,¹³⁸ and several agreements between the two countries in the field of

¹³¹ Bayoumi, *Midnight on the Mavi Marmara*, 2.

¹³² Carol Migdalovitz, “Israel’s Blockade of Gaza, the Mavi Marmara Incident, and Its Aftermath,” Congressional Research Service, (23.06.2010): 5, accessed 26.11.2011, http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R41275_20100623.pdf.

¹³³ “Turkish foreign minister: Israeli raid on Gaza aid flotilla ‘like 9/11’ for his country,” **The Washington Post**, 1.June.2010, accessed 26.11.2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/01/AR2010060101506.html>. “Gizli görüşmede 5 talep,” **Hürriyet.com**, 02.07.2010, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/15200286.asp>.

¹³⁴ “Davutoğlu: İsrail baskını 11 Eylül’ümüz,” **Haber7.com**, 06.06.2010, accessed 26.11.2011, <http://www.haber7.com/haber/20100606/Davutoglu-Israil-baskini-11-Eylulumuz.php>.

¹³⁵ “President Abdullah Gül: Israel making a big mistake,” **Today’szaman.com**, 04.06.2010, accessed 26.11.2011, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-212084-100-president-abdullah-gul-israel-making-a-big-mistake.html>.

¹³⁶ “Peres: Humiliation of Turkey envoy does not reflect Israel’s diplomacy,” **haaretz.com**, 14.01.2010, accessed 26.11.2011, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/peres-humiliation-of-turkey-envoy-does-not-reflect-israel-s-diplomacy-1.261381>

¹³⁷ “Gaza flotilla raid draws furious response from Turkey’s prime minister,” **guardian.co.uk**. 01.06.2010, accessed 26.11.2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/01/gaza-flotilla-raid-turkey-prime-minister-israel>

¹³⁸ “Turkey wants Israel Apology,” **Reuters.com**, 05.07.2010, accessed 26.11.2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE66415S20100705>

military training and cooperation were shelved.¹³⁹ All this process ignited by NGOs provides a unique example as to the influence of civil society on TFP.

To sum up, in parallel with the opening-up policy introduced during the Özal era, the Islamic-conservative circles whose education, economic power and interest in politics increased to a considerable extent have demanded more word on foreign policy making especially in the 2000s. With the help of the democratization process of Turkey, the conservative circles have had a significant impact on foreign policy together with other NGOs. While this impact has surfaced in the form of backing the foreign policy of the AK Party government at the intellectual level, it has turned occasionally into a critical stance. As it was seen in the Mavi Marmara event more clearly, the activities of the NGO's have sometimes directly influenced TFP. What interesting in terms of this study is the argument that the lack of civil society support that the Özal leadership sensed closely in finding intellectual backup for its foreign policy vision was felt to a lesser extent by the Erdoğan administration. This civil society infrastructure has both supported the Erdoğan leadership intellectually through think tanks and has played a significant role in consolidating and spreading the identity definition of the Erdoğan leadership in the society which takes Turkey's historical and cultural ties into account.

2.3.2.3. Developments in domestic politics

As Inan points it out, domestic politics and foreign policy are interactive, and it is hard to separate them from each other.¹⁴⁰ Like in other countries, the structures and actors of domestic politics have a significant impact on the formation of TFP as well.¹⁴¹ Particularly, considering the periods of Özal and Erdoğan, this fact might be observed more closely. After Özal and Erdoğan came to power, unlike traditional foreign political approaches, they opted for more proactive foreign policies. Alongside of security concerns, they have added the economic interests to the top priorities of foreign political agenda, and they accelerated the relations with the Muslim world as well as with the nations that Turkey has cultural and historical ties.¹⁴² Furthermore, they embraced new visions on foreign policy, adopted foreign political approaches in conformity with these visions, and caused Turkish foreign political literature gain new concepts (e.g. 'From Adriatic to the Chinese Wall', 'Central State', 'zero-problem policy with neighbors', 'multilateral foreign policy'). In a nutshell, developments that occurred in domestic politics, such as the change of power, affected also the TFP closely.

¹³⁹ "Turkey to freeze bilateral relations with Israel, excludes private sector," [todayszaman.com](http://www.todayszaman.com), 17.06.2010, accessed 26.11.2011, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-213335-turkey-to-freeze-bilateral-relations-with-israel-excludes-private-sector.html>

¹⁴⁰ Veysel K. Bilgiç, İç Politika-Dış Politika Etkileşimi (Domestic- Foreign Politics Interaction), in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 111. Kamran Inan, Dış Politika (Foreign Policy), (İstanbul: Ötüken, 1997), 27-28.

¹⁴¹ For an analysis of interaction between domestic politics and foreign politics, see. Frank Schimmelfennig, *Internationale Politik*, (Paderborn, Schöningh Verlag, 2008), 144-145.

¹⁴² Öztürk explains the recent changes in TFP and their roots in domestic politics with the following words, "... impulses for a reorientation of Turkey's regional foreign policy originated in the domestic context and were driven in particular by the emergence of new power centers beyond the reach of the traditionally dominant elite, the latter's integration into the political system, and the resultant changes to the foreign-policy decision-making process. These changes in institutional power relations, brought about by pluralisation and democratization of the dominant order, led the key actors to adopt a new set of preferences and strategies. Öztürk, *The Domestic Context of Turkey's Changing Foreign Policy*, 5-6.

On the other hand, whereas the Kurdish question is a matter of domestic politics, owing to the PKK terror, it has increasingly influenced Ankara's foreign policy concerns for approximately two decades, ranging from relations with the European Union and the U.S. to its nearest neighboring countries.¹⁴³ Turkey has failed to accommodate Kurdish ethnicity and culture, and this, in conjunction with other factors, has paved the way for the deaths of thousands of civilians and the displacement of masses of people, as well as severe human rights violations. This failure has also prepared the ground for the intervention of many countries and international political actors into the conflict between Turkey and the Kurdish groups.¹⁴⁴ While some governments and political actors have sought to exploit the Kurdish question for their own interests, some others have seen the issue from a human rights point of view. Consequently, the Kurdish question has become internationalized and begun to occupy a significant place in TFP. Turkey had to face this question in many issues ranging from its membership of the EU to getting the support of the international community to transport Caspian and Central Asian oil through Turkey.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, Özal and Erdoğan have been two distinctive leaders who took giant steps for the solution of this problem and sought to decontaminate TFP from this trouble.

For instance, the Syrian and Greek support for the PKK as a foreign policy tool against Turkey¹⁴⁶ and Turkey's efforts to preclude these and such backings dominated a significant proportion of Ankara's foreign policy until recently. Turkey and Syria came to the brink of war in October 1998. The PKK presence in northern Iraq has been one of the most current agendas in Turkey's relations with the U.S., Iraq, Iran and Syria. Furthermore, Turkey has sought to get the international community to recognize the PKK as a terrorist organization and has also tried to cut logistics and financial supports of the PKK in other countries, particularly in Europe. In this respect, Turkish policy makers have repeatedly warned their American and European allies that it was not sufficient only to add the PKK to the list of terrorist organizations. They articulated that in accordance with the requirements of being friend and ally, they expect the Europeans and Americans to struggle against the PKK more actively.¹⁴⁷ Briefly, though the Kurdish question is a matter of internal affair, because of the PKK terror, it has become a foreign political agenda of Ankara and played a decisive role in Turkey's relations with neighbors, with the EU and the U.S. The most striking example of this fact was viewed in 1998, when Turkey and Syria had almost gone to a war.

¹⁴³ Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question*, (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998) 157.

¹⁴⁴ Kemal Kirisci, *The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy*, in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, eds. D. Kerides and L. Martin, (Cambridge, M.I.T press, 2004), 273.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 273. See also Gönlübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 664-668.

¹⁴⁶ İdris Bal, *Terörizm, Liberal Devlet ve Uluslararası İşbirliği* (Terrorism, Liberal State and International Cooperation) in *21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası* (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 899.

¹⁴⁷ For Erdoğan's statements in "Charlie Rose Show" in PBS TV, see. "Erdoğan:Beni Kimse Aldatamaz," **Yenişafak**, 29.06.2010, accessed 30.06.2011, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/Politika/?t=30.06.2010&i=265483>, "Erdoğan terörün suçlusunu buldu," **Milliyet.com**, 23.06.2010, accessed 30.06.2011, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/erdogan-terorun-suclusunu-buldu/siyaset/sondakika/03.06.2010/1254511/default.htm?ref=haberici>

2.3.2.4. Rising role of public opinion on the re-construction of Turkish identity and its impact on TFP

It might be argued that there has been a positive correlation between the influence of the public opinion in Turkish politics and the democratization of the country. During the military regime between 1980 and 1983, the role of public opinion in foreign policy-making was minimal. Even after the return of the civilian government in 1983, owing to the impediments restricting the democratic participation in the governance created by the new constitution and other related laws, the impact of the public opinion on foreign policy issues was considerably limited and “the governments had an “easy-ride” in foreign policy as far as public pressure was concerned”.¹⁴⁸ However, in parallel with the democratization of Turkish politics and with the emergence of private TV channels as of 1989, public opinion began to be progressively more important factor in the policy-making processes.

On the other hand, in the wake of the Cold War, ethnic and religious identities began to come more into prominence. The globalization phenomenon has created a new environment where ethnicity and religion based commonalities and differences began to crystallize with the developments in transportation and communication technologies.¹⁴⁹ In such a world, owing to the Turkish media which diversified and strengthened with private TV channels, people have begun to get more information about the developments in the world. This rising flow of information has facilitated the recall of the forgotten cultural and historical bonds and contributed to the re-construction of identity perception in Turkey. Turkish public opinion and its strong pressure on the government in regard to the Karabakh, Palestinian and Bosnian conflicts provide good instances as to how the public opinion exerted influence on the shaping of TFP during the 1990s,¹⁵⁰ and on re-construction of Turkish identity.

One of the most significant features of the Turkish society is that 98 percent of it is Muslim and this religious identity plays an important role on public opinion’s approach to foreign political issues. This religious identity gives rise to galvanization of sympathy in the public opinion when Muslim Bosnians or Palestinians or Azerbaijanis are exposed to a pressure.¹⁵¹ Since the events in Bosnia and Nagorno-Karabakh threatened neither directly Turkey’s security nor its national interest directly, at the outset, these were no-win situations from the government’s point of view.¹⁵² However, in the Karabakh war, Turkish public regarded Azerbaijanis -who are ethnic Turks and Muslim- as victims of Armenian aggression, and as long as the fighting continued, Turkish public opinion sided heavily with Azerbaijan. The government remained under pressure and was forced to leave its non-interventionist attitude. Concerning the Bosnian conflict on the other hand, notwithstanding the fact that “the Bosnian Muslims are not ethnic Turks, it seemed that the Turkish public had developed a kinship and responsibility for the Muslims left behind by the retreat of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkans, after around five hundred years of domination.”¹⁵³ Moreover,

¹⁴⁸ Aydın, “Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis,” 98.

¹⁴⁹ E.Fuat Keyman, *Türkiye’de Kimlik Sorunları ve Demokratikleşme*, Doğu Batı Düşünce Dergisi, Sayı:41, (Mayıs, Haziran, Temmuz 2007): 217-230. John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Cultural Identity*, in *The Global Transformations*, ed. David Held, (London: London School of Economics and Political Science, 2nd edition, , 2003), 269-277.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası*, 20. For an analysis of Islam ‘s influence on Turkish politics see also: Özal, *Devlet Sırrı*, 148-150.

¹⁵² Aydın, “Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis,” 98.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

Turkish citizens of Bosnian origin which amounted around four-five millions further increased the pressure on the government.¹⁵⁴ Consequently, the events in Bosnia and Karabakh caused a deep affliction and reaction in Turkish society and encouraged the government to embrace a more active, albeit multilateral, approach to these issues.¹⁵⁵ In other words, Turkey's historical, religious and ethnic links forced it to take a more active attitude. At this point, President Turgut Özal advocated also that Ankara should have followed a more active and hawkish policy in the Bosnia and Azerbaijan crises.¹⁵⁶ In doing this, his main point of reference was Turkey's historical and cultural connections. Even though President Özal lost his influence on the government as of October 1991 and he did not possess the authority to give a direction to the foreign policy of the government directly, he contributed with his pro-Bosnia and Azerbaijan discourse and activities to the recall of the Turkish public its historical and cultural ties.¹⁵⁷

More importantly, thanks to the increasing communication facilities, public opinion has gained also a constructive role. More precisely, the Bosnian crisis which covered significantly in the Turkish media reminded the Turkish people their Ottoman identity. Azerbaijan crisis on the other hand contributed to the revival of Turkish ethnic identity between the two countries in addition to their historical and cultural bonds. Therefore, the mounting communication facilities have played an important role in the transformation of ideas about the Turkish identity in Turkey and the pressure arose through the media had a determining role on the decisions of the policy makers. As a matter of fact, such instances have left important traces on the identity and interest perceptions of both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships.

Additionally, there are also several further instances demonstrating Turkish public's increasing interest and influence on Turkey's identity and foreign policy in the 2000s as well. Events in Palestine galvanize Turkish public opinion too and this brings about some reflections on foreign political decisions of Ankara. Israeli attack on Gaza during the winter of 2008-2009 engendered mass protests and rallies across Turkey. The strong public opinion and its anger against Israel played a role in shaping Turkey's Israel policy in 2009 and the Palestinian problem became one of the top issues in foreign policy agenda.¹⁵⁸ Besides, the spectacular welcome-home ceremony following the event that Turkey's PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan walked out of a panel in World Economic Forum, in Davos, in protest the moderator's and Israeli President Peres' attitude also proves Turkish public interest in foreign political issues as well as its re-constructing role of "new" Turkish identity.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, this kind of examples might be extended. However, the bottom line here is the fact that in parallel with the democratization of Turkey as well as with the rise of the means of communication, the public opinion has become a more significant factor on foreign political issues and has played a more active role in shaping Turkish identity and foreign policy.

¹⁵⁴ Kemal Kirişçi, "Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri," in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy)*, ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 620.

¹⁵⁵ Larrabee and Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," 34.

¹⁵⁶ Sami Kohen, "Askeri önlemler şart," *Milliyet*, 08.04.1993. Sami Kohen, "Dişimizi göstermek gerekir," *Milliyet*, 05.04.1993.

¹⁵⁷ Özcan, "Türkiye'de Siyasal Rejim ve Dış Politika:1983-1993," 528-533.

¹⁵⁸ Ufuk Ulutaş, "Turkish foreign policy in 2009: a year of pro-activity," *Insight Turkey*, (Winter 2010):1 (accessed 1.2.2011), http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_7057/is_1_12/ai_n53201119/

¹⁵⁹ "Turkish Prime Minister Walked out of a Davos panel to Protest Moderator's and Peres' Attitude," *Turkish Weekly*, 30.01.2009, (accessed 1.2.2011), <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/63868/turkish-prime-minister-walked-out-of-a-davos-panel-to-protest-moderator-s-and-peres-attitude.html>

2.3.2.5. Economy as a determining factor of foreign policy

In fact, along with the opening up of Turkish economy to the global markets and the adoption of export oriented development model, economy became one of the significant factors that define foreign policy in the Turgut Özal era. As an economist, Özal strove to increase interdependence in Turkey's surrounding region with a view both to ensure peace and stability and to find new markets for the burgeoning Turkish exporters. To this end, Özal sought to make use of foreign policy instruments to the maximum extent. He tried to solve the long-standing problems with neighbors and to utilize Turkey's historical, religious and cultural assets pragmatically which had been ignored until then. In this context, as a PM and later President, Özal developed several projects and took important steps. His failed "spirit of Davos" initiative which aimed to resolve major issues of conflict in Greek-Turkish relations in the late 1980s might be regarded in this framework. Özal developed also a water pipeline project in 1986 which envisaged the construction of a pipeline to carry Turkish water to the Gulf countries as well as to Israel. The aim of this project was to promote interdependency as a step towards peace-building, yet it fell short of reaching a positive conclusion as well. Özal demonstrated a great effort to address the Arab-Israeli conflict after the end of the first Gulf crisis over the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and pioneered the establishment of the BSEC in 1992. He initiated the practice of taking ever larger delegations of business people to state visits and worked hard to lift visas to enter Turkey. Despite the resistance of the security and foreign policy establishment, he succeeded to lift visa requirements for Greek nationals and later Soviet nationals. All of these efforts of Özal directed to consolidate commercial ties, supply peace and stability and form an environment of interdependency in the region.¹⁶⁰

At this point, adopting a similar attitude to Özal's, Erdoğan leadership has also regarded Turkey's foreign trade and the activities of Turkish businessmen abroad as a significant parameter of TFP. Whilst the economy factor became of secondary importance in the 1990s on account of the rising security-oriented foreign policy understanding, it has gained again a higher place in TFP agenda. Having come to power in 2002, the Erdoğan leadership has sought to utilize Turkey's historical and cultural values to a larger extent with a view to increasing foreign trade. Considering that the rising interdependence in the region would be useful both as a functionalist tool for peace building and for opening new markets for Turkish export, Erdoğan leadership viewed economy as one of the most basic parameters of TFP.¹⁶¹ However, the distinction between Özal and Erdoğan periods in this context is the mounting number of actors in the economy field within the country and their increasing interest in foreign policy making due to their commercial ties with foreign companies. New actors such as the "Anatolian Tigers" which burgeoned mostly as a consequence of the reforms introduced by Turgut Özal in early 1980s completed their institutionalization until the AK Party era and have begun to demand more say in TFP making through associations like MÜSİAD (The Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association), TÜSİAD (the Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association), TOBB (the Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges), TİM (the Turkish Exporters Assembly) and TUSCON (Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists).¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Kemal Kirişçi, "The transformation of Turkish foreign policy: The rise of the trading state," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, No. 40, (2009): 44-45.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Ahmet Davutoğlu "İş Dünyası artık Dış Politikanın Öncülerinden"(Business world is one of pioneers of Foreign Policy), *Turkishtime*, (April-May, 2004).

¹⁶² Kirişçi, "The rise of the trading state," 46.

The Erdoğan government paid attention to the activities of Turkish business people abroad and tried to support them in many sectors, in the construction sector particularly. Protection of the interests of these business people has also become a significant factor in the definition of AK Party foreign policy. In the course of the events in Libya during the Arab Spring, for instance, while Libya leader Colonel Gaddafi was strongly criticized and was called for to step back, in view of the interests of Turkish business people who invested in this country billions of dollars especially in the construction sector, Turkish government remained silent for a certain period of time. Ankara called for the Gaddafi regime to withdraw only after it planned how to save Turkish firms and citizens from the civil war with a minimum loss.

On the other hand, Turkey's developing economic ties with neighbors pushed the Erdoğan leadership to handle political and economic relations virtually at different levels. In this manner, it was aimed to hinder repercussions of political disputes on commercial links and on the flow of tourists from neighboring countries towards Turkey. As a matter of fact, as it will be elaborated in the following chapters, Turkey's trade volume with neighbors increased nearly six fold and reached from USD 9.6 billion in 1995 to USD 67.7 billion in 2007.¹⁶³ This rising economic relationship has urged the Turkish government to be careful not to damage the commercial ties with the neighboring and other countries even though there have been tensions in the political plane. In this context, though the AK Party government harshly criticized the Israeli attacks to Palestine in 2008-2009,¹⁶⁴ it sought to sustain the trade relations at a certain level and hinder the repercussions of the political tensions between Ankara and Tel Aviv. Likewise, despite the disputes during the Russia-Georgia war of 2008 and the Syrian civil war as of 2011, Ankara spent considerable effort to avoid repercussions emanating from these crises on commercial ties. Syrian crisis caused disputes many times between Turkey and Iran as well, however such disagreements have remained again at political level and their reflection on economic links have remained limited again.

PM Erdoğan sustained to implement several political practices launched by Özal to a large extent. Just like Özal, Erdoğan took crowded groups of business people from the above noted NGOs to state visits and regarded the trade volume in his diplomatic contacts as a significant parameter of relations with the countries in question. Such travels have given business circles the opportunity to interact directly and exert influence on the decisions and policies of TFP makers. Furthermore, the practice of lifting visa requirements that AK Party governments boast about a lot¹⁶⁵ is actually also a practice which was initially introduced by the Özal government.

In a nutshell, Özal and Erdoğan are economists and both have regarded the economic development of the country as the catalyst for their aspirations to make Turkey a global player, just like the Ottomans. Thus, as in the Özal period, Turkey's increasing foreign trade volume and foreign economic ties occupied a considerable place in the TFP agenda throughout the Erdoğan era as well. Above all, this attracts attention as one of the most important common points of Özal and Erdoğan eras.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 47-48.

¹⁶⁴ "Stormy debate in Davos over Gaza," *Al Jazeera English*, 29.01.2009, accessed 20.10.2010, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2009/01/20091291976879610.html>

¹⁶⁵ Currently, Turkey lifted the visa requirements mutually with around 70 countries. For detailed information, see the official web site of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed 20.10.2010, www.mfa.gov.tr

2.3.2.6. Other Factors: Personality of the leaders

Foreign policy making approaches suggest that personalities and psychological qualities of the leaders and other foreign policy makers play a determining role in foreign policy making processes. Scholars attempting to introduce and apply decision making analyses in the field of foreign policy, such as Snyder, Frankel, Rosenau and Brecher,¹⁶⁶ highlight the role of individuals in foreign policy making. For instance, Snyder stresses the role of decision makers in foreign policy making saying that “state action is the action taken by those acting in the name of the state.”¹⁶⁷

Policy makers’ personalities matter because other foreign policy determinants are mediated by their images, attitudes, values, beliefs, doctrines and ideologies.¹⁶⁸ Stated differently, personality is the name for a combination of agent leadership traits and perceptions that mediate the ultimate role of power and material aspects of international relations as well as the role of global norms in shaping state behavior.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, their paradigms, perceptions or images of the real world are of great importance, and their personal characteristics would be crucial in understanding foreign policy choice, particularly, under certain conditions such as high stress, high uncertainty, and dominant position of the head of state in foreign policy decision making.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, should a political leader is interested in foreign affairs, his/her participation in making a foreign policy decision would be more potent and he/she would be more predisposed to take the initiative in foreign policy. Some other stimuli such as valuing good external relations or regarding foreign policy as a way to gain re-election may also play a profound role in the active involvement of a leader in foreign policy making.¹⁷¹ Moreover, the more sensitive a leader is to his environment, more likely he/she is to accommodate himself/herself to new information and to the necessity for change suggested by the environment. Hence, sensitivity to environment matters. Consequently, these two prepositions, interest in foreign affairs and sensitivity to the environment are determinant in the relationship between four other personal characteristics (i.e. beliefs, motives, decision style and interpersonal style) and foreign policy.¹⁷² Finally, it should be noted that though Brecher and Frankel accept the role of other agencies in the policy-making process, they give priority to the heads of the governments and the foreign ministers as the core decision-making group.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁶ Richard Snyder and Burton Spain, *Foreign Policy Decision Making: An Approach to the Study of International Politics*, (New York: Free Press, 1962). Joseph Frankel, *The Making of Foreign Policy: An Analysis of Decision Making*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1963). James N. Rosenau, *Pre-theories and Theories of Foreign Policy*, in *Approaches in Comparative and International Politics*, ed. R. B. Farrell, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966), 27-52. Michael Brecher, B. Steinberg and J. Steir, “A Framework for Research on Foreign Policy Behaviour,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (Michigan), vol. XIII, No. 1, (March 1969), 75-161.

¹⁶⁷ Snyder and Spain, *Foreign Policy Decision Making*, 95.

¹⁶⁸ Sita Ramachandran, *Decision-Making in Foreign Policy*, (Delhi: Northern Book Centre, 1996), 15.

¹⁶⁹ Vaughn P. Shannon, *Toward a Social Psychological Theory of International Politics*, (paper presented at ISA 2009 in New York City): 34-35, accessed 15.21.2011, http://wright.academia.edu/VaughnShannon/Papers/84970/Toward_a_Social_Psychological_Theory_of_International_Politics

¹⁷⁰ Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, *Foreign Policy: theories, actors, cases*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 20.

¹⁷¹ Ramachandran, *Decision-Making in Foreign Policy*, 15.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 16

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 11, 14

In developing countries such as Turkey, ideologies, ideals and perceptions of state elites who control the decision mechanisms have a great impact on domestic and foreign policies of the country. Rulers define the interests of the country and, by implication, the policies to be followed in conformity with their own perceptions.¹⁷⁴ In the Turkish case, two main figures have attracted attention in foreign policy making since 2002.¹⁷⁵ The first one is Professor Ahmet Davutoğlu who has been regarded as the intellectual architect of TFP under the Erdoğan leadership, first as the chief advisor to the Prime Minister (2002-2009) and as the Foreign Minister since May 2009.¹⁷⁶ In his influential book, 'the Strategic Depth' (Stratejik Derinlik), he developed a vision for TFP in 2001. When the Erdoğan leadership came to the power in 2002, he enjoyed an unprecedented opportunity to influence TFP in accordance with his own vision. Subsequently, he has become one of the exceptional figures in the field of international relations who could practice his theoretical approach to a considerable extent. Therefore he has been the centre of attraction for the domestic as well as foreign observers who try to understand the new dynamics of TFP.¹⁷⁷ A prominent Turkish scholar, Bülent Aras, introduces Davutoğlu as follows:

“Davutoğlu ... has been influential in a number of major foreign policy developments. There is a consensus that it was Davutoğlu who largely changed the rhetoric and practice of Turkish foreign policy, bringing to it a dynamic and multi-dimensional orientation. He set the vision and the style of the new foreign policy line and provided a framework for pursuing it. At first, Davutoğlu's new vision and style were subject to much discussion and criticism; many wondered whether it would be suitable for Turkish foreign policy. After seven years, the discussion has mainly shifted to whether his policy would be sustainable without the AK Party and himself in the advisor's chair.”¹⁷⁸

Davutoğlu's place in recent TFP decision making is so unique that he was compared by many observers to Henry Kissinger.¹⁷⁹ In essence, he had been employed until 2009 only as an advisor to decision makers and had not been a decision maker himself. However, his influence on foreign political issues had been far more than an ordinary advisor's. He had performed executive-like functions on Turkey's foreign policy and possessed influence over operational functions. The main reason for the impact of Davutoğlu on the formulation of foreign policy is the willingness of Turkish decision makers such as former Foreign Minister and current President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Erdoğan to appropriate his vision in the implementation of foreign policy.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁴ Ali Yaşar Sarıbay, “Dış Politika Kararlarını Belirlemede Psikolojik Etkenler ve Türkiye” (Psychological Factors in Foreign Policy Decision Making and Turkey), in Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 535-542.

¹⁷⁵ Wolfgang Günter Lerch, “Im Porträt: Ahmet Davutoglu Politik der strategischen Tiefe,” **Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung**, 07.09.2011, accessed 10.10.2012, <http://www.faz.net/artikel/C31325/im-portraet-ahmet-davutoglu-politik-der-strategischen-tiefe-30498168.html>

¹⁷⁶ Davutoğlu was listed by the Foreign Policy magazine, one of the world's most influential magazines on international affairs, on its second annual top 100 global thinkers ranking. “The FP Top 100 Global Thinkers,” **Foreignpolicy.com**, December 2010, accessed 10.10.2012 http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/11/29/the_fp_top_100_global_thinkers?page=0.6

¹⁷⁷ Mesut Özcan and Ali Resul Usul, "Understanding the 'New' Turkish Foreign Policy: Changes within Continuity. Is Turkey Departing From the West?," *Uluslar arası Hukuk ve Politika*, Cilt 6, Sayı 21, (2010): 117

¹⁷⁸ Bülent Aras, “Davutoglu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy,” Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA), Brief No: 32, (May 2009): 3

¹⁷⁹ Joshua E. Keating, The List: The World's Kissengers, **Foreign Policy.com**, March/April 2010, accessed 10.10.2012, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/02/22/the_list_the_worlds_kissengers?page=0.3

¹⁸⁰ Aras, Davutoğlu Era, 3

The main figure and decision maker of TFP has been Prime Minister (PM) Recep Tayyip Erdoğan who has been serving as PM since 2003 and enjoys a great popularity among the Turkish electorate. He is charismatic, authoritarian, self confident, emotional, interested in foreign political issues and, as noted above, appraises the vision of Davutoğlu. Furthermore, he attaches a great significance to personal contact with foreign leaders and he is aware of the value of having good and sincere personal relations in the diplomacy field.¹⁸¹ Besides, he does not hesitate to take the initiative under certain conditions. The most striking example of this fact was viewed in Davos, on January 29, 2009. PM Erdoğan stormed out of a heated debate on the Gaza war with Israel's President Shimon Peres at the Davos forum. During the forum, Peres raised his voice and jabbed his finger while he was defending Israel's attacks. As Erdoğan attempted to respond to the strong words of Peres, he was cut off by the moderator. When he was later given a minute to reply, Erdoğan criticized Peres heavily and said "When it comes to killing, you know well how to kill." Subsequently, he left the forum saying that Davos was over for him.¹⁸² Erdoğan complained that he had been allowed to speak for 12 minutes compared with 25 for Peres.¹⁸³ Apparently, Erdoğan's Davos reaction was spontaneous and unplanned. Along with his senses, values and paradigm, his personal emotional character played a significant role in his behavior.¹⁸⁴

Erdoğan's reaction might be compared to another similar case in the Turkish political history in order to illustrate the uniqueness of his political behavior.¹⁸⁵ During the visit of former Turkish PM Necmettin Erbakan to Libya in 1996, Libyan leader Colonel Gaddafi stunned Erbakan undiplomatically by criticizing Turkey's treatment of Kurds and calling for a Kurdish homeland. The Turkish PM, in return, responded diplomatically and underlined the friendship between Turkey and Libya by saying that Libya and Turkey were sister countries.¹⁸⁶ He also added that there was no racism or gender discrimination in Turkey. However, although Gaddafi's remarks were bothersome even for an ordinary Turkish citizen, PM Erbakan's reaction to Gaddafi was rather moderate and did not meet the expectations of the Turkish public opinion. This event caused indignation in Turkey.¹⁸⁷ Thus, whereas PM Erbakan's reaction against Gaddafi's remarks had a limited impact on TFP, it exerted a great influence on domestic politics of Turkey. In other words, if Erbakan had shown a stronger response, as PM Erdoğan did against Israeli President Peres, and stormed off the tent of Gaddafi, the effect of this incident would have been much more different on TFP. On the other hand, Erdoğan's reaction in a similar situation became far sharper than Erbakan's and

¹⁸¹"Başbakan Erdoğan Irak'a Gidiyor," **Haber7.com**, 27.12.2010, accessed 10.10.2012, <http://www.haber7.com/haber/20101227/Basbakan-Erdogan-Iraka-gidiyor.php>

¹⁸²"Leader of Turkey and Israel Clash at Davos Panel," **New York Times**, 29.01.2009, accessed 30.01.2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/30/world/europe/30clash.html>

¹⁸³"Turkish PM storms off in Gaza row," **BBC**, 29.01.2009, accessed 30.01.2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/davos/7859417.stm>

¹⁸⁴ As a matter of fact, Nabi Avcı, who had been communication consultant of PM Erdoğan for 14 years, expressed in an interview that Erdoğan was sometimes speaking spontaneously in diplomatic meetings which was disquieting for the consultants. Avcı also added that he was glad that Erdoğan deviated from the text of speech in the so called "one minute" event. "Avcı: 'One minute'ta iyi ki metinden çıktı," **ntvmsnbc.com**, 09.05.2011, accessed 10.01.2012, <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25211275/>

¹⁸⁵ Political scientist and columnist Koray Çalışkan expressed in a TV program that Erdoğan's "one minute" reaction was emotional rather than diplomatic and he underlined that those who serve as Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs do not have the luxury of being emotional. Eksen Programı, **Habertürk TV**, 28.03.2013

¹⁸⁶ "Daily: Erbakan, Gaddafi tension sparked by fake CIA report," **Todayzaman.com**, 10.06.2009, accessed 30.07.2009, http://www.todayzaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=177622

¹⁸⁷ Hamit Karalı, "Medya 28 Şubat'ın Neresinde?" **Zaman.com**, 08.02.2001, accessed 30.01.2009, <http://arsiv.zaman.com.tr/2001/02/08/odosya/28subat.htm>

this gave rise to the deterioration of Turkish-Israeli relations. Simultaneously, the Davos event increased Erdoğan's popularity seriously both in the domestic domain and in the international arena, particularly in the Muslim world and in the Middle East.¹⁸⁸

Turgut Özal assumed also a substantial role in foreign policy making of Turkey until his death in 1993. Abramowitz points out that Turgut Özal's charismatic personality and leadership was the primary factor influencing the changes in TFP during 1980s and early 1990s.¹⁸⁹ Özal was interested in foreign political issues, sensitive to his environment, to new information and to the need for change. Additionally, he was willing to take the initiative on his own (e.g. despite the intensive domestic opposition, he realized the Davos Summit on his own initiative with the Greek Prime Minister Papandreou in 1988)¹⁹⁰ and he was decisive to reduce the weight of bureaucracy and the military in the state management.¹⁹¹ Thus, in his tenure, he was commonly criticized for attempting directly in the field of foreign policy and disregarding the bureaucracy of ministry of foreign affairs.¹⁹² This fact was clearly evident during the Persian Gulf crisis. When the Crisis initially erupted in 1990, Turkey's reaction remained within the traditional approach, i.e. it was loyal to the principles of non-interference and maintaining the status-quo. However, Özal saw the crisis as an opportunity for Turkey to show Turkey's value to the West, particularly to the United States. Özal believed that the US-led anti-Iraq grouping was right and Turkey had to give a boost to the Alliance. He wanted to be on the winning side and to benefit from the post-war situation.¹⁹³ Özal was also eager to take foreign policy decision-making away from the military establishment. Contrary to Özal's determined stance, the government, the parliament and the military seemed timid in taking the initiative in accordance with President Özal's view. Consequently, with the intention of giving full support to the U.S.-led Alliance, Özal bypassed the government and the parliament by engaging in personal, secret diplomacy mostly in the form of direct telephone conversations with the White House.¹⁹⁴ Then-National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft confirmed the impact of the personal relationship between Bush and Özal on Turkish-U.S. relations. He described Bush and Özal's dialogue as having produced an "intimate, personal" bond "where the relationship really became...very close and in a sense less military and more political than it had ever been before," while "demonstrating the indisputable strategic importance of Turkey to the United States."¹⁹⁵

Under Özal's influence, Turkey rushed to cut the oil pipelines between Turkey and Iraq and the government's request was approved by the parliament to send troops to the Gulf. Özal's active involvement in foreign policy making process was evaluated as a sign of deviation from Kemalism. Many prominent politicians as well as bureaucrats were dissatisfied with Özal's activism in foreign policy and this situation engendered the resignations both from the government and the bureaucracy. It was the Foreign Minister Ali Bozer who resigned first and later Defense Minister Sefa Giray followed Bozer in October 1990. The Turkish Army was also dissatisfied with Özal's foreign policy. Eventually, Chief

¹⁸⁸ Hüsni Mahalli, "Obama niye geldi?" (Why did Obama come?), *Aksam.com*, 26.01.2010, accessed 28.01.2010, http://www.aksam.com.tr/2010/01/26/yazar/12295/husnu_mahalli/obama_niye_geldi_.html

¹⁸⁹ Abramowitz, Morton, "Dateline Ankara: Turkey after Özal," *Foreign Policy*, 91, (Summer 1993): 164-181.

¹⁹⁰ Sarıbay, "Dış Politika Kararlarını Belirlemede Psikolojik Etkenler," 541-542.

¹⁹¹ Özcan, "Türkiye'de Siyasal Rejim ve Dış Politika: 1983-1993," 527.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 529-533.

¹⁹³ Laçiner, "Özalism (Neo-Ottomanism)," 189.

¹⁹⁴ Yasemin Çelik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 87.

¹⁹⁵ Bülent Aliriza and Bülent Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning of the Third Decade of the Post-Cold War Era," A Joint Report by Center for Strategic Research (SAM) and Center for Strategic&International Studies (CSIS), (November 2012): 5.

of the Staff Necip Torumtay criticized Özal's foreign policy as 'adventurist' and implied that the army was against to such a foreign policy. When Torumtay realized that he could not persuade the civilians, he felt obliged to resign in December 1990.¹⁹⁶ It is worthy of noting that such resignations from the military camp occurred rarely in Turkish history.

In a nutshell, these examples illustrate how the personality of a decision maker, his character, his values, his point of view, his beliefs as well as his psychological features can shape the foreign policy of a country and change its direction substantially. By the same token, they also prove that the terms of Wendt's systemic constructivist thinking and its terms such as international structure and international norms fall short of accounting for the change in TFP, and for this reason, further factors like domestic dynamics as well as leaders' personalities must be taken into consideration as well. More precisely, personal and psychological traits of both Özal and Erdoğan as leaders have placed these leaders to a distinctive position in Turkish political history. Erdoğan's emotional, charismatic and strong leadership as well as Özal's charismatic and strong leadership might be regarded in this respect. Moreover, the importance that they attach to personal dialog and friendship in diplomacy, their common personal characteristics not afraid to take risk and initiative are further common personal qualities of Özal and Erdoğan which have had significant implications for TFP.

2.4. External Factors

As a developing country, in Turkey's foreign policy, external factors have always played an important role. In this case, Turkey's strategically important geopolitical location, less developed economy, its need for foreign capital and investment, dependent structure of its defense industry have loomed large.¹⁹⁷ With respect to the external factors, from the point of a constructivist approach, two basic structures are to be mentioned: the material structure and the social structure both of which are significant for Turkey's foreign policy. In the initial years, Turkish policy makers viewed the international material structure (i.e. balance of power and power of neighboring countries such as the Great Britain and France) not convenient to pursue an expansionist or adventurist foreign policy and decided to pursue a realist, passive foreign policy. Otherwise, Turkey's political existence could have been jeopardized. Additionally, Turkey's domestic structure was also inducing Turkey's passive stance in foreign political issues. Mustafa Kemal had established a new nation state and the substantial reforms that Turkey underwent required a peaceful international environment. In the first decades of the Republic, these domestic as well as international structures were the prominent factors for Turkish policy makers to adopt the motto of "peace at home, peace in the world."

Furthermore, in terms of international social structure, Turkey was trying to be a member of new international community and to get its independence and sovereignty recognized by other actors. Thus, it preferred to act respectfully to international norms such as sovereignty and non-interference to the domestic issues of other countries. It abstained from revisionist movements and aimed to be a respected member of international society. Stated differently, the external social and material structure as well as the domestic structure of Turkey played a determining role on the foreign policy of the young Turkish republic.

In the course of the Cold War, Turkey defined its security identity collectively with NATO, and this definition was decisive for the direction of TFP. In the wake of the Second

¹⁹⁶ Laçiner, "Özalism (Neo-Ottomanism)," 190.

¹⁹⁷ Inat, *Türkische Nahostpolitik*, 38-41.

World War, the Soviet threat was the crucial element directing Turkey's foreign policy. The Soviet Union emerged as a super power after the WWII, and its material power as well as its attitude towards Turkey was threatening. The attitude of the Soviets, along with other factors such as Turkey's economic needs and its westernist state ideology, resulted in Turkey's strict pro-western foreign policy. During the Cold War, Turkey was a "*wing country*" under *NATO's* strategic framework and it conducted its foreign policy in a westward-looking manner,¹⁹⁸ except for a few occasions, such as the Cyprus crisis and the following Cyprus Peace Operation.

Accompanied by the end of Cold War, radical changes took place in the international structure and Turkey was obliged to reassess its regional role as well as its relations with the power centers of the world. In the post-Cold War period, the existing material power began to be perceived at the ideational level differently. In this respect, when the Soviet threat disappeared, a more suitable environment has emerged for the rulers of Turkey for the implementation of their interests. However, a unipolar world system was dominant in the wake of the Cold War. Therefore, Özal leadership realized that it was beyond the power of a country on the scale of a regional power like Turkey to materialize its ambitious foreign policy goals only with its own power. Stated differently, the post-Cold war system and its ideational perception by the Özal leadership was a serious reality which could not be ignored while defining foreign policy interests.

Moreover, once the communism threat suddenly lost its meaning for the West, the collective identifications of the Cold War weakened, and statesmen as well as the intellectual circles in Turkey entered into a faltering period considering Turkey's new position in the new world. In this period, Özal leadership assumed a set of initiatives in order to demonstrate Turkey's value for the west. Additionally, emergence of the new countries in the Caucasus region and in the Central Asia which share common linguistic, cultural and historical ties with Turkey opened up new horizons for TFP.¹⁹⁹ Özal's concept of 'From Adriatic to the Chinese Wall' reveals the foreign political approach of Turkey during the post-Cold War period. However, the foreign policy goals of the Özal leadership towards the Central Asia, Balkans and the Middle East were only consolidating the need for the support of the sole super power of the world.

Coming to 2000s, despite the fact that the United States sustained its super power position also in the Erdoğan era, the unipolar structure of the world has not been as clear as in the Özal era. Big actors such as the European Union, Russia and China have increased their power and a judgment began to be prevailing in the world that a transition from a unipolar world towards a multipolar one has been occurring. Additionally, the norm legitimizing the military intervention into another country like in 1990 has begun to be eroded. As a matter of fact, while Washington did not have difficulty in constituting a coalition against Iraq in 1990 and gained the support of the majority of world public opinion as well as the backup of the global actors for the military operation, it was not able to form a consensus in the UN Security Council in 2003 due to the French, German, Chinese and Russian opposition.

¹⁹⁸ Kirişçi, "Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler," 622.

¹⁹⁹ Oral Sander, "Yeni Bölgesel Güç Olarak Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Hedefleri," in Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), ed. Faruk Sönmezoglu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 607-608.

On the other hand, the European Union and the United States have nearly always had a certain influence on TFP both in Özal and Erdoğan eras.²⁰⁰ While the US influence has increased on Turkey whenever it distanced itself from democracy, it has been replaced by the EU when the EU membership process of Turkey has gained seriousness. While the US had been more influential on TFP as of early 1980s until early 2000s, its role began to erode as a result of the declaration of the EU membership candidacy status of Turkey in 1999. As a result of Turkey's candidacy, the EU oriented norms began to play a more determinant role on Turkish foreign policy makers especially until 2007.²⁰¹ Moreover, the Erdoğan leadership underwent its transnational socialization process under the influence of the EU norms and this case has consolidated the influence of the EU and its norms on the Turkish policy makers particularly in the initial years of the AK Party governments. The most important example on this issue is the March 1 motion event of 2003.²⁰²

This case was an outcome of a set of factors. Firstly, the EU membership perspective and the following EU reforms contributed greatly to the democratization of Turkey and thereby while the weight of the military in both domestic and foreign political issues has been curtailed, political and societal actors have been empowered. Consequently, these political and societal actors (e.g. political parties, public opinion, NGOs and civil society) have greatly extended the space for political action in domestic as well as in foreign politics.²⁰³ Secondly,

²⁰⁰ U.S. has interfered in internal political processes of Turkey. In order to shape Turkey's foreign political course in accordance with its interests, the U.S. has always had a close contact with the Turkish elites (e.g. senior executives of the military, media, business associations and politics) and manipulated the internal political events. If the U.S. was not able to direct Turkish foreign policy by making use of these elite groups, intelligential and illegal methods would come into consideration. Inat, *Türkische Nahostpolitik*, 39-40. This fact was viewed most strikingly in the arguably US-backed September 12, 1980 military coup. When the military overthrew the Turkish government on Sept. 12, 1980, Paul Henze, the US National Security Council adviser at the time, passed a note to President Jimmy Carter that read, "Our boys did it." Mehmet Ali Birand, 12 Eylül, Saat: 04.00, (Istanbul: Karacan Yayınları, 1986), 1. See also, Ercan Yavuz, "How the groundwork for the Sept.12 military coup was laid down," *Today's Zaman*, 22.01.2009, accessed 25.03.2011, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=164763. Though Henze denied this claim during a June 2003 interview, two days later Mehmet.Ali Birand, a prominent Turkish journalist, presented an interview with Henze recorded in 1997 in which he basically confirmed Birand's story. Ibrahim Balta, "Birand'dan Paul Henzeye sesli görüntülü yalanlama," *Zaman* 14.06.2003, accessed 25.03.2011, <http://arsiv.zaman.com.tr/2003/06/14/haberler/h2.htm>

²⁰¹ Meltem Müftüler-Baç and Yaprak Gürsoy, "Is there a Europeanization of Turkish Foreign Policy? An Addendum to the literature on EU candidates," RECON Online Working paper, 2009/15, (2009): 6-9

²⁰² As it was stated above, prior to the Iraq War in 2003, the USA had demanded from Turkey to allow the US ground troops to transit through Turkey. Turkish government's willingness notwithstanding, the draft resolution submitted by the government to the Turkish Parliament on 1 March 2003 was, albeit mounting pressure from Washington, narrowly disapproved. "Turkey upsets US military plans," *BBC*, 01.03.2003, accessed 25.03.2011, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2810133.stm>. In fact, the US officials had put a strong pressure on Ankara to convince it to permit the deployment of US troops on its territory and had capitalized on all contacts in Turkey ranging from media and business associations to Turkish commanders to heighten the degree of the repression. Nevertheless, they failed to convince the majority of Turkish politicians as well as the society. Nursel Tozkoparan, "Sadıkoğlu: Yeni Şafak'ın ABD'ye direnişini anlattı," *Haber7.com*, 06.01.2011, accessed 25.03.2011, <http://www.haber7.com/haber/20110106/Sadikoglu-Yeni-Safakin-ABDye-direnisini-anlatti.php>. During an interview, then Assistant Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz had expressed the disappointment and anger of Washington explicitly. He particularly criticized the Turkish army, which had traditionally received the utmost support by Washington due to the circumstances of the Cold War, by saying that "I think for whatever reason, they did not play the strong leadership role that we would have expected," "Turkey Rejects Criticism by U.S. Official Over Iraq," *New York Times.com*, 08.03.2003, accessed 25.03.2011, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E0CEFD91F3CF93BA35756C0A9659C8B63>. Birand, "How, when and where the military made mistakes."

²⁰³ Paula Sandrin, "Overestimating the Impact of Europe?" CESRAN, Political Quarterly, Vol.1, No.3, (September-October-November 2010), 45.

in contrast to 1990s, when Ankara followed a conflict oriented foreign policy, the use of military instruments was prevailing and arguably, the main axis of TFP was the Turkey-US-Israel triangle. However, as of 1999, the EU and its norms have become the principal reference point of Ankara's foreign policy²⁰⁴ and the use of diplomatic and economic instruments in TFP making has increased.

In short, there have always been external factors influencing TFP to certain degrees. However, the meaning attached to the external factors by policy makers might be different. For instance, while some viewed the post-Cold War world structure posing security risks to Turkey, Özal leadership regarded it as a great opportunity to realize its aspirations. In this respect, it followed an active policy and sought to use Turkey's alternatives pragmatically. However, the perception of a unipolar world right after the dissolution of the Cold War blocks forced it to seek the American backup more ambitiously. However, in the 2000s, the perceptions about a unipolar world began to be eroded. Furthermore, the Erdoğan leadership shared also this perception about the rising multi-polar structure of the world. This perception resulted in the new route of Turkish foreign policy which brought about the fluctuating Turkish-American relations. Consequently, although both leaderships share the same vision to make Turkey a global player and share similar identity definitions, they have had relatively different approaches with respect to the meaning they have attached to Turkey-U.S. relations. This case emanates basically from the political structure of the world as well as the ideas that the policy makers have had about it.

2.5. Concluding Remarks

Wendt's theory suggests that every state has some characteristics associated with its corporate identity such as geography and population which exist prior to the interaction with other states. At the ideational level, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have added in accordance with their identity definitions new meanings to two important determinants of TFP, the geography and history which are simultaneously significant elements of Turkey's corporate identity. In this context, while the history and geography had largely been interpreted negatively and regarded as burden and risk factor on Turkey, the Özal and Erdoğan leaderships re-interpreted them positively and considered them as the basic reasons of their active and multi-dimensional foreign policy understandings.

On the other hand, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships re-interpreted and even totally changed some elements of the traditional foreign policy ideology of Turkey. In this respect for instance both leaderships' foreign policy paradigm has not regarded non-interventionism as an option for Turkey on the ground that a big country like Turkey with its deep historical and cultural ties has carried responsibilities. Moreover, its importance in the eyes of the west would be in parallel with its efficiency in the east and in its region. Thus, it should not be expected it to remain indifferent in the face of the events in its neighborhood and in the surrounding regions. They have also re-interpreted further elements of Kemalism like westernization and secularism in line with their identity perceptions. Enjoying a serious self-confidence rooted in the brilliant days of the Turkish history, both leaderships have sought to strengthen Turkey's relations with the east while sustaining the existing strong relationship with the west. In other words, with their self confident attitude, instead of turning their back to the east and westernizing the country at the expense of the relations with the eastern

²⁰⁴ Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era," *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 10, No.1 (2009): 10

countries, they have aimed to develop a multi-dimensional foreign policy model. Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have also not interpreted secularism as strictly as the Kemalists did. They have recognized Turkey's Muslim identity in foreign policy making and have not hesitated to actively participate into organizations like the OIC actively.

In essence, identities of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have been initially constructed by the domestic political factors and they have simultaneously contributed to the re-construction of the internal norms. In the struggle against the undemocratic practices imposed on the Muslim-conservative Turkish people, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have regarded democracy and human rights as liberator. Moreover, the military and bureaucratic tutelary regimes have played significant roles in the construction process of democratic identities of both leaderships. On the other hand, both leaderships have made contributions to the development and consolidation of the norms refusing the tutelary regimes and advocating the supremacy of people's will. Even though Özal's success against the military tutelage lost its impact due to the chaotic political structure of 1990s and left space for the military to intervene into politics, Erdoğan leadership has achieved a considerable success in the 2000s in his struggle against the tutelary regime with the backing of the European Union. Thereby, he has made a serious contribution to the construction of norms to prevent the generals from interfering into political processes. This case has had important impact on both the foreign policy making processes and on the efficacy of the actors in these processes.

In parallel with the policy of integration into the world introduced during the Özal era, the highly educated Islamic-conservative circles have begun in the new millennium to demand more saying in the political processes. With the effect of the democratization in the country, they have had a considerable impact on TFP along with other NGOs. Whilst this impact has been sometimes in the form of providing intellectual backup for the foreign policy of the government, it has turned other times into criticizing it. This impact has become now and then so direct, as it was seen in the Mavi Marmara event of 2010. Furthermore, whereas the Özal leadership closely sensed the lack of civil society support particularly in finding intellectual backup for his foreign policy vision, the Erdoğan administration was luckier in this respect. Furthermore, the effect of the public opinion on TFP which had been relatively limited in the first half of the Özal era increased in parallel with the democratization, development as well as dissemination of mass media. Thereby, the public opinion has become a more significant factor on foreign political issues and has played a more active role in shaping Turkish identity and foreign policy.

Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have also regarded the economic development of the country as a catalyst for their aspirations to make Turkey a global player, like in the Ottoman era. Thus, just like in the Özal period, Turkey's increasing foreign trade volume and foreign economic ties occupied a considerable place in the TFP agenda throughout the Erdoğan era as well. Above all, this attracts attention as one of the most important commonalities in the Özal and Erdoğan eras.

At this point, one has to note a further factor influencing TFP to a considerable extent which is disregarded by the constructivists considering especially Özal and Erdoğan periods. As it was elaborated above, personal and psychological traits of both Özal and Erdoğan as leaders have placed them to distinctive positions in Turkish political history. Erdoğan's emotional, charismatic and strong leadership as well as Özal's charismatic and strong leadership might be regarded in this respect. Moreover, the importance that they attach to personal dialog and friendship in diplomacy, their common personal characteristics not afraid

to take risk and initiative are further common personality traits of Özal and Erdoğan which have had significant implications for the TFP.

All in all, analyzing the determining factors of TFP, one might come to the conclusion that the above mentioned determinants have affected TFP in various dimensions and measures. Yet the bottom line here is that the influence of these factors is also closely related to the lenses of the foreign policy makers. At this point, as the main point of reference of the lenses, identity is of crucial importance to interpret the determinants of FP and their reflection to the foreign policy field. For example, different political leaders in Turkey have interpreted Turkey's geopolitical location differently and this has had reflections on their policy principles and practices.

CHAPTER 3: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN POLICY APPROACHES OF ÖZAL AND ERDOĞAN LEADERSHIPS

This chapter consists of two parts. In the first part, the foreign policy approach of the Özal era will be discussed in general terms. Subsequently, AK Party foreign policy understanding will be theoretically analyzed with the analysis framework built in the first part. As noted before, it is hypothesized that even though these two periods differ from the traditional Turkish foreign policy (TFP) line, they present considerable analogies and in this respect, AK Party foreign policy represents in a sense an extension of the Özal's foreign policy approach. It is further hypothesized that identity-based explanations of foreign policy offer a good analysis framework to comprehend and explain foreign policy periods in question. Thus, after summarizing the foreign policy paradigms of both terms, in the next chapter, I will focus on how the theory has been reflected to the policy field. In other words, in order to verify my theses empirically, I will analyze Turkish-U.S. relations during both Özal and Erdoğan eras. I will then seek to explain the differences by means of a constructivist approach.

3.1. Turkish Foreign Policy during the Özal Era: A Paradigm-shift?

3.1.1. Introduction

Turgut Özal, the architect of the transition to a liberal economic order in the early 1980s, was, first as a Prime Minister and subsequently as a President the most influential and decisive person of Turkish politics throughout 1980s and early 1990s. As of mid-1980s, until his death in 1993, Turkey's agenda, particularly in the field of economy and politics, was set primarily by Özal, and his policy choices and suggestions were of central importance in the country. During the Özal era, Turkey witnessed transformation in many spheres.¹ There is no doubt that Turgut Özal left his mark on Turkish politics in many respects, and among others, on foreign policy as well. His political identity was rather different than his predecessors which led to a distinctive foreign policy line.

It might be argued that foundations of today's economically and politically dynamic Turkey were laid to a large extent in the Özal era. For example, Turkey's export oriented economic model was first advocated and implemented in his period. He took significant steps in terms of democratization and freedoms, and became virtually the first statesman who reevaluated Turkey's historical and cultural legacy in accordance with Turkey's interests and sought considerably to make use of them. In fact, in view of foreign policy principles and applications of Özal, several authors conclude that the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, hereinafter, the AK Party) foreign policy line represents a continuity with Turkey's gradually developing activism in the era of former PM and President Turgut Özal.²

¹ İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal (eds), *Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet* (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality), (İstanbul, Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 7

² Bülent Aras, "Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA)*, Brief No: 32, (May 2009): 6. Gülistan Gürbey, "Wandel in der Türkischen Aussenpolitik unter der AKP-Regierung?", *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen*, (02/2010). My interview with Muhittin Ataman, March

Before starting to discuss this argument, it would be useful to analyze the roots of Özal's identity, the socialization processes that he went through and subsequently his foreign policy approach. This is important, because in developing countries such as Turkey, ideologies, ideals and perceptions of state elites who control the decision mechanisms have a serious impact on domestic and foreign policies of countries. Rulers define the interests of the country and, by implication, the policies to be followed in conformity with their respective perceptions. In this context, it is highly relevant to know Özal's personality and weltanschauung so as to grasp the foreign policy of his era.³

3.1.2. Özal's Personality: Muslim-conservative, devout Muslim, nationalist, democrat, liberal and westernist

Along with others, Özal's identity played a crucial role in his policy choices. In his identity, two key features were striking which were constructed through long socialization processes. First, Özal became a religious conservative person as a result of his societal socialization process. He was coming from an Anatolian, devout family and he acquired his basic religious sensitiveness in his family. His father was educated in an Ottoman madrasah for sixteen years, mastered both Arabic and Farsi languages and was carrying the qualities of a Muslim cleric. His mother, on the other hand, was a teacher with a good religious knowledge and ambitious to raise her children as faithful and believing Muslims.⁴ Özal carried always religious identity in his life and did not feel the need to hide it.⁵ For example, it was known that he was connected with the Nakshibandi order of dervishes. He made his first attempt to enter into politics in the Islamist NSP (National Salvation Party).⁶ Özal did not

2011, Ahmet Sözen, "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges," *Turkish Studies*, 11:1, (2010):103-123. A.Evin, K.Kirişçi, R.Linden, T.Straubhaar, N.Tocci, J. Tolay, J.Walker, "Getting to Zero, Turkey, Its Neighbors and the West," *Transatlantic Academy*, (2010): 25 accessed 04.02.2011, <http://www.transatlanticacademy.org/publications/getting-zero-turkey-its-neighbors-and-west>. Ziya Öniş, "Multiple Faces of the "New" Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique," *Insight Turkey* Vol. 13, No.1, (2001):.49, 58. Former PM Yıldırım Akbulut who was successor to Özal in the Motherland Party and was in office during the presidency of Özal, between 1989 and 1991 concludes as to the policies of PM Erdoğan that "He is following the policies of the Motherland Party. He wants to advance these policies and he does." "Eski başbakanın 'Nereden nereye' dedirten açıklamalar," **zaman.com.tr**, 05.02.2011, accessed 07.02.2011,

<http://www.zaman.com.tr/multimedya.do?tur=video&aktifgaleri=9598&aktifsayfa=0&bolumno=4&aktifsayfaDetay=0&galeriDetayNo=9598&title=genelkurmay-basbakana-bagli-oldugunu-ogrendi>. Soli Özel, Şuhnaz Yılmaz, Abdullah Akyüz, "Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations for a New Era, A Turkish Perspective," *Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association, TÜSİAD Publication No-T/2009-04/490*, (April 2009): 47. Şaban Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s: Revisiting the Basic Parameters of Partnership?" *Perceptions*, Volume XVI, Number 3, (Autumn 2011): 34-35. Bülent Aras and Pınar Akpınar, *Türk Dış Politikasında Davutoğlu Dönemi: 2009 Değerlendirmesi*, in *Türk Dış Politikası Yılı 2009*, Burhanettin Duran, et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 27.

³ Ali Yaşar Sarıbay, "Dış Politika Kararlarını Belirlemede Psikolojik Etkenler ve Türkiye" (Psychological Factors in Foreign Policy Decision Making and Turkey), in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy)*, ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 535-542. For the influence of psychological factors on foreign policy, see also Şenay Yıldız's interview with Robi Friedman, chairman of the International Group Psychotherapy Union, **Akşam**, 27.09.2011, accessed 01.10.2011, <http://www.aksam.com.tr/israile-kriz-kisisel-incinmeyle-basladi--69664h.html>

⁴ Korkut Özal, *Devlet Sırrı* (State Secret), (İstanbul: Yakin Plan Yayınları, Ekim 2010), 13-15.

⁵ Muhittin Ataman, "Özal ve İslam Dünyası: İnanç ve Pragmatizm" (Özal and the Islamic World: Belief and Pragmatism), in *Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet* (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 357.

⁶ Sedat Laçiner, *Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalizm*, "the Journal of Turkish Weekly", 09.03.2009, accessed 01.10.2011, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/print.asp?type=2&id=333>

give up performing his ritual prayers even when he became President. When he was PM, he visited Mecca with the intention of making a pilgrimage, one of the five pillars of Islam.⁷ He usually used to quote in his addresses from Islamic resources, namely from Quran and Hadith.⁸ Given his religious identity, one should not be surprised that he was the first Turkish Prime Minister who laid emphasis on Islam as a part of Turkish national identity.⁹ In his political career, Özal's decisions and policies were always under the influence of history, religion and his personal social adventure.¹⁰

On the other hand, Özal had internalized western values, such as democracy and liberalism, and he had acquired these values mainly, from a constructivist point of view, through societal socialization and transnational socialization processes. In terms of societal socialization, he had worked both in private and public sectors and witnessed several military putsches. Until Özal took his place in the political scene in 1980s, the country had experienced serious political and economic problems which led to recurrent military interventions into politics. These military interventions incurred Turkish people's displeasure and along with others; Özal was also pushed to demand more democracy with higher standards. From a transnational socialization perspective, two experiences were crucial, namely his study in the U.S. and his employment in the World Bank as advisor. With respect to the former experience, as Laçiner points it out,

“having graduated from Istanbul Technical University in 1950 as an electrical engineer, Özal studied in the United States, and during these years became an admirer of the United States. In his view, the United States owed its success to its liberalism. Özal further argued that the United States and the Ottoman Empire were similar political structures: Both allowed different cultures and gave people freedom to exercise their religion, nationality and economic preferences. From this perspective, Turkey had to desert its authoritarian official understanding, namely the Kemalist state ideology.”¹¹

As regards the latter experience, Turgut Özal was adviser to the World Bank on special projects between 1971 and 1973 and enjoyed an opportunity to make observations from an international perspective and developed very good relations with the IMF, the World Bank and the US administration.¹² At this point, one ought to take into account that in the socialization processes of Özal, the transnational socialization was more in the fore front and international norms occupied a wider space in his identity. Consequently, his socialization processes both at societal and transnational levels resulted in his internalization of modern values such as democracy, liberal economy, freedom of thought, freedom of religion and conscious in a universal sense and freedom of enterprise. Along with traditional and religious values, Özal made all these modern values integral part of his identity.

⁷ For instance, Özal's Picture was published in an internet news site, Haber7.com, when he was performing his ritual pray as Imam in 1988 in Medina. This Picture of Ozal as an Imam is most probably the first picture of a Prime Minister in Turkish Republic's political history. “İşte Turgut Özal'ın ‘imamlık’ yaptığı o an!” (Here is the moment of Turgut Ozal as Imam), **Haber7.com**, 14.01.2013, accessed 16.01.2013, <http://www.haber7.com/ic-politika/haber/976897-iste-turgut-ozalin-imamlik-yaptigi-o-an>

⁸ Ataman, "Özal ve İslam Dünyası: İnanç ve Pragmatizm," 356.

⁹ Berdal Aral, “Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş” (Domestic and Foreign Policy in Özal Era: Continuity or Rupture in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 244.

¹⁰ Şaban Çalış, “Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler: Özal, Balkanlar ve Neo-Osmanlılık!” in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 394.

¹¹ Laçiner, "Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism"

¹² Ibid.

Thus, as Gözen accurately notes, Özal's life philosophy put forward a "mixed" identity. This "mixed identity" was composed of both Western philosophy and Islamic philosophy, and Özal's political life was full of with behaviors in accordance with this identity.¹³ In fact, it was one of Özal's characters to reconcile contradictory elements and to establish a harmonious relationship between them.¹⁴ In this framework, he was eager to reconcile the western values and Islamic values with a pragmatic approach.¹⁵ Paradoxically, he was, for instance, neither an absolute Islamist nor a secularist, but accepted both of them; he was neither an absolute traditionalist nor a modernist, but internalized both of them; he was neither the admirer of exclusively Quran nor computer/technology, but carried in one hand the Quran and in the other a computer.¹⁶ In substance, he was a religious conservative, nationalist, liberal and democrat politician,¹⁷ and these personal features reflected also on his political apprehension and political life.¹⁸ Here, one should mention his efforts to find a middle way between Islamism and Turkish nationalism, his goal of formulating a religious understanding suitable for democracy, liberalism and capitalism. His conclusion was a Turkish-Islamic Synthesis which represented an official re-evaluation of Islam as part of Turkish identity with the aim of promoting national solidarity and integration.¹⁹

It should be lastly noted that along with his other personal aforementioned features, he had a brilliant and ambitious character with an ability to adjust the changes, and he was a strong leader who was not hesitating to take initiatives.²⁰ For instance, as it was seen in the neo-Ottomanism discussions, he was successful to bring several issues to the public agenda which were widely regarded as taboo in the Turkish society.²¹ In fact, by taking personal initiatives, Özal sometimes tended to exclude other organs of foreign policy making. This personal character of him peaked especially during his presidency. In addition to bureaucracy, Özal by-passed in some cases, particularly in the course of the Gulf War, even the government from policy-making processes, whereupon two foreign ministers resigned. While he enjoyed being 'one man' in the foreign policy realm during the Motherland Party (MP) government, which was established and headed by Özal and remained until 1991 under the strong influence of him, Özal did not hesitate to conflict with the True Path Party (TPP) government on foreign political issues as well. The Bosnia meeting organized by Özal without government's involvement sets an important example in this regard.²² As a result, it

¹³ Ramazan Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı: İdealler ve Gerçekler Açmazında Dış politika" (Turgut Özal and the Gulf War: Foreign Policy in the Dilemmas of Ideals and Realities), in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 312.

¹⁴ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 223.

¹⁵ Ibid., 228

¹⁶ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 312-313.

¹⁷ Laçiner, "Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism"

¹⁸ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 313.

¹⁹ Laçiner, "Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism," 10-11

²⁰ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 242-243.

²¹ Çalış, "Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler," 396. Cengiz Çandar, "20. Yüzyıl'ın 'put kırıcısı'; 21. Yüzyıl'ın 'özgür bireyi,'" **Hürriyet**, 18.04.2008, accessed 11.07.2011, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=8729602>

²² Gencer Özcan, "Türkiye'de Siyasal Rejim ve Dış Politika: 1983-1993" (Political Regime and Foreign Policy in Turkey: 1983-1993), in Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), ed. Faruk Sönmezoglu, (Istanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 528-533.

might be claimed that Özal's personality and leadership was a significant determining factor of TFP from early 1980s until his death in 1993.²³

3.1.3. Foreign policy paradigm of the Özal era

3.1.3.1. Intellectual roots of Özal's foreign policy approach

With an overriding economist point of view, Özal's approach to foreign policy was also economy-centered.²⁴ Özal's ultimate goal was to make Turkey one of the developed 10-15 countries of the world. To this end, he espoused democracy and liberal economic system as crucial and highlighted three freedoms as vital to reach this goal, namely freedom of thought, freedom of religion and conscious in a universal sense and freedom of enterprise.²⁵ Turkey's geography, population, opportunities offered by international conjuncture as well as its newly liberalized economic structure was all regarded as means to achieve this goal.²⁶ In other words, Turgut Özal, who played a primary role in the opening of Turkish economy to the world, aimed pragmatically at utilizing Turkey's historical, cultural and geopolitical assets, and intended to pave the way for Turkey's economic development as well as to augment Turkey's political weight and efficiency in its region.²⁷ In essence, this approach signaled a paradigm shift in Turkey's traditional status-quo-oriented, passivist and reactionary foreign policy and no doubt, in this new foreign political approach of him, his aforementioned identity, who denied neither the Western nor Eastern values but adopted both of them, played a determining role.

Özal's foreign policy understanding was based on his determination "to depart from established policies, to take calculated risks, and to search for new alternatives and options."²⁸ When he was in office, Turkey followed a diversified, active, daring and outward-oriented foreign policy and was very willing to improve multilateral cooperation in its region.²⁹ In the face of Kemalist policy line which rejected Turkey's Ottoman legacy and embraced a firmly nationalist and westernist concept, Özal developed his own concept, some refer to as neo-Ottomanism,³⁰ and directed TFP in accordance with it.³¹ Özal regarded Turkey's historical,

²³ Muhittin Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış" (Özalist Foreign Policy: An Active and Rational Understanding), *Bilgi, Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, No:7, (2003/2): 50. For a detailed analysis of 'Özal factor' regarding Turkish foreign policy during the Gulf War, see also Ramazan Gözen, "Türkiye'nin II. Körfez Savaşı Politikası: Aktif Politika ve Sonuçları" (Turkey's II. Gulf War Policy: Active Policy and its results), in *21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century)*, ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 753-776.

²⁴ Sabri Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," *Middle East Journal*, v. 46, n. 1, (Winter 1992), 18. For example, for Özal, Turkey's export-import capacity was far more important than military capacity. Hasan Cemal, *Özal Hikayesi (Özal Story)*, (Ankara: Bilgi, 1990), 294.

²⁵ Turgut Özal's speech at the 3. İzmir Economic Congress held in 4-7.6.1992, in Korkut Özal, *Devlet Sırrı*, 234-236

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 231.

²⁷ Hasan Mor, "Türk dış politikasında belirleyici faktörler ekseninde Özal'ın dış politika konsepti" [Özal's foreign policy concept on the axis of determinants in Turkish foreign policy], (PhD diss., Selçuk Üniversitesi, Konya 2002), 203.

²⁸ Sayari, Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment," 18. Mehmet Barlas, *Turgut Özal'ın Anıları (Turgut Özal's Memories)*, (İstanbul, Birey Yayıncılık, 4.Baskı, 2001), 128-130.

²⁹ Muhittin Ataman, "Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Volume 1, Number 1, (Spring 2002), 120-153, accessed 11.12.2012, <http://www.alternativesjournal.net/volume1/number1/ataman.htm>

³⁰ Mehmet Gönübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 1919-1995 (Turkish Foreign Policy with Events, 1919-1995), (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 1996), 650-653. Hakan M. Yavuz, 'Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism', *Critique*, (Spring 1998): 19-41. Originally, founders of the Republic of

cultural and geographical assets not as a burden but as assets presenting opportunities, particularly in economic terms. Geographically, he viewed Turkey as a country in the midst of Pacific-Atlantic axis and equidistant between both the Atlantic and Pacific basins.³² Furthermore, according to Özal, Turkey was located at the centre of East-West and North-South axes, and with this pivotal position, it should have been an active and decisive actor, not a passive one.³³ In this respect, unlike his predecessors, Özal tried to capitalize on Turkey's historical and cultural "depth" in favor of Turkey's interests. For instance, by making use of Ottoman identity, he wanted to open to the Middle East and the Balkans, and by employing Turkish identity, he wanted to open to the Central Asia.³⁴

Having defined Turkey as a "bridge country", Özal argued that with its historical and cultural responsibilities, Turkey was supposed to establish relations with the Western as well as with the Eastern Worlds simultaneously.³⁵ Essentially, his foreign policy perspective was based on the rejection of the assumption that there would be an indispensable hostility between the East and the West.³⁶ As a result, in compliance with the "bridge" definition, Özal prescribed a "balanced relationship" between the East and the West.³⁷ With Özal's words:

"A bridge stands between two places... So, in order to be a bridge, you need to have good association with both sides. That is, Turkey must be an indispensable country for both the West and the East. And this would be exclusively possible with the application of a dynamic, active and honest foreign policy. A policy with well-defined targets which does not change its direction at any moment and does not zigzag..."³⁸ (T.b.A)

In this context; by contrast to the strict pro-Western foreign policy of Kemalist elites, Özal's concept stipulated an active and dynamic policy in Turkey's region and, along with strong association with the West, developing relations with the eastern world, especially with the Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries.³⁹ However, Özal did not view the advancing association with the East as an alternative to the West, but complementary to it. According to Özal, Turkey's weight in the West was a positive function of its weight in the East.⁴⁰

Turkey had rejected Ottoman legacy and traditional Kemalist policy line consciously abstained from seeing Ottomans as a reference point. Towards the end of 1980s, Ottomans returned to Turkey's and Özal's agenda in the face of discussions on two distinctive subjects. The former discussion related to a national identity crisis and forms of social belonging which had emerged as a result of "Kurdish question". In order to ensure the social consensus, Özal and some other Turkish intellectuals suggested Ottomans as a point of reference. The latter discussion stemmed from the oppression and assimilation problem against the Turks in Bulgaria. But the real return of Ottomans to Turkey's agenda in the form of "neo-Ottomanism" occurred in the wake of developments such as the dissolution of Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia. Çalıř, "Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler," 395-397, 400.

³¹ Ataman, "Özalist Dıř Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayıř," 50.

³² Gülistan Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dıř Politika Anlayıřı" (Özal's Foreign Policy Understanding), in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dađı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 291.

³³ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savařı," 314.

³⁴ Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dıř Politika Anlayıřı," 291-292.

³⁵ Mor, "Özal'ın dıř politika konsepti," 187.

³⁶ Berdal Aral, "Dispensing with tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Özal Decade, 1983-93," Middle Eastern Studies, Vol.37, No.1, (Jan.2001): 75

³⁷ Mor, "Özal'ın dıř politika konsepti," 182, 180-188.

³⁸ Barlas, Turgut Özal'ın Anıları, 128.

³⁹ Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dıř Politika Anlayıřı," 300

⁴⁰ Mor, "Özal'ın dıř politika konsepti," 182.

In view of Turkey's traditional uni-dimensional (i.e. strictly westward-looking) foreign policy, Özal's multi-dimensional approach to foreign policy was novel. He declared this new policy paradigm in the governmental program in 1983 as follows:

“We regard our existing ties with the Western World and close association with the Middle East and Islamic World as complementary elements of our foreign policy. Turkey's geographical location forming a natural bridge between the East and the West on the one hand and its common historical and cultural legacy on the other, require Turkey to attach importance to the Islamic World.”⁴¹ (T.b.A.)

Furthermore, after the end of Cold War, Özal strongly advocated that Turkey's position must have been reevaluated in the post-Cold War conjuncture, and Turkey's conventional passive and prudent foreign policy approach must have been replaced by an active one, that is a non-reactive but initiative-taking foreign policy.⁴² By seizing every opportunity, Turkey should have exerted influence upon a vast region stretching from Balkans to the Central Asia and increased its political weight as the strongest power of its region. At the same time, this was its intrinsic right as heir to a civilization which made its mark on the longest peaceful term of this region which still witness bloody struggles from place to place. In the context of its historical mission, should Turkey not be able to achieve again to be a powerful actor and obtain a privileged place in international politics, it would have been faced with the danger of partition.⁴³

Consequently, Özal argued that pursuing an active and dynamic foreign policy was inevitable, and in addition to the existing alliances with the West, relations with other countries in the region must have been developed on the basis of interdependence.⁴⁴ Having touched on the foreign policy approach of Özal in general terms, in the following pages, I will concentrate more systematically on the foreign policy principles followed during his tenure in office, namely, economy-centered foreign policy, multidimensionality and developing alternatives, proactive foreign policy and balance between democracy and security in terms of internal politics.

3.1.3.2. Foreign policy principles of the Özal era

3.1.3.2.1 Economy-centered foreign policy

As noted earlier, Özal perceived foreign policy through the lenses of economy. Turkey's economic situation played certainly a great role in that, however, his economist

⁴¹ Ibid., 184. Whereas several academicians regarded economic pragmatism as the main driving force behind Özal's interest in the Islamic world, Ataman underlines his religious identity, in addition to economic pragmatism. Accordingly, Özal's pragmatism reconciled Islamic cultural tendency and the needs of economy. Consequently, Özal wanted to establish close relations with the Islamic world due to economic, historical, cultural and religious reasons. Ataman, "Özal ve İslam Dünyası: İnanç ve Pragmatizm," 361, 378. See also İhsan Dağı, "Özal'lı Yıllarda Türk Siyaseti: İnsan Hakları, Demokrasi ve Avrupa Birliği" (Turkish Politics in Özal Years: Human Rights, Democracy and the European Union), in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 76.

⁴² Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 231. Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 294. Ataman, "Özal ve İslam Dünyası: İnanç ve Pragmatizm," 380. Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 292.

⁴³ Gönübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 651.

⁴⁴ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 51.

identity was also largely decisive in his economy-centered point of view. He had worked both in the private and public sectors and gave significant weight to economic instruments in the solution of political problems. As an economist, Özal regarded economic instruments more important than political and social instruments both in domestic and foreign policy and in this respect saw foreign policy always an instrument serving to his economic goals.⁴⁵

According to Özal, who expressed often his goal of making Turkey a regional power, a powerful economy and intensive trade relations provide the most important instruments to reach political targets.⁴⁶ In terms of a strong economy, Özal was considering that economic development would bring about increasing political weight, and he also argued that economy occupies a considerable space in a country's foreign policy agenda.⁴⁷ Therefore, it might be claimed that economy was always one of the main motives behind Özal's foreign policy understanding.⁴⁸ Moreover, Özal saw economic development as a key for Turkey's main domestic problems, (such as the Kurdish question); therefore he considered an economic transformation in the country indispensable.⁴⁹ Since Özal believed in liberalism and viewed it as the best way for Turkey's economic development, he saw an economic transformation of Turkey inevitable and to this end he took giant steps to open Turkish economy to the world.⁵⁰ Vast legal arrangements were introduced for the sake of economic liberalism. Moreover, Özal leadership completed the necessary arrangements in foreign trade sphere for the dominance of market rules and also liberalized import, the second leg of foreign trade.⁵¹

3.1.3.2.2. Construction of high level economic cooperation / interdependence with neighbors

From Özal's point of view, booming economic relations with neighbors would have two interrelated dimensions, namely economic and strategic. With respect to the former, increasing economic relations in the region would contribute to Turkey's economic development by opening new markets that emerging Turkish industry needed. This perspective lies at the root of Turkey's orientation during 1980s towards the neighboring countries more intensively than before. Ankara which fell short of its expectations in the developed markets forced to find new markets, such as Iran and Iraq.⁵² As a matter of fact, under Özal's leadership, Turkey's trade partners augmented. In addition to western partners, it found new trade partners, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, and concluded various trade agreements. Turkey's export to the Middle East boomed considerably and amounted in the mid-1980s virtually the half of total export.⁵³

From a strategic point of view, Özal regarded economy as an important functionalist tool to solve problems with other countries. In this context, Özal was hoping that booming economic relations with neighbors was going to bring about the solution of political

⁴⁵ Sedat Laçiner, 'Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası' (Turkish Foreign Policy During Özal Era), in 1980-2003, Türkiye'nin Dış, Ekonomik, Sosyal ve İdari politikaları, ed. Turgut Göksoy et al. (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 2003), 29.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 292.

⁴⁸ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 62.

⁴⁹ Mor, "Özal'ın dış politika konsepti," 176-180.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 202

⁵¹ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 51-52.

⁵² Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 29.

⁵³ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 52.

problems.⁵⁴ Additionally, increasing economic relations would contribute to a stable and secure region that Turkey needed for a sustainable development. According to Özal's foreign policy understanding, Turkey should primarily improve economic relations in its region; augment "interdependence", thereby minimize the risks of conflict. In a sense, "active foreign policy", which developed particularly during Özal's presidency and named by some as "neo-Ottomanism", might be viewed as an extension of this apprehension.⁵⁵ This understanding stipulates that Turkey ought to first accelerate its development through economic instruments and subsequently, again by making use of economic instruments, follow an active foreign policy and form zones of influence around itself. For example, Özal wanted Turkey to retain its influence in northern Iraq and proposed after the Gulf War that Turkey should export electricity to this part of Iraq and Turkish currency would be valid there too.⁵⁶ Moreover, his famous water pipeline project of 1986 which had envisaged the construction of a pipeline that would carry Turkish water to the Gulf countries as well as Israel; might be regarded in the context of promoting interdependency as a step towards peace-building.⁵⁷

Additionally, despite harsh criticism from the opposition, Özal took initiatives to solve the chronic problems of TFP. In this framework, Özal leadership developed a new approach towards Greece and commenced a rapprochement process which culminated in the "spirit of Davos." Moreover, Ankara acquired a leading role in the determination of developments in Turkey's region. Özal prepared drafts which stipulated definition and solution of the problems as well as the determination and improvement of areas of cooperation.⁵⁸ Özal aimed to find a solution to the Cyprus problem too, another chronic problem of Turkey. He viewed it as an impediment to the relations with the West and sought to get back the most important trump card that western powers had been playing against Ankara. Despite the opposition of Turkish diplomats, he wanted to solve the problem by means of mutual concessions. However, his main goal was, rather than solving the problem, to display the Greek side to international actors as the source of the problem.⁵⁹

3.1.3.2.3. Multidimensionality and developing alternatives

Turgut Özal went to the United States for the purpose of studying economics in 1952, profoundly impressed by its economic and political system, advocated liberalism in economy as well as in politics and championed the coexistence of differences. He argued that Turkey would gain advantage from pursuing a compatible foreign policy with the American policies.⁶⁰ Therefore, he deemed an alliance with the US as the main axis of foreign policy.⁶¹ In addition to his own paradigm, there were also other reasons in his pro-American foreign policy. Accordingly, Özal's belief that Turkish national interests were generally overlapping

⁵⁴ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 228. Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 295. See also President Turgut Özal's speech at the Marmara Club Meeting, 16.10.1992, in Barlas, Turgut Özal'ın Anıları, 334. Philip Robins, Suits and uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War, (London: Hurst & Co., 2003) 53.

⁵⁵ Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 29

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Kemal Kirişçi, "The transformation of Turkish foreign policy: The rise of the trading state," New Perspectives on Turkey," No. 40, (2009): 44.

⁵⁸ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 56.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 56-57. See also, Barlas, Turgut Özal'ın Anıları, 132-133

⁶⁰ Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 26

⁶¹ Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 305.

with those of the USA in the Middle East, Caucasias and Central Asia,⁶² and that Turkey did not possess the necessary instruments and resources to follow an entirely 'independent' strategy which could be against the U.S. interests pushed him to espouse a pro-American foreign policy.⁶³ Meanwhile, the rejection of Turkey's application for a full-membership by the European Community in 1989 also pushed Özal towards Washington.⁶⁴ In a nutshell, Özal's ultimate objective was to install Turkey as an influential regional power under the protective umbrella of the USA.⁶⁵

Analyzing Özal's European policy, he might be called in a sense as the strongest advocate of the westernization in the republican history. Nonetheless, his distinctive self-confidence which based Turkish-western relations on a more equal ground was salient. Whereas he was giving to the internal public the message that "Turkey had to join the European Community (EC)," Özal delivered to the EC the message of "you have to admit Turkey to the EC."⁶⁶ He viewed the full-membership application as a significant means for the perpetuation and consolidation of democracy and liberal economy, as well as for the institutionalization of association with the EC. With these considerations, he became the first leader who took a major step and applied officially to the EC for a full-membership. If Laçiner is right, Özal's Europe policy showed to the future leaders that Turkey could be persistent with respect to integration with Europe without following a uni-dimensional foreign policy.⁶⁷ At this point, one should note that though he did continued close relations with the West, Özal was aware of differences between Turkey and the West saying that

"We are an Islamic country. We have differences from the West... We are the bridge between the West and the East. We need to take the science, technology, thinking, understanding, and compromise of the West. But we have also our own values that the West does not have."⁶⁸

Turgut Özal sought also to develop alternatives and multi-dimensional strategies. His apprehension was based on interdependency, mutual interests and the "bridge" role definition of Turkey rather than unilaterally westward-looking policy.⁶⁹ In this respect, he sought to diversify relations with the USA, which had revolved up to Özal's leadership around military and strategic considerations. In contrast to his predecessors, he asked for more trade and economic concessions from the USA, not more military aid. By deepening the association with the EC, he targeted to use the EC as a balancing element against the dependence on the USA and vice versa.⁷⁰ Again in this framework, without changing Turkey's conventional direction, a new policy approach was adopted envisaging close relations with the Turkic republics of the Central Asia, with the states of the Eastern Europe and with the Islamic countries. In order to balance the association with the West, Özal initiated or revitalized some regional organizations such as BSEC, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and Central Asian Common Market. Similarly, Turkey's role increased in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and during Özal's leadership, Turkey's policies in the Middle East did not coincide on occasion with those of the West. For example, contrary to the expectations

⁶² Gökhan Çetinsaya, "İki Yüzyılın Hikâyesi: Türk Dış ve Güvenlik Politikasında Süreklilikler," in Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2009, Burhanettin Duran et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 620.

⁶³ Aral, "Dispensing with tradition?," 76-77

⁶⁴ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 231.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 229.

⁶⁶ Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 31.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ataman, "Leadership Change"

⁶⁹ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 53. See also Ataman, "Leadership Change"

⁷⁰ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 57.

of the West, Turkey did not conduct its policy against Iran, and followed “active neutrality” policy during the Iraq-Iran war. Moreover, in order to gain the support of the Arab states, Özal pursued a distanced policy towards Israel and made Turkey one of the first countries which recognized Palestinian state declared in exile.⁷¹ Nonetheless, in spite of the diversification efforts of Turgut Özal, given the above mentioned western ties of Turkey; it is hardly possible to talk about an “axis-shift” under the Özal leadership as regards the traditional western orientation of TFP.

In short, stressing Turkey’s both western and Eastern identities and its “bridge” role, Özal sought to establish balanced relations with all international actors. For example, unlike the previous governments, while he developed close relations with the Middle East and Islamic world, his approach did not exclude other dimensions of TFP;⁷² rather he embraced a multidimensional and pragmatic approach. However, in accordance with his ideas about the structure of the world, while seeking to develop alternatives, he continued to see the alignment with the USA as the main axis of TFP.

3.1.3.2.4. Proactive foreign policy

Turgut Özal rose to power following the 12 September 1980 military coup. Thus, in the initial years of his administration, he had to deal mostly with internal political and economic issues, and restore the relations with the world which were damaged due to the military coup.⁷³ His influence on foreign political issues began to augment exclusively in parallel with the democratization of the country, i.e. towards the end of 1980s.⁷⁴ For instance, “Turkey’s application for full European Community membership in 1987 was engineered by the then Prime Minister Özal.”⁷⁵ Although he was elected in 1989 as President, Özal increasingly sustained his weight in the foreign policy of the country through his influence in the ruling Motherland Party as well as through his personal charisma and initiative-taking character. His active foreign policy approach was conspicuous in many fields, yet it was far more striking during the Gulf war that the resistance of civil and military bureaucracy notwithstanding, Özal directed the foreign policy of the country virtually alone.⁷⁶

He adopted an active foreign policy appraisal and left the conventional passivist and non-interventionist policy aside. He described active policy as the precondition of an assertive FP. He deemed the status quo-oriented isolation policy of the Kemalist leadership as the biggest obstacle in front of Turkey’s economic development and democratization process, and tried to overcome it. In fact, the above mentioned FP principles such as multidimensionality and developing alternatives were also the manifestation of Özal’s active foreign policy understanding.⁷⁷ Until the end of Cold War, he sought to deepen the existing relations with the USA and the EC and simultaneously tried to improve relations with the Muslim and Arab

⁷¹ Ibid., 53-54.

⁷² Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 38.

⁷³ Barlas, Turgut Özal’ın Anıları, 149.

⁷⁴ Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 17. Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 230. Laçiner, "Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism," 13.

⁷⁵ Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 17.

⁷⁶ Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 36. Gözen, "Türkiye’nin II. Körfez Savaşı Politikası," 758. George S. Harris, "Turkey’s Foreign Policy: Independent or Reactive?" in *Diplomacy in the Middle East, The International Relations of Regional and Outside Powers*, ed. L Carl Brown, (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001),271.

⁷⁷ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 57-58.

world mostly on economic grounds. For example, for the first time in the Republican history, a Turkish President attended an Islamic summit in Casablanca (1984). In this conference, Turkish president assumed the presidency of the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Economic and Commercial Co-operation (COMCEC), one of the six specialized OIC committees.⁷⁸ Moreover, Turkish trade with the neighboring and Muslim countries increased substantially during the Özal era.

Özal leadership regarded the end of Cold War as a significant event, offering great opportunities for Turkey. He argued that an active FP was indispensable in the post-Cold War conjuncture, thus adopted an initiative-taking and leading FP instead of the traditional passive and prudent one.⁷⁹ Özal was advocating that the most important thing in a political change was to realize it early, take measures accordingly, dispense with conservatism and develop forward looking policies. According to Özal, risks of an active FP must have been calculated carefully and decisions must have been reached expeditiously.⁸⁰ Since bureaucracy was slow in nature, decisions should have been made by politicians.⁸¹ Along with the concept of a Turkish World from the “Adriatic to the Chinese Wall”, Turkey’s active involvement in Bosnian and Nagorno-Karabakh crises and its initiative-taking to establish the BSEC and ECO as well as the active participation in the OIC might be appraised in the framework of an active foreign policy. Finally, it should be noted that under the Özal leadership Turkey signed more international agreements than all the past republican governments did. Even this fact alone gives a clue as to the dynamic nature of FP during the Özal era.⁸²

3.1.3.2.5. Balance between democracy and security

Özal argued that in order to be powerful and influential in FP, internal peace was essential. This would be possible with the ensuring of a balance between freedom and security,⁸³ and with the development of democracy in the country.⁸⁴ In this context, by granting the Kurds more freedom, Özal aimed to weaken the terrorist organization PKK as well as to make a contribution to social peace, thereby render Turkey powerful in foreign political issues. His most important reference in this regard was the Ottoman legacy. Inspired by this legacy, Özal made most of his suggestions such as the adoption of the states system, the localization of the administration, and the presidential system.⁸⁵ Accordingly, administrators as heir to an empire which managed to administrate a multi-national, multi-religious and multi-identity population for centuries together in peace had to comprehend that cultural pluralism, and powerful local governments would play a key role in the solution of Turkey’s fundamental problems.⁸⁶ With this understanding, Özal held talks with ethnic groups living in the country. This was particularly an important beginning for the Kurds and they

⁷⁸ Laçiner, "Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism," 14

⁷⁹ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 231. Gürbey, "Özal’ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 294. Ataman, "Özal ve İslam Dünyası: İnanç ve Pragmatizm," 380.

⁸⁰ Gürbey, "Özal’ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 294.

⁸¹ Özal criticizes harshly that Turkish foreign ministry bureaucracy has always a status quo-oriented stance. Accordingly, bureaucracy takes neither inside nor outside risk. It is politicians who will take risk; therefore, they must be in the forefront and must be more decisive in decision-making processes. Barlas, Turgut Özal’ın Anıları, 119-120.

⁸² Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 58.

⁸³ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 225.

⁸⁴ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 60. Barlas, Turgut Özal’ın Anıları, 148-149.

⁸⁵ Laçiner, "Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism," 10.

⁸⁶ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 241.

were for the first time recognized from the rulers of the country. Moreover, through legal arrangements, it was paved the way for the use of Kurdish language in the media.⁸⁷

Özal was of the opinion that a probable Kurdish state in northern Iraq was threatening the territorial integrity of Turkey. Thus, to address this problem, he pursued a pro-American active foreign policy during the Gulf War and chose to be active not reactive. He considered that a successful Kurdish policy was closely related with the opening policies towards the Kurds in the country. Along with this strategic consideration, in line with his economic and political transformation goal, Özal took the attitude that democratic rights should have been granted to the Kurds.⁸⁸ Furthermore, although he advocated that a federative solution was inappropriate, he saw no harm in the democratic discussion of it.⁸⁹

On the other hand, Özal's ethnic pluralism approach did not remain limited to the Kurdish ethnicity; other ethnic groups were also recognized and began to be regarded in the foreign policy conducting processes.⁹⁰ Economic development of Turkey and the democratic steps contributed also to the rise of influence of the ethnic groups residing in the country on foreign political issues. While Özal viewed the ethnic groups as a 'chance' and 'source of power' in terms of internal and external policies and tried to make use of them, he was affected by the goals and regional perceptions of those groups as well. In a sense, a major part of the ethnic groups composing Ottoman Empire returned to Turkey's foreign policy agenda and the leader of the country was virtually pleased with that. Turkey's Bosnia and Azerbaijan policies after the Cold War provide examples in this regard. Turkey supported these countries to the bitter end in all platforms, especially in the NATO, UN and European organizations.⁹¹

In terms of nationalism, by including other Turks living in other countries, Özal extended the Kemalist nationalism appraisal which had reduced nationalism to the Turks living in Anatolia. Özal's nationalism stipulated a synthesis of "cultural Turkishness" and Islam (Turkish-Islam Synthesis). His apprehension excluded the denial of other Muslim elements living in the country. His nationalism was based on good and tolerant governing, and accepted cultural values and tradition inherited from the past. Therefore, he was arguing that Atatürk's phrase "Happy is he who calls himself a Turk" should have been perceived as "Happy is he who calls himself a Turkish citizen".⁹²

To conclude, from Özal's point of view, Turkey's power in foreign policy was a positive function of internal peace and this peace would be provided through equilibrium between freedom and security. He underscored Ottoman legacy as the most important reference point in this respect and redefined Turkish identity on the basis of "Turkish-Islam synthesis". This new identity definition brought about the return of cultural, historical and religious ties to the foreign policy agenda.⁹³

⁸⁷ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 59.

⁸⁸ Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 302.

⁸⁹ Barlas, Turgut Özal'ın Anıları, 151.

⁹⁰ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 59. Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 41.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 59.

⁹³ See Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası."

3.1.4. Conclusion

Özal's vision for Turkey was to make it one of the most developed ten-fifteen countries of the world and to make it the most important economic and political actor in its region. As an economist, he viewed Turkey's economic success as the most important instrument to attain this vision. Accordingly, Turkey's economic success was going to make it a center of attraction and this would bring about increasing political weight. However, in parallel with the needs of outward-oriented economic order, he realized that his vision was not achievable with an exclusively westward-looking foreign policy. Defining Turkey as a bridge country, along with the West, he sought to improve relations with the eastern countries as well. Particularly until the end of Cold War, his interest in the East was rather economy-oriented and he tried to capitalize on Turkey's historical, religious and cultural assets with a pragmatic approach. On the other hand, contrary to the Kemalist elite, Özal did not view these assets, namely Islam, Turkism and Ottomanism as an obstacle to Turkey's integration to the West. Therefore, he never intended to turn Turkey's face completely to the East. Regarding the strong relations with the West as the main axis of foreign policy, he viewed the developing relations with the East as complementary to the association with the West. Furthermore, with a view to solving Turkey's security problems as well as to settling the existing problems with neighbors, he underlined the importance of forming economic cooperation and interdependencies, and took steps to this end.

In essence, what expanded his horizon was his identity which internalized both eastern and western values. Özal blended the Turkish, eastern and western values in order to create "the great Turkey" once more. The elements of his alternative identity definition were intrinsically reflected to his political approach and he defined Turkey's identity in conformity with his respective values. He recognized Turkey's historical, cultural and religious identities, which were ignored up to that time to a large extent, as part of Turkish identity. His relatively more active and internationalist foreign policy was largely connected with this new identity definition. Undoubtedly, there were also other internal and external political factors encouraging and supporting his new identity definition and foreign policy understanding. The revolutionary liberalization and the opening of the Turkish economy to the world are of crucial importance in this respect. Furthermore, the emerging alternative power centers (e.g. the so called Anatolian capital), the democratization process in the country and the increasing weight of the divergent ethnic and religious groups on foreign political issues might be viewed further internal factors in this regard. On the other hand, the rejection of Turkey's application for the EC membership, the new international conjuncture in the wake of the Cold war, and the Karabakh and Bosnian conflicts might be regarded as external factors contributing to the rise of new Turkish identity. All these factors contributed to Özal's new identity definition and made Özal's policies realizable.

Özal's foreign policy represents a deviation from the Republican orthodoxy. His new identity definition brought about changes with respect to national interest perceptions.⁹⁴ For instance, while due to its secular state structure, Ankara traditionally had ignored the religious identity of the country in foreign political issues, during the Özal era a new identity definition based on Turkish-Islamic synthesis dominated TFP. In accordance with this new identity definition, Turkey's national interests were re-defined and this paved the way for the

⁹⁴ See Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization*, vol. 46, no. 2, (1992): 398.

development of a multi-dimensional foreign policy concept. In fact, this new understanding marks the beginning of a new proactive term in TFP.

Finally, the recent TFP cannot be fully understood without referring to Özalism. It might even be claimed that roots of current TFP in the new millennium lie to a great extent at Özalism. For example, foundations of two important catalysts of today's foreign policy, civil society and emerging Anatolian capital, were largely laid during the Özal era. Additionally, as mentioned above, ranging from proactive and multidimensional foreign policy to the understanding which made economy one of the most significant components of diplomacy and to the roots of most of the AK Party foreign policy principles might be found in Özalism. In this context, AK Party foreign policy can be characterized to a large extent as an extension of Özal's policies or a more advanced form of them, which will be handled below in detail.

3.2. AK Party foreign policy paradigm: Transformation or continuity?

3.2.1. Introduction

With its unique geographical position at the crossroads of the Balkans, Middle East and the Caucasus, Turkey was caught unprepared to the post Cold War term. This new age forced all actors to reevaluate their international positions as well as their national strategies. Turkey, which practically plays a bridge role both geographically and culturally with its privileged location where continents meet, felt the same need of reevaluation. The new international conjuncture and the developments in the international relations pushed Turkey to adapt itself to the new circumstances. However, both Turkish political elite and policy makers oscillated in the initial years of the post-Cold War term to keep pace with the new developments in the international system. At first, Turgut Özal's nostalgic and ambitious rhetoric of - a Turkish world from the Adriatic Sea to the Chinese Wall- dominated foreign policy. Yet, this rather assertive vision of Özal was not compatible with Turkey's capacity and it found neither from the traditional power centers (e.g. military and civil bureaucracy) nor from the society adequate support. In the wake of Özal's death in 1993, this vision lost its momentum and an ideological and pro-security understanding gained predominance in foreign policy making. Whereas Özal's vision was excessively over Turkey's capacity, the latter approach ignored the areas of cooperation particularly with neighboring countries and did not make use of the potentials provided by Turkey's geography and history.

Despite that transformation of TFP started before the Justice and Development Party (AK Party),⁹⁵ its rise to power in early years of the new millennium signaled a turning point for Turkey in many respects and in terms of foreign policy as well. The AK Party government, which defines itself as conservative-democrat, reinterpreted Turkey's international position in accordance with its lenses. AK Party's Muslim-conservative identity, which has been constructed through a long societal and transnational socialization process, has enabled it to utilize the historical and geographical assets of Turkey and broadened Ankara's horizons. In other words, conservative-democrat AK Party's rise to power which is able to reconcile Islam and democracy has paved the way for a multi dimensional and dynamic foreign policy. As Kirişçi points out "the political development, economic capabilities, dynamic social forces, and ability to reconcile Islam and democracy at home are

⁹⁵ Nasuh Uslu, *Türk Dış Politikası Yol Ayrımında* (Turkish Foreign Policy is at Crossroads) (İstanbul: Anka Yayınları, 2006).

the qualities that offer Turkey the possibility to develop and implement such policies.”⁹⁶ In essence, this new approach which emphasizes the historical and geographical “depth” of Turkey might be also assessed as the reflection of a domestic political development to the foreign policy landscape through a new identity description.⁹⁷

In the following sections, I argue that the origins of AK Party foreign policy might be found in the Özal's policies outlined in the preceding part. In other words, AK Party foreign policy is substantially a kind of advanced and crystallized form of Özal's foreign policy understanding. I further argue that, like Özal's foreign policy, AK Party leadership's foreign policy could be also better accounted for by means of an identity-based approach. In this context, for the sake of developing a framework of analysis, it would be highly relevant to analyze briefly the personality of Erdoğan, leader of the AK Party and the PM of Turkish Republic since 2003, and the socialization processes that he went through. At this point, the question arises, why Erdoğan? In fact, Davutoğlu has an undeniable impact on AK Party foreign policy both theoretically and practically. However, as the head of government, PM Erdoğan carries the primary responsibility as well as the authority on foreign political issues. Considering the interrelated nature of domestic and foreign politics, he is interested in foreign political issues to a large extent and plays a substantial role in the FP definition of the country. Moreover, it is Erdoğan who employed Davutoğlu first as chief advisor on foreign political issues and later as the minister of foreign affairs. The reason for that lies basically in their sharing of common weltanschauung and visions. Therefore, one should not underestimate the role of Erdoğan on foreign policy of AK Party. As a matter of fact, Erdoğan enjoys a high popularity particularly in the Middle East which initially soared in the wake of his sharp reaction to Israeli President Peres in the Davos Forum in January 2009 and has increasingly continued thanks to Erdoğan's pro-Palestine and anti-Israel discourse as well as owing to Turkey's success to reconcile Islam and democracy which became more striking in the climate of “Arab spring”.⁹⁸ Additionally, Erdoğan's foreign policy approach has been frequently analyzed by international media institutions, particularly in reference to his influence in the Middle East politics.⁹⁹ Considering all of those points, it would be an appropriate step to begin with the personality of Erdoğan, his weltanschauung and the socialization processes that he has gone through. Subsequently, foreign policy paradigm of the AK Party will be studied under the light of Davutoğlu's foreign policy approach.

⁹⁶ Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times,” Chaillot Paper, 92, EU-ISS, (Paris: September 2006): 96.

⁹⁷ Bülent Aras, “Türk-İran İlişkileri: Değişim ve Süreklilik,” (Turkish-Iranian Relations: Transformation or Continuity) Avrasya Dosyası, Vol. 12, No 2, (2006): 77-78. For the influence of identity on Turkish foreign policy see: Igor Torbakov and Hanna Ojanen, “Looking for a new strategic identity: Is Turkey emerging as an Independent Regional Power?,” The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Briefing Paper 30, (7 May 2009).

⁹⁸ 2011 edition of the annual “Arab Public Opinion Survey” conducted by Shibley Telhami of the Brookings Institution approves that Recep Tayyip Erdogan has emerged as the most admired leader by far in the region and Turkey has played the “most constructive” role in the past year's events. Jim Lobe, “Erdogan Most Popular Leader By Far Among Arabs,” **Inter Press Service News Agency** (IPS), Washington, 21.11.2011, accessed 25.12.2011, <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=105919>

⁹⁹ “Israeli Enmity takes centre stage for Erdoğan,” **thetimes.co.uk**, 13.09.2011, accessed 25.12.2011, <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/profile/Alexander-Christie--Miller>, “The Middle East's new emperor: Why the West quietly cheers Turkey's rise,” **theglobeandmail.com**, 17.09.2011, accessed 25.12.2011, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/africa-mideast/the-middle-east-new-emperor-why-the-west-quietly-cheers-turkeys-rise/article2169665/>, “Der neue Kalif,” **Die Welt.de**, 14.09.2011, accessed 25.12.2011, http://www.welt.de/print/die_welt/politik/article13603326/Der-neue-Kalif.html, “Les tribulations d'un Turc dans le monde arabe,” **lemonde.fr**, 22.09.2011, accessed 25.12.2011, http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2011/09/22/les-tribulations-d-un-turc-dans-le-monde-arabe_1576006_3232.html

3.2.2. Erdoğan's Personality: Devout Muslim, conservative, democrat

With family origins in Turkey's Rize province, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was born in a middle-class district of Istanbul, Kasımpaşa, as a child of a religious-conservative family. His father was a captain in the state Maritime Agency and his mother a housewife. After graduating from Istanbul Religious Vocational High School (İmam Hatip Lisesi), he obtained a B.A. degree from the Department of Economics and Trade of Marmara University in Istanbul (1980).¹⁰⁰ As Heper and Toktaş argue, there were four major influences on his life: (1) his father, (2) Kasımpaşa- the neighborhood in Istanbul where he grew up, (3) his teacher at the primary school he attended, and (4) Sufism.¹⁰¹ His father was a religious and authoritarian personality. Like Özal, Erdoğan received a good religious training in his own family. He had learned the rudiments of Islam and had become a devout Muslim even before he attended Imam Hatip School. Additionally, he is an authoritarian personality and has strict principles in life. These two characteristics of him, religiosity and authoritarianism, may be attributed to his father's influence. Meanwhile, Erdoğan is not an easygoing man which seems to be related to the fact that he was brought up in Kasımpaşa, which is well known with its bravado culture. Erdoğan underlines its impact on him saying that "my manliness, bluntness, and principled conduct derive from my roots [in Kasımpaşa]. Defiance is also observed in Erdoğan¹⁰² and he is never afraid of a test of strength.¹⁰³ In this respect, his outbursts in some cases, such as the famous one in Davos Economic Forum in 2009, may be closely connected with this character of him. Furthermore, his education in the Imam Hatip left also a strong impression on Erdoğan, not only in terms of religious education, but also in terms of weltanschauung, which was explicitly underscored by Erdoğan in an interview. Finally, he attended the Iskenderpaşa Seminary (dergah) of the Nakshibandi Sheikh Mehmet Zahit Kotku and Sufi creeds of this seminary had a significant influence on Erdoğan's personality.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, it is clear that being connected with the Nakshibandi order of dervishes was a common point of Erdoğan and Özal.

Islam has always had a significant impact on the identity of Erdoğan which could be observed in numerous ways, ranging from his daily life practices to his discourses. Even before the years at Imam Hatip School, Erdoğan had become a practicing Muslim, doing his prayers on a regular basis which might be viewed as another common point of Özal and Erdoğan.¹⁰⁵ Taking Islam as a basic reference, he derived from it a set of moral principles for his personal and social life. For example, he does not sit cross-legged, as this was perceived disrespect for others.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, as Özal, Erdoğan also resorts often to terminology informed by Islamic themes. For example, he quoted 179. verse of Koran, the Heights (Al-Arâf) Sura, several times to criticize opposition and judicial bureaucracy¹⁰⁷ saying "they have

¹⁰⁰ For Erdoğan's CV, see the official website of AK Party, accessed 12.09.2011, <http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/yonetim/genel-baskan>

¹⁰¹ Metin Heper and Şule Toktaş, "Islam, Modernity, and Democracy in Contemporary Turkey: The Case of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan," *The Muslim World*, Vol. 93, No. 2, (April 2003): 161

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 162

¹⁰³ Daniel Dombey, "Turkey looks to punch above its weight," **Financial Times**, 27.09.2011, accessed 28.09.2011, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/39f83f1a-e912-11e0-ac9c-00144feab49a.html?ftcamp=rss#axzz1ZF3OSXoU>

¹⁰⁴ Heper and Toktaş, "Islam, Modernity, and Democracy in Contemporary Turkey," 163-164.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 163.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 165.

¹⁰⁷ "Ayette cevap verdi," **Radikal**, 16.03.2008, accessed 28.09.2011, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalHaberDetayV3&ArticleID=843113&Date=03.09.2011&CategoryID=98>

hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not”¹⁰⁸ Additionally, when the chairman of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) submitted a 10 million Turkish Liras donation check to Erdoğan in the framework of an aid campaign to Somalia in the Summer of 2011, Erdoğan quoted this time a Hadith (the Prophet Muhammad's sayings/deeds), “the upper hand is better than the lower hand.” (The upper hand is meant the one which expends, and the lower one is the one which asks.)¹⁰⁹ All in all, such examples are easy to find in Erdoğan’s daily discourses.

Considering his personal qualities, Erdoğan carries distinctive personal features as well. First of all, he attaches a considerable importance to the personal relationships which might be observed both in domestic and international politics. In terms of international contacts, he developed warm relations, among others, with President Obama, former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and former Greek PM Karamanlis. As a matter of fact, the Los Angeles Times reported in October 2011 that Obama has placed more calls to Erdoğan than to any other world leader in 2011 next to British Prime Minister David Cameron.¹¹⁰ However, this personal feature of Erdoğan also reminds Turgut Özal and his close relationships with foreign leaders. For instance, Özal sought to be influential on the US policy towards Iraq in the course of the Gulf crisis through the close relationship that he had developed with President George H.W. Bush. Aras and Aliriza underlines in this regard that

“this special relationship (between Erdoğan and Obama)—akin to the one between former president George H.W. Bush and Özal—mitigated strains in 2010 caused by differences over Iran, Turkish-Israeli tensions, and the reintroduction of a congressional resolution on the “Armenian Genocide” issue, which had long bedeviled the relationship.”¹¹¹

Erdoğan is known with his emotional, ambitious and indomitable character.¹¹² He does not hesitate to fight with those who are willing to conflict with him, to set forth his final opinion in scathing terms and to burn the bridges if he deems it necessary. The most well known example in this subject is his famous reaction in the Davos forum. Reacting to the moderator of the forum and Israeli President Peres harshly, Erdoğan declared that he would never attend the Davos forum again.

Some comment on Erdoğan's personality that he has a strong antipathy against impositions. From this point, it is concluded that instead of conflicting, it is a more reasonable way to attach him the value that he deserves and get along well with him to reach better results. Prominent Turkish journalist, Alper Görmüş's words on this subject offer a good example:

¹⁰⁸ Full text of 179.verse of Koran, the Heights (Al-Aráf) sura: “Many are the Jinns and men we have made for Hell: They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle,- nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning).”

¹⁰⁹ “TOBB, Somali’ye yardım çekini Başbakan’a sundu,” **Yeni Şafak**, 09.09.2011, accessed 28.09.2011, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/Ekonomi/?i=339782&t=09.09.2011> .

¹¹⁰ “Erdoğan and Obama’s phone chats reveal Turkey’s ascent,” **Today’s Zaman**, 16.10.2011, accessed 28.09.2011, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-259995-erdogan-and-obamas-phone-chats-reveal-turkeys-ascent.html> .

¹¹¹ Bülent Aliriza and Bülent Aras, “U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning of the Third Decade of the Post-Cold War Era,” A Joint Report by Center for Strategic Research (SAM) and Center for Strategic&International Studies (CSIS), (November 2012): 7.

¹¹² Daniel Dombey, "Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: Supreme ambition," **Financial Times**, 2.7.2014, accessed 4.7.2014, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d4d0b1f8-005b-11e4-8aaf-00144feab7de.html#axzz374XC7Csx> .

"Such people (like Erdoğan) cannot be intimidated with menace and harshness; you get even the opposite of your expectation. You will see that he gets closer to you when you say that you respect and like him."¹¹³ (T.b.A.)

This personal quality of Erdoğan has been discovered by both internal and external actors. The success of Obama government's foreign policy understanding regarding the relations with Turkey lies to a certain extent also in the fact that Obama responded Erdoğan's efforts to establish a warm and close relationship positively and he has respected and attached Erdoğan a certain value.¹¹⁴ The genuine dialogue developed when President Obama called PM Erdoğan on occasion of Erdoğan's mother's death and that President Obama mentioned his own sorrow when his mother died are worthy of attention with respect to the warm friendship between the two leaders.¹¹⁵

As far as Erdoğan's political career concerned, he started his career in the National Outlook Movement (NOM or Milli Görüş) in 1969, which advocated the unification of Islamic countries under the leadership of Turkey and made anti-westernism an integral part of its identity. Erdoğan moved up the political career ladder steadily. Through socialization processes, his political identity underwent a certain evolution which was interpreted by him as "development."¹¹⁶ It might be argued that societal and international norms occupied central roles in the construction of Erdoğan and his close colleagues' identity as well as in their foreign policy understandings. From the perspective of transnational socialization and societal socialization concepts of constructivist approach, one might argue that demand of more democracy and conservatism which arose as a reaction to the process of 28 February (a post-modern intervention of military into politics in 1997) formed the basis of societal norms which influenced the construction of political identity of Erdoğan leadership. These social norms shared by the majority of Turkish people were adopted as the main element of Erdoğan leadership's identity and successfully converted into vote in the general elections of 2002. However, in the construction of Erdoğan leadership's identity, international norms played a more prominent role. Having suffered from the internal threat perceptions and subjected to undemocratic practices, Erdoğan leadership embarked on a quest of more democracy and freedom. At this point, international norms represented by the European Union played a more

¹¹³ Alper Görmüş, "Merkez'in yeni filmi: Yasla başını omzuma," **Taraf**, 06.01.2012, accessed 28.06.12, <http://www.taraf.com.tr/alper-gormus/makale-merkez-in-yeni-filmi-yasla-basini-omzuma.htm>. Askeri psikiyatrist Prof. Nevzat Tarhan da Görmüş ile bu konuda hemfikiridir. "Necdet Özel Paşa darbecilere ne dedi?" **Haber7**, 09.01.2012, accessed 25.09.2012, <http://www.haber7.com/haber/20120109/Necdet-Ozel-Pasa-darbecilere-ne-dedi.php>

¹¹⁴ See David Ignatius, "U.S. and Turkey find a relationship that Works," **Washington Post**, 8.12.2011, accessed 28.06.2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/us-and-turkey-find-a-relationship-that-works/2011/12/06/gIQA5UcdO_story.html. David Ignatius, the moderator of the famous Davos forum of 2009 where PM Erdoğan walked out because he thought he hadn't been given a fair chance to express his criticism of the Gaza war, defined Erdoğan in his article published in the Washington Post as "proud and sometimes hot-tempered" while he described the U.S. President as "cool and unflappable." Ignatius reported that "they (Erdoğan and Obama) have talked by phone 13 times this year (in 2011), according to the White House. The two didn't start off as friends but became so after a blunt conversation last year in Toronto. The relationship that emerged exemplifies Obama's basic formulation of "mutual respect and mutual interest."... Turks agree that a real partnership was born at that meeting."

¹¹⁵"Obama'dan Erdoğan'a: Anne acısını iyi bilirim," **Zaman**, 05.11.2011, accessed 28.06.2012, http://www.zaman.com.tr/dunya_obamadan-erdogana-anne-acisini-iyi-bilirim_1198811.html

¹¹⁶ "Değişmedim geliştirdim," **Hürriyet**, 10.08.2002, accessed 28.06.2012, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/printnews.aspx?DocID=90463>. "İmam Bildiğini Okudu," **Milliyet**, 24.08.2001

significant role in the construction of Erdoğan leadership's identity.¹¹⁷ In the following paragraphs, I attempt to elaborate how this socialization process took place.

Political approach of the Erdoğan leadership, which comes from the anti-western Islamic NOM evolved towards the centre of political spectrum owing to its experiences throughout its the political life. Political parties of NOM (i.e. National Order Party, National Salvation Party, Welfare Party and Virtue Party), frequently subjected to closure and this pushed Erdoğan and his friends to review their anti-western stance and their posture vis-à-vis the modern/western values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law which eventually resulted in their adoption of these values as integral part of their identities.¹¹⁸ Erdoğan and his friends, who broke away from NOM political line which was excluded several times by the laicist-statist structure from the political landscape, realized that they could survive exclusively in a country, where a real democracy functions and human and political rights are abided.¹¹⁹ Additionally, non-isolationism or openness to the world and integration with the West (i.e. the EU) has been viewed as further preconditions for survival in Turkish politics.¹²⁰ Dağı explains the evolution process of Islamic identity of AK Party leadership as follows:

“... Islamic political identity was traditionally built in opposition to the West, western values and, equally important, to the history of westernization in Turkey. Yet pro-Islamic politicians of the late 1990s, most of whom have joined the JDP, realized that they needed the West and modern/western values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in order to build a broader front against the Kemalist center, and to acquire legitimacy through this new discourse in their confrontation with the secularist establishment. In the face of pressures originating from the military’s adamant opposition to the Islamists, which influences attitudes of the judges, high state bureaucracy as well as mainstream secular media, they realized the legitimizing power and the virtue of democracy which turned out to be a means to highlight “people power” vis-à-vis the state power. They knew that they could survive only in a country that was democratically oriented, respecting civil and political rights, and moreover integrated further into the western world, particularly the EU. This discursive turn, speaking the universal language of political modernity instead of Islam’s particularities, also served to justify the presence of an Islamic political identity.”¹²¹

In other words, as a consequence of their both societal and transnational socialization processes, whereas Erdoğan and his associates kept their ties with Islam in the social realm, they abandoned it as a political program.¹²² In the construction of AK Party’s identity, along

¹¹⁷ Kemal İnat and Burhanettin Duran “AKP Dış Politikası:Teori ve Uygulama” (AKP Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice,” in Zeynep Dağı, *Doğudan Batıya Dış Politika AK Parti’li Yıllar*, (Foreign policy from the West to the East: AK Party years) (Ankara: Pozitif Matbaacılık, 2006), 24-25.

¹¹⁸ Ömer Çaha, Turkish Election of November 2002 and the Rise of “Moderate” Political Islam,” *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Volume 2, Number 1, (Fall 2003): 103-107

¹¹⁹ İhsan D. Dağı, “Transformation of Islamic Political Identity in Turkey: Rethinking the West and Westernization,” *Turkish Studies Vol 6*, No 1, (2005): 12-13.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 8-9. Philip Robins, “Between the EU and the Middle East: Turkish Foreign Policy under the AKP Government, 2002-2007,” ISPI (ISTITUTO PER GLI STUDI DI POLITICA INTERNAZIONALE) Working Papers, WP 11, (Milano 2007): 5

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 12-13

¹²² *Ibid.*, 11. In response to the critiques whether or not he had changed, Erdoğan addressed in a press conference in 2001 and stated that he had not changed in the sense that he was still proud of subscribing to the values of civilization and history of his countrymen and the moral values that he and his party wish to inject into politics. However, he also expressed that changing, i.e. drawing lessons from past experience, is a virtuous act. As an example in this respect, he mentioned that he now supports Turkey’s entry into the European Union. “Vize

with societal norms, international norms played central roles and in the end, coupled with their traditional values, modern/western values like democracy, human rights, liberalism and the rule of law became an integral part of the AK Party identity.¹²³ Therefore, it might be claimed that, Erdoğan and AK Party leadership's identity resembles to Özal's identity in the sense that they both share a pious Muslim identity as well as international norms such as democracy, liberalism and respect for human rights acquired as a result of various socialization processes.

Erdoğan's westernism, on the other hand, does not carry an inferiority complex, yet rather a unique self confidence. Just like Özal, Erdoğan based Turkey-West relations on a more equal ground.¹²⁴ Being proud of the positive sides of his own civilization, PM Erdoğan emphasizes in an interview that Turkey should have taken science as well as other developments and beauties of the West saying:

“...everything that the western world does is not necessarily right. We work on adopting the science of the west. We work on adopting whatever has been developed and whatever is beautiful in the west. But let's not forget there are really beautiful things in the east, as well. Do not leave the eastern parts of the world aside. We're always running after science, after intellect, we seek out knowledge from whichever part of the world that is most of that, then we extract and adopt it.”¹²⁵

This self-confident stance of Erdoğan vis-à-vis the West facilitated a multidimensional foreign policy in the course of the AK Party governments. That is, rather than being a strict admirer of the west and focusing on a strictly westward looking FP, Erdoğan leadership sought to develop alternatives by employing Turkey's respective cultural and historical assets.¹²⁶

In terms of foreign policy, owing to its Islamist identity, Erdoğan leadership first left aside the traditional ultra secularist point of view to foreign policy issues and took into account of Turkey's historical and cultural ties. Furthermore, Erdoğan leadership's Islamist roots helped it develop closer cultural, diplomatic and economic links with the Arab Middle East and the Muslim world in general.¹²⁷ A conspicuous example which demonstrates the reflection of Erdoğan leadership's conservative-democrat identity on the policy field was witnessed during a polemic between PM Erdoğan and the leader of the main opposition party leader, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. PM Erdoğan replied Kılıçdaroğlu's criticism that "he was discriminating Turkey as religious and faithless" with these words:

"Mr. Kılıçdaroğlu, are you expecting from us, from a party with conservative-democrat party identity, to raise an atheist generation?.. Yet we have no goal of this kind. We are going to raise a conservative-democrat generation which will adopt and back the values and the

almam,” 24.08.2001, **Hürriyet**, accessed 13.01.2012,
<http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=11836>

¹²³ As Çaha puts it, “the AK Party's identity was framed by three sources, namely traditional values, international norms and the official institutions, particularly secularism, brought to life by the Republican regime.” Çaha, "Turkish Election of November 2002 and the Rise of 'Moderate' Political Islam," 108.

¹²⁴ See: Heper and Toktaş, "Islam, Modernity, and Democracy in Contemporary Turkey," 163

¹²⁵ Interview with PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan by Fareed Zakaria in CNN TV Channel, 25.09.2011, accessed 27.09.2011, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1109/25/fzgps.01.html>

¹²⁶ Aras and Akpınar advocate also that a change in the identity of actors and in domestic politics trigger a transformation process in the demands and perceptions of policy makers and bring about a new understanding. Aras and Akpınar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Davutoğlu Dönemi: 2009 Değerlendirmesi," 16.

¹²⁷ Öniş, "Multiple Faces of the “New” Turkish Foreign Policy," 57.

principles stemming from the history of its nation, homeland. We are working for this."¹²⁸
(T.b.A.)

As it can be comprehended from this statement, AK Party leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan publicly uttered the influence of the AK Party identity on party politics. Therefore, the reflection of Erdoğan leadership's 'conservative' and 'democratic' identity on its foreign policy should be seen as a natural consequence.

Similarly, the Islamist side of Erdoğan leadership's identity has been a considerable facilitator to establish close relations with the Arab people and in some cases with Arab countries. As Öniş points it out “arguably, a more secular government led by the Republic People’s Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, the CHP), for instance, would not have experienced the same degree of popularity in the Arab or Muslim worlds.”¹²⁹ On the other hand, however, despite the significant credentials of Erdoğan and AK Party in general, one should not perceive their Islamic roots as the main driving force behind their foreign policy.¹³⁰ Therefore, claiming that Erdoğan leadership looks at the foreign political issues solely through religious lenses would be misleading and this would be only a little part of the whole story.

In a nutshell, one might conclude that Özal and Erdoğan share the quality of being devout Muslims. Moreover, notwithstanding they underwent various socialization processes; they acquired similar international norms such as democracy, human rights and liberalism. However, the fact that Özal and Erdoğan were nurtured from different sources in the process of transnational socialization has significant implications in terms of their foreign policy understandings. For example, in the post-cold war period, Özal remained under the influence of hard power policy represented by the USA.¹³¹ On the contrary, Erdoğan was affected by the compromise and cooperation-oriented soft power policy represented by the “core Europe.”¹³² Those norms strongly affected the foreign policy orientations of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships especially during the Gulf War in 1991 and in the operation on Iraq in 2003 respectively. Since this issue will be discussed in the next chapter, I do not elaborate it here.

Before starting to deal with the foreign policy paradigm of the Erdoğan leadership, it must be underlined that theoretical roots of this new foreign policy understanding of the Erdoğan leadership might be found in the ideas of Ahmet Davutoğlu, former chief advisor to the Prime Minister (2002-2009) and the foreign minister since May 2009. He is widely known as the intellectual architect of the new TFP; therefore, one has to read his ideas correctly with respect to Turkey’s geographical and historical “depth” in a post-Cold War environment so as to make an accurate analysis of recent TFP. Thus, his ideas will be significantly employed in the coming part.

¹²⁸ “Dindar bir gençlik yetiştirmek istiyoruz,” **Hürriyet**, 01.02.2012, accessed 02.03.2012, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/19819295.asp>. For similar explanations of Deputy PM, Bekir Bozdağ, see also Deniz Güçer’s Interview with Bekir Bozdağ, **Vatan**, 04.02.2012

¹²⁹ Öniş, "Multiple Faces of the “New” Turkish Foreign Policy," 57.

¹³⁰ F Stephen Larrabee, “The New Turkey and American-Turkish Relations,” *Insight Turkey* Vol.13, No:1, (2011): 3.

¹³¹ As to the US influence on Özal, Sayari writes: “Compared to other contemporary Turkish political leaders, Özal was much more favorably disposed towards the United States and the US role in world affairs.” Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 18.

¹³² For a valuable analysis of the impact of the EU norms on Turkish foreign policy, see Meltem Müftüler--Baç and Yaprak Gürsoy, "Is There a Europeanization of Turkish Foreign Policy? An Addendum to the Literature on EU Candidates," *Turkish Studies*, 11:3, (2010): 405-42

3.2.3. Foreign Policy Paradigm of the Erdoğan Leadership

3.2.3.1. Intellectual roots

There is a consensus that Ahmet Davutoğlu has played a significant role in the new orientation of TFP first as the man behind the scenes and as foreign minister since 2009. In his major studies,¹³³ Davutoğlu reevaluates the post-Cold War international system, underscores the geographical and historical depth of Turkey and sets a new vision for it. Since this new vision has been seen as compatible by the AK Party leadership with its own policy line, particularly by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Abdullah Gül, Davutoğlu enjoyed the chance to have a determining role in the AK Party foreign policy.¹³⁴ Consequently, as Aras notes it,

“the new foreign policy took form under the impact of Davutoğlu’s re-definition of Turkey’s role in the neighboring regions and in international politics, namely its “strategic depth,” with frontiers that have expanded beyond the homeland in the cognitive map of policymaker’s minds.”¹³⁵

The concept of “Strategic Depth” was firstly introduced in 2001 by Professor Ahmet Davutoğlu in his seminal book, which was published with the same title. Davutoğlu’s core argument is that geopolitical, geo-cultural and geo-economic components form the basis of strategic depth and it is these two invariable assets, namely geo-strategic location and historical depth, which determines the value of a nation in world politics.¹³⁶ In this respect, Turkey with its unique geographical position and rich historical legacy of the Ottoman Empire enjoys a great potential.

With respect to the geographical position of Turkey, Davutoğlu argues that in north-south direction, two land transition zones (Balkans and the Caucasus) connecting Eurasian central land mass to warm seas and Africa, and a sea transition zone (Bosporus and Dardanelles) intersect on Turkey and connect these zones to the geo-economic center of resources in the Middle East and Caspian region. In the east-west direction, on the other hand, the Anatolian peninsula is the most important part of strategic peninsula belts surrounding the Eurasian continent. As a result of these geopolitical qualities, the Anatolian peninsula has always been a candidate for being a political power center. It is a matter of exception that Anatolian/Balkan axis became a peripheral/passive element to another political power center.¹³⁷ Meanwhile, Davutoğlu discusses that Turkey is not an island state, like the USA or Japan or England. It cannot withdraw into its own boundaries. Its geography has a depth, for example, Turkey’s borders with Syria or Iraq lack of geographical meaning. There is no other period in the history that Urfa and Aleppo stayed so far away from each other. Similar determinations might be done for the Caucasian and Thracian borders as well.¹³⁸

¹³³ Ahmet Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, (Strategic Depth), (İstanbul: Küre yayınları, 2001). Ahmet Davutoglu *Küresel Bunalım* (Global Depression), (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2002).

¹³⁴ Bülent Aras, “Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy,” 3.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹³⁶ Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 551-552. See also, İbrahim Kalın, “Strategic Depth at Work,” *Today’s Zaman*, 13.8.2009, accessed 15.10.2010, <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-183835-strategic-depth-at-work.html>. Joshua W. Walker, “Learning strategic depth: implications of Turkey’s new foreign policy,” *Insight Turkey*, Volume 9, Number 3 (July-September 2007).

¹³⁷ Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 116.

¹³⁸ Davutoglu, *Küresel Bunalım*, 178-179.

In connection with historical legacy, Davutoğlu contends that history and geography are two invariables that cannot be changed in the short or middle term. A society cannot change its geography when it is troubled by its neighbors. Nor cannot one make a denial of historical heritage. Even if one does, it has no meaning in the eyes of others. However, invariables are not necessarily static, they can be reevaluated. During the Cold War, the world was mainly separated into two camps and countries on Turkey's scale could not afford to develop cross-border policies, because, Turkey's east borders were also the borders of the NATO. The post-Cold War era brought about new opportunities as well as new responsibilities. Even though Ankara seeks to build walls between Turkey and the Middle East, it cannot completely turn its back on the regions that it has cultural or historical links. Any trouble in these geographies concerns Turkey. When Bosnians, for instance, confront a problem, they come most intensively to Turkey, but not to another country.¹³⁹

In view of Turkey's geographical and historical characteristics, Davutoğlu defines Turkey both geographically and historically as a central country.

“In terms of geography, Turkey occupies a unique space. As a large country in the midst of Afro-Eurasia's vast landmass, it may be defined as a central country with multiple regional identities that cannot be reduced to one unified character. Like Russia, Germany, Iran, and Egypt, Turkey cannot be explained geographically or culturally by associating it with one single region. Turkey's diverse regional composition lends it the capability of maneuvering in several regions simultaneously; in this sense, it controls an area of influence in its immediate environs.”¹⁴⁰

Davutoğlu further argues that today Turkey can be viewed neither in the periphery of the European Union nor in the periphery of the Middle East. It is a centre mainly due to its special geopolitical position and its Ottoman heritage.¹⁴¹ Contrary to other states in the region, Turkey is simultaneously Middle Eastern, Balkan, Caucasus, Black Sea and Mediterranean state. Hence, Turkey has several regional identities which cannot be reduced to a single one. Its unique geographic position grants Turkey European, Middle Eastern and Asian identities at the same time and the opportunity to be active in all these regions. Moreover, anything around Turkey cannot be comprehended without it. History of Turkey's neighboring countries such as Greece or Bulgaria cannot be written without Turkey.¹⁴² Its cultural and political economic borders are far wider than its political borders and it cannot be confined to its political borders. Therefore, it has to develop cross-border policies,¹⁴³ particularly towards Ottoman geography and towards the Muslim societies.

Davutoğlu further claims that Turkey cannot be defined any more with the regional power discourse of the Cold War era. It is a “central country” and moving forward on the way of becoming a global player. It has to act as its “depth” requires, otherwise it would lose. Globalization and external factors have changed Turkey's position so excessively that Turkey cannot survive any longer with the status quo. It cannot follow an isolation policy like the

¹³⁹ Ibid., 180-184.

¹⁴⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey's New Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007,” *Insight Turkey* 10, No.1 (2008): 78.

¹⁴¹ Speech of Ahmet Davutoglu “New Horizons and New Opportunities in Turkish Foreign Policy, Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD), İstanbul, accessed 11.12.2007, <http://www.musiad.org.tr/detay.asp?id=156> . Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 556, 563.

¹⁴² Davutoglu, *Küresel Bunalım*, 191.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 178-179. Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 553.

USA or Japan. If it tries to isolate itself, its territorial integrity might fall under threat because of internal discussions and tensions.¹⁴⁴ This is why; Turkey should re-discover its geographic and historical identity, re-gain its self-confidence, recognize its historical and cultural roots in the neighboring regions and seek a balanced relationship with all global and regional actors.¹⁴⁵

It should be noted that whereas Özal defined Turkey as a “bridge”, Davutoğlu defines it as a “central” country. In spite of the fact that they have different starting points, their conclusions are quite similar. Both argue that Turkey ought to follow an active, multidimensional foreign policy due to its unique geographical character. Likewise, Özal and Davutoğlu view a positive correlation between Turkey’s weight in the East and the West, thus regard developing relations with the East necessary. Nonetheless, they do not consider developing relations with the East as an alternative to the West, yet as complementary to Turkey’s traditional foreign policy orientation. They both regard the end of Cold War as a chance for Turkey and agree that isolation is not an option for Turkey. On the other hand, there are also some dissimilarity concerning Özal and Davutoğlu's concepts. For instance, while Özal also takes into account of geographical and historical assets of Turkey, he pays attention not to run counter to the U.S. on significant issues, that is, he was targeting to be an influential actor under the protective umbrella of the U.S. Davutoğlu advocates a relatively more “independent” foreign policy by defining Turkey as a central country.

3.2.3.2. Reflection of Davutoğlu’s ideas to the AK Party Program and Government Programs

Before reviewing foreign policy principles of the Erdoğan leadership, one should review how Ahmet Davutoğlu’s ideas, reflected to the AK Party program and to the AK Party governmental programs.¹⁴⁶ In fact, once reading the programs, one can draw many parallels between the ideas of Davutoğlu, and party program and governmental programs of the AK Party, including the 58th, 59th, 60th and 61st governments. For instance, Davutoğlu’s ideas such as the reassessment of the new conjuncture in the post-Cold War World, the need to reevaluate Turkey’s position in this new environment and the goal to keep pace with it have been included in the programs of the 58th, 59th, 60th and 61st governments as well as in the party program of the AK Party. Furthermore, an emphasis on Turkey’s historical and geographical depth, a proactive foreign policy need and goal as well as a visional foreign policy has been explicitly utilized in the party and governmental programs. Likewise, a multi-dimensional foreign policy (along with Atlantic and European dimensions of foreign policy, increasing efforts to develop a Eurasian oriented policy) might be called as a further point underscored in the governmental programs and party program. Historical responsibilities of Turkey stemming from historical and cultural ties with the Middle East, Balkans and the Caucasus, the aim to develop relations with these regions particularly on economic ground and a close interest in the problems of these regions are commonly underlined in the governmental programs and in the party program too.

¹⁴⁴ Davutoglu, Küresel Bunalım, 156. Davutoglu, Stratejik Derinlik, 217-218.

¹⁴⁵ Gürbey, "Wandel in der Türkischen Aussenpolitik," 5. Davutoglu, Stratejik Derinlik, 545.

¹⁴⁶ Text of the AKP Party program can be reached at the official website of the party in English, accessed 21.10.2011, <http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme>. Text of government programs of AK Party can be found in Turkish in the website: www.belgenet.com (accessed 21.10.2012).

Considering the below mentioned foreign policy principles, it ought to be noted that these principles were stipulated by Davutoğlu as the foreign minister of Turkey and it can be also found out that proactive and pre-emptive foreign policy, rhythmic diplomacy, “zero problem policy” and maximum cooperation/economic integration with neighbors, balanced relations with all global and regional players (i.e. the EU, US, Russia, China, Muslim World, Arab World) are virtually common principles of all governmental programs and the party program.¹⁴⁷

Therefore, one may conclude that his ideas have been to a large extent adopted by the AK Party governments and, that Davutoğlu has left his mark on recent TFP as the prevailing conviction proposes.

3.2.3.3. Principles of the new Turkish foreign policy

3.2.3.3.1. Two “balances”

Considering popular discussions about TFP, Davutoğlu stresses two “balances”. First balance refers to the idea that Turkey should develop a balanced relationship with all global actors which is relevant to axis shift debates on Turkey’s new foreign policy orientation. The second one relates to the balance between democracy and security in terms of internal politics.

1. Davutoğlu’s vision suggests a multidimensional approach to foreign policy. Though the recent TFP attracts criticism that Turkey shifts its axis from the West towards the East, Davutoğlu views developing relations with the Muslim world and with other regional organizations as complementary to the new Turkish strategy, but not an alternative to Turkey’s current relations with the EU or the USA.¹⁴⁸ As such, improving relations with Russia should be viewed neither as an alternative to relations with the EU nor to the relations with the United States.¹⁴⁹ In this regard, developing relations with the Islamic world and assuming an active role in regional organizations such as the BSEC or ECO matter both strategically and political economically, which would also strengthen Turkey’s position in the eyes of the EU and other power centers.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ For the impact of Davutoğlu vision on foreign and security elites as well as on the government authorities see also, Aras and Akpınar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Davutoğlu Dönemi: 2009 Değerlendirmesi," 26-27.

¹⁴⁸ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 281. As a matter of fact, with respect to the axis-shift discussions, Davutoğlu argues in his address in SETA Washington D.C. (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research) in December 2009 that Turkey has assumed a more active role in the NATO during the AK Party administration and increased its contributions to the NATO. Moreover, according to him, Turkey has achieved more progress in the same period in comparison with the past 40 years. As a result, he underscores that he sees no good intention regarding the axis-shift accusations. "Adress by H.E. Foreign Minister of Republic of Turkey Ahmet Davutoğlu," (addressed at SETA Foundation's Washington DC Branch, December 8, 2009, 12.15pm EST) accessed 01.08.2011, <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/14808.pdf>. More recently, Foreign Minister Davutoğlu has complained about claims that AK Party was following neo-Ottomanist aspirations: "In fact we smooth the way for a great regional restoration. When we say that, they call us "neo-Ottomanist." Do you know why they say that? In order to provoke some nations in the Middle East and Balkans against us. Whereas the whole Europe removes the borders and becomes integrated, they are not labeled as neo-Romans or pro neo-Holy Roman-German empire. Why are we being accused and declared as neo-Ottoman, when we say that peoples who lived together until just 100 years ago should come together again?" (T.b.A.)

"Ya birlik oluruz ya da bizi lime lime parçalarlar," *Star*, 16.03.2013, p.15

¹⁴⁹ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey’s Zero-Problems Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy Magazine*, 20.05.2010, accessed 21.06.2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/20/turkeys_zero_problems_foreign_policy

¹⁵⁰ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 263-264, 280-281.

On the other hand, tense relations with the EU and its negative attitude against Turkey's EU membership rendered developing a comprehensive regional strategy inevitable. Since a uni-dimensional foreign policy towards the West would place Turkey in a dilemma, Ankara has to augment its alternatives.¹⁵¹ Consequently, Davutoğlu suggests that Turkey should replace its strictly pro-western foreign policy with a multi-dimensional one and establish balanced relations with all global actors. Similarly, Özal regards a multidimensional foreign policy essential and views developing relations with the East not as an alternative but as complementary to Turkey's western connection. Therefore, it might be suggested that roots of Davutoğlu's multidimensional approach are in the Özal era.

2. Like Özal, Davutoğlu establishes a close connection between domestic political transformation and foreign policy, and sees a balance between democracy and security as a precondition for having a chance to establish a sphere of influence in its environs. He regards this balance relevant to internal peace and highlights it as essential in order to eliminate internal political threat perceptions and underlines that democracy is Turkey's most important soft power.¹⁵² He argues that more democracy would produce more security which would emancipate the domestic political landscape increasingly from the enduring dominance of security. This case would influence foreign policy positively and strengthen the maneuverability of Turkey to a great extent.¹⁵³ This understanding constituted one of the main reasons of AK Party government's "opening" policies, particularly towards the Kurds. Furthermore, in parallel with Özal, Erdoğan defined the supra-identity of Turkish people as "Turkish citizenship".¹⁵⁴

3.2.3.3.2. "Zero problems policy" and maximum cooperation / economic integration with neighbors

Regarding the relations with the neighbors, Davutoğlu had advocated as an academician that Turkey could not develop cross-border regional or global policies so long as it experiences consistent problems with neighbors.¹⁵⁵ Hence, in order to be a player on regional and global scale, Turkey has to resolve its problems with the neighboring countries.¹⁵⁶ This logic has been reflected to the policy field with the slogan of "zero problems policy" towards neighbors. It might possibly be the most well known principle of recent TFP which envisages maintaining the best possible relationships with all of surrounding countries. In addition to the zero problems policy, Davutoğlu advances his approach one step further and aims for maximum economic and political cooperation with Turkey's neighbors.¹⁵⁷ In other words, cultivating a welfare circle in the region has become one of the significant goals of AK Party government's foreign policy. As Laçiner puts it

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 142, 550.

¹⁵² Davutoğlu, "Turkey's New Foreign Policy Vision," 79-80. PM Erdoğan shares this view of Davutoğlu by stating that "Turkey has grown together with democracy and has become one of the most respected countries of the world." "Başbakan Erdoğan'dan net açıklamalar" **Zaman.com.tr**, 21.08.2011, accessed 05.08.2011, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=1171774&title=basbakan-erdogandan-net-aciklamalar>

¹⁵³ Gürbey, "Wandel in der Türkischen Aussenpolitik unter der AKP-Regierung?," 21.

¹⁵⁴ "Kimlikte Tartışma," **Sabah**, 22.08.2005, accessed 23.09.2011, <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2005/08/22/siy107.html>

¹⁵⁵ Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 143-144.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 148-149.

¹⁵⁷ Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Zero-Problems Foreign Policy."

“Ankara wants well-being of its surrounding countries, this is clear, because well-being of them is the well-being of Turkey itself.”¹⁵⁸

However, Davutoğlu points out that while he put forward this principle, he never imagined that every single problem with neighbors would be solved. He underscores that in employing this slogan, their main goal was to achieve a mentality change in Turkey as well as to shift Turkey’s international outlook positively. Meanwhile, he makes a distinction between the regimes and peoples of neighboring countries and argues that they materialized the “zero-problems” first among the peoples of the countries not with the regimes of the neighbors.¹⁵⁹

In this context, Turkish diplomacy has witnessed a considerably dynamic process. Turkey's trade with its neighbors and nearby regions has substantially increased in recent years. In this respect, developing relations with Syria until the beginning of the so called Arab Spring in 2011 and Georgia are particularly worthy of mentioning. It might be claimed that Turkey’s level of economic relations with Russia, Iran and Georgia reached nearly a certain level of economic interdependence. Moreover, Turkey established high-level strategic council meetings with Iraq, Syria, Greece and Russia and targets to establish similar mechanisms with Bulgaria, Azerbaijan and Ukraine as well as other neighboring countries. Turkey took considerable steps in respect of abolishing visa requirements with neighbors and abolished visa requirements mutually with Syria, Tajikistan, Albania, Lebanon, Jordan, Libya, Russia and Ukraine.¹⁶⁰

Moreover, zero problems with neighbors principle of the Erdoğan leadership seems to be confirming one of the main theses of the constructivist theory, namely anarchy is what states make of it. Erdoğan leadership has put forward a policy and has aimed at the ideational level to eliminate the barriers existing and preventing good relations with neighbors. Likewise, it has sought to establish closer relations with them and thereby to establish a peace and prosperity circle around Turkey. The next step of this policy has been explained by FM Davutoğlu as commencing the integration process with the regional countries, i.e. constructing a collective identity definition with them.¹⁶¹ In this manner, Erdoğan leadership has intended to make a contribution to a peaceful environment in its region instead of an anarchic one.

Considering the Özal era, in fact, Özal did not put forward a “zero problems” vision, yet he believed that the questions with neighboring countries would be solved in parallel with developing economic relations. In this context, he attached great importance especially to improving economic relations and establishing interdependencies with neighbors. In this respect, one might contend that the Davutoğlu approach with neighbors is a kind of advanced form of the Özal's approach which was underpinned by a good theoretical background and a striking slogan.

¹⁵⁸ Sedat Laçiner, "Yeni Dönemde Türk Dış Politikasının Felsefesi, Fikri Altyapısı ve Hedefleri," in Yeni Dönemde Türk Dış Politikası, Uluslararası IV. Türk Dış Politikası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri, Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al. (Ankara: Uluslararası Stratejik Araştırmalar Kurumu (USAK) Yayınları, Şubat 2010), 13.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Ahmet Davutoğlu by the CNN Türk TV Channel, “Davutoğlu da MİT’in arkasında,” **cnnturk.com**, 18.09.2011, accessed 22.09.2011, <http://www.cnnturk.com/2011/turkiye/09/18/davutoglu.da.mitin.arkasinda/629646.0/index.html>

¹⁶⁰ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Zero-Problems Foreign Policy.”

¹⁶¹ Interview with FM Ahmet Davutoğlu by Ahmed Arpat, Yakın Plan Programı, **NTV Channel**, 12.11.2013, Ankara, accessed 15.12.2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-sayin-ahmet-davutoglu-ntv-de-yayinlanan-yakin-plan-programina-konuk-oldu-12-kasim-2013-ankara.tr.mfa>

3.2.3.3.3. Economy and civil society as a part of foreign policy

An assessment of economy and civil society as a part of foreign policy whose support is being mobilized and integrated into the process of foreign policy-conducting may be envisaged as a further principle of the AK Party foreign policy.¹⁶² In parallel with the development of economy and democracy, independent industrialists and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have increased their weight on foreign policy of Ankara to a large extent.¹⁶³ Additionally, the AK Party government cooperates with NGOs on numerous issues and regards them as a part of foreign policy and complementary to its foreign policy vision.¹⁶⁴ To list a few instances, TUSKON played a considerable role in Turkey's opening policies to Africa. TUSIAD seeks to facilitate Turkey's EU membership process through its lobby activities. MUSIAD is in search for developed relations with the Gulf countries.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, civil society is integrated into foreign policy processes, along with other channels, through think tanks and it is mobilized in international humanitarian aid campaigns as it was clearly seen in the famine catastrophe in Somalia, in the summer of 2011.

On the other hand, economic concerns have been still one of the main drivers of TFP. In fact, economy found initially a place at the top of TFP agenda during the Özal leadership. In the early 1980s, the economic model of import substitution was replaced with an export-oriented model and thereby economy became a significant item on TFP agenda. In the wake of Özal's withdrawal from the political scene in 1993, a security-based understanding dominated foreign policy and security loomed large in foreign policy-making. When İsmail Cem became FM in the second half of 1990s, economy made a comeback to the top of foreign policy agenda.¹⁶⁶ Under the rule of AK Party, economy continued to be one of the significant components of FP. Similar to Özal, Erdoğan attaches a great importance to economy. Accordingly, Turkey first needs a strong economy in order to build a robust republic and safeguard democracy.¹⁶⁷ A strong economy is also a precondition of an assertive foreign policy. One has to recognize the close connection between the spectacular economic performance of Turkish economy and its recent foreign policy activism.

Being aware of the close connection between the export-oriented development model and the pursuit of economic interest, Davutoğlu implies that economic interests are among the main foreign policy priorities of those countries which adopt export-oriented economic development model.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, in an interview in 2004, he underlines that in order to reach the political goals, political authority should cooperate with the private sector and concludes that the business world has become a primary driver of foreign policy.¹⁶⁹ Thus, speaking of economy as a main driver of recent foreign policy activism of Turkey, one should not ignore the role of economic actors. In this context, the changing interest perceptions of industrialists and the new economic actors such as the so called Anatolian Tigers are worthy

¹⁶² Gürbey, "Wandel in der Türkischen Aussenpolitik unter der AKP-Regierung?," 22.

¹⁶³ Kirişçi, "The transformation of Turkish foreign policy," 46-54.

¹⁶⁴ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 10, No. 1, (2008), 83-84.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Kirişçi, "The transformation of Turkish foreign policy," 43-45.

¹⁶⁷ Heper and Toktaş, "Islam, Modernity, and Democracy in Contemporary Turkey," 169

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 42

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Ahmet Davutoğlu "İş Dünyası artık Dış Politikanın Öncülerinden" *Turkishtime*, (April-May, 2004).

of noting.¹⁷⁰ Booming trade with neighbors cannot be comprehended without a reference to those actors. For instance, in the booming economic relations with Syria, the Anatolian industrialists and exporters played a crucial role.¹⁷¹

Finally, one should note that economic concerns lie at the center of zero-problems policy and economic cooperation approaches with neighbors. It might be considered that two goals underlie the developing interdependencies approach of the AK Party government. First, interdependence is seen as a functionalist tool for conflict resolution and peace building; second, interdependence provides markets for Turkish exports and businesses.¹⁷² It could be argued that as a strategist, Davutoğlu puts relatively more emphasis on the former dimension. Accordingly, in the course of AK Party governments, the economy has been seen as a part of security and stability policy. By improving interdependencies and a welfare circle around Turkey, the government aims for more security and stability in the region. Additionally, since Turkey has an export-oriented economy, foreign trade has been a significant component of TFP since 1980s. In order to sustain its economic growth, Turkey has needed new markets. Therefore, it has pragmatically capitalized on its historical and geographical assets and strove for revitalizing its potential in the Middle East, Balkans and Central Asia.

3.2.3.3.4. Proactive and pre-emptive peace diplomacy

This principle envisions a proactive and pre-emptive stance towards the crises, that is, it implies taking measures before crises emerge and escalate to a critical level. According to Davutoğlu, “Turkey's regional policy is based on security for all, high-level political dialogue, economic integration and interdependence, and multicultural coexistence.”¹⁷³ In conformity with this principle, Turkey undertook the mediator role between Syria and Israel and endeavored to achieve Sunni-Shiite reconciliation in Iraq. Reconciliation efforts in Lebanon and Palestine, the Serbia-Bosnia reconciliation in the Balkans, dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the reconstruction of Darfur and Somalia might be listed as further examples of pre-emptive diplomacy.¹⁷⁴ Additionally, Ankara's mediation endeavors can be also assessed in the context of AK Party leadership's sense of responsibility towards the territories which were formerly incorporated into the Ottoman imperial realm. As a matter of fact, AK Party leadership prefers viewing itself as being not just politically but also morally responsible for the events in the former Ottoman territories.¹⁷⁵

Meanwhile, in compliance with a proactive foreign policy understanding, FM Davutoğlu underlines a vision-oriented foreign policy as a methodological principle of TFP. Accordingly, policies are conducted not with a passive and reactionary approach to international developments, but with a visionary approach that already defined before.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁰ Mustafa Kutlay, “Economy as the ‘Practical Hand’ of ‘New Turkish Foreign Policy’: A Political Economy Explanantion,” *Insight Turkey* Vol.13/No.1 (2011): 67-88.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 80-81.

¹⁷² Kirişçi, “The transformation of Turkish foreign policy,” 42. Kirişçi, based on Richard Rosecrance's notion of the “trading state” and Robert Putnam's idea of “two-level diplomatic games” classifies Turkey as a trading state. He regards economy as one of the main driving forces of the AK Party policies and regards Davutoğlu's interdependence, zero-problems and cooperation-oriented approaches as blue-print manifestations of a trading state. *Ibid.*, 42-45.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Davutoğlu's address in SETA Washington D.C

¹⁷⁵ Torbakov and Ojanen, “Looking for a new strategic identity,” 5-6.

¹⁷⁶ Davutoğlu's address in SETA Washington D.C

Proactive foreign policy is a common point of Özal and Erdoğan eras. Özal advocated that active foreign policy was indispensable especially in the wake of the Cold War and in accordance with this understanding; he pursued an active policy particularly during the Gulf War and sought to avoid the negative implications of a possible Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. Furthermore, Özal took serious initiatives in the Bosnian and Nagorno-Karabakh crises and maintained an active policy to settle the crises. Given the Erdoğan governments' encompassing and assertive efforts to settle or prevent the crises, Özal leadership's endeavors seem somewhat limited. Nevertheless, considering Özal's attitude in the course of the Gulf War and in the Bosnian and Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts, one might draw parallels between the Özal and Erdoğan eras.

3.2.3.3.5. Rhythmic diplomacy

This principle stipulates a more active involvement of Turkey in all international relations issues. Accordingly, Turkey should take an active role in all international organizations and on issues of international importance. In this framework, after almost fifty years, Turkey became once again a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council for 2009-2010 period and chaired three commissions on the council concerning Afghanistan, North Korea, and the fight against terror. By the same token, "Turkey undertook the chairmanship-in-office of the South-East European Cooperation Process, a forum for dialogue among Balkan states and their immediate neighbors, for 2009 and 2010. Turkey is also a member of G-20, maintains observer status in the African Union, has a strategic dialogue mechanism with the Gulf Cooperation Council, and actively participates in the Arab League. Turkey has also launched new diplomatic initiatives by opening 15 new embassies in Africa and two in Latin America, and is a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol."¹⁷⁷ All these examples might be appraised in the context of the rhythmic diplomacy principle.

Indeed, it may be argued that the Davutoğlu vision on this subject is more assertive than Özal's vision. Nonetheless, one might contend that the roots of the rhythmic diplomacy principle lie in the Özal era as well. As a matter of fact, under his reign, Turkey assumed an increasingly active role in the OIC. Additionally, Özal spearheaded or revitalized some regional organizations such as BSEC, ECO and Central Asian Common Market. Consequently, rhythmic diplomacy principle may be seen as an advanced extension of a policy line commenced in the Özal era too.

3.2.3.3.6. Pro-Soft power foreign policy

In addition to these principles, capitalizing on soft power might be regarded as a further principle of the Erdoğan leadership's foreign policy.¹⁷⁸ Davutoğlu underlines it as a significant methodological principle of TFP. At this point, a definition of soft power is necessary. Notwithstanding the divergent definitions in the literature, it is defined by Joseph S. Nye as the ability to attract others by the legitimacy of a country's policies and the values underlie them.¹⁷⁹ In other words, soft power is described as "a country's ability to obtain the outcomes it wants not through coercion or rewards but through its attractiveness –

¹⁷⁷ Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Zero-Problems Foreign Policy." Davutoğlu's address in SETA Washington D.C

¹⁷⁸ Gürbey, "Wandel in der Türkischen Aussenpolitik unter der AKP-Regierung?," 22.

¹⁷⁹ Joseph S. Nye, "The decline of America's Soft Power, Why Washington Should Worry," *Foreign Affairs* 83(3), (2004): 16.

specifically, through the attractiveness of its culture, political values, and policies.”¹⁸⁰ This is only possible through the ability of persuasion with convincing arguments and rational policies. Here, the ability of persuasion and persuasiveness emerge as the component of power.¹⁸¹

In this respect, it is accepted that Turkey’s soft power peaked particularly until the beginning of the "Arab spring."¹⁸² Along with its historical and cultural depth,¹⁸³ there were three basic reasons for Turkey’s rising soft power.¹⁸⁴ Its social and cultural achievements, its modernization and economic development and its political and economic stability played essential roles for Turkey’s rising soft power. Additionally, Turkey’s democracy coupled with its candidate status to the EU membership and reform process was viewed as the most important component of its soft power.¹⁸⁵

Lastly, Turkish diplomacy has recently demonstrated an increasing eagerness to interfere in the regional conflicts and to play third party roles in the management and, if possible, the resolution of them.¹⁸⁶ In its mediation endeavors, Turkey has adopted a modest and careful diplomacy, targeted to include all related actors and to form a broad coalition to solve problems. This has strengthened Turkey’s soft power in international politics. Turkish policy-makers’ sensitiveness to keep an equal distance from all actors and to avoid taking part in any regional alliances or groupings until the beginning of the Arab spring enhanced its credibility and provided Turkey a distinguished place at the international level.¹⁸⁷ Along with all-inclusive policy and equi-distance policy, its good relations with the conflicting parties in the region contributed to the soft power of Turkey.¹⁸⁸ These policies were most probably the key in Turkey’s success as regards its mediation endeavors in the Balkans (i.e. regarding the controversies between Serbs and Bosnians) and in the Middle East (i.e. Syria-Israeli peace talks¹⁸⁹ facilitated by Turkey which had made a great progress until Israel’s Gaza attack in 2008). From a constructivist point of view, the change in Turkey's domestic politics, namely advancing democratization process, determined steps taken on the way of EU membership as well as economic dynamism and development have changed the "Turkey perception" at the ideational level in the eyes of the world. Along with its material power, this reality has ideationally mounted Turkey's soft power in the world.

¹⁸⁰ Yasushi, Watanabe, Revisiting soft power. - Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, 2006, accessed 23.06.2011, <http://www.cgp.org/index.php?option=article&task=default&articleid=342>, p.1

¹⁸¹ İbrahim Kalın, “Türkiye’nin İnce Gücü” (Turkey’s Soft Power), SETA (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research), 24.02.2006, accessed 26.06.2012, <http://www.setav.org/public/HaberDetay.aspx?Dil=tr&hid=11330&q=turkiye-nin-ince-gucu>

¹⁸² See: Meliha B Altunışık, ‘The Possibilities and Limits of Turkey’s Soft Power in the Middle East’, Insight Turkey, Vol. 10, No.2, (2008): 50. Utku Ali Rıza Alpaydın, "Soft Power in Turkish Foreign Policy under the AKP Governments: 2002-2009," (Master thesis, Department of International Relations Bilkent University, Ankara, July 2010).

¹⁸³ Kalın, “Türkiye’nin İnce Gücü.”

¹⁸⁴ Bülent Aras, “Turkey’s Soft Power,” **Guardian.co.uk.**, 14.04.2009, accessed 14.10.2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/apr/13/turkey-middleeast>. See also: E. Fuat Keyman, “Turkish Foreign Policy in the Era of Global Turmoil,” SETA Policy Brief No: 39, (December 2009): 4.

¹⁸⁵ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s New Foreign Policy Vision,” 80. In an interview published by the daily newspaper **Bugün**, with respect to the roots of Turkey’s soft power, President Abdullah Gül puts special emphasis on its candidate status to the European Union. Interview with President Abdullah Gül, **Bugün**, 23.11.2011, accessed 24.11.2011, <http://www.bugun.com.tr/haber-detay/176157-abdullah-gul-den-agir-benzetme-haberi.aspx>

¹⁸⁶ Altunışık, "The Possibilities and Limits of Turkey’s Soft Power," 50.

¹⁸⁷ Aras, “Turkey’s Soft Power”

¹⁸⁸ Altunışık, "The Possibilities and Limits of Turkey’s Soft Power," 43, 50.

¹⁸⁹ "Israel-Syria confirm peace talks," **BBC**, 21.05.2008, accessed 25.06.2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7412247.stm

In comparison to the Özal era, Turkey's soft power seems one step ahead in the Erdoğan era, at least up to 2011. In this case, the dominant norms of both terms play considerable role as well. One might argue that owing to the impact of the hard power policy represented by the USA, soft power was of secondary importance in the Özal era. Moreover, due to Özal's active support for the USA in the course of the Gulf War, Turkey's prestige was shaken particularly in the Arab world; thereby Turkey's soft power was adversely affected in the region. On the contrary, Erdoğan leadership viewed soft power as a significant component of its foreign policy especially until 2011 and aforementioned factors increased Turkey's soft power to a considerable extent. Consequently, it seems that Erdoğan leadership's soft power-oriented foreign policy presented a sort of novelty.

3.2.4. Conclusion

While the Kemalist elite inclined to ignore the Ottoman legacy of Turkey, similar to Özal leadership, Erdoğan leadership has brought it once again on the table by arguing that the end of Cold War period changed the international conjuncture and brought about new opportunities as well as new responsibilities for Turkey. Several incidents in the Balkans and in the Middle East showed that Turkey can neither deny nor ignore its history. Regarding these facts, Davutoğlu re-defined Turkish identity by taking into account of Turkey's Ottoman history and its geography, and called it as a central country. Subsequently, he defined Turkey's foreign policy principles in compatible with his new identity definition and with his perception about the new conditions of the international system. Davutoğlu's ideas were widely acknowledged among the AK Party elite and thereby "new" Turkey's foreign policy has been heavily influenced by him.

Considering the common points of Özal and Erdoğan eras, one would realize that both leaders come from religious families and Islam constitutes a significant part of their identities. They both perform ritual prayers on a regular basis, their paths intersected at the Nakshibandi order of dervishes and their discourses bear the stamp of Islamic sources such as Quran and Hadith. They both have similar civilization understandings, that is, they represent an analogous line which does not deny Turkey's historical legacy stemming from the Ottoman past and share a similar point of view vis-à-vis the West. They are westernist indeed, yet in a different sense. Both consider that just as the East, the West has positive as well as negative sides. Therefore, without ignoring the "virtues" of their respective civilization, they adopt the modern/western values. Furthermore, a combination of their self-confident stances towards the West with their Islamic identities paves the way for a multidimensional foreign policy, i.e. without changing the conventional direction of Turkey; they develop alternative relations with the Muslim world and other eastern countries. Consequently, their common Muslim identities as well as their unique posture towards the western values bring them to a distinctive position.

Albeit their different socialization processes and non-identically overlapping intellectual roots of foreign policy concepts, Erdoğan and Özal leaderships share considerably similar points in terms of their foreign policy principles as well as policy practices. For example, in both terms Turkey's historical and cultural values were regarded as parts of Turkish identity. Both the responsibilities and opportunities presented by those values were taken into consideration in FP conducting, and policy makers sought to make use of them in line with their FP principles. Even though Özal defined Turkey rhetorically as a "bridge" and Davutoğlu defined it as a "central" country, they drew similar conclusions from these various definitions, namely an active and multidimensional foreign policy was indispensable for Ankara. Both considered the end of Cold War as a horizon-opening event for TFP and

subscribed to the idea that Turkey could not isolate itself from the world. Additionally, it was accepted in both eras that Turkey's weight in the West was a positive function of its weight in the east. Thus, in addition to the high profile relations with the West, developing relations with the East was viewed essential. With the words of Öniş and Yılmaz, "the Europeanization and Euro-Asian elements in Turkish foreign policy coexisted during both periods. What seems to be striking is a swing of the pendulum in the direction of Euro-Asianism in periods of disappointment and weakening of relations with the European Union."¹⁹⁰ Nevertheless, in accordance with multidimensional understanding, relations with the East were not viewed as alternative to the relations with the West or vice versa.

Under the stewardship of Özal and Eroğan leaderships, internal peace was regarded as a prerequisite of a successful foreign policy and a well functioning democracy was viewed the most important instrument to achieve internal peace. Hence, revolutionary steps were taken to this end, particularly in terms of the Kurdish question.¹⁹¹ Pursuant to the considerations that developing interdependencies in the region matters both in terms of regional peace and Turkey's economic interests, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships attached importance to the relations with neighbors. In spite of the fact that Özal did not put forward a "zero problems" vision, he was of the opinion that problems with neighbors would be solved in parallel with the booming economic relations. In this respect, he put emphasis especially on the importance of developing economic relations and establishing interdependencies with the neighboring countries. In short, underpinned with good slogans, Davutoğlu's vision of "zero problems" and "maximum cooperation/economic integration" with neighbors might be deemed as an advanced and crystallized form of Özal's approach. Additionally, economy occupied a central space in both Özal and Erdoğan governments' agendas. Export-oriented economic model commenced by Özal was firmly embraced by Erdoğan as well. With a view to increasing export of the country, like Özal, Erdoğan leadership followed active foreign policy. As Kirişçi stated,¹⁹² in both terms the concept of "trading state" was on the rise.

A proactive foreign policy has been a serious commonality of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships, in which the traditional non-interventionist foreign policy was left aside. At this point, a parallel may be drawn between Özal and Davutoğlu approaches, which aimed to spearhead international politics instead of pursuing a reactive policy line. Özal's active policy was especially in the post-Cold War term conspicuous, i.e. during the Gulf War, Bosnian and Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts. Erdoğan governments carried this proactive policy line further and assumed mediator roles in several conflict points. Reconciliation efforts between Syria and Israel, Serbians and Bosnians, Shiites and Sunnis in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan might be regarded in this respect.

¹⁹⁰ Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era," *Turkish Studies*, 10: 1, (2009): 18.

¹⁹¹ Regarding the revolutionary steps taken by Özal and Erdoğan on the Kurdish question, a prominent Turkish columnist, Ali Bulaç, underlines their Islamic identities and argues that their identities are the main source of legitimacy for their brave initiatives and one of the main lenses through which they view this issue. Ali Bulaç, "Kürtlerin acısını hissetmek!" *Zaman*, 27.10.2011, accessed 29.10.2011, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/yazar.do?yazino=1195273&title=kurtlerin-acisini-hissetmek2>

¹⁹² Kirişçi, "The transformation of Turkish foreign policy." Even though the "trading state" concept explains foreign policy practices of the Erdoğan leadership to a certain extent, it falls short of accounting for it entirely. The trading state has difficulty for example in explaining the government's close interest in the countries with whom Turkey enjoys historical and cultural connections and seeks to have an increased cooperation. This concept has also difficulty in explaining Turkey's great endeavors to settle the problems between Bosnians, Croats and Serbians in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Similarly, it seems hard to explain Erdoğan leadership's interest in the Palestine-Israel question with the "trading state" concept at the expense of having disputes with Israel and its traditional ally, the United States. Therefore, a more holistic approach is required to see the whole picture.

Erdoğan government's rhythmic diplomacy principle can be also traced back to the Özal era. As a matter of fact, for the very first time Turkey participated in the activities of ICO actively and sought to make use of it under Özal's reign. This fact materialized particularly in Turkey's endeavors in Bosnian conflict. Furthermore, he initiated or revitalized some regional organizations such as BSEC, ECO and Central Asian Common Market. As a consequence, rhythmic diplomacy might be also viewed as an extension of Özal's policies.

Additionally, Davutoğlu vision put forward a balanced approach to all global and regional actors. Though Özal envisaged also a balanced relationship with the regional and global actors because of Turkey's "bridge role", he did not give up regarding the USA as the main axis of TFP. As noted above, his ultimate goal was to install Turkey as an influential regional power under the protective umbrella of the USA. Stated differently, whilst Özal regarded the USA as the main axis of TFP, he sought to decrease Turkish dependency on the United States by improving alternative relations with other actors. On the other hand, by defining Turkey as a "central country", Davutoğlu vision has been stricter in terms of developing balanced relations with all actors. In this respect, this vision did not see the dimensions of "new" foreign policy as alternative to each other; hence, as long as the Turkish interests are concerned, it saw no harm in developing closer relations with the Middle Eastern neighbors, such as Iran and Syria, increasingly at the expense of its ties with the U.S.¹⁹³ Of course, the ideational change about the structure of international system from one polar in the last few years of the Özal era to a multi-polar system in the 2000s as well as the changing norms which did not welcome the use of hard power were decisive in the attitude of the AK Party leadership. Therefore, one might conclude that a distinctive approach of the Özal and Erdoğan leaderships concerning the relations with the United States attract attention and this might be partly explained with the diverging ideas about the role and position of Washington in world politics as well as with the changing norms of the day.

Before ending this chapter, one should underline two more common points of Erdoğan and Özal leaderships, namely their similar attitudes towards the bureaucracy and their struggle with the military tutelage. Firstly, Turgut Özal was not satisfied with the state understanding and the working tempo of the bureaucracy. He regarded it as a structure which was not able to keep up with his working pace and even being impediment to him. Özal stressed that it was politicians who were carrying the political responsibility, thus the decision-making authority should have been in their hand. Özal objected the decisive position of the bureaucracy in the state affairs which carried neither economic nor political responsibility. In this context, he made some interventions to the scope of authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Forming the Under secretariat for Treasury and Foreign Trade and linking it directly to the Prime Ministry, PM Özal narrowed the scope of authority of the Foreign Ministry and indirectly lessened the weight of bureaucrats in foreign policy making. Furthermore, he recruited a group of advisors and increased their influence in the foreign policy field. It was even claimed that "Özal's foreign policy advisors, a new generation of younger, educated technocrats such as Özdem Sanberk and Cem Duna who were attuned to his dynamic and reformist approach, were more influential than even the serving under-secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."¹⁹⁴ A similar conclusion might be reached as to the Erdoğan era as well. It is hard to claim that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has very positive ideas about the Turkish bureaucracy. As a matter of fact, he put forward the "bureaucratic oligarchy" concept and repeatedly criticized bureaucrats as those who were passive, resist every kind of change and could not keep pace

¹⁹³ Nicholas Danforth, "Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Atatürk to the AKP," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Volume 7 No.3, (Fall 2008): 91.

¹⁹⁴ Robins, *Suits and uniforms*, 55.

with the change in the world. Erdoğan declared his determination to struggle with this "bureaucratic oligarchy."¹⁹⁵ In order to overcome the bureaucratic structure in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Erdoğan pursued a similar strategy to Özal's.¹⁹⁶

Therefore, foreign policy advisors occupied a significant place in the foreign policy making processes of the Erdoğan government as well. As noted before, the role of Ahmet Davutoğlu who served first as the chief advisor of Erdoğan from 2003 until 2009 has been widely acknowledged in the literature in the "new" foreign policy understanding of the AK Party governments. This situation continued until 2009 when Davutoğlu became foreign minister. As of 2009, however, contrary to the established practices, along with the foreign ministry bureaucrats, successful people in different professions such as founders of NGOs and academicians began to be appointed as ambassadors as well.¹⁹⁷ Therefore, both the structure and the role of foreign ministry in foreign policy making have begun to alter. Consequently, both Özal and Erdoğan criticized bureaucracy for not being able to keep up with their own understanding and with their pace in the foreign policy field. Hence both have sought to give a new direction to the TFP by by-passing the foreign policy bureaucrats through an alternative "advisors cadre."

Another common point between Özal and Erdoğan eras is the role of these leaders to decrease the weight of the army in Turkish politics as well as in the foreign policy making field. The rise of Turgut Özal in foreign policy making was in parallel with the re-democratization of the country, in other words, along with the decline of the army's role in Turkish politics. As a matter of fact, Özal took substantial steps on the way of democratization of the country, played an essential role in the descending weight of the generals in foreign policy making and increased the efficiency of the civil authority in this field.¹⁹⁸ In doing this, Özal declared his "fearlessness" in the face of the allegations that the army could interfere into the government again.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ "Erdoğan 'bürokratik oligarşi'ye savaş açtı," **Hürriyet**, 10.06.2003, accessed 11.09.2011, <http://hurasiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=152343>. "Erdoğan'ın bürokratik oligarşi isyanı," **Yeni Şafak**, 09.05.2009, accessed 11.09.2011, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/Politika/?t=10.05.2009&i=185427>. "Erdoğan: Bürokratik oligarşi bir beladır," **Zaman**, 05.04.2010, accessed 11.09.2011, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=969802&title=erdogan-burokratik-oligarsi-bir-beladir>. "Erdoğan: Bürokratik oligarşi var," **Milliyet**, 21.01.2011, accessed 11.09.2011, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/erdogan-burokratik-oligarsi-var/siyaset/haberdetay/21.01.2011/1342101/default.htm>. "Geldiğimden beri en büyük kavgam," **Habertürk**, 24.09.2011, accessed 26.09.2011, <http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/672707-geldigimden-beri-en-buyuk-kavgam>.

¹⁹⁶ Erdoğan proclaimed his feelings about the traditional Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucracy most explicitly in the course of the "monşer polemic". Erdoğan heavily criticized some former ambassadors by calling them "mon cher". "Erdoğan: Monşer Geldiler, monşer gidiyorlar," **Milliyet**, 13.02.2009, accessed 11.09.2011, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/Siyaset/SonDakika.aspx?aType=SonDakika&ArticleID=1059445&Date=13.02.2009&Kategori=siyaset&b=Erdoğan:%20Monşer%20geldiler,%20monşer%20gidiyorlar>. He implied with this "moncher" concept that some diplomats were admirer of the west, they distanced themselves from their respective society and from its realities, and they were disdaining their respective people. "Monşer lafını üzerlerine aldılar," **Habertürk**, 13.09.2011, accessed 21.09.2011, <http://www.haberturk.com/gundem/haber/669205-monser-lafini-uzerlerine-aldilar>. "NATO toplantısında monşer polemği," **Zaman**, 01.02.2009, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=810488>

¹⁹⁷ "Davutoğlu to appoint another non-diplomat as ambassador," **Todays Zaman**, 11.08.2011, accessed 11.09.2011, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=253434. "Endonezya ve Myanmar Birliğine Yeni Büyükelçiler," **TRTHaber.com**, 14.01.2012, accessed 11.03.2012, <http://www.trthaber.com/haber/turkiye/endonezya-ve-myanmar-birligine-yeni-buyukelciler-24167.html>. "YÖK Eski Başkanı Büyükelçi Oldu," **TRTHaber.com**, 23.02.2012, accessed 11.03.2012, <http://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/yok-eski-baskani-buyukelci-oldu-29705.html>

¹⁹⁸ Robins, Suits and uniforms, 54-55.

¹⁹⁹ Yasemin Çelik, Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 87.

Likewise, along with the democratization of Turkey, the role of the generals in foreign policy decision-making process has relatively decreased in the Erdoğan leadership's era as well and the civil authority gained prominence once again. Erdoğan leadership has struggled also to further downgrade the weight of the military in the political landscape. In this connection for instance, unlike the widely accepted practices of the Turkish Armed Forces, PM Erdoğan interfered in the High Military Councils (Yüksek Askeri Şura) of 2011 and 2012. Consequently, a rare event took place in Turkish politics and the Chief of Staff, Işık Koşaner resigned. This was the second resignation of a Chief of Staff in the Turkish Army after Necip Torumtay who had resigned in 1990 in protest against the policies of President Turgut Özal during the first Gulf War. In a nutshell, both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships took giant steps on the way democratization of Turkey and simultaneously on the way of downgrading the weight of the Turkish Armed Forces in Turkish politics.

Eventually, one may conclude that foreign policy approaches of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships overlap to a large extent. However, it is evident that theory and practice may not always overlap owing to the realities on the ground. Though there is a consensus that Davutoğlu's ideational approach made a mark on recent TFP, in order to discover to what degree his theoretical approach influenced foreign policy applications of Turkish diplomacy, a closer and concrete analysis is necessary. Coupled with this consideration, in order to test the coherence of my aforementioned hypotheses, in the following chapters, Turkish-U.S. relations will be empirically analyzed as of early 1980s. Special emphasis will be laid on the Özal and Erdoğan eras so as to make an accurate comparison between these periods and test the hypotheses. Finally, the results of this analysis will be evaluated under the framework of the constructivist thinking.

CHAPTER 4: TURKISH-US RELATIONS: BACKGROUND AND THE ÖZAL ERA

4.1. Historical background: Outlines of Turkish foreign policy until 1980s: The traditional route

4.1.1. Intensive cooperation with the US in the security field between 1945 and 1960s

In this chapter, the roots of Turkey's strict pro-western foreign policy in the aftermath of the Second World War are discussed. Thereby, the historical development process of Ankara-Washington relations will have been handled. It seems necessary to analyze the strong alliance tradition with Washington both at the institutional level and at the practical level in order to fully account for the historical roots of Turkey-U.S. relations.

Immediately after the end of the WWII, the biggest problem of Turkish foreign policy (TFP) was its solitude. Turkey which abstained meticulously from joining the war was concerned to see the negative effects of this stance.¹ As a matter of fact, in the immediate aftermath of the War, Turkey faced a serious security threat from its northern neighbor, the Soviet Union (SU), which had made some unacceptable claims including some territorial ones. Ankara had to tackle with these Soviet demands virtually on its own and could not get easily the backup of the USA in particular and the West in general.²

The SU sought to expand its sphere of influence to the Mediterranean including Turkey.³ To this end, it did not want to extend the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality of 1925 unless its demands were fulfilled. The Soviets demanded a revision of the Soviet-Turkish border in the northeast of Turkey, permission to establish military bases on the Bosphorus and Dardanelles as well as some changes of the Montreux Strait Convention.⁴ Facing this aggressive and expansionist policies of the SU to its sovereignty, Turkey's foreign policy agenda was completely dominated by this issue and Ankara had no other choice except for asking the USA and the UK for protection.⁵ Thus, the Soviet attitude towards Turkey and need for security led to a radical change in TFP in favor of the West. In other words, due to the Soviet threat, Turkey was obliged to leave aside its traditional balance and neutrality based foreign policy and turned its face to the West.

In addition to the Soviet threat, there were, of course, other reasons with respect to Turkey's strictly pro-western foreign policy. Ideologically, Turkey had seen the West as the

¹ Nevin Yurdsever Ateş, Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası ve Hükümet Programları, in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in 21.Century), ed.İdris Bal, (Ankara: Ankara Global Araştırmalar Merkezi-Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 37.

² İlay İleri, "Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası"(Foreign Policy of Turkey), Ankara Üniversitesi Türk İnkılâp Tarihi Enstitüsü Atatürk Yolu Dergisi, (Mayıs-Kasım 2005): 378.

³ K. Inat, "Republic of Turkey," p.499

⁴ Hüseyin Bağcı and İdris Bal, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War Era: New Problems and Opportunities," in Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War, ed. İdris Bal, (Florida: Brown Walker Press, 2004), 97.

⁵ Kemal İnât, Republic of Turkey, Foreign Policy of States, in Wolfgang Gieler, Kemal Inat, Claudio Kullmann (eds), (İstanbul: Tasam Publications, 2005), 499

contemporary civilization and wanted to become an integral part of it.⁶ Therefore, as mentioned above, Westernization has been a significant determining factor of TFP as well. As Uslu notes it:

“Since the foundation of the Turkish Republic, Turkish ruling elite has believed that Turkey can reach the level of advanced countries only if it follows the path of Western countries and joins their political, economic and cultural organizations.”⁷

Nevertheless, before and during the World War II, it pursued a rather balanced foreign policy and followed basically the principle of non-interference rather than alliances. In other words, whereas a policy of Westernization in domestic affairs was obvious, its repercussions on foreign policy field were relatively limited.⁸ But, especially after 1945, when the Soviet threat arose, TFP behavior changed almost entirely. Turkish rulers turned their face to the West and attributed more importance to attaining full participation in all Western organizations than they had before attributed.⁹ Thus, in the aftermath of the WWII, Westernization became the leading philosophical principle of Turkey’s foreign policy in real terms and the developments since the War confirmed this fact to a great extent.¹⁰ Consequently, ideological aspiration of Turkey also played a determining role in Turkey’s decision. Furthermore, Turkey had needed external economic aid in order to realize its economic development and the West could meet this need of Turkey.¹¹

On the other hand, though the USA, at first, was not very willing to support Turkey against the Soviet threat, as of the beginning of 1946, the USA embarked on attaching more importance to the territorial integrity of Turkey. As the symbol of this situation, the US battle ship Missouri transported the dead body of the Turkish ambassador to the USA home to Istanbul in April 1946.¹² Moreover, “US President Truman announced that the USA would provide USD 400 million in aid and military personnel to Turkey and Greece to resist the Soviet threat.” This open US support was highly appreciated by Ankara.¹³ Furthermore, within the framework of the Marshall plan, on July 4, 1948, the US signed an agreement with Turkey in order to supply economic aid¹⁴ and Turkey received almost \$140 million economic assistance in three years.

Even though the Truman Doctrine showed that the US would not leave Turkey alone against the Soviet threat, Turkey needed an actual guarantee and that was vital for its security. Thus, when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed on 4 April 1949, Turkey expressed its will to join it. Since the early days of the alliance, Turkish policy makers demonstrated a great effort to join this alliance system and to acquire the American alliance in particular.¹⁵ In addition to countering the Soviet threat, being a NATO member would

⁶ Ateş, “Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası ve Hükümet Programları,” 37.

⁷ Nasuh Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003, The History of a Distinctive Alliance*, (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2003), 36.

⁸ Dietrich Jung and Wolfango Piccoli, *Turkey at the crossroads: Otoman Legacies and a Greater Middle East*, (London: Zed Books, 2001), 136.

⁹ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 36.

¹⁰ Bağcı and Bal, “Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War Era,” 98.

¹¹ Ateş, “Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası ve Hükümet Programları,” 37.

¹² Mehmet Gönlübol et al., “Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası,” 1919-1995 (*Turkish Foreign Policy with Events, 1919-1995*), (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 1996), 201.

¹³ Inat, “Republic of Turkey,” 499.

¹⁴ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 68.

¹⁵ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (20th Century Political History)*, (Istanbul: Alkım Yayınevi, 1999), 518.

guarantee and institutionalize the Western aid, which was fundamental for both socio-economic development of Turkey and modernization of its army. Additionally, NATO membership would confirm that Turkey was an integral part of the Western world and strengthen the organic relations with it.¹⁶

In order to be a part of the North Atlantic Pact, Turkey had to comply with the foreign policy guidelines of the US-led Western bloc. Thus, Turkey adjusted its Middle East policy to the strategies of the USA, altered its pro-Arabic stance, and recognized the state of Israel in March 1949.¹⁷ By the same token, Turkey sent a brigade to the Korean War in 1950 to assist the US forces. With 4,500-man, the Turkish brigade was the third largest contingent after the American and South Korean forces. Upon Turkish brigade's well performance and earning of high praise during the war, albeit the general hesitation and opposition within the Pact, NATO states approved the membership of Turkey mostly as a result of the US request for it.¹⁸ Eventually, Turkey joined the NATO on 18 February 1952.

During the 1950s, Turkey was inclined to see and evaluate all international events through the lenses of this organization and defined its FP in accordance with the western alliance. In conformity with the general Western policy, Ankara spearheaded a set of political and military organizations in its region.¹⁹ In order to close the gap between the NATO and CENTO, the USA and the UK wanted to establish a regional alliance in the Middle East. Turkey played a major role in the formation of this alliance and eventually the 1955 Baghdad Pact was formed between Turkey and Iraq. The UK, Iran and Pakistan joined this alliance later on.²⁰ Furthermore, Turkey pioneered another anti-Soviet alliance in the Balkans and together with Greece and Yugoslavia; it established the US-sponsored Balkan Pact.²¹ In addition to these regional alliances, Turkey signed 31 bilateral agreements on military support and cooperation with the United States between the years of 1950 and 1960.²² Although these alliances and bilateral agreements relieved Turkish policy-makers to a great extent against the Soviet threat, they resulted in strong dependence on the US. Nonetheless, Turkey sustained its efforts also for an economic alignment with the West and became a founding member of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), which was reformed into the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1961, the organization of the Marshall Plan (ERP), and the Council of Europe.²³ Moreover, Turkey applied to the European Community for membership in 1959 and the Ankara agreement whose objective was to make Turkey a full member was signed in this context in 1963.²⁴

Turkey's strictly pro-Western attitude materialized also in some certain incidents in the Middle East. Turkey fully supported the West in the Suez crisis of 1956, in the Eisenhower doctrine, in the Syrian crisis of 1957, in the Lebanese and Jordanian crises and in the Iraqi revolution of 1958. It acted just like the spokesperson of the West at the Bandung

¹⁶ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 68-69.

¹⁷ Inat, "Republic of Turkey," 499.

¹⁸ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 69. For detailed information on Turkey's entrance into NATO see: Gönlübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 1919-1995," 227-236.

¹⁹ Gönlübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 1919-1995," 311-312.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 251-268, 269.

²¹ Inat, "Republic of Turkey," 500.

²² Gönlübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 1919-1995," 235-236.

²³ Inat, "Republic of Turkey," 500.

²⁴ Bağcı and Bal, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War Era," 98.

Conference of non-aligned states in 1955.²⁵ This overdrawn pro-Western stance of Turkey strained its relations to non-aligned and some Middle Eastern states. The Baghdad Pact, for instance, discomfited Egypt and Syria and they took a strong line against it. Turkey and other members of the Pact were accused of serving imperialist interests. Egypt which aimed to be the leader of the Arab world saw the pact as a Western attempt to split the Arab world.²⁶

Ankara's attitude in the Bandung Conference is also worthy of attention to comprehend its foreign policy approach until early 1960s. Turkish policy-makers did not accept the non-alignment as a foreign policy stand and chose the commitment to the West as the best way for Turkey's national interests.²⁷ Thus, it became a promoter of Western foreign policy goals. Within this framework, in the Bandung Conference, Turkey sided with the small group of states that rejected the idea of non-alignment, acted just like an envoy of the West²⁸ and requested the non-aligned countries to join the anti-communist alliance. As a result of this stance, Turkey was considered by some non-aligned countries as a herald of Western colonialism.²⁹

4.1.2. Fluctuating relations with the USA and search for new alternatives from early 1960s until 1980s

Owing to the Soviet threat during the years of 1945-46, Turkey built its foreign policy philosophy upon the principle of full affiliation with the West almost at any price. Hence, joining the economic, political as well as the security organizations established in the West had been one of the most basic foreign policy priorities of Turkey.³⁰ In the course of 1945-1960, Turkey experienced very close relations with the West, especially with the United States and a positive trend in the relations was obvious. In this term, Turkey adjusted its foreign policy to the strategies of the U.S and pursued a firmly pro-Western foreign policy.³¹ However, as from 1960s, some fluctuations and crises began to emerge in the relations of these two countries. The main reason of these crises and fluctuations in the Turkish-U.S. relations between 1960s and 1980s has been the Cyprus issue. In fact, in this term, the Cyprus issue constituted the fundamental axis of TFP and its activities on other fields established upon it.³²

Due to its strictly pro-Western foreign policy, Turkey ignored other policy alternatives almost entirely and exaggerated the alignment with the West immoderately. For instance, Turkey did not give support to the independence of Algeria at the UN, which had been ruled by the Ottomans for several centuries and with whom Ankara enjoys strong historical and cultural ties. Instead, it gave a boost to France by declaring that France and Turkey would be NATO partners. However, though being NATO partner with France as well, Greece did not refrain from voting for Algeria. As a consequence, Turkey experienced difficulty in getting the support of Islamic countries on the Cyprus issue at the UN and several of them did not

²⁵ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 72. Mehmet Gönlübol, "NATO and Turkey," in *Turkey's Foreign Policy in Transition: 1950-1974*, ed. Kemal H. Karpat, (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1975), 47-48.

²⁶ Inat, "Republic of Turkey," 500.

²⁷ Gönlübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 1919-1995," 312.

²⁸ Jung and Piccoli, *Turkey at the crossroads*, 138.

²⁹ Inat, "Republic of Turkey," 500.

³⁰ Gönlübol et al., "Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası," 1919-1995," 311.

³¹ İdris Bal, *Turkis-USA Relations and the Impacts of 2003 Iraq War*, *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War*, ed. İdris Bal, (Florida: Brown Walker Pres, 2004), 119.

³² Armaoğlu, *20.Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, 783.

side with Turkey on this issue. The danger of almost total identification with Western policies that Turkey had previously displayed became obvious owing to the famous ‘Johnson Letter’ of June 5, 1964, which eventually became the cornerstone of TFP.³³ In this shocking letter, US President Johnson not only warned Ankara not to intervene in Cyprus, but also declared that the United States would not permit Turkey to use any U.S.-supplied military equipment for a Turkish intervention in Cyprus. Additionally and most importantly, Johnson stated that if Turkey takes a step, in case of a Soviet attack, it could not hope for NATO protection. The Turks were shocked and disappointed because they had based all their security on the guarantee provided by the NATO and had paralleled their foreign policy almost entirely with the foreign policy of the U.S. However, now doubts began to emerge as to the credibility of the NATO umbrella in case of a Soviet attack.³⁴

Thus, Turkish policy-makers began to demonstrate effort to diversify TFP and reduce the dominance of the United States in foreign politics.³⁵ Of course, these efforts were not only the result of the Johnson Letter. Relations between Turkey and the United States had already been shaken by another crisis. Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and removal of the Jupiter missiles from Turkey without consulting Ankara following an agreement between the Americans and the Soviets had already led to some doubts among the Turks about the USA.³⁶ This had signaled that Washington had kept its own security interests over its allies’ and the Turks were upset about that.³⁷ The new atmosphere in international relations since the early 1960s has been also influential in Turkey’s new foreign policy approach. Détente between the two superpowers which appeared in the aftermath of the Cuban Missiles Crises and the relatively multi-polar structure of the world during the 1960s made a positive contribution to the diversification efforts of Turkey regarding its foreign policy. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that the Johnson Letter had a triggering role in this process.³⁸

When Ankara had come to recognize the danger of its overdrawn strategic orientation towards the West, in which it sometimes appeared more pro-Western than the West itself, it sought for improving its relations with the Middle East, the Soviet Union and the developing world. Thereby, Turkish policy-makers hoped to obtain a broader international support for their foreign policy goals (e.g. gathering international support for their Cyprus policy) as well as to gain more economic benefits.³⁹ Accordingly, Ankara substantially intensified its economic ties with both the SU and the other members of the Eastern bloc.⁴⁰ Simultaneously, it abstained from blindly supporting U.S. policies in the Middle East unless it was vital to the North Atlantic Pact or had a clear humanitarian purpose. Therefore, during the 1967 Arab-Israel war, Ankara sided with the Arab countries and refused the U.S. to use Turkish bases to support Israel.⁴¹ Likewise, Turkey maintained its support for the Arab side in the course of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and voted for the 1975 UN General Assembly resolution, which condemned Zionism as a form of racism.⁴²

³³ Inat, “Republic of Turkey,” 500.

³⁴ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 74-75.

³⁵ Udo Steinbach, *Geschichte der Türkei*, (München: C.H.Beck Verlag, 2007) 69-70.

³⁶ Bal, “Turkish-USA Relations and the Impacts of 2003 Iraq War,” 119.

³⁷ Armaoğlu, *20.Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, 819-820.

³⁸ Gönübol et al., “Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası,” 1919-1995,” 492-493.

³⁹ Graham E.Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey As A Pivotal State in The Muslim World*, (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2008), 39.

⁴⁰ Inat, “Republic of Turkey,” 500.

⁴¹ Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic*, 39-40.

⁴² Inat, “Republic of Turkey,” 501.

Turkish intervention in Cyprus on 20 July 1974 marked another significant stage in the Turkish-U.S. relations. When the Greek junta-backed EOKA, the Greek-Cypriot terror group, carried out a coup d'état and a puppet government was installed, disregarding the strong US urgings not to intervene, Ankara conducted a military intervention in the island.⁴³ This act of Turkey culminated in a considerable tension in the Turkish-U.S. relations. In December 1974, the US Congress imposed a weapons embargo on Turkey by February 1975 in case that it would continue to refuse the UN resolution on a cease-fire.⁴⁴ This embargo considerably damaged Turkish-US relations which had been relatively stabilized in the wake of 1969 US-Turkish treaty on military cooperation. Eventually, Ankara announced to abolish this military cooperation agreement and put all American bases under its control.⁴⁵ Briefly saying, 1974 Cyprus intervention of Turkey and the consequent US embargo on Turkey constitutes another cornerstone which strengthened the searches of the Turks to diversify their foreign policy and distanced Turkey somewhat from the US.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the question of Peace Corps and of poppy cultivation as well as the problems arising from the US military personnel in Turkey constituted the main outlook of bilateral relations up to 1980s.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, all these problematic issues notwithstanding, Turkey's disengagement from the Western alliance did not encompass the institutional/structural relations and remained very partial and uncertain during the 1970s.⁴⁸

4.1.3. Conclusion

Foreign policy behavior of Turkey in the aftermath of the WWII parallels with the self and other perceptions. Once the Soviet Union began to threaten the sovereignty of its neighbor, Turkey changed its self-other perceptions and began to define its security policy with the West collectively. As mentioned in the Chapter 1, reciprocity matters in terms of collective identity formation. Turkey's attempts reciprocated by the West and thereby, the process completed successfully. Besides, as constructivists put it, actors, i.e. Turkey and the SU, constructed each other mutually. Notwithstanding the fact that the Turks and Russians had been in struggle for centuries, immediately after the formation of Turkish Republic, they established good relations and maintained it for a few decades. However, these good relations are dependent on the steps that actors take against each other. In our case, the Soviets embraced a threatening stance against Turkey as of the end of the Second World War. In retaliation, Ankara adopted a defensive strategy and asked the USA and the UK for help. Thereby, mutual construction process was completed for that time. As a result, as constructivists discuss, Turkey and the Soviet Union constructed each other mutually.

On the other hand, Turkey was firmly loyal to its alliance with the West and ignored other foreign policy alternatives. However, as of the beginning of the 1960s, because of some events that had taken place in the international field, such as the Cyprus issue and Jupiter missiles crisis, Turkey gradually realized that the West and particularly the United States was not so enthusiastic to reciprocate Turkey's attempts to define its foreign policy in line with its

⁴³ George S. Harris, "Turkish-American Relations Since the Truman Doctrine," in *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present and Futures*, eds. Mustafa Aydın and Çağrı Erhan, (London: Routledge, 2004), 72.

⁴⁴ Inat, "Republic of Turkey," 501.

⁴⁵ Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, 824.

⁴⁶ Harris, "Turkish-American Relations Since the Truman Doctrine," 72.

⁴⁷ Çağrı Erhan, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkilerinin Mantıksal Çerçevesi" (The Logical Framework of Turkey-US Relations), in *21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası* (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21. Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 142.

⁴⁸ William M. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), 162.

alliances. This is why Turkey began to search for other alternatives –or at least counterweights- and slight changes in TFP occurred.

4.2. Turkey-U.S. relations during the Özal era

4.2.1. Introduction

Since the end of the World War II, Turkish-U.S. relations have always been special. Soviet demands from Turkey right after the WWII forced Ankara to search for an alignment with the U.S.-led counter block. Along with security needs, pro-western ideological stance of the state elite and Turkey's need for the economic and military aid of the Western Block might be regarded as further reasons pushing Turkey towards the West. On the other hand, Turkey's significant strategic importance to the US strategic interests in the Middle East, its contribution to the NATO at global level and the western willingness to keep Ankara in the Western Block with the intention of not losing prestige against the Soviet camp were the reasons why the US has been eager to forge close relations with Turkey.⁴⁹ In this context, whereas Turkey opened its territory for the American and NATO military bases which provided major strategic advantage against the communist bloc, the U.S. provided economic and military aid for its strategically pivotal ally.

Attempting to constitute an analysis framework for the Turkish-American relations, Gözen argues that two major factors have always been decisive.⁵⁰ Generally speaking, the set of structural and institutional factors form the first part which can be viewed as the fundamental dynamic of bilateral relations. At the institutional level, Turkish-American relations have depicted a strong continuity. Turkey's NATO membership, its relations with the IMF and the World Bank, its political and diplomatic role stemming from the United Nations membership and lastly the US sphere of influence policy in the regions around Turkey constitute the most important elements of these determinants which served to the continuity of the relations. Secondly, those national and international cyclical/periodical developments have been determinant on bilateral relations. Periodic developments at national and international levels, governmental changes in Ankara and Washington and the new foreign policy approaches of those governments might be regarded in this context. Whereas changing conjunctures have brought about sometimes an overlap of interests and policies of the two countries, they have caused at other times tensions and conflicts.⁵¹

It should be underscored that in spite of the fluctuating relations because of periodical developments especially as of early 1960s, Turkey-US relations have remained considerably stable and have not experienced serious zigzags in the institutional dimension. For example, Ankara's Cyprus policy was not approved by the White House and its reaction to Turkey's policies and initiatives was considerably sharp. However, while bilateral relations fluctuated from time to time seriously (as it was seen in the Cyprus dispute), these actions and reactions have not brought about alterations in bilateral relations at the institutional/structural level. As

⁴⁹ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 254. See also Şaban Kardeş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s: Revisiting the Basic Parameters of Partnership?" *Perceptions*, Volume XVI, Number 3, (Autumn 2011), 26-28.

⁵⁰ Ramazan Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," *Perceptions*, Volume XV, Number 3-4, (Autumn-Winter 2010), 49-77.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

such, since the concern of the Cold War calculations was in the forefront, the U.S. did not care about undemocratic developments in Turkey's domestic politics as long as these developments did not threaten to alter Turkey's foreign policy course substantially. This fact was seen in one way or another in the military coups of 1960, 1971 and 1980. In August 1960 for example, a few weeks after the military takeover of the 27th May, U.S. ambassador Avra M. Warren evaluated in a cable that the United States "intend[ed] to work with [the military government] just as loyally and faithfully as [the United States] did during the Menderes government" and that it would work with any future government to ensure Turkey's commitment to the West, "unless it is commie." Likewise, U.S. priorities were revealed in a memorandum from Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff of President Richard M. Nixon on March 25, 1971. Disregarding the oscillating Turkish democracy, Saunders focused solely on the balance of power and who possess the final word in Turkish politics. Saunders merely noted that the military leaders "[were] the final arbiters" and that the United States should now be open "to convincing the military decision makers of the urgency of the opium problem," the primary issue of concern to the United States at the time.⁵² Someone might conclude at this point from a constructivist point of view that during the Cold War the valid norm for the United States to be on the Western camp. Practicing the West oriented norms such as democracy and human rights were of secondary importance. But this situation began to change after the end of Cold War.

Gözen underlines that "Turkey's policy towards the USA was shaped more by the situations in the third countries or regions which were related to the interests of both countries than by the issues directly related to bilateral relations."⁵³ With other words, Turkey's geostrategic position compels the US to take it into account as regards the policies in the Middle East, the Caucasus, the Central Asia and Balkans. On the other hand, the direct or indirect influence of the US on these regions compels Ankara to consider and to seek the support of this super power on the regional policies.⁵⁴ Yet perspectives and foreign policy approaches of the primary actors at power in both countries have had a strong impact on the converging or diverging policy lines. For instance, during the Özal period, in addition to other factors, resemblances of policy understandings of Özal and father Bush gave rise to close cooperation in the Gulf War. Turkish-American relations experienced one of the golden ages in this period.⁵⁵

Considering the relations between Ankara and Washington as of early 1980s, transition process to multidimensionality in foreign relations of Ankara began to lose momentum and Turkish-American relations entered into a new period of reengagement. Both internal and international factors played significant roles in this reengagement process. In terms of international conjuncture, "at the end of the 1970s, global developments heightened

⁵² Bülent Aliriza and Bülent Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning of the Third Decade of the Post-Cold War Era," A Joint Report by Center for Strategic Research (SAM) and Center for Strategic&International Studies (CSIS), (November 2012): 3.

⁵³ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 51. F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," Santa Monica, CA, RAND (National Security Research Division), (2003): 165.

⁵⁴ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 25-26.

⁵⁵ It is possible to make similar findings for the AK Party term as well. When the son Bush's hard power policy did not overlap with the soft power oriented approach of the AK Party government, the relations strained. However, Obama administration decreased relatively the weight of hard power policy in American foreign policy and so to say opened a new page in relations with Turkey. Consequently, along with other factors, Obama administration's new foreign policy understanding brought about the augmentation of cooperation areas between the two countries and the relations gained a new momentum.

tensions between the super powers, and re-established the importance of Turkey's role in the Western alliance, as well as the Turks' attachment to the West."⁵⁶ The Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 re-enhanced Turkey to an indispensably important position for the western alliance.⁵⁷ Additionally, Iraq-Iran War of September 1980 and the Green Belt Project of the USA are further cyclical factors augmenting Turkey's weight in the region during 1980s. Finally, aggressive policy of the Soviets engendered security concerns in Ankara and pushed it to review its relations with this super power. Consequently Turkish policy makers felt the need to reengage with the West.⁵⁸

Domestic political circumstances, on the other hand, were also pushing Ankara towards Washington. As a matter of fact, the military putsch on September 12, 1980 destroyed the relations with the European Community due to the violation of democracy, rule of law and human rights principles. Thus, the military rule sought for legitimacy in the international arena and the US, which has not been as strict as the Europeans on democracy and human rights issues did not refrain from providing political and economic support to the putschist generals.⁵⁹ After all, unlike the Europeans, Americans has attached more importance to Turkey's strategic contribution to the western interests than its democratic development.⁶⁰ Therefore, the relevant norm for the Americans to keep Turkey on the path was not a working democratic regime in its strategically important ally. In this framework, after the coup d'état, Washington tolerated the military administration, declared the decision that American aid to its ally would not be interrupted and consequently Turkish-American relations entered into a new path. To give a few examples, before the putsch, Turkish civilian governments had not given their consent to the return of Greece to the military command of NATO. Yet solely one month after the takeover of the military regime, generals accepted NATO's American commander General Roger's proposal of lifting the veto on Greece's return to the NATO military structure.⁶¹ Likewise, prior to the putsch, Turkey was not an ally to be taken for granted just as it was seen during the Hostage Crisis. Ankara had resisted to American demands to form a multilateral reactionary block against Iran and had not applied some malpractices suggested by America against Teheran. Conversely, it had been eager to play a mediator role between Iran and the USA. However, in the wake of the September 12 military putsch, the alliance relationship between Ankara and Washington gained a new momentum and "two countries have often initiated and reacted together with respect to the various problems and issues of world politics. From that time on, America looked up Turkey as 'a reliable ally in a problematic region'."⁶²

Despite the relatively stable and smooth relations during the 1980s, Turkish-American relations experienced periodic fluctuations on some occasions as well. In the following pages, Turkish-American relations will be analyzed by concentrating on significant themes. In doing this, the special emphasis will be laid certainly on the Özal era and Özal's impact on TFP.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 163.

⁵⁷ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "İki Yüzyılın Hikâyesi: Türk Dış ve Güvenlik Politikasında Süreklilikler," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2009*, Burhanettin Duran et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011) 620.

⁵⁸ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, 163.

⁵⁹ Ömer Isyar, "An Analysis of Turkish-American Relations from 1945 to 2004: Initiatives and Reactions in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Alternatives, Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Volume 4, Number 3, (Fall 2005), 29.

⁶⁰ Nasuh Uslu, *Türk Dış Politikası Yol Ayrımında* (Turkish Foreign Policy is at Crossroads) (Istanbul: Anka Yayınları, 2006), 117.

⁶¹ Fuat Aksu, "Turkish-Greek Relations and the Cyprus Question: Quo Vadis?" *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, No:23, (May 2010): 210.

⁶² Isyar, "An Analysis of Turkish-American Relations from 1945 to 2004," 29-30.

4.2.2. A Constructivist approach to the Turkish-U.S. relations during the Özal era, 1980s

To begin with, one has to clarify what is meant with the Özal era. The Özal era refers to the time period which started in 1983, when Turgut Özal's Motherland Party (MP) came to power and ended in October 1991 when the intra-party opposition of the MP defeated the general chairman candidate backed by President Özal and put an end to the Özal dominance in the governmental party. As a matter of fact, in the wake of this date, first Özal's influence on the governing MP decreased and even frictions appeared between the MP and President Özal after the party lost the elections in 1992. Consequently, even though President Özal tried to give a direction to the government's foreign policy, he fell short of this and his influence on the foreign policy of the country decreased to a significant extent. Considering this fact, as Özal's policy principles and goals lost their weight on TFP as of October 1991 to a large extent, it is hardly possible to evaluate the post-October 1991 period within the Özal era, even though President Özal continued to stay in office until his death in 1993. Aware of this case, Özal desired to re-enter politics and to be as active and influential as before, yet his life was not long enough to materialize his objective.⁶³

Considering the relations with the U.S, Özal argued that Turkey would gain advantage from pursuing a compatible foreign policy with the American policies.⁶⁴ Hence, an alliance with the US as the main axis of foreign policy was essential for him.⁶⁵ In his pro-American approach, along with the realities of the day, Turgut Özal's years in the USA and its strong impact on his transnational socialization process had a considerable impact. As mentioned in the Chapter 3, Turgut Ozal's way of thinking and ideas have many sources. The most influential determinants of his political ideas have been fed by free markets, economic liberalism, cooperation with the world hegemon with pragmatic gains.

Turgut Ozal's political philosophy regarding economic development and modernization has strongly been affected by American tradition of public choice. According to this perspective, political development could be possible as long as human agency and his free will are cleared from pressures from structures including the state itself. Every individual including ordinary citizens, bureaucrats and politicians is self-interested. If people are let alone to make their preferences within a healthy institutional environment, they will maximize their benefits and the liberalization of human choice would bring about public improvements and modernization. This idea of Özal might be closely associated with his transnational socialization process in the United States. In this context for example, Fehmi Koru, a prominent columnist in Turkey, "interprets Özal's 'pro-American' policy as a result of his reading of American society, leadership and administration."⁶⁶ In this manner, Koru establishes in a sense a connection between Özal's close acquaintance with the US system and

⁶³ See interviews with Hasan Celal Güzel, Oltan Sungurlu, Bülent Çaparoglu, Vahit Erdem and Ali Coşkun deputies and prominent figures of Motherland Party and close colleagues of Özal. Turgut Özal Belgeseli, Türkiye'de Bir Milat" (Turgut Özal Documentary, A Milestone in Turkey) Part 10, Yapımcı&Yönetmen Yusuf Tümtürk, Mart 2008, accessed 01.06.2012, <http://www.kure.tv/belgesel/572-turgut-ozal-belgeseli/>.

⁶⁴ Sedat Laçiner, 'Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası' (Turkish Foreign Policy During Özal Era), in 1980-2003, Türkiye'nin Dış, Ekonomik, Sosyal ve İdari politikaları, ed. Turgut Gökso et al. (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 2003), 26.

⁶⁵ Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 305.

⁶⁶ Muhittin Ataman, An Integrated Approach to Foreign Policy Change: Explainin Changes in Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1980s, (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, 1999), 200.

culture, and Özal's political identity.⁶⁷ Furthermore, Özal considered that Americans were more pragmatic, whereas Europeans had obsessions and tendentiousness stemming from their long history. Thereby, he implied that there was a more appropriate ground for cooperation with the Americans on some foreign political issues, the Cyprus issue in particular.

Along with his own paradigm, some further factors were decisive in his pro-American foreign policy as well. Above all, it did not seem possible for Turkey under the circumstances of the Cold War to follow a foreign policy entirely independent from the United States. In the wake of the Cold War, the United States remained as the only super power of the world and even a unipolar world system was a matter of discussion.⁶⁸ However, considering Turkey's limited power, it seemed hard for the Özal leadership to seize the opportunities by relying solely on the country's resources. Furthermore, Özal leadership believed in the common interests of Turkey and the USA in the Middle East, Caucasasia and Central Asia, and was aware of the fact that Turkey did not possess the necessary instruments and resources to follow an 'independent' strategy which could be against the U.S. interests. Thus, a pro-American foreign policy was inevitable from his point of view.⁶⁹

In addition, Özal leadership was aware of the US influence as the leader of the western camp on Turkish politics. Hence, Özal felt obliged to bandwagon with the US in order to avoid Kemalist threats. In domestic politics, the American support consolidated his status particularly against the Kemalist establishment.⁷⁰ For instance, among others, it was the US support which enabled President Özal to direct Turkey's Gulf War policy with his personal initiatives.⁷¹ He benefited from the US support on many problems, the Cyprus issue in particular. Whereas the EU overwhelmingly lent its support in favor of Greeks, Özal leadership made use of the American support to counterbalance the European influence. For instance, with the help of the US, Turkey was able to persuade the UN to support the Security Council Resolution 649 regarding Cyprus.

Likewise, the US leverage was important in connection with Turkey-EC/EU relations too. The rejection of Turkey's application for a full-membership by the European Community in 1989 also pushed Turkey to the US.⁷² Additionally, the US put pressure on the EU in favor of Turkey vis-à-vis many problems between Turkey and the EU, and encouraged Turkey's

⁶⁷ Mehmet Keçeciler, former state Minister and Özal's colleague, confirms Özal's good knowledge about the US and its system in an interview by saying "The late Özal was one of the people who knew and analyzed America best. I have not seen any other person who knows and analyzes America better than him. He was aware of the power of America. He considered that America was going to be the winner of Cold War and become the only leader of the world. Furthermore, above all the late Özal knew that the free market economy in America was a more appropriate economic model and he was trying to implement it." "Turgut Özal Belgeseli, Türkiye'de Bir Milat," Part 1.

⁶⁸ Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (Winter 1990/1991): 23–33. William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," *The MIT Press Journals, International Security*, 24/1, (Summer 1999): 5.

⁶⁹ Aral, "Dispensing with tradition?," 76-77.

⁷⁰ Muhittin Ataman, "Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Volume 1, Number 1, (Spring 2002): 120-153, accessed 12.03.2012, <http://www.alternativesjournal.net/volume1/number1/ataman.htm>.

⁷¹ Ramazan Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı: İdealler ve Gerçekler Açmazında Dış politika" (Turgut Özal and the Gulf War: Foreign Policy in the Dilemmas of Ideals and Realities) in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 348.

⁷² Berdal Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş" (Domestic and Foreign Policy in Özal Era: Continuity or Rupture) in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality) ed. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 231.

EU membership. Hence, the US backing was crucial for the Özal leadership to balance the European pressure.⁷³ In a nutshell, as noted before, Özal's ultimate objective was to make Turkey an influential regional power under the protective umbrella of the USA.⁷⁴ Therefore, considering the structure of his identity as well as his ideas about the circumstances of the day, it should not be surprising that, as Barkey points out, "despite his traditional upbringing and religious roots, Özal was by far the most pro-American leader Turkey has ever had."⁷⁵

However, the relations with the US did not always at the same level during the Özal era. Turgut Özal, who had initially served in the military government as the chosen person of the US and IMF to implement the Washington consensus in Turkey and accomplished to come to the power subsequent to the first free elections after the 1980 military putsch, had to deal predominantly with internal political issues.⁷⁶ In the initial years, the first priority of Özal government in the foreign policy field was to restore Ankara's relations with the world, which had been simply isolated from the international community, and to support Turkey's economic program through foreign political means.⁷⁷ Especially in view of the first Özal government, as an economist, the most important contribution of Özal on the relations with the USA was to include a strong economic dimension to the relationship.⁷⁸ Özal's predominance in foreign policy was witnessed only towards the end of 1980s in parallel with the democratization process in the country.

4.2.2.1. Military relations

A Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA) was signed between Turkey and the U.S. on 29 March 1980 and the framework of Turkish-American military relations in the course of 1980s were defined with this agreement. Essentially, the first DECA had been signed in 1969 and periodically revised. It had established a *quid pro quo* between US access to Turkish defense facilities and in return, U.S. security assistance to Turkey. In practice yet this linkage has never been stable or predictable and has become a source of considerable resentment for the Turks and frustration for the Americans.⁷⁹

The DECA of 1980 was a five year, annually renewable executive agreement. It stipulated that the United States would provide defense equipment, services, and training to Turkish forces. In return, Turkey authorized the USA to maintain forces and exercise military activities at specified installations. Though the agreement was signed before the coup d'état, as touched on above, the military rule remained committed to the agreement and showed its willingness to improve bilateral relations with the aim of gaining the American support to the undemocratic regime. In accordance with the prevailing norms of the Cold War, Washington put more emphasis on the stability of its ally and its place on the Western camp. Therefore, it

⁷³ Ataman, "Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy."

⁷⁴ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 229. Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 31.

⁷⁵ Henri J. Barkey, "Turkey's strategic Future: An American View," Turkey's Strategic Future, ESF Working Paper No.13,(May 2003), 9, accessed 21.10.2012, http://edoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/HALCoRe_derivate_00005809/Turkey_Strategic.pdf

⁷⁶ Mehmet Ali Tuğtan, Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003: A Game-Theoretical Analysis of the Institutional Effect, (PhD diss., Boğaziçi University 2007), 203.

⁷⁷ Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 40-41.

⁷⁸ Ataman, An integrated Approach to Foreign Policy Change, 200.

⁷⁹ Larrabee and Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," 165.

demonstrated its “friendship”, did not criticize the Turkish military coup and did not cut the military and economic aid to Turkey.⁸⁰

When Turgut Özal came to power in November 1983, despite his some reservations on the implementation and the content of the DECA, he strongly desired this agreement to continue. Main complaints with regard the agreement were as follows: (1) The 7:10 ratio exercised by Washington in determining aid to Greece and Turkey was unfair. (2) The efforts to make the American aid conditional on the Cyprus question, human rights and the claim that Ottoman Empire massacred the Armenians during the World War I.(3) The discussion of these matters by the American Congress during aid bill negotiations was giving rise in Turkish public opinion to a reaction against the USA. (4) Last but not least, the DECA’s inclusion of economic cooperation notwithstanding, the United States had not provided sufficient trade facilities, particularly to Turkish textile products.⁸¹

Towards the end of the first five-year period of the DECA, the Özal government called Washington to negotiate changes in the agreement. Negotiations lasted from 1985 until March 1987, yet, despite Turkish leaders’ radical change demands, no major revision was introduced in the DECA.⁸² However, Ankara’s discontent did not engender any major change in the institutional dimension regarding the relations with the United States. Instead of a new agreement, the DECA, including U.S. base rights, was extended through supplementary letters which were exchanged on 16 March 1987. Terms of these letters stipulated neither radical change nor any new commitment to the United States. Congress’ cutting of military aid to Turkey from \$ 913 million to \$ 525 million caused the Özal government to suspend the ratification of the letters. But this suspension ended on the eve of President Evren’s visit to the USA, which would have been the first by a Turkish President in twenty-five years and the letters were eventually ratified by the government.⁸³

Under normal conditions, the DECA was supposed to expire at the end of December 1990 and its terms should have been negotiated between the two countries before September 17. However, thanks to Turkey’s close cooperation with the U.S. in the aftermath of Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, the DECA was extended for five years quietly and automatically. Consequently, in spite of Turkish rulers’ resentment towards the American indifference to Turkish worries and complaints about the DECA, Turkish-American relations were stable and displayed a significant continuity throughout 1980s.⁸⁴ In the initial years of 1990s, the relations peaked once again on occasion of the Gulf War, which will be elaborated below in another section.

4.2.2.2. American aid question

In view of Turkey’s strategically pivotal location, the American policy-makers attached a great importance to a strong and stable Turkey, and therefore it was crucial for

⁸⁰ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 254. One should note at this stage that as it was mentioned in the second chapter, there has existed a strong belief in the Turkish public that the US had a hand in the 12 September 1980 military coup and some journalists, like M.Ali Birand, provided convincing evidences about the US involvement. See chapter 2, section “External Factors”

⁸¹ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 254-255. Mahmut Bali Aykan, “Turkish Perspectives on Turkish-US Relations Concerning Persian Gulf Security in the post-Cold War Era: 1989-1995,” *The Middle East Journal*, 50, 3 (Summer 1996): 345.

⁸² Armaoğlu, *20.Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, 967.

⁸³ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 255.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

them to provide economic and security assistance to their ally. These assistances were also crucial to keep Turkey on the western camp. On the ground of the Cyprus Peace Operation of 1974, the United States had imposed arms embargo on Turkey, because of which Turkish armed forces, the second largest standing army in the NATO, was deprived of modern weapons. However, coupled with the changing circumstances in the region, modernization of Turkish army became a primary objective of the American leaders in the course of 1980s. In this respect, the Reagan administration took the lead and doubled the U.S. security assistance to Turkey; thereby showed the seriousness of American rulers on their security relationship with Turkey. Reagan's successors continued to give weight to the modernization of Turkish army as well. In fact, American aids fell considerably short of Turkey's needs and expectations. Notwithstanding Turkish leaders' efforts to increase the amount of the aid, Americans resisted the excessive Turkish demands. This resulted in difficult and bitter negotiations, which often ended in disappointment and resentment in both sides.⁸⁵

Additionally, there were two more matters of tension with respect to the American assistance issue, which were negatively influencing the American aid to Ankara in this term. The former was the 7:10 ratio exercised by the American Congress on the aids to Turkey and Greece, and the latter one was the efforts of the US Congress to lay down the Cyprus and Armenian issues as a condition of American aid to Turkey.

In 1978, the US Congress had voted a policy with the aim of achieving a 'balance of military strength' between Turkey and Greece. Accordingly, in order to maintain the present balance of military strength in the Aegean Sea, a '7:10 ratio' was stipulated for the aids; for every \$7 of military aid to Greece, Turkey received \$10. Yet, this ratio took into consideration neither the territories nor the populations to be defended and this was harshly criticized by the Turkish side. In spite of Turkish governments' efforts to receive more aid, Washington did not alter its stance and continued to stick to this ratio during the 1980s as well.⁸⁶ Even though the White House seemed to share similar views with Ankara, it "chose the easy way by blaming Congress on the non-realization of the projected amounts of aid for Turkey." In return, Turkish rulers used this unchanging posture of the U.S. to justify tight control of American military activities on the Turkish territory.⁸⁷

Another question was the pro-Greek attitude of the American Congress on the Cyprus issue and its efforts to make the American aid conditional on Turkish soldiers' withdrawal from the Island. The attitude of the Congress on this issue became a source of discomfort for Ankara every year when the American aid bill was in question.⁸⁸ At this point, one should note the role of lobbying activities in the Congress. The U.S. conditioning of aid on Cyprus and Armenian issues might be partly explained with the considerable lobbying of Armenian and Greek Diaspora. Furthermore, conflicting interests with Israel urged sometimes the Jewish lobbies to adopt an anti-Turkey position. For instance, when the Özal government opted to support the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) statehood against Israel, this resulted in steadily decrease of the US military and economic aid.⁸⁹

As a result, the U.S. allocated to Turkey annually around \$ 700 million through its Military Assistance Program, Economic Support Fund and International Educational Training

⁸⁵ Ibid., 256.

⁸⁶ Armaoğlu, 20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi, 965.

⁸⁷ Uslu, The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003, 256.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 203.

Program. However, as noted above, the Congress continued to play a decisive and “restrictive” role concerning the amount of the aid. For example, the American government asked for a total package of \$ 930 million for Turkey from the Congress for the fiscal year of 1984. Despite this open challenge to the 7:10 formula, the result did not change and \$ 930 million for Turkey was reduced to \$ 715 million, whereas the initial request for Greece was amended to \$ 500 million. The American aid reached the peak in 1985 with \$878 million, yet in the following years it amounted about \$ 500 million. Once the request of the American administration was reduced from \$913.5 million to \$ 525.3 million for the fiscal year 1988, this led to a disappointment in the Özal government and to temporarily suspension of ratification of the letters extending the DECA.⁹⁰ Finally, even the booming relations during the Gulf crisis of 1990-1991 were not sufficient to augment the aid substantially. The last aid request of the Bush administration was reduced from \$ 543 million to \$ 450 million as credits by Congress.⁹¹

4.2.2.3. The Economic aspect

Özal’s answer to Turkey’s economic problems was under the strong influence of the US system. As mentioned above, Özal had studied in the USA, worked in the World Bank and had been profoundly impressed by the American system and consequently adopted the American liberalism as a recipe for Turkey’s economic problems.⁹² Hence one might come to the conclusion that Özal's economist identity was pushing him to put more emphasis on economy with respect to Turkey's foreign relations.

In the early 1980s, there were two major economic development models in the world. 1) Import substitution model which was adopted in Turkey between 1960 and 1980. 2) Export-oriented development strategy. In accordance with his *weltanschauung*, Özal adopted the latter model and introduced reforms accordingly. His market-oriented economic reforms were naturally welcomed in Washington and these reforms made Turkey in the 1980s particularly attractive for the American and European investments in several sectors.⁹³ Furthermore, Özal enjoyed good relations with the United States as well as with the institutions of western origin such as IMF and the World Bank.

The most important novelty that Özal added to Ankara-Washington relations was his emphasis on economic relations.⁹⁴ Özal leadership aspired to diversify Turkish-United States relations by adding it an economic dimension in addition to the strong security ties He regarded a strong economy as the most important condition of providing national security. Thus, stressing the economy side of the DECA, he gave more weight to trade with the US and to receive more economic concessions rather than merely receiving military aid from it. His slogan in this respect was “trade not aid”. He aimed in this context opening the U.S. market to Turkish products, textile in particular, and having advantageous partnership arrangements

⁹⁰ Ibid., 203-205.

⁹¹ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 257.

⁹² In addition to the American economic model, Özal advocated that the American Presidential system would be a good choice for Turkey. This fact implies that Özal was not only under the influence of American economic system but also political system. Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 224. Additionally, one should note that PM Tayyip Erdogan has also been advocating presidential system for Turkey.

⁹³ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 261-262.

⁹⁴ Isyar, "An Analysis of Turkish-American Relations from 1945 to 2004," 31.

with the American industry.⁹⁵ This approach of Özal seems also to include Özal's self-confident and assertive political approach. Accordingly, in order to make Turkey one of 10-15 economies of the world, Turkey should trust itself, work hard and should not be afraid of economic rivalry.

Despite the remarkable performance of Turkey's new export-oriented economic model, the trade imbalance between Turkey and the United States continued. For instance, whereas Turkish export to the US in 1980 amounted \$ 127 million, Turkish imports from it was \$ 442 million. By 1990, the figures were \$971 million and \$2.1 billion, respectively.⁹⁶ Thus, the Özal government sought to raise the textile quota and equalize the trade imbalance, and brought these issues in the negotiations of the DECA agreement. However, the American authorities were quite conservative in conjunction with the quotas established for the Turkish textile imports to the United States. Consequently, while the US did not grant any concession on the textile quota issue and did not take any significant step to abolish the trade inequality, it pledged the American support for Turkey's future membership in the European Community, which was regarded as a positive development by the Turkish leaders.⁹⁷

4.2.2.4. Greek-Turkish differences and the Cyprus issue

Even though the United States tried to avoid involvement in the disputes between Turkey and Greece such as the boundaries of territorial waters and continental shelf, the control of airspace, surface navigation and oil rights in the Aegean sea, these questions inevitably affected both Turkish-American and Greek-American relations.⁹⁸ For instance, in March 1987, the US was obliged to intervene when Turkish-Greek relations seriously strained and the two sides came to the brink of an armed conflict. Upon Athens' declaration that it was planning to drill for oil in the parts of the Aegean which were considered as international waters by Ankara, a Turkish research vessel was sent to the same area and subsequently relations were strained so seriously that a danger of an armed conflict emerged. At this point, the US and NATO had no other choice except for intervening in the tension between its allies and appeasing it. Eventually, the Özal government was persuaded by the Americans to stay outside the disputed area.⁹⁹ As such, the crisis over the militarization of the Limni (Lemnos) Island and the Greek efforts to include the Island into the NATO exercise scheme in the Aegean in 1983 were other issues influencing Turkish-American relations.¹⁰⁰ Such events continued to repeat in the future too, as in the crisis over Imia/Kardak in January 1996.

Likewise, the Cyprus question was another factor casting shadow on Ankara-Washington relations. Whereas the U.S. endeavored not to lose its influence on strategically important Cyprus by making the issue conditional on U.S. military interactions with Turkey, it became a source of disappointment and resentment for the Turkish side. Especially, the US Congress was quite decisive in this matter. When the arms embargo on Turkey was lifted in 1978, the US administration was assigned to submit bimonthly report to the Congress certifying that headway was being made towards a solution on the Island. The declaration of

⁹⁵ George S. Harris, "Turkey's Foreign Policy: Independent or Reactive?" in *Diplomacy in the Middle East, The International Relations of Regional and Outside Powers*, ed. L. Carl Brown (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001) 269.

⁹⁶ Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 202.

⁹⁷ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 262.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 264.

⁹⁹ Monteaagle Stearns, *Entangled allies: U.S. policy toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus*, (New York: A Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992), 126. See also Aksu, "Turkish-Greek Relations and the Cyprus Question: Quo Vadis?," 210.

¹⁰⁰ Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 196.

the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in November 1983 was condemned by both chambers of the American Congress and they called on the American administration to try to reverse it which was regarded as a dangerous move by the Turks. The Greek lobby also played certainly a crucial role in the attitude of the Congress; consequently the American aid bills tied sometimes the U.S. aid to unacceptable conditions for Turkey. For example, the aid bill in 1984 stipulated the presidential certification that “(a) the U.S. government was acting to prevent moves to partition Cyprus and was calling on Turkey to take steps to reverse the independence of Northern Cyprus and (b) Turkey was making efforts to insure that the Turkish Cypriots took no action in Maraş (Varosha) that would impede negotiations on the future of Cyprus.”¹⁰¹ Nonetheless, it should be noted that there was a marked difference in the attitude of the Congress and the Administration. In spite of the rigid attitude of the Congress against Turkey, the governments were relatively more lenient and constructive on the Cyprus question.¹⁰²

Since the Cyprus-related tensions threatened the peace and stability in the region, the American administrations felt compelled to put pressure on both sides for a permanent solution of the question. As a matter of fact, the norms of the day required to ease the potential conflicts between the allies and to save the energy for the enemy, the Soviet Block. Therefore, the collective identity formed in the security field was imposing the leader of the western block to take initiative in order to keep the potential disputes between its two allies at a limited level. These American initiatives were constructing the identities of the allies as leader and its followers, and were either consolidating or reconstructing their existing identities. However, the problem is so complicated and the peoples of both countries are so sensitive on the issue that even though the administrations had been willing to give concessions, it would not have been easy to achieve it.¹⁰³ Thus, for Özal too, the Cyprus question has continued to be an impediment for Turkey’s foreign relations as well as for its relations with the USA.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 264-265.

¹⁰² Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 199.

¹⁰³ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 264-265.

¹⁰⁴ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 56-57.

4.2.2.5. The Armenian issue¹⁰⁵

The continuing efforts of the Armenian Diaspora to persuade some Congressmen to introduce resolutions caused resentment in Turkey and strained the U.S.-Turkish relationship during the 1980s as well.¹⁰⁶ The Diaspora has "sought to establish a day of remembrance to commemorate 'man's inhumanity to man', calling particular attention to the alleged genocide of Armenians at the hands of the Ottoman Turks early in the twentieth century and somehow associating the present-day Turkish Republic with those events." Thus, the Armenian issue has ever since become another trouble source for the two allies. In fact, in the first half of 1980s, some Armenians resorted to terrorism in order to promote the Armenian genocide claims. In this context, in the course of 1974-84, eighty Turkish diplomats and members of foreign representatives were assassinated by ASALA and JCAG terrorism.¹⁰⁷ Yet, the Armenian terrorism lost its vital training and logistic base after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. As such, the Orly Airport attack on 15 July 1983, in which eight people were indiscriminately killed and several others were injured, gave rise to the withdrawal of the western sympathy to the Armenian cause, and the Turkish secret service received a green light to eliminate ASALA and JCAG targets worldwide. Consequently, by the end of 1984, the terror tactic ceased to be an effective force, upon which the Armenian Diaspora adopted a new tactic of politicizing the genocide claim by using their lobbying power in their respective countries of settlement and in the international platforms.¹⁰⁸

In this framework, the first Armenian attempt in the US Congress came in September 1984. The House of Representatives approved a resolution to recognize the 24 April as 'Man's Inhumanity to Man day'. Even if the Özal government saw these attempts as part of the US domestic political struggle for the upcoming elections, it had to deal with such attempts directly or indirectly until February 1990. In June 1985, the House of Representatives rejected in general vote the Draft of Armenian "Genocide". Yet the lobby did not give up. In April 1987, it made another attempt and managed to bring the Draft of Armenian "Genocide" to the Commission of Postal and Civil Services of the House of Representatives. Ankara reacted to this development by calling back its ambassador to

¹⁰⁵ During the World War I, the Ottoman Committee of Unity and Progress government decided to the relocation of the Ottoman Armenians who had been fighting against the Ottomans in cooperation with the Russians and endangering the internal security of the empire that already struggled of life and death. During this deportation, many Ottoman Armenians tragically died. Today, Armenians and a number of historians describe these deaths as "genocide" in modern sense and both the Armenian state and the Armenian Diaspora have been striving to make all states in the world recognize these events as officially genocide. On the other hand, whereas the Turkish side accepts that some tragic events occurred during the war-time conditions, it declines the allegations the Armenians were killed systematically in accordance with a premeditated plan to kill off Armenians. In the official Web site of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is argued in this regard that the then Ottoman Government took a number of measures for safe transfer during the relocation. However, under war-time conditions, exacerbated by internal strife, local groups seeking revenge; banditry, famine, epidemics, and a failing state apparatus (including unruly officials who were court-martialed and sentenced to capital punishment by the Ottoman Government in 1916, much before the end of the War) all combined to produce what became a tragedy." "The Events of 1915 and the Turkish-Armenian Controversy over History: An Overview," Official Website of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed 21.11.2012, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-events-of-1915-and-the-turkish-armenian-controversy-over-history--an-overview.en.mfa>. See also: Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*, (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007). Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri*, (İstanbul: Babiali Kültür Yayıncılığı, 2003). Birol Akgün and Murat Çemrek, *Türk Dış Politikasında Ermeni Sorunu* (Armenian Problem in Turkish Foreign Policy), Institute of Strategic Thinking, Ankara, (April 2010): 10.

¹⁰⁶ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 265.

¹⁰⁷ Armaoğlu, *20.Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, 965-966.

¹⁰⁸ Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 200.

Washington 'for consultations'. Additionally, President Kenan Evren postponed his visit to Washington for May 1987.¹⁰⁹ As a result, in August 1987, a vote on the proposal was refused by the Congress on procedural grounds.¹¹⁰

Another Draft of Armenian "Genocide" was accepted in October 1989 by the Committee of Justice of US Senate, which engendered a sharp reaction of the Özal government. Ankara froze bilateral relations and banned US F 16 flights from Incirlik air base.¹¹¹ On the one hand, Turkey threatened Washington to take stronger actions in case of adoption of the resolution by the Senate. On the other hand, Turkey tried to make use of other means to hinder the resolution. To this end, it tried to engage both the Jewish lobby and US business community (the aerospace industry in particular) on Turkey's behalf.¹¹² Furthermore, President Turgut Özal paid a visit to Washington in January 1990 and met President Bush. Eventually, the Senate rejected to put the Draft into negotiation agenda.¹¹³ Meanwhile, in order to appease the Armenian lobby, President Bush made a formal written statement on 24 April 1990 and described the events of 1915 as genocide but in name.¹¹⁴ Likewise, in order to appease the Turkish anger, the White House emphasized that "non-binding resolutions passed by Congress did not constitute major U.S. foreign policy pronouncements and that they were not connected directly to the foreign aid legislation or to the general tone of U.S.-Turkish cooperation in security and defense matters."¹¹⁵

The Armenian claims and the resolutions of Congress related to these claims have since 1980s constituted a major sore point in the Turkish-American relations. However, the mutual ideas existing in both sides both in the Cold War and post-Cold War periods as to the mutual need of both countries have always prevailed at the end of the day. Thereby, the controversies notwithstanding, the Armenian genocide claims have fallen short of destroying bilateral relations.

4.2.2.6. Cooperation in the Middle East

As noted above, the beginning of 1980s witnessed the rise of superpower rivalry. Given the western dependence on the oil supply from the Middle East, the US faced two significant threats: radical Islam and Soviet encroachment. The Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 and the Iraq-Iran War of September 1980 were the important developments at the beginning of 1980s, which re-enhanced Turkey to an indispensably significant position for the United States. Since American strategists regarded a moderate Sunni Islam as an antidote to both radical Islam stemming from Iran and communism, throughout the early 1980s, Washington encouraged its allies in the region to establish closer ties and form a united front of moderate Sunni Islam against Tehran and Moscow. At his point, Turkey's democratic Muslim character and its NATO membership were two more important factors contributing to Turkey's indispensability in the region.¹¹⁶ Moreover, Turgut Özal as a person who managed to combine western values, such as

¹⁰⁹ Mustafa Aydın, Çağrı Erhan and Gökhan Erdem, "Chronology of Turkish-American Relations," *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol. XXXI, No.2, (2000): 253-254.

¹¹⁰ Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 200-201.

¹¹¹ Aydın et al., "Chronology of Turkish-American Relations," 254.

¹¹² Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 201.

¹¹³ Aydın et al., "Chronology of Turkish-American Relations," 254-255.

¹¹⁴ Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 202.

¹¹⁵ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 265.

¹¹⁶ Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 191.

democracy and liberalism, with the Islamic-conservative values of his own society could be viewed as the best person to cooperate for the Americans.

Iran Islam Revolution and the aggressive Soviet policy concerned also the military junta in Ankara and it was obliged to turn its face to the leader of the Western camp. Coupled with security concerns, need for international economic and political backup pushed the Turkish generals towards the US. In the wake of the military coup, the Europeans had severely criticized the human rights violations of the putschist administration. Conversely, the US was the sole ally in the western block which had been more understanding about “the necessities of the martial law.” Additionally, the Turkish economy suffered from a balance of payment crisis, thus, both direct American economic aid and support of international institutions such as the IMF was crucial for the success of the new economic program introduced in January 1980 under the architecture of Turgut Özal. Consequently, Turkey’s needs and its leaders’ interest perceptions, including Özal’s and Evren’s, converged with the interest perceptions of the Americans in the Middle East.¹¹⁷

In this context, the military rule had already pledged to host American facilities for the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, which had been formed in Florida to fly in and intervene to stop any emerging threat or act as a trip-wire to deter any aggressor in the Middle East.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, Turkey had also started military cooperation with the Gulf States, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in the field of training, sales and joint investments. This cooperation continued following the takeover of the rule by the Özal government as well. For example, during President Evren’s visit to Saudi Arabia in February 1984, two countries signed a military training and cooperation treaty.¹¹⁹

Özal was promoting good relations with the Middle East also at the institutional level and this was also converging with the anti-radical Islamist standing of the US. In this framework, the first Özal government increased Turkey's share to 160 million Islamic Dinars in 1985, becoming the fifth largest shareholder of the Islamic Development Bank, and therefore gaining the right to be represented at the Executive Committee.¹²⁰ Similarly, for the first time a Turkish President, Kenan Evren, represented Turkey in the Casablanca Summit of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in January 1984 and he was elected as permanent chairman of the OIC Economic and Commercial Cooperation Permanent Committee. Likewise, President Özal sought to make use of the Organization actively for Turkey’s economic and political interests as well as in international issues. For example, Özal called for additional meetings to discuss issues such as the Bosnian problem and Muslim minority problems in the Balkans. Turkey assumed a leading role in the acceptance of the Central Asian Muslim republics to the organization. Özal sought to free the OIC from Arab domination and inter-Arab conflicts. To this end, he showed special effort to integrate in the OIC the non-Arab countries of the Balkans and the Central Asia, Iran, Indonesia and Malaysia.¹²¹ In line with the American policy, Ankara advanced its relations with Israel and Egypt too.¹²²

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 186.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 192.

¹²⁰ Ataman, “Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy.”

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Isyar, "An Analysis of Turkish-American Relations from 1945 to 2004," 30-31.

However, some unilaterally regulated relations of Turkey were also from time to time in contrast of America. Unrepentantly recognition of the new-born Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) by Turkey in November 1983 might be regarded in this respect.¹²³ Additionally, as a result of a “low-key policy” towards Israel with the aim of gaining Arab and Islamic support, Turkish policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict during 1980s did not overlap with the American policy either. The military rule had downgraded embassy in Tel Aviv to secondary status, to charge d'affairs level. Özal governments continued also a similar policy line and became one of the first countries that recognized Palestine. Despite the pro-Palestinian stance of Özal government in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Özal's policy towards Israel was not hostile. It offered to mediate and host peace talks between Palestinians and Israelis.¹²⁴ In this context, Özal offered in 1988 the "peace water pipeline project" in the Middle East, through which it was aimed to supply Turkish waters to both Arabs and Israelis. According to this project, two pipelines would supply extra waters of two Turkish rivers, Seyhan and Ceyhan. Yet, this project was rejected by Arab countries on the ground that it would give water to Israel too.¹²⁵

Furthermore, apart from the Arab-Israeli conflict, in line with the American aspirations, Turkish-Israeli relations entered into a development process. In essence, the US had already been promoting good relations between its two allies in the Middle East. Despite the cool relations during the military regime, the concern of both countries on Syria's Soviet-backed policies attracted them to each other. Secret information exchange of Turkish and Israeli experts in their common fight against terrorism which had started in the early 1980s, gained a new momentum during the terrorist bombing of Istanbul synagogue in December 1986. Ankara fully cooperated with its allies, which pleased both Washington and Tel Aviv. Before the Gulf Crisis erupted, Turkish-Israeli relations had made a considerable progress. This reflected also to the attitude of Jewish lobby in Washington and it supported Turkey against the campaigns of Armenian and Greek lobbies in the Congress.¹²⁶

Iraq-Iran war was another issue that Turkey deviated from the American policy. During the war, contrary to the expectations of the west, Ankara conducted neither overtly nor covertly an anti-Iranian foreign policy, but pursued an “active neutrality” policy. Additionally, Turkey did not join in Western efforts to isolate Iran and Libya during the 1980s. Instead, economic relations with these countries increased dramatically and Turkish companies became very active in Libya.¹²⁷

To sum up, as a consequence of the radical Islam and Russian threats emerged in Iran and Afghanistan as well the search for legitimization of the putschist generals in the international arena, Turkish-American cooperation increasingly continued throughout the 1980s. Moreover, Turkey's value increased in the eyes of the United States, as the unique identity structure of the Özal leadership combining both Islamic and the western values was regarded as the alternative of the radical Islam understanding presented in Iran. Subsequent to his takeover of the office, PM Özal was also eager to improve the relations with the U.S. considering Turkey's need for the economic and military backing of Washington. Additionally, as an Islamic-conservative-liberal leader, along with high-profile relations with the west, Özal sought to add new dimensions to Turkey's foreign policy by developing

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ataman, “Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy.”

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Uslu, *The Turkish American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 261.

¹²⁷ Ataman, "Özalist Dış Politika: Aktif ve Rasyonel Bir Anlayış," 54-55.

relations with the Muslim Middle Eastern countries and also by taking steps to find solution to the deep-rooted problems in the neighborhood, like the Israel-Palestine question. Nonetheless, despite the high profile relations between Turkey and the United States in the Middle East throughout the 1980s, one cannot claim that the relations were smooth. In contrast to 1950s, Özal leadership followed a relatively more active and independent policy in Middle Eastern issues.¹²⁸ In spite of serious Turkish cooperation with the U.S. on Middle Eastern issues, the disagreements between the two allies on the Iran-Iraq war, Libya issue and Arab-Israeli conflict, which led to Turkey's deviation from American policy line, illustrate relatively independent policy of Ankara. However, such frictions did not damage the institutional dimension of relations.

4.2.2.7. A General analysis of Turkey-US Relations during 1980s from a constructivist perspective

Several experiences took place prior to the 1980s such as the removal of the Jupiter missiles from Turkey in the aftermath of the Cuba missiles crisis of 1962, the Johnson letter of 1964 and the American arms embargo imposed as a result of Turkey's Cyprus peace operation in 1974 undermined Turkish policy makers' ideas as to the reliability of the United States and pushed Ankara to search for new foreign policy alternatives. However, the military junta which took over the administration in the wake of the September 12, 1980 coup d'état felt obliged to establish closer relations with the U.S. with a view to ensuring the international legitimacy. Considering the norms such as democracy and human rights as having secondary importance within the hierarchy of norms under the Cold War circumstances and aiming to see stable and west-oriented administrations in its allies like Turkey, the US administration disregarded the undemocratic practices of the military junta and demonstrated its will to re-improve its relations with Ankara. Moreover, as Özal leadership's alternative identity definition which combines Islamic and western values in itself was regarded as the antidote of the radical Islam understanding emerged in Iran, Turkey's significance increased in the eyes of Washington and this consolidated the cooperation of the long-standing allies.

Military junta's successor, the Özal leadership attached also a considerable importance to the relations with the United States. In this situation, along with its ideas about the material circumstances of the day, Özal leadership's foreign policy paradigm had also a significant role. Having educated and spent the most important part of his transnational socialization process in the U.S., Özal's foreign policy paradigm was based on making Turkey an influential regional actor under the protective umbrella of Washington. Additionally, being an economist, Özal aimed to diversify Turkish-American relations by adding them a stronger economic dimension. While strengthening its ties with the United States, as a believing Muslim, Özal aimed to develop relations with the Muslim countries as well. At this point it is worthy of attention that having left aside the strict interpretation of secularism, Turgut Özal became the first Turkish head of state in the republican history who recognized Turkey's Muslim identity.

Having adopted the American liberalism, Özal leadership demonstrated effort in this respect to prevail democratic and liberal norms in Turkey. For the legitimacy of these norms in the country, Özal referred sometimes to Turkey's Ottoman past. More precisely, he regarded the Ottoman tolerance the most important point of reference for the settlement of the Kurdish question. Furthermore, having been qualified later as a foreign policy approach and

¹²⁸ See Ataman, "Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy."

called neo-Ottomanism, this approach signaled a rupture from the traditional foreign policy line which had been based on the principles of non-interference, westernization and secularism. In short, Özal tried to shape Turkey's FP in accordance with his own identity paradigm which had been constructed as a result of societal and transnational socialization processes.

4.2.3. Turkish-U.S. Relations during early 1990s and President Özal

4.2.3.1. The Gulf Crisis and Turkish American relations

As mentioned before, Özal's weight in foreign political issues increased in parallel with the democratization process in the country and peaked during the Gulf Crisis.¹²⁹ His approach to foreign policy making, as Sayari states, "...was best reflected in Turkey's stand during the Gulf crisis..."¹³⁰ When the crisis initially erupted, he was President. Nonetheless, owing to his strong influence in the ruling Motherland Party as well as in the government, he was able to conduct TFP virtually alone in the early 1990s. His strong leadership who did not hesitate to take initiatives if he deemed it necessary might be counted as another significant factor contributing Özal's dominance in the FP field. Considering Özal's unique role in the course of the Gulf Crisis in the early 1990s, it is worthy of scrutinizing this issue in detail.

However, before starting to discuss the issue, one should consider that the United States carried out another military intervention in Iraq in 2003, following the Justice and Development Party's (AK Party) takeover of the office. Given the actors (the USA and Iraq) and circumstances of this crisis, it is reminiscent of the Gulf crisis of 1990-91. Thus, these two events, namely the Gulf Crisis of 1990-91 and 2003, present unique examples for comparison. Therefore it absolutely makes sense to explore these two issues in detail. At this point, the former event will be elaborated and the latter will be left to the next chapter.

4.2.3.2. Background of pro-US foreign policy during the Gulf Crisis

As explained above, Özal was advocating an active foreign policy and the end of Cold War generated a convenient ground for his aspirations. Along with the breakdown of the Soviet Union, a new détente began between the East and the West. According to Özal, under the circumstances of the "new world," states should have acted expeditiously and the decision mechanisms of states should have been capable of keeping pace with events.

Furthermore, Özal defended the argument that Turkey should have left aside the traditional policy line which had consistently preferred to stay out of the turbulent conflicts of the Middle East and followed politics of neutrality in frictions among Muslim countries. While augmenting the intensity of relations with the West, Turkey should have bolstered its relations with the Arab world too. In another word, in the face of changing conditions, Turkey should have played a bridge role between the East and the West.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Philip Robins, *Suits and uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War*, (London: Hurst & Co., 2003), 53.

¹³⁰ Sabri Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," *The Middle East Journal*; 46, 1 (Winter 1992): 16.

¹³¹ Ertan Efeğil, *Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli*, (Istanbul: Gündoğan Yayınları, 2002), 216.

At this point the question arises, despite the traditional neutral stance of TFP towards the Middle East, why did Özal decide to follow an active policy and give a strong support to the United States during the Persian Gulf Crisis? Along with his personality traits and his identity, Özal's ideas and interpretations about the material conditions were also determining about his stance during the Gulf crisis. After all, as every single person perceives the events through his own lenses and interprets the events and defines his interests in accordance with his own identity definition, ideas about the material conditions are as important as the material factors.

In this context, firstly, Turkey had been caught unprepared to the post Cold War term. At the outset of this new term, like all other states whose foreign and security policies were indexed to one polar, Turkey experienced a considerable shock as well. Throughout the Cold War, it had sought to be a part of the western world, and its efforts were supported by the west owing to its special geopolitical position against the Soviet Union. Consequently, due to the Soviet threat, Ankara could acquire a place as an equal member in the western security and political system. Yet the end of Cold War initially decreased the importance of Turkey and channeled the interest of Europe to the East and Central Europe. Moreover, the Middle East and the Islamic world were depicted as the source of all developments and declared 'enemy' in the "new world order." Thus, the end of Cold War was perceived as a great threat by virtually all groups in Turkey. Especially, it can be said that rejection of Turkey's bid for European Community membership, European support to the separatist movements in Turkey and the inadequate American support to Turkey in this term gave rise to a considerable "panic" in Turkey.¹³²

At this stage, Özal wanted to make Turkey gain its ascendancy in the eyes of the West through an active policy during the Gulf Crisis. Stated differently, Özal viewed this crisis as a good opportunity to highlight Turkey's importance to the western countries and to show its indispensability for them.¹³³ Through an active involvement in the Gulf Crisis, Turkey's geopolitical and strategic importance would have been reminded to the West. This point was important for the Özal leadership, as Turkey's application for the full European Community membership had been declined short time ago.¹³⁴ Moreover, through an active policy during the Gulf Crisis, Özal leadership was hoping to ensure a place at the table to be formed subsequent to the crisis and to direct the post-crisis order in compliance with Turkish interests.¹³⁵

Secondly, Özal saw a high likelihood of a war and aimed first of all to eschew consequences that may result from the war against Turkey. As a further step, he regarded that crisis as a "golden opportunity" and wanted to take the advantage of the opportunities that may arise after the war. Özal's "golden opportunity" assessments interpreted by both national and international media organs that he wanted to recapture Mosul and Kirkuk, which had been within the borders of National Pact of 1920 and had been left to the British mandate due to the special conditions of the day.¹³⁶ In this context, the "invest one, get three" metaphor attributed to Özal was widely discussed in the media. In his comprehensive study, Gözen argues that he

¹³² Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 40.

¹³³ Yasemin Çelik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 77.

¹³⁴ "Siyasiler, AT raporuna farklı bakıyor," *Milliyet*, 20.12.1989, 14.

¹³⁵ Efeğil, *Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli*, 217.

¹³⁶ Uslu, *Türk Dış Politikası Yol Ayrımında*, 156.

did not find any evidence that Özal used explicitly such a metaphor.¹³⁷ He rather claims that what Özal viewed as “golden opportunity” was to develop on the occasion of this crisis a positive image for Turkey and consequently increase its influence in the region, in the western world and even in the whole world.¹³⁸ On the other hand, even though Özal had aspired to recapture Mosul and Kirkuk in return for his support to the US,¹³⁹ he was aware that neither the countries in the region, Iran and Syria, nor the western countries, especially the USA, would have given their consent to a possible boundary change in the region. Moreover, Turkish army’s entrance into the northern Iraq was the precondition of such an aim. However, since the opposition in Turkey objected such a movement and the Iraqi army was defeated easily through an air operation; a suitable environment did not arise for Özal’s potential target.¹⁴⁰ The last chance to enter into the northern Iraq was an attack from Iraq. Yavuz Gökmen underscores in this regard that President Özal waited eagerly for an Iraqi attack during the war. When this did not occur either, it was not possible any longer for President Özal to make any change with regard to the Mosul-Kirkuk question in favor of Turkey.¹⁴¹

Thirdly, the main concern of Özal as to the post-crisis order was about the Northern Iraq. Likelihood of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq and the potentiality that this state would possess oil-rich regions of Iraq constituted Özal’s major apprehension during the crisis. According to Özal, Turkey should not have been subjected to the consequences of a future formed out of its control. Therefore, Turkey should have pursued an active policy, and by taking its place in the centre of events it should have tried to canalize the developments in line with its interests. In this context, while granting domestically more rights to the Kurds, Özal aimed to increase Turkish influence in northern Iraq and to take away the Kurdish card from Iran, Iraq and Syria.¹⁴² It might be claimed that considering the southern borders of Turkey as artificial, Özal was advocating a return to Ottoman borders in the sense of economic and cultural influence. In a nutshell, thanks to his close cooperation with the United States in the Gulf Crisis, Özal was hoping to raise Turkish influence in Northern Iraq, to take the Kurdish card off the neighbors’ hands as well as to gain the western backup on the Kurdish question. In this regard, Özal preferred an active and initiative taking policy to a reactionary one.¹⁴³

Fourthly, Özal was of the opinion that with its free market system and democracy, Turkey could have been a model for the Arab countries and a stability island in its region. Similarly, Özal was attributing Turkey a bridge role between the East and West and was drawing a parallel between Turkey’s weight in the East and the West.¹⁴⁴ Özal had no doubt that if Turkey could play diplomatic and even military roles in the crisis, Turkey would increase its weight in the Middle East and this would reflect positively to Turkey’s weight in

¹³⁷ Executive assistant of President Özal, Engin Güner, also stresses in an interview that the “invest one, get three” metaphor does not belong to Özal. “Turgut Özal Belgeseli, Türkiye’de Bir Milat” (Turgut Özal Documentary, A Milestone in Turkey) Part 10, Yapımcı&Yönetmen Yusuf Tümtürk, Mart 2008, accessed 12.01.2012, <http://www.kure.tv/belgesel/572-turgut-ozal-belgeseli/>

¹³⁸ Gözen, “Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı,” 323-324.

¹³⁹ Yavuz Gökmen wrote that a relative of Özal said that during a conversation in September 1990, Özal asked for U.S. President George Bush’s backup to annex Mosul and Kirkuk. Aral, “Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş,” 234.

Gözen, “Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı,” 335-339.

¹⁴¹ Gülistan Gürbey, “Özal’ın Dış Politika Anlayışı” (Özal’s Foreign Policy Understanding), in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 304

¹⁴² Ibid., 301-302.

¹⁴³ Laçiner, “Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası,” 37.

¹⁴⁴ Efeğil, Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli, 217.

the West.¹⁴⁵ In this framework, in order to obtain Arab states' confidence, Özal wanted Turkey to play its two cards during the crisis, namely high level relations with the west and Turkey's Muslim identity. Hence, President Özal advocated that Turkey should have demonstrated its support to the Arab States and that in order to show Turkish support to the Arab world which was exposed to the Iraqi threat; it should have sent at least symbolically Turkish troops to the region.¹⁴⁶

Fifthly, pruning the military power of Iraq which was threatening the security of Turkey was of great significance.¹⁴⁷ Özal was of the opinion that Saddam Hussein was a dangerous person. Subsequent to the eight-year war against Iran, he had begun to put Turkey to inconvenience by raising the matter of water. Saddam had also threatened Turkey on 5 May 1990 by threatening the Turkish PM Yıldırım Akbulut. Iraqi leader had always dreamed of forming the Great Arab State, and it was not clear where he would go after Kuwait. In addition to Saddam's aggressive and unpredictable behaviors, he was tolerating activities by Kurdish rebels of Turkish origin (PKK), who were using Iraqi territory for hit-and-run attacks inside Turkey.¹⁴⁸

Lastly, American interest and involvement in the Gulf Crisis as well as the enormous power of the USA were further reasons pushing Özal to pursue a pro-US policy. In the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Block, the United States remained as the sole super power and a "uni-polar world" began to be a matter of discussion in terms of new world system.¹⁴⁹ Özal was also aware of the change in the world system and the position of the USA in it. In the face of the decisive standing of this economic and military giant, Iraq had no chance.¹⁵⁰ Additionally, according to Özal, Turkey had stood on the losing party for many years because of its timidity and it was time to take place on the winning side.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, one should underscore once again the impact of the US on Özal's identity and weltanschauung. His socialization process in the United States had always a significant role in his paradigm, with respect to the relations between Turkey and the US too. Özal closely witnessed the power of the US economic and political system and this strengthened the "unipolar" position of the United States in his eyes.

According to President Özal, siding with Iraq or neutrality during the Gulf Crisis was not an option for Ankara. As a matter of fact, in addition to European countries, most of Arab and Islamic countries were on the United States' side. With an accurate interpretation of Özal, "Iraq had challenged the whole world" and in this case Turkey did not possess much alternative.¹⁵² Moreover, considering Turkey's need for the economic as well as technological support of the western world and US in particular, Özal knew that Turkey did not have much choice. Meanwhile, Özal was aware that remaining neutral in the crisis and sustaining the present relations with Iraq, which met a considerable part of its needs through Turkey and was marketing the main part of its oil to the world through Turkey, would mean an implicit backup for Iraq. In this respect, it was not rational for Turkey to challenge the anti-Iraq policy

¹⁴⁵ Gürbey, "Özal'ın Dış Politika Anlayışı," 299.

¹⁴⁶ Efeğil, *Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli*, 217.

¹⁴⁷ Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 13.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 217-218. Sami Kohen, "Özal Counting on Closer US Ties," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, (April 1991).

¹⁴⁹ Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," 23-33. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," 5.

¹⁵⁰ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 317-318.

¹⁵¹ Sedat Laçiner, *Ideology and Foreign Policy*, (PhD diss., King's College, University of London, 2001), 325.

¹⁵² Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 318-319.

of the United States.¹⁵³ Consequently, Turkey should have sided with the winning party and sought to avoid any political and economic harm.¹⁵⁴

Consequently, along with his personality traits and his identity, Özal's ideas and interpretations about the material conditions were also determining about his stance during the Gulf crisis. Analyzing and interpreting the material conditions of the day through his lenses, Özal leadership defined Turkey's interest in favor of a pro-U.S. active foreign policy. Despite the strong domestic opposition, President Özal pursued an active, pragmatic and pro-American policy. He almost single-handedly engineered the foreign policy of the country during the Gulf Crisis.¹⁵⁵ He either bypassed the government, National Security Council, military and civil bureaucracy, which had been the traditional decision makers on foreign political issues, or motivated them to take decisions in accordance with his policy line. In fact, he achieved a considerable success in these efforts and put his own choices into practice, yet he could not be successful on some issues such as joining the hot war issue.¹⁵⁶

4.2.3.3. A constructivist approach to the factors increasing Özal's weight in TFP

It might be claimed that Özal's character and personality had a key effect in his role during the Gulf Crisis. Even though the psychological factors are disregarded by constructivists, I strongly advocate that President Özal's foreign policy style during the Gulf crisis cannot be fully comprehended without considering his personality traits. That is, his practical, pragmatic, initiative-taking personality and pro- United States stand played a key role in his stance throughout the Gulf Crisis. Since the beginning of the multi-party democratic life in Turkey, none of Özal's predecessors had used the presidential authority to shape TFP so actively and leadingly. In contrast to the established practices and the traditional decision making structure, Özal highlighted his presidential authority in foreign policy making during the Gulf Crisis. In this period, despite the serious opposition from his former party (Motherland Party), opposition parties, civil and military bureaucracy, Özal sought to conduct TFP almost alone and achieved a great success in doing this.¹⁵⁷

Another reason for Özal's relatively significant success was the ideological vacuum and his rivals' trouble to produce alternative solutions. Remembering the Gulf Crisis period, Iraq had invaded another state and refused to withdraw. From left to right, no Turkish political party was able to find a coherent solution to the issue. Bülent Ecevit, a social democrat, paid a visit to the invader, Saddam Hussein, in Baghdad. Likewise, the Islamist Necmettin Erbakan could not adopt a consistent attitude in a conflict between two Muslim countries. By espousing an aggressive stance, Iraq had become an assertive rival of Turkey in the region and had challenged the whole western world. While Russia, China and even the Arab world were siding with the US-led western alliance, except for the President, no other institution, including the security and foreign policy bureaucracy, could determine a clear stance. In such an environment, where politics and bureaucracy were not able to produce solutions, Özal's

¹⁵³ Ibid., 319-321. Efegil, Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli, 218.

¹⁵⁴ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 322.

¹⁵⁵ Harris, "Turkey's Foreign Policy: Independent or Reactive?," 271.

¹⁵⁶ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 344-345.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 345.

determined stance granted him a prominent place, and perhaps for the first time the President won the main decision-maker status in TFP.¹⁵⁸

Two further basic factors enabling Özal's active involvement and extraordinary interventions in politics paved the way for Özal's success. The first factor relates to the presidential authority and the constitutional power of the President. The second factor is pertinent to the internal political structure of the period i.e. Özal's weight in the ruling Motherland Party as well as in the Parliament. The latter is of crucial importance, because it allowed Özal to use his constitutional authorities, position and role in an extreme manner. Stated differently, without the arithmetic superiority of the MP both in the government and in the parliament, Özal's role in the policy-making could not have reached to such extreme levels.¹⁵⁹

President Özal adopted two tactics in order to realize his goals mentioned above. (1) He tried to approach the United States and employ its power in line with his own goals. To this end, he collaborated increasingly with the U.S. throughout the Gulf Crisis. Moreover, he sought to bolster in this respect a personal friendship with the US President Bush, emphasized this "close friendship" in his statements to the media and tried to reinforce it. He considered that in this way he could have had influence on the American President and indirectly on the US foreign policy. He tried to give a direction to American war policy in accordance with Turkish interests. (2) Özal strongly stressed that Turkey had a very significant power and geographical location and that it was an indispensable ally for the U.S. in the region. In order to prove this, he took every kind of measures against Iraq quickly and effectively. Ankara implemented the economic embargo on Iraq shortly after the United Nations' resolution and closed the petroleum pipeline of Kirkuk-Yumurtalik. It adopted a hard attitude against Saddam and did not object the American use of Incirlik Base in southern Turkey. Özal's support for the international mainstream was so strong that some even alleged that Özal was more eager for the war than the US itself.¹⁶⁰ In the aftermath of Saddam's invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990, the Council of Ministers (CM) made a statement rejecting the invasion and calling for Saddam Hussein to withdraw.

Consequently, President Özal's foreign policy paradigm and his ideas about the material circumstances of the day which were closely associated with his identity definition were considerably determining in his political approach towards the Gulf crisis. Additionally one should not disregard the role of his psychological qualities on his policy style and on the policy outcomes throughout the crisis. In a nutshell, President Özal's intervention into the foreign policy of the country was considerably unconventional or more precisely unprecedented.

4.2.3.4. Path to the war

In the wake of Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the Cabinet was inclined to determine its attitude in line with the attitudes of the UN and other international institutions. On the other hand, President Özal was making harder statements and articulating that the crisis was a dangerous development for both the Middle East and the West as well as for the other countries of the world. He was stressing that Saddam entered into Kuwait with

¹⁵⁸Laçiner, "Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası," 36-37.

¹⁵⁹Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 345. See also the footnote in Robins, Suits and uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War, 54.

¹⁶⁰Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 324-325.

the goal of controlling a big part of the oil resources and controlling the oil prices. He also added that Saddam's ultimate goal was the leadership of the Arab World.¹⁶¹

On the third day of the invasion, Iraq's leader Saddam sent his Vice President, Taha Yassin Ramadan, to Ankara and tried to convince Turkey to remain neutral and continue its trade with Iraq, yet could not achieve any success. Subsequently, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived to Ankara. Both the President Özal and the Turkish Government stated that Iraqi attack should have been stopped and Turkey would do its part to stop it.¹⁶²

On the fourth day of the Crisis, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted the resolution 661, and decided to impose an economic embargo against Iraq to enforce it to withdraw from Kuwait. Immediately after the UNSC decision, without waiting for the reaction of the international community, the CM gathered under the chairmanship of President Özal and closed the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik petroleum pipeline. In addition to this, trade with Iraq and transit transport through it was stopped, and its assets in Turkey were frozen.¹⁶³ Criticizing this demeanor of the government, opposition parties claimed that the government acted unnecessarily in haste and exhibited an anti-Iraq attitude. In the face of such critiques, despite its controversial legal foundations, Özal was taking the UNSC decision as the most important point of reference to Turkey's support for the US-led camp.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, by acting quickly on the embargo issue, the government aimed both to make Turkey gain its ascendancy in the eyes of the West and to abstain from getting into a "degrading situation" by taking this step upon the American insist.¹⁶⁵ As a matter of fact, President Özal reminded on this question the words of US Secretary of State James Baker who had visited Turkey in the wake of the UNSC resolution. Quoting from Baker's words that "if you had not closed the pipeline, we would have blockaded Iskenderun (Alexandretta)", Özal expressed that being aware of this intention of the Americans, they closed the pipeline immediately. President Özal argued that by this means Turkey gained ascendancy and eschewed getting into a degrading situation.¹⁶⁶

With regard to military support, Özal had already proclaimed before it was not clear whether it was going to be resorted to military power against Iraq to a CNN correspondent that Incirlik base could have been used by the Americans.¹⁶⁷ Additionally, he advocated at the initial stage of the crisis that Turkey should have sent its troops to the region in order to demonstrate Ankara's support to the Arab countries. The government agreed with Özal on this issue. However, the governmental motion to obtain a permission on the issues of declaration of a state of war, on the use of armed forces, sending them abroad or presence of foreign armed forces in Turkey was not approved by the parliament due to the strong opposition stemming from both opposition parties and from the ruling MP itself.¹⁶⁸ Thereby, Akbulut government's idea of giving support to the international alliance for show fell through. Under these circumstances, Özal began to advocate the needlessness of sending

¹⁶¹ Efeğil, Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli, 177-178.

¹⁶² Ibid., 178-179.

¹⁶³ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 232-233. Efeğil, Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli, 179.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 233.

¹⁶⁵ Efeğil, Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli, 179.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 219-220.

¹⁶⁷ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 234.

¹⁶⁸ "Özal nasıl frenlendi," *Milliyet*, 14.08.1990, 14.

troops to the international alliance and argued that deployment of forces at the Iraqi border would be more effective than sending troops to the region.¹⁶⁹

In the face of Saddam's diplomatic maneuvers, President Özal sent Foreign Minister Ali Bozer to Iran, Syria, Jordan and Egypt, and tried to ensure their coordinated action. In the meantime, UNSC decided with the resolution 665 to impose a sea blockade against Iraq. Upon this decision, Özal wanted at least to send a warship to the Gulf. He was of the opinion that sending a warship would ensure Turkey the right to speak during and after the war. Despite differences of opinion within the government on this issue, Özal used his influence, and the CM chaired by President Özal accepted the governmental motion which stipulated to authorize the government to send Turkish Armed Forces abroad and to permit the presence of foreign armed forces in Turkey. Eventually, some deputies' dissenting votes from the ruling MP notwithstanding, this motion was adopted in the Turkish Parliament.¹⁷⁰ Meanwhile, Özal was stressing in view of Saddam's diplomatic maneuvers that Turkey was with the United States, and he was underlining that in an environment which had been strained due to the hostage crisis, Turkey would not object an American intervention into the crisis region. Nevertheless, in order to avoid creating an eternal enemy in the neighborhood and to lay the groundwork for relationship with future governments in Baghdad, Turkey drew a distinction between the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people. In this regard, Ankara was disposed to refrain from actions which would harm directly the Iraqi people. As a matter of fact, the demands to increase the pressure on Baghdad by cutting the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris were immediately rejected by the government on the ground that Iraqi people would suffer from such actions.¹⁷¹ Likewise, President Özal's severe critiques focused on Iraqi leader Saddam and his administration. He pointed out that the Iraqi people should have been saved from Saddam's dictatorship.¹⁷²

By the way, with a view to alleviating the heavy burden of economic embargo on Turkish economy, the government embarked on a quest of acquiring international economic assistance. As a matter of fact, oil prices had risen to \$ 40 and Turkish economy was severely hit when the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik petroleum pipeline was closed. Any kind of trade with Iraq as well as the services of the Turkish contracting sector in Iraq was stopped. Iraq froze its debts to Turkey and finally Turkish tourism sector entered into a recession. In order to compensate these economic losses, the government demanded more international assistance. However, President Özal explained his will in favor of technological investment by the western countries and joint investments instead of economic assistance. In this framework, he emphasized that the USA should have stretched the quota imposed on Turkish textile products and should have contributed more to the modernization of Turkish armed forces. Because, Özal advocated that economically supported and militarily reinforced Turkey could have been an element of balance in the Middle East and have played a key role to ensure the stability of the region. To this end, a contact was established with the U.S. both at the governmental and presidential levels and Americans made positive promises on the issues of economic assistance, extension of textile quotas as well as modernization of the Turkish army.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ Efeğil, Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli, 183-185.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 185-189. "Haydi hayırlısı," *Milliyet*, 06.09.1990, 1.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 190-193.

¹⁷² Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 330.

¹⁷³ Efeğil, Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli, 190-192.

However, Özal's strong and extraordinary leadership style in favor of the U.S. placed him at odds with the majority of the Turkish society¹⁷⁴ and with some members of the Cabinet. In mid-October, the government was shocked with the resignation of the Foreign Minister, Ali Bozer, who criticized President Özal's demeanor during the Gulf Crisis and withdrew from the government. In the course of the Gulf Crisis, Özal had refused to take Foreign Minister Bozer into meetings with Americans in Washington.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, in contrast to Özal, Bozer had objected sending Turkish troops to the Gulf and he had learned the closure of the petroleum pipeline first from the press. Following Bozer's resignation, National Defense Minister Safa Giray resigned as well.¹⁷⁶

In November, the American administration embarked on efforts to make the military option acceptable in the international arena. In this context, President Bush sent Secretary of State James Baker to Ankara to feel Turkey's pulse. Even though the Turkish government gave the US administration the green light with respect to a military option, it preferred to exhibit an attitude in parallel with France, USSR and China which followed relatively soft policy towards Iraq. PM Akbulut underlined that results of the economic embargo should have been waited for before resorting to a military solution and that no military operation should have been carried out without a Security Council decision. Nonetheless, he told Baker that Turkey would not object any Security Council resolution to use force. President Özal, on the other hand, gave clearer answers to Baker about the attitude of Turkey in his own usual style. Accordingly, Ankara would give a boost to the military option, but with the following conditions:

1. The United States should not have performed the operation alone.
2. UNSC decisions were indispensable for the participation of Turkey to the military operation and it was hard for Turkey to provide political and military assistance without the UNSC resolution.
3. Considering the estimated reactions from the public opinion as well as from civil and military circles, Özal expressed that Turkey's military role should have been limited to logistic support.
4. It could not have been assumed that the crisis ended unless Iraq withdrew to its pre-August 2 boundaries.¹⁷⁷

Subsequent to the UNSC resolution 678 which granted a 45 days respite to the Iraqi administration to withdraw, Ankara got into motion. In the meetings of National Security Council and CM chaired by President Özal, the resolution 678 and its implications were discussed. Taking into consideration of a possible war, the cabinet came to a decision to invite NATO Rapid Deployment Force to Turkey. Following the CM meeting, the Crisis Committee which was chaired again by President Özal and attended by PM Yıldırım Akbulut, Chief of General Staff Necip Torumtay, National Defense Minister Hüsnü Doğan and FM Alptemoçin

¹⁷⁴ William D. Montalbano, "Crisis in The Persian Gulf: Baker Visits Turkey Today; Stalwart Ally Poised at Iraq's North Border: Western alliance: Secretary to seek President Ozal's permission for U.S. bomber strikes from base at Incirlik," **Los Angeles Times**, 13.01.1991, accessed 09.11.2011, http://articles.latimes.com/1991-01-13/news/mn-413_1_persian-gulf

¹⁷⁵ Robins, Suits and uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War, 60.

¹⁷⁶ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 347.

¹⁷⁷ Efeçil, Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli, 194-195.

came together. Whereas the government was debating the quality of the resolution 678, rather than discussing its nature, President Özal was arguing that the military bases in Turkey should have been opened for use. According to him, if the bases would not be used in case of a hot conflict, the end of the Gulf war would be risky, thus, Ankara should have opened the bases.¹⁷⁸

Contrary to Özal's clear stance on the bases matter, there existed some cracks in the Cabinet. Whereas some members argued that the former permission obtained from the Parliament was invalid and that Turkey should have stayed away from the war, other members contemplated to the contrary. The opposition parties objected also to sending troops to the region and to opening the bases to the allies. By the same token, the General Staff and the bureaucracy of foreign affairs were uneasy about allowing the international mainstream to use the bases in Turkey.¹⁷⁹ In this environment, Chief of the Staff Necip Torumtay criticized Özal's foreign policy as 'adventurist' and resigned. It was for the first time in Turkey's political history that a Chief of Staff resigned. In fact, this occasion signaled how influential President Özal's leadership was on Turkish politics. Those who do not agree with Özal's ideas felt compelled to resign. At this point, in addition to Özal's strong leadership, one should also underline the strong backup of the United States in favor of Özal.¹⁸⁰

On December 1990, Turkey asked for a Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) from NATO against a probable Iraqi attack to Turkey to settle in the Southern Turkey.¹⁸¹ In doing this, Turkish government aimed to make use of the deterrence power of the RDF and to prove the NATO solidarity in the region. The government further aimed to react to a possible attack from Iraq with NATO and in this manner, not to impair Turkey's credit before the Iraqi people. NATO answered Turkey's call positively and on January 6-10 1991 the RDF came to Turkey and based Malatya Erhaç Air Base.¹⁸²

On the path to the war, while the Akbulut government was trying to enhance military power of the country through the NATO assistance and purchase of weapons, it was proclaiming that Ankara was in favor of a peaceful resolution, and it was sustaining its diplomatic efforts to this end. Fearing the unpredictable results of a war in the region, Turkey signed a joint declaration with Iran and Pakistan and called for an extraordinary meeting for the Organization of Islamic Conference. On the other hand, President Özal regarded the likelihood of a war 80 percent and evaluated the events with a pragmatic approach. Believing that a probable war would end to the disadvantage of Iraq in a short time, in the wake of a war, Özal predicted border changes in the region, new opportunities for the Arab-Israel question and a large wave of refugees towards Turkey. At this stage, he listed Turkey's priorities as achieving a good peace, preserving the existing borders of Iraq and eliminating the capability of war of Baghdad. Moreover, Özal stressed that Turkey would not open a second front against Iraq as long as it does not attack its northern neighbor.¹⁸³

Towards the end of the deadline set by the UNSC's resolution 678, the hot issue in Ankara was whether Turkey would allow the US-led coalition allies use Turkish bases.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 195-196.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 197.

¹⁸⁰ Sedat Laçiner, "Özalism (Neo-Ottomanism): An Alternative in Turkish Foreign Policy?" *Journal of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 1, No: 1-2, (2003-2004), 196.

¹⁸¹ Aydın et al., "Chronology of Turkish-American Relations," 255.

¹⁸² Efeğil, *Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikası Karar Verme Modeli*, 198-199.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 199-201.

President Özal was in favor of permission for the coalition forces. As a matter of fact, after the US warplanes began to bomb Iraq on January 15, the CM chaired by President Özal decided to ask for a comprehensive authority from the Parliament. Through this authority, the government would be entitled to dispatch Turkish Armed Forces to other countries as well as to permit the presence and usage of foreign armed forces in Turkey. In fact, by giving logistical support, government had intended to reinforce Turkey's place in the equations of the post-war term. Consequently, despite the negative votes of the opposition, the Motherland Party government which enjoyed also the majority in the parliament obtained the permission from the legislative body. After hours of the obtainment of this permission, CM gave the coalition allies the green light to the usage of the Incirlik base. Following this permission, the US aircraft took off from Incirlik and began to bomb Baghdad.¹⁸⁴

Turkey's assistance to the anti-Iraq coalition did not remain limited to permitting US military air craft access to the Incirlik air base for strikes into Iraq and the strong support to the economic embargo. Ankara extended the duration of the DECA in 1991 and thereby paved the way for the usage of the bases in Turkey by the American forces. Additionally, Turkey deployed nearly one hundred thousand troops on its Iraqi border and pinned down Baghdad to deploy a considerable part of its troops in the north.¹⁸⁵

4.2.3.5. Outcomes of the Gulf Crisis and its beyond

When Özal realized how serious the United States was on the issue of the Gulf crisis, he based TFP on eschewing from the dangerous consequences of an estimated war by siding with the winners and on seizing potential opportunities in the aftermath of the war. To this end, Özal employed the advantages of his presidential authority, his weight in the government as well as in the parliament and pulled the wires in Turkey's Gulf war policy. By foreseeing the developments in the foreign policy field, he tried to take initiatives prior to demands of the US. Furthermore, by means of personal relationships (e.g. through his "close friendship" with the US President Bush), Özal sought to be influential on American foreign policy; thereby he strove to accomplish his foreign political goals mentioned in the preceding paragraphs.

However, events did not exactly occur as Özal hoped. First of all, Turkey's economic expectations were not fulfilled. Its economic losses caused by the economic embargo against Iraq were not adequately compensated by the United States and its allies. Admittedly, the US made some effort to assist Turkish economy. For example, it allocated an additional textile quota amounting to \$ 282 million for Turkey, convinced the Arab states to give \$ 5, 6 billion credits to it and ensured Egypt's purchase of 40 F 16 aircraft from Turkey. Nonetheless, these efforts did not suffice to reimburse Turkey for its losses.¹⁸⁶ As a matter of fact, when the US wanted to use Turkish territory to invade Iraq in 2003, the heavy cost of the first Gulf war of early 1990s played a key role in the objection of Turkish public opinion to such permission.

On the other hand, contrary to Özal's expectations, Turkey's role during the crisis was not sufficiently appreciated by the European countries. Although Western European governments, Britain in particular, expressed their appreciation for Ankara's Gulf policy, there was no discernible change in their attitude in the issue of closer EU-Turkish economic and political ties. Hence, another expectation of Özal was not fulfilled. Moreover, "Germany's reluctance to participate in a symbolic NATO force that the Turks requested

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 201-205.

¹⁸⁵ Aral, "Özal Döneminde İç ve Dış Siyaset: Süreklilik ya da Kopuş," 235.

¹⁸⁶ Uslu, *Türk Dış Politikası Yol Ayrımında*, 156.

against a possible attack from Iraq during the Gulf crisis strengthened Turkish misgivings about Europe's commitment to Turkey's defense in case of new Middle Eastern contingencies."¹⁸⁷

Above all, the most important adverse effect of the Gulf crisis for Turkey was in the security realm, rather than in the economy. The post-war developments laid the groundwork for the emergence of a Kurdish state which had been regarded by Turkish policy makers as a nightmare. Subsequent to the official end of war, when Kurdish and Shiite uprisings in Iraq, particularly in the Northern part were brutally quelled by Iraqi forces, approximately 1.5 million Kurds fled towards Turkish and Iranian borders fearing of a massacre by the Republican Guard. This refugee crisis engendered President Özal to come up with new projects. He was of the opinion that opening the borders to some 500.000 refugees would be a source of threat for Turkey's security. In order to preclude this threat, Özal put forward that those refugees should have been sent to their respective country. Besides, with a view any to hindering any possible attack from the Iraqi army, "safe heavens" should have been created in Northern Iraq. When President Özal's "safe heavens" project was accepted by the US, the no-fly zone over thirty-sixth parallel was declared and the refugees started to settle in the safe heavens. A joint force of US, France, Britain and Turkey assumed the protection of the refugees under the "Operation Provide Comfort". Following the return of all refugees to the Northern Iraq, the first operation ended in mid-July and the second stage, Operation Provide Comfort II (also known as Operation Poised Hammer) started. Though initially the Combined Task Force-Poised Hammer,¹⁸⁸ whose task was to implement the Operation Provide Comfort II, settled in Northern Iraq, it was later (in September 1991) transferred to the bases of Incirlik and Pirinçlik in Turkey.¹⁸⁹

Theoretical dimension of the Poised Hammer (the force which implemented the Operation Provide Comfort) belongs essentially to President Turgut Özal. That is, he proclaimed that safe heavens should have been created in Northern Iraq¹⁹⁰ and refugees should have been protected from the central government in Baghdad; yet he did not express any opinion as to how this would be done. This question was answered by the USA and other European countries by launching the Operation Provide Comfort. At the process of the shift of the Poised Hammer from northern Iraq to Incirlik and Pirinçlik bases in Turkey, Mesut Yılmaz government played the decisive role, not President Özal. However, Özal did not raise any objection to the deployment of this force to Turkey. He even regarded the existence of this power in Turkey as a means to influence the US policy towards the region. Additionally, he considered that Turkey could suspend its control over northern Iraq by means of the Poised Hammer.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 19.

¹⁸⁸ For an extensive discussion of Poised Hammer see Baskın Oran, "Uluslararası ve İç Hukukta Çekiç Güç'ün Yasal Dayanakları Sorunu," Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi, Ankara, Sayı: 3-4, Cilt 50, (1995): 257-270.

¹⁸⁹ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 339-340. Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 237-238.

¹⁹⁰ Kirişçi argues about the origins of "Safe Heavens" that whereas President Özal initially put forward the idea of forming a buffer zone along the border with Iraq, this idea gained another form in the wake of negotiations with Europeans; and consequently Özal's buffer zone proposal evaluated to creating "Safe Heavens" under the UN umbrella. When this proposal of European Community was not adopted by the United Nations, the USA took the initiative to forge a "Safe Heaven" in the near of Zoha. This implied a considerably different form of safe Heaven than Özal's. Kemal Kirişçi, "Huzur mu Huzursuzluk mu: Çekiç Güç ve Türk Dış Politikası 1991-1993" (Çev.Ahmet K. Han), in Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), Faruk Sönmezoglu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 200-201.

¹⁹¹ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 340-341.

Conversely, the idea of “safe heavens” led to a power vacuum in northern Iraq and by implication to the emergence of a de facto Kurdish-controlled zone under the supervision of the allied forces.¹⁹² This case underpinned in the long run a de facto Kurdish “state” which had been one of the primary nightmares of Turkish policy makers.¹⁹³ It is clear that while proposing the creation of safe heavens, Özal leadership failed to foresee the process which led to the emergence of a de facto Kurdish state in the north of 36th parallel.¹⁹⁴ Besides, when the evidences published in the media that the Poised Hammer carried out activities to the disadvantage of Turkey and it gave support to the establishment of a Kurdish state in the region, a serious reaction arose in the Turkish public opinion against the Americans. Thus, it was evident that Turkish and American interests began to diverge since the early 1990s. Whereas Ankara demanded whether under Saddam’s control or not a unitary Iraq, Washington wanted to see as much as possible a weak central authority in Baghdad. As a result, by contrast with Özal’s goal to prevent the emergence of a Kurdish state in the region by supporting the US-led coalition, the post-war developments went to another direction and the Gulf crisis brought about disastrous outcomes for Turkey in terms of the Kurdish question.¹⁹⁵

On the other hand, whenever Turkey wanted to conduct a military operation to neutralize the PKK terrorists in northern Iraq during 1990s, the US gave its consent. Therefore, these permissions given by Washington during the Özal era and after his death for trans-border military operations recurrently performed by Turkish troops might be regarded as a positive contribution of the Poised Hammer.¹⁹⁶ As a matter of fact, having harshly criticized the existence of the Poised Hammer in Turkey, all governmental parties extended the duration of its task until 2003.¹⁹⁷ However, the US tolerance to Turkish operations in northern Iraq did not change the rising PKK terrorism fact. As it was implied in the preceding paragraphs, one of the most significant results of the Persian Gulf crisis for the Turks was the growing PKK terrorism. Owing to the authority vacuum in Northern Iraq, the PKK found an appropriate groundwork for itself and intensified its violent campaign in southeastern Turkey. Thus, the Turkish authorities faced a growing problem in their attempts to control it.¹⁹⁸ The Gulf war and the Kurdish rebellion in Iraq contributed to the raise of ethnic consciousness among the Kurdish population in Turkey. In addition, there were signs that Saddam Hussein had begun to give material support to the PKK for the purpose of punishing Turkey for its close cooperation with the allied forces during the Gulf crisis.¹⁹⁹

4.2.4. Turkey-US relations towards the end of Özal era

In the process that started with Mesut Yılmaz’s takeover of the Motherland Party, President Özal’s weight began gradually to diminish in TFP and this process gained a grower momentum in the wake of MP’s defeat in the elections of October 1991.²⁰⁰ As the top

¹⁹² Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 19.

¹⁹³ Graham E. Fuller, *Yükselen Yeni Bölgesel Aktör Yeni Türkiye Cumhuriyeti*, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2008), 281-282.

¹⁹⁴ Kirişçi, “Huzur mu Huzursuzluk mu: Çekiç Güç ve Türk Dış Politikası 1991-1993,” 202.

¹⁹⁵ Mesut Özcan, “Uyuşmazlıkları uzlaştırma: 1989-2002 arası Türk-Amerikan ilişkileri,” *Anlayış*, Sayı 55 (Aralık 2007).

¹⁹⁶ Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 341.

¹⁹⁷ Oran, "Uluslararası ve İç Hukukta Çekiç Güç'ün Yasal Dayanakları Sorunu," 258.

¹⁹⁸ Çelik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy*, 80-81. Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, “Friends No More? The Rise of Anti-American Nationalism in Turkey,” *Middle East Journal*, Volume 64, No. 1, (Winter 2010): 53.

¹⁹⁹ Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 19-20.

²⁰⁰ Robins, *Suits and uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War*, 61.

political leader of Turkey since early 1980s, his performance became the most important theme of the October elections. The main critiques directed by the opposition parties to President Özal revolved around three issues: his personalized and single-handed conduct of governmental issues, the high visibility of his immediate family members in politics and business, and the failure the MP to curb Turkey's soaring inflation rate. Even though the content of his foreign policy initiatives were subjected to relatively less criticism, Özal's style in conducting Turkey's foreign policy became a serious source of criticism.²⁰¹ Opposition parties and their leaders harshly lashed Özal's control on foreign policy making, his personal conduct of Gulf war diplomacy, his exclusion of government and foreign ministry from policy making processes. All of these critiques were referred to his tendency to "dictatorship." President Özal's active participation in foreign policy making was characterized as being undemocratic and unconstitutional.²⁰²

Another criticism for Özal was his extreme pro-war image in the course of the Gulf war. His talkative personality and extraordinary active pro-American stance during the whole Gulf crisis gave rise to an image of extreme pro-war. However, Özal was left alone with his thoughts on war and peace, and he could not achieve to convince neither the public opinion nor the domestic opposition. He failed even to convince the military and civil bureaucracy to send a battleship and Turkish troops to the Persian Gulf, let alone recapture Mosul and Kirkuk as mentioned above. Nevertheless, the fierce opposition in the country could not dissuade him from his active policy. Quite the contrary, Foreign Minister, Minister of National Defense as well as Chief of Staff who fell into disagreement with President Özal preferred to resign.²⁰³ Even though it is hard to claim that Özal was fond of war, considering his hard-power oriented thoughts of solution with respect to northern Iraq and Mosul-Kirkuk questions, it is also not easy to argue that he entirely disagreed with the valid international norms of that time which were predominantly represented by the US hard-power policies.

Although his power weakened to a certain extent in foreign political issues due to the changes in the balance of power in domestic politics, President Özal continued to be a significant actor on TFP in the recent years of his presidency too. Notable points of Turkish-American relations during the last period of Özal concentrated on Turkey-US cooperation in the Balkans and the Central Asia. One may conclude that Turkish-American cooperation continued in this period as well.

4.2.4.1. Cooperation in the Balkans: Rising "neo-Ottomanist" identity albeit decreasing power of President Özal

Another area of cooperation between Turkey and the U.S. during the Özal era was the Balkans. Turkey and the USA closely cooperated in the Bosnia and Kosovo crises. But this time Özal played a less active role in this cooperation. The major reason for that was Özal's relatively decreasing weight in Turkish domestic and foreign politics because of the leadership change within the Motherland Party and subsequently the governmental shift in October 1991 in the wake of the defeat of the MP in general elections.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 20.

²⁰² Gözen, "Turgut Özal ve Körfez Savaşı," 345.

²⁰³ Ibid., 346-348.

²⁰⁴ Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis," 20. Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War, 61.

When the dissolution process of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia began in early 1990s, Turkey tried not to interfere in this question. Whilst Turkish public opinion strongly advocated to side with Muslims, Turkish leaders waited cautiously for the attitude of Europe and the US. Once the US and Europe defined their positions in favor of territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and preserving the status quo, Turkish policy makers also defended the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Along with the desire of positioning in the same line with the West, there were several other reasons behind Turkey's non-interventionist policy. Above all Turkey and Yugoslavia had enjoyed good relations from the past. Moreover, Yugoslavia was a vital trade and transportation corridor between Turkey and Europe. Additionally, Turkey anticipated that any instability in Yugoslavia would bring about an emigration flow of Bosnians and Albanians living in the region towards Turkey and considered that such a scenario would generate trouble given Turkey's limited resources. Perhaps most important of all of them was Turkish rulers', except for the Özal leadership, attitude towards the region. They were concerned that an active TFP in the region would be perceived as a "neo-Ottomanist" aspiration of the country. That is, they were worried that an active foreign policy for the benefit of Bosnia, Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia with which Turkey share historical, ethnic, cultural and religious ties would push Turkey to an adventure and would augment friction with Greece, Bulgaria and Russia.²⁰⁵

Turkey's attitude as regards the Yugoslavia question altered again in concert with the attitude of the West. Despite its moral support for Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Turkey officially recognized four republics emerged from the ashes of former Yugoslavia in February 1992, only subsequent to the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia by the EU and the USA.²⁰⁶ Additionally, when Serbian violence was widely reported in the Turkish media, Ankara sensed the need to formulate an active policy in the Balkans. This policy change was in nature a reaction to the growing pressure of the Turkish public opinion and to the indifferent posture of the western states to the Serbian massacres of Muslim Bosnians. Consequently, by focusing on both western organizations (e.g. NATO, European Council, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) and Islamic organizations (Organization of the Islamic Conference in particular), Turkey strove in all platforms with might and main to stop the war as of the second part of 1992.²⁰⁷

Nonetheless it never acted alone in these efforts and remained committed to the principle of acting together with Western states as well as with international institutions. For example, though Turkey already declared from the very beginning that it was ready to send peacekeeping troops to serve in Yugoslavia, it preferred to act in unison with the international community and waited patiently for the United Nations' invitation.²⁰⁸

In contrast to government's prudent attitude, President Özal's eagerness to assume a more active role in the region and his defense of a more hawkish foreign policy in the Balkans caused discomfort in both the government and foreign affairs bureaucracy.²⁰⁹ Nevertheless,

²⁰⁵ Şaban Çalış and Birol Akgün, "Çatışmadan Uzlaşmaya: 21. Yüzyıla Girerken Balkanlar'da Türk Yunan Rekabeti" (From Conflict to Reconciliation: Turkish-Greek Competition in the Balkans entering the 21st Century), in 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21. Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 299-301.

²⁰⁶ Şule Kut, "Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna-Hersek Makedonya Politikası: 1990-1993," in Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 327.

²⁰⁷ Çalış and Akgün, "Çatışmadan Uzlaşmaya," 301-302.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 302.

²⁰⁹ Çalış and Akgün, "Çatışmadan Uzlaşmaya," 303.

the government followed a relatively more active foreign policy in the Balkans and it was claimed that President Özal's active foreign policy approach had a certain psychological impact on PM Süleyman Demirel's relatively active policy approach, who had been in a long-standing competition with Turgut Özal. Accordingly, Demirel did not want to lag behind Özal in the foreign policy field.²¹⁰ Stated differently, President Özal was in a sense a source of pressure on Demirel government on foreign policy. As a matter of fact, in the course of Bosnian crisis, Demirel was, incomparably to his earlier prime ministries, excessively interested in foreign policy. PM Demirel took a stand, unusually in the republican history, against President Özal and, for instance, he tried to hinder the impression that President Özal was using initiative on behalf of Turkey. With respect to Özal's Balkan tour in February 1993, PM Demirel stressed that the authority belonged to the government both in domestic and foreign policy. Furthermore, he proclaimed with reference to Özal's words "Turkey should take risk for Bosnia-Herzegovina" that Turkey should act and was already acting in unison with the world.²¹¹

On the other hand, President Özal did not stand idle on the Balkans issue either and by bringing the Bosnia question in national and international platforms, he tried to influence Turkey's Balkans policy. In this framework for example, during his visit to the USA between 24 January and 9 February, he lobbied in favor of Bosnia and demanded a military intervention from President Clinton to stop Serbs.²¹² Additionally, prior to his Balkan trip mentioned above, he unusually gave support to a Bosnia solidarity open-air-meeting organized on 13 February 1993 and he even addressed a speech there. In his address, Özal underlined that "Turkey and Turkish nation would never allow a second Andalusia tragedy in Bosnia" (T.b.A.).²¹³ Thereby he sought to mobilize public opinion and indirectly tried to exert pressure on the government.

Consequently, even though the Demirel government sought to act together with the west and tried to avoid the steps which could be potentially perceived as a neo-Ottomanist policy, Turkey's historical and cultural ties forced it to follow a more active policy in the Bosnian crisis. President Özal already viewed the Bosnian question as a part of Turkey's Ottoman heritage and believed Turkey's responsibility against the Bosnians.²¹⁴ Therefore, he

²¹⁰ Şaban ÇalıŖ, "Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler: Özal, Balkanlar ve Neo-Osmanlıcılık!" in Kim Bu Özal, Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet (Who is this Özal, Politics, Economy, Mentality, eds. İhsan Dağı and İhsan Sezal, (Istanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2. Baskı 2003), 408-409.

²¹¹ Ibid., 410-411.

²¹² "Clinton Özal'ı Ağırladı," **Milliyet**, 09.02.1993.

²¹³ "Özal Meydan Okudu," **Milliyet**, 14.02.1993.

²¹⁴ The private consultant of President Özal, Cengiz Çandar, who had worked very closely with him from 1991 until his death in 1993 expressed Özal's ideas about the Bosnia War with these words:

"Saying without exaggeration, deceased President Turgut Özal spent the last year of his life by living Bosnia. He cried for Bosnia in a real sense and shed tears. He whimpered for Bosnia. As if we were responsible for the whole atrocities, massacres and casualties... In this sense however, it is neither ethnicity nor language which separate the Bosnians, Serbians and Croatians. They have a just dialectic difference, that's all. Ethnically, they are Slavs, southern Slavs. What does separate them, the religion! The Serbians are Orthodox, the Croatians catholic and the Bosnians Muslim. When did they become Muslim? They became Muslim in the Ottoman era. Whatever befalling them at the moment, it is for that reason. They are being exposed to a campaign of genocide. Therefore, Özal was of the opinion that as heir to the Ottoman State, it was morally and historically Turkey's mission to save our brothers from the genocide campaigns and massacres. And what can be done what should be done... He spent the last months, the last year, especially the last months of his life by living Bosnia. (T.b.A.)"

These words express actually Turgut Özal's perception about Turkey's historical and cultural ties and how it pushed him towards an active policy in the Bosnia question in a gnomic manner.

tried in this respect to create pressure on the government to force it to pursue a more active policy. This neo-Ottoman identity understanding which had already had certain reciprocity within the Turkish society was consolidated also by the events in Bosnia and the neo-Ottomanism began to rise. In a nutshell, despite the anti-Özal posture of the government, coupled with the public pressure, President Özal was one of the most important factors in Ankara's relatively more active foreign policy in the Balkans during the period of 1992-93.²¹⁵

It was evident by the end of 1993 that the arms embargo imposed by UNSC Resolution 713, the EU-led negotiations and the UN peace-keeping force on the ground (UNPROFOR) failed to stop the war in Bosnia and served only to prolong it. At this point, the deepening human tragedy in Bosnian war required the US to assume the initiative. The leading role of the US in the crisis intervention and its positive contributions on the protection of Turkish and Muslim minorities brought Turkey and the USA together. To give an example, whereas Russia, France and England supported the Serbian pro-integrity party, and Germany, Austria and Italy backed Croats and Slovenes, Turkey and the US gave support to Albanians, Macedonians and Bosnian Muslims.²¹⁶

Turkey's stance on the Bosnia crisis was clear: Ankara proposed since the early days of the crisis a limited military operation against the aggressor or the removal of arms embargo imposed on Bosnia-Herzegovina.²¹⁷ In this context, Turkey's proposal of the military option to end the humanitarian tragedies in the Balkans and the fact that solely the US possessed the will and capacity to realize such a military intervention made it indispensable for the Turks to cooperate with the USA.²¹⁸ Turkish policy makers reminded to the American authorities the Gulf Crisis and pointed out that a similar international intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina was necessary.²¹⁹ By the same token, President Özal tried to use his personal relationship with President Bush to urge the US to a military intervention.²²⁰ Furthermore, Turkey lobbied for the so-called "lift and strike" policy to end the war and the suffering of Bosnians. By early 1994, the Clinton administration came to the same line with Ankara and began to support the "lift and strike" option. Meanwhile, the arms embargo notwithstanding, both countries had been secretly providing the Bosnians with weapons. In March 1994, a federation between Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats was forged in Washington, and Turkey and the US indirectly endeavored to strengthen the Croat and Muslim forces. Towards the end of 1994, the new Bosnian Muslim-Croat army went on the offensive. Eventually, accompanied by the international pressure, NATO air strikes against the Bosnian Serb positions culminated in the Dayton peace talks between the parties.

4.2.4.2. Cooperation in the Central Asia and Caucasus

Even though Turkey's importance for the West diminished owing to the end of East-West conflict, and the West did not need Turkey any longer as a fortress against the Soviet Union, ensuing events such as the Gulf War, ethnic conflicts in the Balkans and the independence of Turkic republics in the wake of the dissolution of Soviet Union proved that

Cengiz Çandar, Kentler ve Gölgele Belgeseli, **TRTTÜRK**, 14.03.2013, accessed 05.06.2013, <http://kentlervegolgeler.tumblr.com/page/5>

²¹⁵ Çalış, "Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler," 413.

²¹⁶ Tuğtan, "Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003," 251.

²¹⁷ Kut, "Yugoslavya Bunalımı," 329.

²¹⁸ M. Özcan, "Uyuşmazlıkları uzlaştırma: 1989-2002 arası Türk-Amerikan ilişkileri,"

²¹⁹ Kut, "Yugoslavya Bunalımı," 329.

²²⁰ "Özal'ın Bosna-Hersek Atağı," **Milliyet**, 07.12.1992.

Turkey was still a significant partner for both Europe and the USA. In the aftermath of the emergence of Turkic republics as independent units, in contrast to previous claims, it was commonly stressed that Turkey's importance increased, new opportunities arose for it, and it could undertake new roles.²²¹

In such an environment, President Turgut Özal was eager to seize the opportunities in Central Asia in favor of Turkey. Özal regarded Central Asia as a new field to expand Ankara's influence, enhance its strategic value to the West and offset Turkey's difficulties with Europe by opening to the newly emerged Turkic states.²²² Once the iron curtain had lost its meaning and new horizons had been opened for Turkey, Ankara abandoned traditional isolationist Kemalist policy towards the Central Asia. Turkey became the first state in the world that recognized the independence of the newly born republics of Central Asia, many of which had cultural, linguistic, historical and religious ties with Turkey. With its market economy and relatively democratic system, Turkey was seen as a model to be emulated.

In essence, a significant part of Turkish civil and military bureaucracy "which had adhered fairly closely to traditional, isolationist policies" was inclined to refrain from following an active policy towards the Central Asia. It was Özal leadership who strongly encouraged high level relations with this region. Özal visited Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan in March 1991 and the President of Kazakhstan paid the first foreign visit to Turkey in the same year. Visits of Presidents of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan sustained this trend.²²³ President Özal excitedly proclaimed at the opening of a summit of Turkic leaders in October 1992 that the 21st century would be "the century of the Turks". Additionally, he spoke of the need to establish a Turkic Common Market accompanied by a Development and Investment Bank.²²⁴ In a mood of optimism following the end of Cold War, Özal leadership was ambitiously eager to play a "big brother" role for the Turkic republics in the Central Asia and ignored the passivism oriented reflexes of traditionally-minded bureaucracy. Therefore, this leadership mobilized all resources of the country and sought to provide economic and technical assistance to the new republics of Central Asia and supported them in all international platforms.²²⁵ One might claim that President Özal's foreign policy approach which attached importance to cooperate with the countries with which Turkey enjoys historical and cultural denominators was also influential in his proactive approach towards the Central Asia and Caucasus.

²²¹ İdris Bal, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türk Dış Politikası için Türk Cumhuriyetlerinin Önemi, in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 397-398. Kemal Kirişçi, "New Patterns of Turkish Foreign Policy Behaviour," in Turkey: Political, Social and Economic Challenges in the 1990s, ed. Çiğdem Balım et al., (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1995), 1-2.

²²² Larrabee and Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," 99.

²²³ Ataman, "Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy."

²²⁴ Gareth M.Winrow, "Regional Security and National Identity: The Role of Turkey in Former Soviet Central Asia," in Turkey: Political, Social and Economic Challenges in the 1990s, ed. Çiğdem Balım et al., (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1995), 24.

²²⁵ One has to note that this period of optimism began to disappear after a certain time. The reason for this was more than one. Above all, it was comprehended that there was an imbalance between Turkey's ambitions and its resources. Furthermore, it was realized that Turkic republics had various expectations from Turkey and they already had frictions with each other which did not coincide with Özal's "common market" aspiration. As a consequence of all these factors, a more realist climate began to dominate Ankara in connection with its relations with the Central Asia. Gül Turan and İlter Turan, "Türkiye'nin Diğer Türk Cumhuriyetleriyle İlişkileri," in Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), ed.Faruk Sönmezoğlu, (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1998), 403-425.

With respect to Turkish-US cooperation, the post-Soviet republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia provided another area for American-Turkish strategic cooperation.²²⁶ “The USA had three major goals for the Central Asia: domination of energy sources and routes; keeping Russian resurgence, Chinese incursion and Iranian influence in check; and integration of the Central Asian states into the international system under the US tutelage. All three aims coincided with Turkey’s interests in the region, and the US needed Turkey” for the realization of its goals.²²⁷ Hence, American leaders began to give support to Ankara for its efforts to enhance Turkish influence in Central Asia so that it could fill the “power vacuum” in the region. In doing so, they hoped that Turkey, which comes from the same ethnicity and shares the same religion and language with the new Central Asian republics, could be helpful in precluding Russian and Iranian influence or at least in confining them.²²⁸

In this respect, the new “Turkish Model” was presented to the Central Asian states.²²⁹ The motive behind the promotion of this model was that Turkey’s secular and democratic political structure and its free market economy would set an example for the newly born states.²³⁰ On the other hand, in the face of Russian and Iranian competition, cognizant of its inadequate economic, military and political power for its projects in the region, Turkey closely cooperated with the US and gained the American support in investment, diplomatic initiative and economic leverage.²³¹

However, the Turkish and American interests did not always coincide either. Whereas Ankara strongly backed Azerbaijan up throughout the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict, the US followed a more pro-Armenian policy.²³² In terms of Turkey’s stance towards this conflict, there were disagreements between President Özal and the government in Ankara. More precisely speaking, President Özal was in favor of a more hawkish policy than the government and advocated the exploitation of means of “hard-power”. As a matter of fact, President Özal declared at every turn that Turkey sided with Azerbaijan, that “Turkish nation’s patience should not be tried” and that the option of a military intervention in the conflict should be seriously considered.²³³ He even underscored in a statement that Turkey’s intervention in the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict was a matter of courage and he reminded that Turkey already demonstrated this courage in the Cyprus intervention.²³⁴ According to him, in this world it was not possible to achieve any result without taking any risk. Conversely, the then PM Süleyman Demirel underlined that Turkey would not use military force in the face of Armenian invasions in Azerbaijan.²³⁵

²²⁶ Grigoriadis, “Friends No More? The Rise of Anti-American Nationalism in Turkey,” 53.

²²⁷ Tuğtan, “Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003,” 254.

²²⁸ Uslu, *Türk Dış Politikası Yol Ayrımında*, 221. Bülent Aras, “Turkish Policy toward Central Asia,” SETA Policy Brief, No:12, (April 2008): 1-2.

²²⁹ Bal, “Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türk Dış Politikası için Türk Cumhuriyetlerinin Önemi,” 398.

²³⁰ Both President Bush and President Özal made statements as to that Turkey would be a “model” for the newly emerging republics in Central Asia. To give an example, after a meeting with PM Süleyman Demirel on 11 February 1992, President Bush depicted Turkey as a democratic and secular “model” which could be emulated by the Central Asian countries. “‘Geliştirilmiş Ortaklığa’ Start,” *Milliyet*, 12.02.1992.

²³¹ Tuğtan, “Turkish-US Security Relations 1945-2003,” 254.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Sami Kohen, “Askeri önlemler şart,” *Milliyet*, 08.04.1993.

²³⁴ Sami Kohen, “Dişimizi göstermek gerekir,” *Milliyet*, 05.04.1993.

²³⁵ Ömer Engin LÜTEM, “Türkiye ve Azerbaycan’ın Ermenistan ile Sorunları: Karabağ Sorunu,” *Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi Ermeni Araştırmaları Enstitüsü*, no date!, accessed 11.07.2012, http://www.eraren.org/bilgibankasi/tr/index3_1_2.htm. Yavuz Donat, “Amerikalılar Ne Sordu, Demirel Ne Dedi?” *Milliyet*, 08.04.1993.

Opening a parenthesis before coming to the conclusion, one should note that Turkish-American cooperation during the Özal era was not confined to the issues explained above. For instance, at the urging of the United States, Turkey participated in UN peace keeping and humanitarian actions. In this context, Turkey sent in December 1992 a military unit to support UN operations in Somalia and the UN peace-keeping force in this African country was led by a Turkish General.²³⁶ However, since the Özal factor is determinant in this analysis and his role in the events such as the US-Turkish cooperation in Somalia is relatively less relevant owing to the internal political developments mentioned in the preceding pages, I do not intend to analyze such issues here in detail.

4.2.5. Conclusion

This analysis of Turkey-US relations during the Özal era shows that despite ups and downs in bilateral relations at the periodic level; Turkish-American relations continued to a large extent to remain stable at the institutional level. In view of the Özal decade, it might be also concluded that the relations between the two allies witnessed high profile relations at the periodical level as well. This special relationship peaked particularly during the Gulf Crisis in the Middle East, in the Central Asia, Caucasus and Balkans in the wake of the Cold War.

As it was noted above, Özal period occupies an exceptional place in Turkish political history in many senses. In this term, Turkey witnessed serious novelties in numerous fields, especially in economy. Foreign policy field had also its share of these novelties and TFP went beyond traditional passivism, non-interventionism and pro-status quo oriented policy line, which was more visible in the post-Cold War process. Undoubtedly, inter alia, Özal's conservative-Muslim and economist identities, his paradigm as well as his personality and psychological qualities played considerable roles in this new policy line. Therefore, without analyzing the quality of Özal leadership's identity definition, his personality and the socialization processes that he went through, a foreign policy analysis of the Özal era would be incomplete. As a matter of course, Özal's identity and his correspondingly defined interest definitions for TFP had reflections on Turkish-American relations as well.

Turkey-US relations which entered into a new period in the wake of the September 12, 1980 military putsch continued the upwards trend under the Özal government as well. In spite of the high profile relations during the Özal era, relations with the US were not always smooth and free of periodic fluctuations, particularly until the end of Cold War. As a matter of fact, Armenian question, American aid issue, Turkey's neutral standing during the Iran-Iraq war, Turkey' rejection of joining the international coalition to isolate Libya, pro-Palestinian stance of the Özal leadership and diverging Turkish and American postures on the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict might be stressed as tension points in the course of Özal period. Despite these periodic fluctuations, the relations continued to be at a good level and they did not experience a deep crisis. Additionally, the American aid proceeded at a certain level. The drafts to recognize the 1915 events as "genocide" were somehow curbed in the American Congress and a serious break in the relations was forestalled by the American administrations through "middle ways."

When the Cold War ended, it was initially thought that Turkey's importance decreased substantially for the West. However, the developments in the coming period, particularly the Gulf crisis, proved it to the contrary. The end of Cold War provided a new environment which

²³⁶ Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey and the United States: Ambivalent Allies," *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA) Journal*, Volume 2, No: 4, (November 1998).

was relatively free from Cold War restrictions which were imposing to side with one of two major blocks. As the Soviet Block dissolved and the Cold War came to an end, the new term required the members of both blocks to define a new foreign policy course. However, along with many other countries, Turkey had defined no strategy for the post-Cold War world either. A new reading of the world as well as a new strategy was necessary for Ankara. At this point, President Turgut Özal took the initiative and his foreign policy paradigm, identity definition as well as personal qualities stepped in. Because, even if the post-Cold War opened a new policy space for Ankara, a concert chief was necessary, and President Özal played this role. By utilizing his Presidential status as well as his influence on the ruling Motherland Party, he defined a new policy line for Turkey nearly alone. This new strategy included several elements such as active foreign policy and "a Turkish world from the Adriatic Sea to the Chinese Wall."

Özal regarded the developments in the post-Cold War term as presenting significant opportunities for Ankara and he aimed to seize them. Therefore, he followed an active foreign policy during the Gulf War and thereby tried to direct the crisis in favor of his country. As noted above, Özal leadership was advocating a proactive rather than passive foreign policy in the face of the events around Turkey. Therefore, an indifferent attitude towards a crisis on its doorstep was unthinkable. Additionally, Özal was of the opinion that an American attack against Iraq was indispensable and this war would end in a short time in favor of the Americans. Therefore, in a unipolar world, a possible confrontation with the U.S. in this subject would be to the detriment of Turkish interests. For such reasons, he spearheaded the close collaboration with Washington during the Gulf crisis. In this case, along with Özal's foreign policy paradigm, his analyzing and interpreting the material conditions of the day through his lenses were determinant. In this respect, Özal leadership defined Turkey's interest in favor of a pro-U.S. active foreign policy during the Gulf War.

In the high profile relations between Ankara and Washington, Özal leadership's role cannot be ignored.²³⁷ As noted above, he spent an important part of his international socialization process in the United States, significantly impressed by the power, economic and political system of the U.S. and adopted its liberalism for his political *weltanschauung*. Additionally, Özal was capable of speaking English very well and was very familiar with the American mentality, and thanks to this he was able to communicate well with the Americans. He desired the strengthening of Ankara-Washington ties and strove for the diversification of relations by adding also an economic dimension to bilateral relationship. After all, as touched on above, in Özal's foreign policy understanding, the USA had a quite exceptional place and gaining the support of this super power was of vital importance for Özal's active as well as assertive policy in the region. Without the American backup, it was hardly possible for Turkey to achieve the goals set by Özal in the Middle East, Central Asia and Balkans solely on the basis of its own power. Thus, in the face of the emerging newly independent Turkic states of the Central Asia and the ethnic conflicts in the Balkans, Özal leadership considered again that a close alliance with the U.S. and its support was of vital importance for Turkey's interests in these regions.

²³⁷ Along with several other scholars, Ahmet K. Han agrees on the leading role of Özal regarding the high profile Turkish-American relations particularly during his presidential term by writing that "I have to underline that even though Özal years were somehow idealized in terms of the development of Turkish – US relations the individual affect and weight of Özal's influence in it should not be underestimated." Ahmet K. Han, "From "Strategic Partnership" to "Model Partnership": AKP, Turkish – US Relations and the Prospects under Obama," UNISCI Discussion Papers, No:23, (May 2010): footnote 42, 86.

On the issues mentioned so far, Özal's identity definition and his personality traits have an undeniable role. Firstly, Özal's identity played a key role on the issues ranging from his ideas on Turkey's foreign policy activism in its region to his recognition of Turkey's Muslim social identity. Contrary to conventional Turkish policy line, while formulating and implementing TFP Turgut Özal preferred to benefit from Turkey's cultural diversity and Ottoman legacy keeping an eye on towards country's interests and pragmatic goals. Moreover, Özal's ideas and interpretations about the material conditions were also determining about his foreign political stance and practices. Secondly, his strong leadership based on his initiative- and risk-taking personal trait was of vital importance in his foreign policy approach and style especially after the disappearance of the Cold War restrictions. For instance, the strong opposition notwithstanding, he did not give up assuming a leading role during the Gulf Crisis. Even if he was not able to realize all of his considerations, he never lost his resolution to direct Turkey's Gulf policy. With other words, though his hard power oriented suggestions, such as sending troops or at least a battle ship to the Gulf were not adequately appreciated by the opposition and Turkish people, Özal did not abandon his attitude to direct Turkey's Gulf policy in concert with his own perspective and achieved a considerable success. This might be connected to his psychological traits which is not a situation envisaged by the constructivists.

In this chapter, it has been stressed that without an identity-based approach, an analysis of foreign policy during the Özal era would be incomplete. In doing this, the constructivist foreign policy approach has been utilized and it has been also underlined that identity definitions of policy makers have a considerable impact on the foreign policy approach of them. Accordingly, policy makers view the material world through their lenses constructed during their socialization processes and heavily influenced by their identity definitions and define their policy approach and practices correspondingly. Furthermore, by adding the psychological factors to the analysis which have been ignored by the constructivist approaches, it was tried to fill a gap left by constructivists.

In the following chapter, in addition to all these points, analogies between the Özal and AK Party era foreign policy practices will be emphasized. In doing this, the identity-based approach of constructivism will be used again and I will seek to test my thesis which argues that there is a serious analogy between the two eras and AK Party's foreign policy applications seem like the extension of the Özal era foreign policy applications.

CHAPTER 5: TURKEY-US RELATIONS DURING THE AK PARTY ERA

5.1. A general appraisal of Turkish-U.S. relations during 1990s and early 2000s

In the post-Cold War transition period, Turgut Özal leadership's active and initiative taking diplomatic style, which sought to adapt to the "new world order" and seize the opportunities offered by this new order, could not find the sufficient backup from Turkish bureaucratic circles who received their diplomatic training in the context of the Cold War parameters. Following President Özal's unexpected death in 1993, Süleyman Demirel took the office and the country entered into a decade of intense political and economic turbulence. The political vacuum in the center-right, coalition governments established one after another and economic crises accelerated the rise of bureaucracy as the most influential decision maker. This situation had also some reflections on the identity and interest definitions of Turkey. In this period, TFP entered into a securitization process. Instead of Özal's foreign policy principles such as highlighting Turkey's historical and cultural assets in foreign policy making and an active foreign policy aiming to construct interdependencies in the region and thereby to ensure peace and stability, Turkey's traditional reactive and pro-status quo oriented policy line began to be dominant again and even a conflictive approach was on the rise on account of the security concerns.¹ Politicians and bureaucrats of this era whose mindsets were shaped according to the circumstances of the Cold War term were unable to grasp the specific conditions of this new period and these years became the weakest times of Turkish diplomacy ever.²

Turkish-U.S. relations on the other hand continued to remain at a high level throughout the 1990s. Some divergences on foreign policy such as the issue of Northern Iraq, the policy of dual containment³ and its negative consequences for Turkey, the appropriate way of dealing with Iran and the Cyprus issue did not undermine the prevailing positive climate of relations in the aftermath of the Cold War.⁴ Ranging from strategic tendencies⁵ to exclusivist attitude of the Europeans towards Turkey, a number of factors forced Ankara to keep its relations with the U.S. at a good level in the last decade of the 20th century. The hostile postures of neighboring countries, their support to terrorist organizations against

¹ Ahmet K. Han, "From "Strategic Partnership" to "Model Partnership": AKP, Turkish – US Relations and the Prospects under Obama," UNISCI Discussion Papers, No:23, (May 2010): 90-91. The way of thinking which might be advocated to be dominant among the decision makers of that time was summarized by a retired Turkish ambassador, Şükrü Elekdağ, in one sentence: "[N]o matter how capable a foreign policy might be, it cannot be stronger than the military might it relies on." Ibid., 91.

² Hasan Kösebalaban, "AKP Döneminde ABD'yle İlişkiler: Kriz Yönetimi" [Relations with the USA in the AKP Era: Crisis Management], *Anlayış*, Sayı 55, (Aralık 2007), accessed 12.98.2012, <http://www.anlayis.net/makaleGoster.aspx?dergiid=84&makaleid=867>

³ "Dual containment" is the name of official American policy defined in early 1990s against Iraq and Iran which were identified as significant threats to the US interests in the Middle East. The policy stipulated the containment of Iraq and Iran, isolation of both countries regionally and cutting them off from the world economic and trading system. Washington strongly supported the continuation of U.N. sanctions against both countries and simultaneously sustained its military commitments to Saudi Arabia and the smaller monarchies in the Gulf region. This adamant U.S. policy has had adverse impacts on Turkey's economic interests in particular. F. Gregory Gause, "The Illogic of Dual Containment, *Foreign Affairs Magazine*, (March/April 1994).

⁴ Han, "From "Strategic Partnership" to "Model Partnership," 91.

⁵ Erhan, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkilerinin Mantıksal Çerçevesi," 143-150.

Turkey, new problems of the post-Cold War period that arose in the neighborhood of Turkish borders might be also counted in this context, motivating Turkey to keep good relations with Washington. Additionally, 1990s might be also named as the years when Turkey was seeking to overcome its isolation in international arena with the American and Israel ties.

Following the great earthquake of August 17, 1999, which hit the most important industrial regions of Turkey and gave rise to the death of more than 17.000 people, President Bill Clinton paid a five-day official visit to Turkey in November 1999. This longest-visit ever paid by a US President added both a new impetus to bilateral relations and conduced to the birth of a new concept to qualify Ankara-Washington relationship. During this visit, President Clinton made his famous declaration on US and Turkey being "strategic partners." Even though Turkish policy makers frequently used the term "strategic" to underscore the strength of Turkish-American relations, it was for the first time that a US President described this long term partnership as "strategic".⁶

While the 9/11 signaled the beginning of a new term in international politics, it connoted also the inception of a new era for Turkish-US relations. Responding George W. Bush's call "you're either with us or against us in the fight against terror"⁷ positively in accordance with the shared international attitude, Ankara has sided with the U.S. government. Together with a number of other countries from Europe, Asia and the Middle East, including Iran, Germany, Russia, China and India,⁸ Turkey indicated its support to the US government by sending its troops to Afghanistan to support the US policies there. Ankara did not limit its backing to the United States only to sending more than thousand soldiers to the Afghanistan war, it assumed on 23 May 2002 the command of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) established by the United Nations Security Council in December 2001 by Resolution 1386.⁹ As a Muslim-majority NATO member, Turkey's involvement into the ISAF was of great importance both militarily and symbolically. It might be even claimed that the damage caused by the motion crisis of March 2003, which will be elaborated below, was partly mitigated by Turkey's consistent support in Afghanistan.¹⁰

Iraq and Iraqi related issues has been in the last decade at the top of Turkey-US diplomatic agenda. Turkey has been advocating the territorial integrity of Iraq since the end of 2001, when a probable American attack to Iraq became a topic of discussion. Furthermore, Turkey declared its red lines as follows: a new state to be formed in northern Iraq could not be tolerated and it was vitally important that lives and properties as well as the rights of the Iraqi Turkmens to be protected. Their convergence on many issues notwithstanding, Ankara and Washington have had seriously different views on Iraq.¹¹

⁶ "Moral veren sözler," **Milliyet**, 16.11.1999, 12.

⁷ "You are either with us or against us," **CNN.com**, 06.11.2001, accessed 12.09.2012, <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/11/06/gen.attack.on.terror/>

⁸ David J. Gerleman and Jennifer E. Stevens, "Operation Enduring Freedom: Foreign Pldeges of Military&Intelligence Support," CRS REport for Congress, 17.10.2001, Order Code RL31152, accessed 12.10.2012, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/6207.pdf>

⁹ Süleyman Özeren, Hüseyin Cinoğlu, Murat Sever, "ABD'nin Afganistan ve Irak'ta Terörle Mücadele Politikası" [U.S. Policy of War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq], UTSAM (Uluslararası Terörizm ve Sınırşan Suçlar Araştırma Merkezi) Raporlar Serisi, (14, Ocak 2010): 13-14.

¹⁰ Bülent Alirıza and Bülent Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning of the Third Decade of the Post-Cold War Era," A Joint Report by Center for Strategic Research (SAM) and Center for Strategic&International Studies (CSIS), (November 2012) .6-7.

¹¹ Ali Ayata, "Ortadoğu Perspektifinden Türkiye –ABD ilişkilerinin Yeni Boyutu" [The New Dimension of Turkey-USA Relations from the Middle East Perspective], Akademik Bakış Dergisi, Sayı 22, (Ekim-Kasım-Aralık 2010): 6. Prominent journalist Fikret Bila wrote that Turkey was at the beginning insistent on these red

As the bilateral relations in the 2000s centered around the Middle Eastern issues most intensively, in the following sections bilateral relations of both countries will be elaborated in the context of the Middle East. Subsequently, the relations will be analyzed in the context of the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asian regions, where Turkish - American interests have been relatively closer.

5.2. Turkey-USA Relations in the context of the Middle East

5.2.1. A constructivist analysis of Erdoğan leadership's policy paradigm about the relations with the U.S. and towards the “deepest confidence crisis” in Turkish-American relations

The new security strategy of the Bush administration (or Bush Doctrine) in the post 9/11 period was advocating a bellicose foreign policy based on leaving the liberal globalization policy of the Clinton term aside and pursuing a ‘preventive war’ strategy. While the outcomes of this strategy were closely felt in the Middle East, Justice and Development Party (or AK Party) achieved a great victory in Turkey in general elections of November 2002. Thereby, after losing 1990s due to weak coalition governments as well as economic and political turmoil, Turkey began to enjoy once again a strong one-party government, just like during the Turgut Özal era of 1980s. Gaining the office in the wake of the general elections of November 2002, the Erdoğan leadership defined Turkey as a central state and argued that it is a European, Balkan, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Asian country at the same time. Furthermore, its weigh in the West would be a positive function of its activity in the east. Hence, it was argued that a central state like Turkey could not be indifferent to the events in its neighborhood, especially about the incidents taking place in the former Ottoman territories.¹² Such an identity definition has constituted the main argument of an active and initiative-taking foreign policy approach of the Erdoğan leadership.

While conducting a proactive policy line, the Erdoğan leadership has adopted a multilateral approach which takes other actors into account in addition to the existing ties with the west. In other words, foreign policy understanding of the Erdoğan leadership has been based on developing a balanced relationship with all global actors instead of regarding them alternative to each other. In this context, whilst establishing high level relations with the United States about which the ideas began to change as to its role as the "single super power" of the world in the 2000s, it has sought to give priority to its own interests and simultaneously tried to regard other global actors like the EU, Russia and China. Stated differently, instead of strictly following a block and indexing its foreign policy to it as in the Cold War period, it has given more priority to its own foreign policy strategy and sought to follow an Ankara-oriented policy line rather than a U.S.-oriented one. This approach might be interpreted as a demand of a new relationship model based on equality instead of a hierarchical one like in the Cold War

lines to the extent that it was discussed during the Prime Ministry of Bülent Ecevit to enter Iraq before the USA. After Ecevit, the idea of entering Northern Iraq along with the U.S. gained weight. Fikret Bila, “Kuzey Irak’ta ağzı süttten yanan Türkiye,” **Milliyet.com.**, 29.07.2012.

¹² PM Erdoğan expressed in his visit to Malaysia on January 10, 2014: “We as Turkey have preferred not to follow the silence of the dominant powers but preferred the legacy that our history, civilization and ancestors impose us. (T.b.A.)” In this manner, he explicitly declared how his identity definition attaching importance to Turkey’s historical and cultural ties reflected on foreign policy approach. “Özgürlüğün olmadığı yerde...” **Zaman**, 10.01.2014, accessed 11.01.2014, http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_ozgurlugun-olmadigi-verde_2192689.html

era. This demand and the continuing interactions between the two countries have generated on occasion fluctuating and other times very well going relations depending on the varying or overlapping interests of both countries.

On the other hand, in the first half of the AK Party government, one of the most active periods of Turkish diplomacy was witnessed in terms of Turkey's European integration. The intensively continuing relations with the European Union and Turkey's EU perspective which gained seriousness in the wake of the fulfillment of the Copenhagen Criteria by Ankara and the declaration of its candidate status have brought about the rise of soft power and good neighborhood policies in Turkey. As a matter of fact, despite the pro-American intention of the AK Party executive concerning the US demand to open a northern front against Iraq by using the Turkish territory in 2003, the dynamics in the country preferred a policy line in parallel with the EU norms. Consequently, the government was not able persuade the public opinion to open its soil for the US soldiers and the Turkish-American relations entered in the subsequent period into one of the most strained periods of bilateral relations.¹³

After the Erdoğan leadership came to power in November 2002, Turkish-US relations experienced in March 2003 one of the most profound traumas that the relations of both countries witnessed ever. Washington contemplated to use Turkish soil to open a northern front in a prospective war against Iraq, thus it came into contact with the Turkish government. Subsequent to long negotiations, AK Party government submitted a proposal to the Parliament to allow more than 60,000 US troops to operate from Turkish bases and ports in the event of a war with Iraq. Yet, as the proposal could not gain the necessary majority of the votes in the parliament, it was rejected.¹⁴ As a consequence of this parliamentary rejection, Turkey-US relations were significantly deteriorated. "The decision showed the United States that in its strategic relationship with Turkey, it could no longer rely solely on past legacies of cooperation and its close ties with the Turkish military."¹⁵ In view of the significance of this crisis, which was called by some as a "constitutional wreck"¹⁶ it might be regarded as one of the most important milestones of Turkish- U.S. relations; therefore, it is worth of elaborating it in detail.

5.3. Troubles pertinent to Iraq

5.3.1. "1 March Motion Crisis" of 2003, before and after

In the wake of 9/11 terrorist attacks, international terrorism became number one threat and enemy for the US administration. Hence, the US security policy underwent drastic changes in the face of this new threat which is known as "asymmetric threat/war". In the US threat perception, threats pertinent to terror gained an utmost importance, the countries "backing" terrorism were qualified as "axis of evil" and it was stressed that these countries would be fought. To this end, the "preventive war doctrine" or more widely known as the "Bush doctrine" was put forward and this new national security strategy began to be the

¹³ Kösebalaban, "AKP Döneminde ABD'yle İlişkiler: Kriz Yönetimi."

¹⁴ "Turkey rejects U.S. troop proposal," **CNNWorld**, 01.03.2003, accessed 15.12.2012, http://articles.cnn.com/2003-03-01/world/sprj.irq.main_1_al-samoud-demetrius-perricos-prime-minister-abdullah-gul?_s=PM:WORLD

¹⁵ Jim Zanotti, "Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations," CRS Report for Congress, (April 27, 2012): 24. F. Stephen Larrabee, "The 'New Turkey' and American-Turkish Relations," *Insight Turkey*, Volume 13, No:1, (January-March 2011): 4.

¹⁶ Özeren et al., "ABD'nin Afganistan ve Irak'ta Terörle Mücadele Politikası," 31.

decisive element of the US foreign policy, which aimed to destroy the potential threats before they become active.¹⁷ Refraining from global cooperation, another feature of the Bush doctrine was its inclination to act unilaterally whenever the security of the USA was concerned.¹⁸ "The Bush Doctrine identifies three threat agents: terrorist organizations with global reach, weak states that harbor and assist such terrorist organizations, and rogue states" which include also Iraq along with Libya, Syria and Iran.¹⁹

In this respect, one of the most important rings of the preventive war strategy commenced by the US government was the invasion of Iraq. As from the very first day when the invasion of Iraq came to the agenda, Iraq has retained its primary position in Turkey-US relationship. In view of the troubles in Ankara-Washington ties in the last decade, the following argument of Larrabee seems quite convincing: "Many of the current problems in U.S.-Turkish relations are a direct outgrowth of the U.S. decision to invade Iraq."²⁰

Once a likely US attack to Iraq and a likely status quo shift came into question, Ankara shared its reservations with Washington. Security and economy took their places at the top of the list. The Turkish security establishment worried that any harm to Iraq's territorial integrity might lead to the creation of a Kurdish state. A development of this kind could then bring about irredentist claims on the Kurdish-populated regions of Turkey, or "could encourage some among Turkey's Kurds to become more insistent in their demands for independence."²¹ Additionally, the economic losses that Turkey subjected to in the aftermath of the Gulf War as well as the rising terrorist attacks of the PKK which intensified its activities thanks to the post-Gulf war environment led the Turkish public and policy makers to consider very carefully.²² Thus, when the U.S. asked for Turkey's permission to use Turkish territory for the invasion of Iraq, another important item on the agenda in the negotiations between the parties was the issue of meeting Turkey's potential economic losses.²³ Above all,

¹⁷ Ekrem Yaşar Akçay, Karar-Alma Yaklaşımı Çerçevesinde 1 Mart 2003 Tezkeresi, [The 1 March 2003 Motion in the context of Decision-Making approach] (master thesis, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Uluslararası İlişkiler Anabilim Dalı, Isparta 2010), 66-67.

¹⁸ Tayyar Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?" [Turkish-American Relations: a Matter of Change in the System] Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika, Cilt 4, No:13, (2008): 25. As a matter of fact, even if the U.S. sought to comprise a consensus in the UN Security Council to justify a possible invasion of Iraq by claiming that the Iraqi regime possessed the weapons of mass destruction and it was seeking to develop further similar weapons, it could not manage to achieve its goal due to basically the French, German, Chinese and Russian opposition. Upon this, contending that an additional UN resolution was not necessary to intervene militarily in Iraq and the UN resolution 1441 justified the war already, the US invaded Iraq. Bal, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri," 164, 167. See also Ömer Taşpınar, "Türkiye ile ABD arasındaki sorunların düzelmesi kolay değil" [Amelioration of the problems between Turkey and the USA is not easy], **Radikal.com.tr**, 02.10.2006, accessed 03.09.2012, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=200334>

¹⁹ Jeffrey Record, "The Bush Doctrine and War with Iraq," Parameters, (Spring 2003): 5.

²⁰ F. Stephen Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership, U.S.-Turkish Relations in an Era of Global Geopolitical Change," RAND Project Air Force, (2010): 11.

²¹ Kemal Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy," MERIA, Vol.8, no. 1 (March 2004): 4.

²² Mark R. Parris, "Common Values and Common Interests? The Bush Legacy in US-Turkish Relations," Insight Turkey, Vol.10, No:4, (2008): 7. Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Turkey-EU-US Triangle in Perspective: Transformation or Continuity?" (December 2004): 14-15, accessed 22.12.2013, http://istanbul2004.ku.edu.tr/syilmaz/public_html/doc/03.pdf. Larrabee explains the negative impact of the first Gulf War on the future of U.S.-Turkish relations with these words: "Although many American officials tend to regard the war as a kind of "golden age" of U.S.-Turkish cooperation, the Turkish perception is quite different. For many Turks, as Ian Lesser has noted, the Gulf War is "where the trouble started." Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 7.

²³ "Ankara stands firm on Iraq demands despite mounting US pressure," **Hürriyet Daily News.com**, 23.02.2003, accessed 15.8.2012, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/ankara-stands-firm-on-iraq-demands-despite-mounting->

US policy towards the Middle East was in contradiction with AK Party's new foreign policy understanding whose one of the keystones was "zero problems with neighbors" based on solving Turkey's problems with neighbors.²⁴

Even though Turkey and the United States diverged on their respective Iraq policies due to the reasons explained above, the real breaking point was the motion crisis in March 2003. The repercussions of this break have been felt for a long time in bilateral relations. In the face of American request to invade Iraq by using Turkish soil, Turkey listed the following red lines: Turkish army was going to enter into Iraq separated from the international coalition to be forged and thereby it was going to be out of the direct campaign against Iraq. Ankara's goal in doing this was to take precautions against a wave of refugees inside Iraq and to ensure the border security. Besides, Turkey requested that its troops were to act entirely independent and a Turkish general would be appointed to command Turkish soldiers in Northern Iraq. Usage of the bases in Turkey would be conditional upon a commitment on this issue. Another Turkish General would accompany American General Tomy Franks in the operation center in Qatar. Ankara was advocating the idea that the real mission of the American soldiers in northern Iraq would be to liaise between Turkish forces in northern Iraq and the American troops in the south of the 36th parallel. Ankara was also negotiating for a "common operation center" in Turkey where a Turkish as well as a US liaison officer at the level of generals would work. Moreover, Turkey demanded that distribution of weapons to the Peshmergas led by Jallal Talabani and Massoud Barzani as well as their collection at the end of the war would occur under its supervision. Turkey's major concern on this question was to preclude the likelihood that these weapons fall into the hands of the outlawed PKK organization. Eventually, on the issues of Turkish supervision on the weapons to be distributed to the Peshmergas, the number of soldiers that Turkey would dispatch to the northern Iraq and where these soldiers would be deployed, no agreement could be reached.²⁵ Nonetheless, the impression emerged in the public opinion that the negotiations locked primarily in economic terms.²⁶

Since the AK Party carried out a strong bargaining process with the U.S., the American side got the impression that Turks would be helpful on the US plans to open a northern front. However, the government was still retaining its suspicion, as a considerable part of the Turkish people strongly opposed the occupation of Iraq. As noted above, eventuality of the emergence of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq, negative impact on the plight of the Iraqi Turkmens, possible economic losses as well as a refugee crisis similar to the one in 1991, were the further reasons of the hesitant behavior of the AK Party government. After six months of military, political and financial negotiations between Washington and Ankara, the government submitted a draft bill to the parliament which is publicly known as "1 March motion" for the purpose of authorizing the US forces to open a

us-pressure.aspx?pageID=438&n=ankara-stands-firm-on-iraq-demands-despite-mounting-us-pressure-2003-02-23.

²⁴ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 11.

²⁵ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 27.

²⁶ It was claimed that the AK Party sent then Foreign Minister Yasar Yakis and the state minister responsible for the treasury, Ali Babacan, to Washington on 15 February 2003 to negotiate for a massive US aid package, including a grant of \$6 billion, plus \$20 billion in loan guarantees. In the subsequent period, President Bush reportedly likened the hard bargaining of the Turkish side to the horse trading of his native Texas. "Şok Diyalog," *Milliyet*, 24.02.2003. This gave rise to a very damaging impact on the Turkish public opinion. Koray Caliskan and Yüksel Taskin, "Turkey's Dangerous Game," *Middle East Report Online*, (March 2003): 2. "Tezkere hemen çıksın, bizim asker denizde indirmemiz lazım," *Milliyet*, 15.02.2003, 7.

new front by using Turkish territory.²⁷ Yet the motion did not receive the necessary majority vote from the parliament and it was rejected on 1 March 2003.²⁸ This refusal of access for the US troops to Iraq via Turkish land shocked the White House and even forced the Pentagon to revise its war plans.²⁹ Members of the Bush government claimed that Turkey's rejection of US request was detrimental to the US interests since it lengthened their route to victory and complicated the post-war situation. Consequently, Turkish-US relations entered into a troublesome period and could not overcome the negative impacts of the "1 March Crisis" for a long time.³⁰

In fact, another governmental motion authorizing the government for the modernization of military bases and facilities as well as the ports had already been approved in a closed session of the parliament on 6 February 2003, voting 308-193.³¹ The motion had stipulated the deployment of US technical and military staff in Turkey for three months to engage in activities of renovation, modernization, construction and extension in Turkish military bases and facilities. To this end, the government was supposed to make the necessary arrangements.³² According to the first motion in question, Alexandretta and Mersin seaports, and Diyarbakir, Afyon, Çorlu and Sabiha Gökçen airports would have been modernized and if it would have been deemed necessary, other bases and ports would have been also included in the modernization program. Within this framework, approximately 5.000 American personnel and military equipment had come to Turkey. Yet American personnel were obliged to leave Turkey upon the rejection of the March 1 motion. In essence, the negotiations were not concluded and more importantly Ankara was not relieved with respect to its concerns on political, military and economic issues.³³

Considering Erdoğan leadership's motivation to cooperate with the US government, an operation against Iraq seemed indispensable from Ankara's perspective as well, just like during the first Gulf War. The war would occur in the immediate vicinity of its borders and Turkey would be willy-nilly influenced. Moreover, even though it had declined the American demands, Turkey was not in a position to dissuade the Bush government from the war. Therefore, like Özal, Erdoğan leadership aimed to cooperate with Washington and avoid the adverse effects of the war and post-war situation. In the face of the developments in its immediate neighborhood, Erdoğan leadership aimed to be active and direct the events instead of following a wait and see policy whose repercussions were unpredictable for Turkey. Were

²⁷ Full name of the motion was: "Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerinin yabancı ülkelere gönderilmesine, yabancı silahlı kuvvetler unsurlarının altı ay süreyle Türkiye'de bulunmasına ve muharip unsurların Türkiye dışına intikalleri için gerekli düzenlemelerin yapılmasına Anayasanın 92 nci maddesi uyarınca izin verilmesine ilişkin Başbakanlık tezkeresi" ["A draft Bill of the Prime Ministry to authorize dispatching Turkish Armed Forces to foreign countries, deployment of the units of foreign armed forces in Turkey for six months and the making of necessary arrangements to transfer the combatant units outside Turkey in accordance with the article 92 of the Constitution"], T.B.M.M. Tutanak Dergisi,[Minute Journal of the Turkish Grand National Assembly] Dönem 22, Cilt 6, Yasama Yılı 1, p.109.

²⁸ 533 deputies voted on the bill, 264 voted for the bill, 250 voted against and 19 abstained. However, as the article 96 of the Constitution stipuated 267 positive votes for such a bill, according to which nearly 62.000 soldiers, 255 war planes and 65 helicopters would be deployed in Turkey for six months, it was deemed to be rejected. Only three votes were missing but this did not alter the result. Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 27.

²⁹ "Amerika Şokta," **Milliyet**, 02.03.2003.

³⁰ Helin Sarı Ertem, "Turkish-American Relations and Northern Iraq: Relief at Last?," in Turkey in the 21st Century Quest for a New Foreign Policy, ed. Özden Zeynep Oktav, (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2011), 57-59.

³¹ "Irak tezkeresi AKP'yi çatlattı," **Milliyet**, 07.02.2003, 16.

³² "ABD personeli 3 ay Türkiye'de," **Milliyet**, 07.02.2003, 16.

³³ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 26.

the Turks not to cooperate with the Americans, as the advocates of the motion frequently articulated, they would not have a voice at the table to be set up after the war and they would have to give up their red lines as regards the Iraq question. Even more importantly, a probable Kurdish state in northern Iraq as well as the outlawed PKK organization stationed in northern Iraq would increase Turkey's fears in case Turkey remained out of the game.³⁴ Additionally, as the Erdoğan leadership has advocated a proactive vs. reactive foreign policy approach and defined Turkey as a central state, an initiative-taking policy seemed a better option for Ankara. At this point, an active policy during the operation against Iraq seemed also in parallel with Wendt's logic of appropriateness thesis.

Despite the strong desire of the Erdoğan leadership to cooperate with the USA, the Turkish parliament did not agree with it. In spite of the high expectations of the US administration for Turkish support and Turkish government's backing of the motion which possessed an overwhelming majority in the parliament and sustained its support, why could not the governmental motion get the sufficient vote from the National Assembly? "A constellation of factors played a critical role in Turkey's initial decision not to permit the transit of U.S. troops to Iraq." First of all, there was a strong opposition in Turkish society against the draft bill and this was manifested uncharacteristically in a forceful manner. Several public demonstrations with large participation were held, one of which held in front of the parliament the day before the vote. "An underlying factor here was that Turkish education and socialization emphasizes national independence, non-intervention in other country's affairs, and deep suspicion of the "West" in general and the United States in particular. The "West" and the United States are portrayed as imperialist powers driven by their own interest."³⁵

Therefore, it was widely believed that the Bush administration had a hidden agenda such as controlling oil resources behind its promoted intention of ending brutal repression, promoting democratization, and dismantling weapons of mass destruction. The perception of Turkey portrayed in the United States as a greedy country merely trying to profit from the situation poured fuel to the fire too. This triggered a nationalist reaction in the country which was followed by comments in the Turkish media calling for the government to pursue independent policies and calling for the people to say 'no' against the war as a requirement of national pride which had a certain impact on the Turkish public opinion.³⁶ Moreover, humanitarian as well as religious sentiments played also a certain role in the attitude of the Turkish public opinion. Accordingly, the Muslim people of Iraq and the miserable situation that they would fall in case of a war played a key role in the anti-war stances of Islamic-conservative circles as well. The speaker of parliament, who was also of a conservative origin and has had a considerable weight in the governmental party, did not hide his view that it was an operation directed against a Muslim people.³⁷ In such a mood, a possible support to the Americans would be a serious political challenge for a government which carries a conservative democrat identity.

Secondly, Turkey's Gulf War experience was also influential in the anti-American standing of the Turkish public opinion.³⁸ In this context, several arguments were effectively

³⁴ Bal, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri," 168-170.

³⁵ Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy."

³⁶ Bal, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri," 170-171.

³⁷ Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy."

³⁸ According to the opinion polls of that time close to 90 per-cent of the Turkish population opposed the invasion of Iraq. Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 11.

articulated. Accordingly, for instance, Turkey would be again one of the biggest losers of the war just like in the aftermath of the Gulf War. The war would impose a serious burden on Turkish economy which was already in trouble and the Arab public opinion would turn against Turkey. Additionally, Turkey would be internationally more isolated if it would act with the US government collectively. On the other hand, while Turkish circles were agitating against the American demands, the U.S. acted on the assumption that it would certainly receive Ankara's support. This paradoxically gave rise to insufficient lobbying activities and underestimating the power of the opposition in the public opinion. Turkish governments' staunch pro-U.S. attitude in the past was misleading for the Bush administration. The sharp criticisms from varying segments of Turkish society notwithstanding, backing of various governments to the Operation Provide Comfort and the subsequent Operation Northern Watch might be assessed in this framework. In addition to this, while the negotiations continued between Ankara and Washington, authorization of some American personnel to come to Turkey with the aim of modernizing military bases and seaports in Turkey through a motion approved on 6 February 2003 was another development filling the American side with hope.³⁹

Thirdly, as Larrabee argues, the US side carried responsibility on the rejection of the motion by the Turkish parliament as well. The U.S. had already raised the bar by making a demand other than the Turks had been used to be, such as allowing the U.S. to use the Turkish airspace. Besides, the Americans demanded to invade a Muslim country from a government with a strong Islamic base which had been in power only for a few months and had had a limited experience in foreign political issues. As a matter of fact, the U.S. Secretary of State of that time, Colin Powell, had already expressed his doubt "about Ankara's willingness to agree to the movement of large numbers of land forces, especially heavy armored or mechanized divisions, across Anatolia to invade another Muslim country." However, these doubts of Powell were disregarded by the Bush administration.

Fourthly, the army which had been a major actor in Turkish politics did not want to assume a leadership role regarding the American request and remained relatively neutral.⁴⁰ Larrabee explains this neutral position of the Turkish General Staff on the motion issue with a hidden political agenda. Accordingly, the army which distrusted the AK Party government due to its Islamist roots, aimed to pass the buck on the government on an issue which was considerably unpopular among the Turkish people and thereby sought to undermine the public support that the AK Party had enjoyed.⁴¹ Furthermore, the representatives of the army conducted very detailed and complex negotiations with the U.S. counterparts in January and February 2003. As the military and security elite regarded the possible emergence of an independent Kurdish state as well as the presence of armed PKK militants in northern Iraq as

³⁹ Bal, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri,"170-171.

⁴⁰In the following years, probably out of the past experiences, U.S. officials distinctly expressed that they had expected the leadership of Turkish Generals on the bill issue, yet their expectation had not been met. As a matter of fact, then U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, made this statement " I think for whatever reason they (Turkish Generals) did not play the strong leadership role on that issue that we would have expected." and thereby connoted his discontent. Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz Interview with CNN-TURK, (Interview Cengiz Çandar and M. Ali Birand), Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 108th Congress First Session, Volume 149-Part 9, May 14, 2003 to May 21 2003, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 2003, pp.12107-12108. Then Chief of Staff, Hilmi Özkök, on the other hand stated that despite the expectations of Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz, Turkish Generals did not pressure the government as they regarded this issue as a political one on which the last decision belonged to the politicians. "ABD 1 Mart tezkeresinde baskı yapmamı istedi!"[The USA asked me to put pressure about the 1 March motion], [Milliyet.com.tr](http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/abd-1-mart-tezkeresinde-baski-yapmamı-istedi-/gundem/gundemdetay/04.08.2012/1576049/default.htm), 04.08.2012, accessed 0908.2012, <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/abd-1-mart-tezkeresinde-baski-yapmamı-istedi-/gundem/gundemdetay/04.08.2012/1576049/default.htm>

⁴¹ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership, U.S.-Turkish Relations ,"12-13.

a major threat to national security, the representatives of the military were urgent about deploying Turkish troops in Northern Iraq. Yet the U.S. rejection to allow a Turkish military presence played a critical role in the military's silence on backing U.S. demands to invade Iraq through Turkey. In connection with this, Turkish generals did not raise their voice in the National Security Council meeting as well which ended up with the absence of a clear recommendation from the Council meeting "just before the decisive parliamentary session which was a critical factor in the government's failure to mobilize the necessary votes to win on the issue" as well.⁴²

Fifthly, the Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer also sided with the opposition on the American proposal to use Turkish soil for Iraqi invasion. Coming from a legal background, he underlined the necessity for international legitimization. He further underlined that for a possible support to the U.S. intervention, a UN or multilateral authorization needed according to the Turkish constitution. It might be claimed that this attitude of the head of state had a certain impact on the parliament and at least caused some hesitations.⁴³ The government, on the other hand, was caught between the unpopularity of supporting the U.S. intervention⁴⁴ and remaining out of the game which was an undesirable situation for a "central state."

Finally, with regard to the governing AK Party's stance on the issue, there was a blurry outlook. In the AK Party, there were representatives from several segments of Turkish society such as those who share a moderate view of Islam, who share a more conservative view of Islam as well as protest votes reacting to the former governments. It was already a great challenge to bring all these different segments together on such a critical issue. As a matter of fact, there was a strong opposition within the party.⁴⁵ Along with Deputy Prime Minister Ertuğrul Yalçınbayır, many Members of Parliament from AK Party and more importantly, one of the founders as well as influential figures of the AK Party and the then speaker of the Parliament, Bülent Arınç, opposed the deployment of American troops for the invasion of Iraq.⁴⁶ Moreover, members of the AK Party were under the strong pressure of their electorate and the public reaction which was materialized through the public demonstrations organized by NGOs.⁴⁷ On the other hand, while the repercussions of the February 28 post-modern putsch were still felt within the country, it was not powerful enough to direct the whole political processes in the country (the dialectic of iktidar-muktedir).⁴⁸ As a matter of fact, the plans of military putsch like Balyoz and Ayışığı whose accuracy have been

⁴² Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy." Sedat Ergin, "1 Mart tezkeresinde ibretlik sonuç hangisiydi?" **Milliyet.com.tr**, 03.03.2007, accessed 08.10.2012, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/--mart-tezkeresinde-ibretlik-sonuc-hangisiydi/-sedat-ergin/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/03.03.2007/999964/default.htm>

⁴³ Bal, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri," 171.

⁴⁴ Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy."

⁴⁵ "AKP'de İlk çatlak," **Milliyet**, 07.02.2003. "Devrin Moğollarını durdurun," **Milliyet**, 12.02.2003, 12.

⁴⁶ Sedat Ergin, "1 Mart tezkeresinde ibretlik sonuç hangisiydi?" **Milliyet.com.tr**, 03.03.2007.

⁴⁷ "Bir Barış Serüveni," **Milliyet**, 16.02.2003, 17. "Cemaat Erdoğan'a yüklendi," **Milliyet**, 01.03.2003.

⁴⁸ This dialectic was used for the initial years of the AK Party government, particularly until 2010, to imply that though the AK Party won the elections and came to power with a great majority, it was not able to fully implement its policies due to the established power structure and the traditional political actors such as the Kemalist establishment in the civil and military bureaucracy. It meant actually the limited room of action of the ruling party and pointed out the strength of undemocratic political actors in the country. See Hüseyin Gülerce, "İktidar, muktedir olmak isteyince paniklediler," **Zaman**, 25.03.2010, http://www.zaman.com.tr/huseyin-gulerce/newsDetail_openPrintPage.action?newsId=965427. Ali Saydam, "'İktidar' ve 'muktedir olmak'...", **Yeni Şafak**, 01.04.2014, accessed 10.04. 2014, http://yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/Ali_Saydam/iktidar-ve-muktedir-olmak/51084

later approved by the judiciary authorities demonstrate indeed how slippery the political ground was at that time. On such a variable and instable political atmosphere, considering the strong resistance from its own party members as well as from the other circles of the society, the Muslim-conservative people in particular, the Erdoğan leadership could not be very insisting on the March 1 governmental bill. That is, in the face of the possible interventions into politics by non-democratic actors, the Erdoğan leadership which was feeling hardly safe against such threats refrained from weakening its ground by forcing its deputies to vote for the motion.

Nonetheless, the Erdoğan leadership was trying to convince the other parliamentarians to vote for the motion. AK Party leader Erdoğan who was not Prime Minister and then PM of the time, Abdullah Gül, were in favor of the motion.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Erdoğan leadership strikingly did not take a ‘group decision’ to force the AK Party deputies to vote for the motion; to the contrary, the deputies were left free on the color of their votes.⁵⁰ Importance of this political act of the AK Party leadership to let its deputies to make their own decision rather than imposing its own agenda was appreciated later on by the then Chief of General Staff, Hilmi Özkök, with these words: “Had the governmental party taken a group decision, the motion would have been approved by the parliament.”(T.b.A.)⁵¹ Eventually, 90-100 AK Party deputies voted against the draft bill of the government and it was rejected by the parliament since the necessary majority could not be achieved.

⁴⁹ Then Prime Minister Abdullah Gül commented after nearly one decade on the period of motion, the dilemma that he fell into and his personal stance with these words: "There should not be any other period that soldiers came to the office of PM more often. I was asking the Chief of Staff, he was saying ' I was looking and seeing the glass half full from morning till noon and from afternoon till evening I was seeing the glass half empty.' However, Gül did not comment as to whether the rejection of the bill was good or bad. Ömer Şahin, “1 Mart tezkeresi sırları” [Secrets of the 1 March motion], **Radikal.com.tr**, 24.09.2012, accessed 28.09.2012, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalYazar&ArticleID=1101397&CategoryID=98>. PM Erdoğan on the other hand, as in 2003, continued his pro-bill attitude years later as well. Erdoğan claimed in aTV program on CNN Türk channel that the failure of the governmental bill in the parliament was a mistake and he articulated this in this manner: "We remained out of the equation. I wish 1 March motion had passed. I do not see this end of the bill accurate. We should draw lesson from this and not fall into the same error in the future. Sedat Ergin, “1 Mart tezkeresinde ibretlik sonuç hangisiydi?” **Milliyet.com.tr**, 03.03.2007.

⁵⁰ Some analysts claim that in the failure of the AK Party government on the bill issue, two factors played a critical role. First, Erdoğan could yet become neither a member of parliament nor a Prime Minister at the time when the American demands came to the agenda because of political reasons which led to problems in the intra-party discipline. Second, both the AK Party leader Erdoğan and then PM Abdullah Gül were inexperienced in the face of such serious crises. İ.Bal, “Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri,” p.171. Though these arguments are convincing to a great extent, they do not tell the whole story. As touched upon in the previous sections, AK Party administrators are the victims of the post-modern 28 February coup d’état and in the wake of their experiences in the process of the coup, they declared democracy along with conservatism as integral part of their political identity. From this perspective, it is possible to think that AK Party leaders did not impose a decision from the top in order to prove that AK Party acted in accordance with democratic principles. As a matter of fact, whereas the opposition party took a group decision against the bill, the ruling AK Party did not take a similar one. Furthermore, as the considerable part of Turkish society, a significant part of AK Party members were concerned about the American demands, had the Party leadership taken a group decision, this could have brought about a heavy political bill. Therefore, following the entrance of Turkish and American forces into Iraq, any negative development would be billed for the AK Party which could have put the party leadership politically in a difficult position and undermined their credibility before the electorate. Consequently, since it abstained from the political bill that it could face in case it supported the bill unflinchingly and it claimed to be acting in line with democratic principles, AK Party leadership refrained from binding its deputies with a group decision and this had a decisive impact on the outcome of the parliamentary vote on the governmental bill.

⁵¹ Murat Yetkin, “Tezkeresi geçse 4-5 tugayla Irak’a girip tampon bölge kuracaktık,” **Radikal.com.tr**, 06.08.2012, accessed 25.08.2012, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalYazar&ArticleID=1096315&CategoryID=98>.

Parliament's decision came as a shock for the Erdoğan leadership, which had expected success and hoped that the financial arrangements associated with the deal would help revive the economy. The decision was shocking also for the U.S. government and military, which were also confident that at the end of the day Ankara would act in a way befitting a long-standing ally. Thus, having made their plans on the assumption that Turkey would grant the permission sooner or later, the United States had already begun to prepare its troops for deployment in Turkey on the basis of a previous Turkish governmental decision made after the parliamentary vote on February 6, 2003.⁵² This certainly aggravated the disappointment of the American side. "The irony, of course, was that this decision was the result of the working of a democratic process which the United States had long urged on Turkey."⁵³

As a result, although the Erdoğan leadership planned to follow an active policy by cooperating with the US government during the U.S.-Iraq war, it failed to achieve this goal. The diversified and stronger civil society infrastructure which was elaborated in the second chapter and its objection to the government's pro-US demand stance contributed *inter alia* to the construction of an anti-war norm. Even though the AK Party was in office and enjoyed having a great majority in the parliament, it fell short of constructing a widely shared pro-war idea. In a political climate where the repercussions of the February 28 post-modern coup d'état were still felt, Erdoğan leadership abstained from embarking on an activity which may have brought about the decreasing public support. Thus, instead of taking a binding decision for its deputies in the parliament, Erdoğan leadership left its members free in their votes regarding the 1 March vote and this culminated in a deep crisis in the relations with Washington.

5.3.2. The crisis process: deteriorating Turkish-American relations

The shock following the March 1 motion crisis started to reflect to the bilateral reactions negatively. Despite the efforts of the Turkish government as of immediately after the March 1 crisis to get rid of the adverse consequences of it, relations of the long-standing ally entered into a troubled period which had rarely been seen in Ankara-Washington relationship history. Interests of both countries conflicted often in this period and they shared different views especially on Iraq until November 2007. Moreover, the fluctuations in bilateral relations influenced the Turkish public opinion negatively as well, in consequence of which anti-American sentiments peaked in Turkey.⁵⁴

Since Ankara did not want to see the collapse of bilateral relations, with the beginning of the operation against Iraq, Turkey began to discuss authorizing the American forces to use Turkish airspace and decided on which corridors to be assigned to the U.S. forces. Parliamentary resolution of 763 adopted on 20 March 2003 authorized the government for six months to dispatch Turkish armed forces to northern Iraq, use these troops when needed according to the principles to be laid down and make the necessary arrangements to allow

⁵² "Without Turkish bases, US would lose option of opening a northern front," **Hürriyet Daily News.com**, 02.23.2003, accessed 26.08.2012, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/without-turkish-bases-us-would-lose-option-of-opening-a-northern-front.aspx?pageID=438&n=without-turkish-bases-us-would-lose-option-of-opening-a-northern-front-2003-02-23>

⁵³ Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy."

⁵⁴ See German Marshall Fund's Report of Transatlantic Trends 2008 Partners, accessed 17.7.2014, http://trends.gmfus.staging.wpengine.com/files/archived/doc/2008_english_key.pdf

foreign air forces to use Turkish airspace in line with the principles and rules determined by the Turkish authorities. This resolution stipulated on the one hand permitting the U.S. forces to use Turkish airspace and on the other hand sending Turkish troops to the northern Iraq.⁵⁵ In the post-motion crisis process, the first tension arose right at this point as the American authorities did not welcome the idea of entering Turkish troops into northern Iraq.⁵⁶ Therefore, one might conclude that in spite of the government's willingness to keep good relations with Washington which implied this desire by opening Turkish air space to the US for flights during the invasion operations and indirectly supported the USA, Bush government's frustration did not calm down and the impact of the 1 March crisis continued to be felt in bilateral relations.⁵⁷

On the other hand, speaking generally, given Turkey's strategic importance for the future of both the US war in Iraq and the post-war period, the Bush administration did not desire completely to alienate its long-standing ally. Therefore, the U.S. government also tried to limit any damage to bilateral relations as well as to its own war effort.⁵⁸ In this context, in the additional \$79 billion budgetary draft requested by the Bush administration for the ongoing war in Iraq, it was stipulated to grant \$1 billion (or \$8.5 billion credit) to Ankara in the framework of the Economic Support Fund. In fact, this step was important in terms of U.S. approach to Turkey. Though the U.S. administration made this assistance conditional upon Turkey's cooperation in the operation, maintaining its support for the humanitarian assistance as well as not deploying its troops to the northern Iraq unilaterally,⁵⁹ it indicated that by offering this economic assistance, Washington still attached importance to Ankara and did not want to alienate it.⁶⁰

However, developments were different and divergence of interests between the two countries endured to undermine the long-standing alliance. Once a possible U.S. intervention in Iran and Syria began to be discussed in early May, Ankara adopted a determined attitude and declared that it was against the use of force which might lead to a new chaos in the region. Policy difference between the parties surfaced more clearly in the common press conference of Turkish foreign minister Abdullah Gül and Israeli foreign minister Silvan Shalom. In the face of Israeli minister's words targeting Syria, Gül announced that Turkey did not want to see new conflicts in the region, thus Turkish government was against the use of military force.⁶¹

⁵⁵ In fact, it did not become easy for the AK Party government to convince the public opinion about sending troops to northern Iraq. In order to legitimize Turkish involvement in the eyes of the public, both the government and the military emphasized that Turkey would deal with humanitarian issues focusing on the restoration of public services. A popular expression employed in this context was trying, "to put out the fire in the neighbor's house." "Another basic immediate concern of the security elite was the repercussions that chaos and instability in Iraq could have on Turkey. They feared the breakup of Iraq and the emergence of a Kurdish state. They argued that sending troops would block these outcomes while guaranteeing Turkey a place at the negotiating table where Iraq's future would be discussed. Furthermore, there was also deep concern about the fact that the PKK had again started operations in towns along the border with Iraq and threatened further attacks deeper into Turkey." Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy."

⁵⁶ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 28.

⁵⁷ Ramazan Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," *Perceptions*, Volume XV, Number 3-4, (Autumn-Winter 2010), 52.

⁵⁸ Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy."

⁵⁹ Tayyar Arı, "Türkiye, Irak ve ABD: Soğuk Savaş sonrası Dönemde Basra Körfezi'nde Yeni Parametreler"[Turkey, Iraq and the USA: New Parameters in the aftermath of the Cold War in the Persian Gulf], in *21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21. Century)*, ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 746.

⁶⁰ Bal, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri," 176.

⁶¹ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 29.

5.3.3. The “hood event” or “the greatest confidence crisis”

The most critical development in terms of Turkey-U.S. relations in the post-Iraq war process was the arrest of 11 Turkish Special Forces members by American forces on July 4, 2003, alleging that they were planning to assassinate the newly appointed Kurdish governor of Kirkuk.⁶² In this incident, Turkish soldiers were roughed up and sacks placed over their heads, as if they were members of an enemy army. This publicly known “hood event” occurred in Suleymaniya in northern Iraq in the summer of 2003 seriously hurt both the Turkish army and Turkish citizens, which was terribly hard to explain with the terms of a long-standing alliance relationship. One of the detained Turkish soldiers complained that “the (U.S.) marines treated us as if we were war detainees.” The Turkish foreign minister Abdullah Gül commented on the “hood event” which was widely covered in the Turkish media that the American allegations were “unconvincing”.⁶³ The Turkish Chief of General Staff, Hilmi Özkök, however, made the most gnomonic comment on the deep crisis between the two allies by describing it “the greatest confidence crisis between Turkey and the United States.”⁶⁴

This arrest of Turkish soldiers clearly illustrated “the precarious nature of relations and the lack of trust among the parties.” In consequence of this development, “Turkish-American relations reached their lowest ebb in years giving way to a mutual questioning of the meaning and viability of the concept of Turkish-American ‘strategic partnership.’”⁶⁵ As the hood event was perceived by the Turkish public opinion as humiliating, it had repercussions on the Turkish public opinion as well. Anti-American sentiments increased dramatically which reflected to the polls conducted by the German Marshall Fund. Accordingly, reports by the Fund since 2003 and particularly in 2008 indicated that the Turks regarded the U.S. in first place among nations viewed as threatening Turkey’s security.⁶⁶ Additionally, another “public opinion poll conducted in Turkey in 2003, nine out of ten respondents (88.3 percent) did not accept American explanations for the incident, while seven out of ten (70.2 percent) argued that the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) government, which was acting cautiously so as not to further damage bilateral relations with the U.S., did not take a tough enough stand on the incident.”⁶⁷

It was even argued that the hood event which undermined the confidence of 53 years NATO alliance of Washington and Ankara stemmed from the U.S. intention to watch over the PKK terrorist organization. Accordingly, the Americans preferred the PKK and northern Iraq Regional Administration to the Turks and felt itself responsible to protect them against Turkey. The U.S. signaled at the same time that it would not allow Ankara to perform operations in northern Iraq freely as it did during the 1990s. Stated differently, while the Washington administration tried to punish Turkey owing to the 1 March motion, it sought to reward the Kurds who almost unconditionally supported the Americans. It also indicated that

⁶² Arı, “Türkiye, Irak ve ABD: Soğuk Savaş sonrası Dönemde Basra Körfezi’nde Yeni Parametreler,” 747.

⁶³ Banu Eligür, “Turkish-American Relations since the 2003 Iraqi War: A Troubled Partnership,” Middle East Brief No: 6, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University, (May 2006): 2.

⁶⁴ “‘En büyük güven krizi’ dedik ABD’nin üzüntüsüyle yetindik,” **Radikal.com.tr**, 16.07.2003, accessed 01.01.2013,

<http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=676323&CategoryID=98>

⁶⁵ Öniş and Yılmaz, “Turkey-EU-US Triangle in Perspective,” 17.

⁶⁶ Parris, “Common Values and Common Interests? The Bush Legacy in US-Turkish Relations,” 7. See also German Marshall Fund’s Report of Transatlantic Trends 2008 Partners.

⁶⁷ Eligür, “Turkish-American Relations since the 2003 Iraqi War,” 2.

as the "conqueror of Iraq" it would not permit other actors to be active there without its consent.⁶⁸

5.3.4. Continuing troubles centered around Iraq

Another tension between Turkey and the U.S. arose upon the looting events in Kirkuk by Peshmergas following the invasion of Baghdad and the attacks against the Turkmens in this context.⁶⁹ Turkish government reacted these events harshly and demanded the US government to take the region under control.⁷⁰ In doing this, Ankara signaled that it could dispatch its troops to the region. Having been disturbed by Turkey's probable intervention in the region, Washington came into action and took steps to regain the control of the city.⁷¹

U.S. troubles to control the country in the face of guerilla activities emerged following the end of regular war and the subsequent American demand for Turkish army's assistance was a further significant development in Washington-Ankara relationship.⁷² Another governmental motion authorizing the government to send Turkish troops abroad was prepared and submitted to the parliament. This time the motion was approved by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) on 7 October 2003.⁷³ As US General Myers pointed out, the U.S. request was in the nature of testing Turkey-Washington ties. Ankara answered this demand positively with the aim of indicating that it was eager to sustain the good relations, that Washington still mattered and that both countries were still allies.⁷⁴ However, mostly by reason of the reaction of the Kurdish groups in northern Iraq, despite Turkey's positive answer, the White House gave up this claim. After all, consolidation of Turkey's position in Iraq which had had plans as well as concerns about Iraq would weaken the position of the Kurdish groups and necessitate a revision of American plans on Iraq. Consequently, the White House withdrew its request reasoning that Turkish soldiers were not very necessary. Aware of a possible negative U.S. decision, AK Party government had already declared on November 7, 2003 that it was not going to use the parliamentary permission to dispatch Turkish troops abroad.⁷⁵ No doubt, it was the Kurdish leaders in northern Iraq who were the most pleased and breathed a sigh of relief.⁷⁶

On the other hand, despite the efforts to mend the fences, interests of both countries went on remaining divergent. As a matter of fact, Iraqi transitional administrative law (Iraq's provisional constitution) indicated that Turkey's concerns were not taken into consideration. Washington did not take any step to clear the air by refraining from the initiatives that Ankara claimed on the status of Kirkuk and clearance of the PKK units located in northern Iraq.⁷⁷ PM Tayyip Erdoğan on the other hand described the U.S. bombings of civilians in Iraq and

⁶⁸ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 29.

⁶⁹ "Türkmenler ayakta," *Milliyet*, 15.04.2003, 1.

⁷⁰ "Ankara'dan Talabani'ye: Ayağınızı denk alın, sizi takip ediyoruz..." *Milliyet*, 24.08.2003, 17.

⁷¹ "Türkmen Cephesi'ne Amerikan baskını," *Milliyet*, 25.08.2003, 16.

⁷² "US expects Turkey to send division to Iraq," *Hürriyet Daily News.com*, 09.25.2003, accessed 10.02.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/us-expects-turkey-to-send-division-to-iraq.aspx?pageID=438&n=us-expects-turkey-to-send-division-to-iraq-2003-09-25> "Powell: Türkiye'den bir Tümen bekliyoruz," *Milliyet*, 25.09.2003, 22.

⁷³ "İzin Çıktı," *Milliyet*, 07.10.2003, 1.

⁷⁴ Bal, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri," 177.

⁷⁵ Fikret Bila, "Gül'den imalı mesaj," *Milliyet*, 8.11.2003, 16.

⁷⁶ Bal, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri ve 2003 Irak Savaşının Getirdikleri," 177-178. "Tarihin hatası: Osmanlı çöktü," *Milliyet*, 10.11.2003, 21.

⁷⁷ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?" 29-30.

Israel's bombings of Palestinians as "state terror" and thereby in other words uttered the reaction of Turkish public opinion loudly against the American administration.⁷⁸

The troubles on the Iraq question notwithstanding, positive developments in other policy fields brought a partial relief to the bilateral relations. U.S. initiatives on the Cyprus question, especially its symbolic steps to eliminate the isolation of the TRNC⁷⁹ and its continuing support to Turkey's EU membership perspective might be viewed as the causes of short-term softening of bilateral relations.⁸⁰ Likewise, PM Erdoğan's U.S. visit between 25 January and 1 February 2004,⁸¹ and his attendance to the G-8 Summit on behalf of Turkey as a "democratic partner";⁸² US President George W. Bush's visit to Turkey on the occasion of NATO summit in June 2004,⁸³ US Secretary of State Condoleza Rice's visit to Turkey in February 2005 within the framework of her first tour to the region after her inauguration,⁸⁴ and PM Erdoğan's visit to the U.S. in June 2005⁸⁵ can be seen as important developments in terms of fixing Turkish-American relationship. Rhetorically, both sides declared that relations would continue in the context of strategic partnership. Moreover, Turkey took steps also unilaterally to foster the relations. Two months before PM Erdoğan's visit to Washington in June 2005, Ankara awarded the \$1.1 billion tender which stipulated the modernization of 117 Turkish F-16 war planes to an American firm.⁸⁶ In the same period, just like in 2003 and 2004, the U.S. use of Incirlik Airbase was ensured with a decree of the CM adopted on 18 April 2005 for logistical purposes.⁸⁷

In spite of all these steps and symbolic gestures as well as Turkey's unilateral attempts to recover the relations, Iraq and Iraqi related issues carried on straining/poisoning the long-

⁷⁸ "Erdoğan'dan İsrail ve ABD'ye kınama," **Hürriyet**, 20.05.2004, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/2004/05/20/461879.asp>.

⁷⁹ For instance, a delegation from the U.S. Congress paid a visit to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus by using the Ercan airport. In his press statement, head of the delegation, Ed Whitfield, stressed that he was hoping that their visit would give a message to the Greek Cypriot leader Tasos Papadapulos. He also added that when they return to their country, they would try to implement projects on a number of areas especially launching direct flights from Ercan Airport to Washington. "Türkiye-ABD İlişkilerinin Gelişimi," **ntvmsnbc.com**, 08.06.2005, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://arsiv.ntvmsnbc.com/news/327504.asp>.

⁸⁰ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 30.

⁸¹ İlnur Çevik, "Erdogan earn high marks from Washington with Cyprus initiative," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 30.01.2004, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/erdogan-earns-high-marks-from-washington-with-cyprus-initiative.aspx?pageID=438&n=erdogan-earns-high-marks-from-washington-with-cyprus-initiative-2004-01-30>.

⁸² "BOP: Turkey's Co- Chairmanship," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 10.06.2004, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/bop-turkeys-co--chairmanship.aspx?pageID=438&n=bop-turkeys-co-chairmanship-2004-06-10>.

⁸³ İlnur Çevik, "Good words backed by actions," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 30.06.2004, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/good-words-backed-by-actions.aspx?pageID=438&n=good-words-backed-by-actions-2004-06-30>. "NATO summit begins in Istanbul," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 28.06.2004, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/nato-summit-begins-in-istanbul.aspx?pageID=438&n=nato-summit-begins-in-istanbul-2004-06-28>.

⁸⁴ "Rice geldi Erdoğan gitti," **Radikal**, 06.02.2005, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=142649>

⁸⁵ "Büyük Ortadoğu'ya evet," **Radikal**, 09.06.2005, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/index.php?tarikh=09/06/2005>

⁸⁶ "Turkey, US ink \$1.1 billion deal for F-16 upgrades," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 27.04.2005, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-us-ink-1.1-billion-deal-for-f-16-upgrades.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkey-us-ink-1.1-billion-deal-for-f-16-upgrades-2005-04-27>

⁸⁷ "İncirlik cooperation in progress," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 26.04.2005, accessed 12.01.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/incirlik-cooperation-in-progress.aspx?pageID=438&n=incirlik-cooperation-in-progress-2005-04-26>. Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 30-31.

standing alliance. "The ongoing chaos and instability in Iraq and its repercussions, particularly the growing risks and dangers such as the fragmentation of Iraq, emergence of a Kurdish state and change of Kirkuk's status led to an incremental increase of anti-Americanism at the social and political levels in Turkey."⁸⁸ The rising PKK terror and the US reluctance of cooperating with Turkey against the PKK terrorism caused a significant annoyance among the Turkish public, particularly until November 2007, and this displayed that the troublesome post-1 March motion crisis period continued. Furthermore, whereas the elections held in January 2005 launched the transition period in Iraq, Jalal Talabani's presidency who had been the leader of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) gave rise to mixed feelings in Turkey.⁸⁹

5.3.5. Effects of deteriorating relations on Turkey's PKK question

In the post-1 March 2003 period, the US reluctance to actively assist Ankara in its struggle against the PKK became a serious source of trouble between the parties. The rising terrorist attacks by the PKK in 2006 were pushing the Turkish government to take steps which culminated in a major military buildup along the Turkish-Iraqi border. This step of the government in the summer of 2006 which looked like a preparation for a large-scale military incursion into northern Iraq worried particularly the U.S. officials. A possible Turkish military incursion could lead to a military confrontation between Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish forces and destabilize northern Iraq. Thus the US government demonstrated an intense diplomatic effort to hinder a Turkish military operation and became successful. But Washington learned from this experience that Turkey was serious as to the incursion into Iraq, hence it sensed the necessity to take Turkish concerns into consideration.⁹⁰

In this respect, a "Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue to Advance the Turkish-American Strategic Partnership"⁹¹ document was commonly revealed by Turkey and the U.S. in July 2006. Even though this document was commented as the beginning of a new momentum in bilateral relations, the developments over time were not in parallel with such comments.⁹² At the rhetorical level, the document was quite successful which expressed the intention for a structured dialogue, underlined the existence of "strong bonds of friendship, alliance, mutual trust and unity of vision" and stressed shared set of values and ideals in terms of regional and "global objectives" like "the promotion of peace, democracy, freedom and prosperity." This document, however, was not signed by the parties. It seemed that the document was prepared and announced mainly upon Turkish side's demand⁹³ and the lacking signatures revealed the difficulty to structure a dialogue around a shared strategic vision."⁹⁴

Another important development in bilateral relations in 2006 was the formation of the Coordination Group for Countering the PKK. In order to defuse the tensions with Ankara and respond to the Turkish concerns about the PKK, the Bush administration appointed Gen. Joseph Ralston, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, as special envoy with

⁸⁸ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 52.

⁸⁹ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 31.

⁹⁰ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 18.

⁹¹ For the full text of the document, see: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/data/DISPOLITIKA/SharedVision.pdf> (accessed 22.12.2013)

⁹² Frances G. Burwell, "Rebuilding U.S.-Turkey Relations in a Transatlantic Context," in *The Evolution of U.S.-Turkish Relations in a Transatlantic Context*, ed. Frances G. Burwell, Strategic Studies Institute, Colloquium Report, (April 2008): 5.

⁹³ Fikret Bila, "Stratejik vizyon belgesi yazıldı bile," *Milliyet*, 27.06.2006.

⁹⁴ Han, "From "Strategic Partnership" to "Model Partnership," 93-94.

responsibility for coordinating policy towards the PKK. This step of the US government was initially welcomed by the Turks and regarded "as a sign that Washington seemed finally to be taking Turkish concerns about the PKK seriously."⁹⁵ However, this mechanism did not work effectively either. In fact, only a few months after the declaration of Shared Vision Document, President Bush and PM Erdoğan referred in their October 2006 meeting in the White House to the Shared Vision Document and the strategic partnership between the parties. In the meeting yet, by not saying a single word about the PKK and handling it in the general context of "cooperation against global terrorism", President Bush demonstrated that the U.S. was not on the same line with Turkey about the PKK question. As a matter of fact, the coordinator mechanism ended de facto when the Turkish envoy General Edip Başer was removed from the office following his public criticisms of the US attitude on 21 May 2007.⁹⁶ The Coordinator mechanism came entirely to an end when Başer's American counterpart Joseph Ralston quit nearly five months later and left Turkey. Consequently the project proved abortive.⁹⁷

Assessing the post-Iraq war process generally, one might easily realize that most of Turkey's fears in the pre-war period, those relevant to security issues in particular, materialized and Ankara became once again one of the biggest losers of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Firstly, the invasion brought about an increase in sectarian violence among the Iraqi groups and the fragmentation of the central government's control over the country. Secondly and ironically, the invasion led to an increase of Iranian influence in Iraq as well as in the region more broadly. Thirdly, Turkish security elite's nightmare became almost real when the Iraqi Kurds took another giant step on the way of gaining their autonomy and eventual independence. As noted above, Turkish officials have always been concerned as to the irredentist claims of a possible Kurdish state in northern Iraq on the grounds that it could rise separatist pressures in the country and pose a threat to its territorial integrity.⁹⁸

Finally, the most annoying development for Turkey has been certainly the upsurge of violence perpetrated by the PKK terrorism. The PKK has caused to the death of more than 40 thousand Turkish and Kurdish people and had declared a unilateral ceasefire in the wake of its leader, Abdullah Öcalan's capture by Turkish forces. In consequence, the violence had subsided temporarily until the PKK took up arms again in June 2004. Ever since it launched repeated attacks on Turkish territory from sanctuaries in the Qandil Mountains in northern Iraq which have resulted in the death of several hundred Turkish security personnel as well as Turkish and Kurdish civilians. Larrabee summarizes Turkey's attitude and demands from Washington in the face of rising PKK threats and the concerns of the US administration in case of a Turkish operation in northern Iraq as follows:

“As the PKK attacks increased, the Erdoğan government came under growing domestic pressure to take military action to halt the PKK threat, and it repeatedly requested U.S. military assistance to help eliminate the PKK training camps in northern Iraq. However, Washington was reluctant to take military action against the PKK because an assault against it would have diverted troops needed to combat the insurgency in Baghdad and other parts of Iraq. U.S. officials also feared that military action against the PKK would destabilize northern Iraq, which was relatively calm compared to the rest of the country. The Iraqi Kurds were the

⁹⁵ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 18-19.

⁹⁶ Han, "From "Strategic Partnership" to "Model Partnership," 93-94.

⁹⁷ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?," 32.

⁹⁸ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 14.

staunchest backers of U.S. policy in Iraq, and the U.S. administration officials regarded Kurdish support as essential to maintaining a unified Iraq."⁹⁹

All in all, Ankara's requests from the U.S. for military assistance against the PKK did not get serious high-level policy attention for a long time. Despite the rhetorical support for Turkey's fight against terrorism, the White House remained reluctant to provide Ankara concrete military and intelligence support, especially by the end of 2007. In addition to its indifference on Turkey's terror problem, Bush administration did not welcome any Turkish "cross-border military operations against the PKK training camps and sanctuaries in northern Iraq" either, "fearing that this could destabilize the Kurdish-dominated areas in northern Iraq, which were relatively stable in comparison with the rest of the country."¹⁰⁰

5.3.6. Turkey's reconsideration of foreign policy approach towards the U.S. and its reflections upon the practical policy domain

While the "hood event", the US reluctance to collaborate with Turkey on the PKK question and its opposition to Ankara's military incursion into Iraq had already increased the anti-American sentiments in the Turkish public opinion, allegations that American heavy weapons were found in the hands of the PKK terrorists and even that these weapons were given them by the Americans reinforced the existing anti-American feelings in the Turkish society.¹⁰¹ This case was proved also by the public opinion polls. A survey undertaken by the Pew Charitable Trust in 2007 indicated that whereas 30 percent held a positive opinion of the United States in 2002, it dropped to 9 percent in 2007. The same survey exhibited that "83 percent of respondents said that their attitude towards the United States was unfavorable, including 75 percent who felt very unfavorably." These results do not seem reasonable for a long-standing alliance relationship, which elevated Turkey to the second place in terms of anti-Americanism among the Middle Eastern nations behind Palestine.¹⁰²

The US reluctance to collaborate with Turkey on terrorism on the other hand encouraged Turkey to give more weight to its relations with Iran and Syria whose territorial integrity was also threatened by a prospective emergence of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq. In this respect, Iranian military operations against the PJAK (The Party of Free Life of Kurdistan) which is known also as the Iranian branch of the PKK, gained the support of the Turkish public opinion and paved the way for developing relations with Tehran. Both countries declared their common determination to diversify and deepen the relations which had been developing in the security field against the common enemy. To this end, Turkey and Iran reached a natural gas deal in June-September 2007 term and thereby Turkey was authorized to operate some natural gas reserves in northern Iran. Likewise, the parties began to work on a shared project to market the Iranian natural gas via Turkey. However, these developments caused a serious inconvenience in Washington.¹⁰³

On the other hand, at the beginning years of the new millennium, Turkey was virtually among a few countries (Iran, Venezuela, N. Korea) backing Syria which was under a heavy pressure from the international community. In this period, bilateral Turkish-Syrian relations

⁹⁹Ibid., 15.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 15-16.

¹⁰¹ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?" 32.

¹⁰² Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 16.

¹⁰³ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?" 32.

reached such a good level that this country became almost the flagship of Turkey's "zero-problems policy with neighbors." In essence, the Syrian regime was more isolated in the post-Cold War period when Russia withdrew its backing. In the wake of the Hariri assassination, upon the intensification of U.S.-led international pressure, Syria was obliged to withdraw its troops from Lebanon. In this international environment, whereas even traditional allies such as Russia and France did not give support to the Assad regime, Turkey not only improved its relations with Damascus but also did not hesitate to follow a common policy with respect to the Palestine and Lebanon questions as well as concerning the relations with Iran. Though the developing Turkish-Syrian relations caused concern in Washington, Ankara went on disregarding US concerns basically because of its displeasure about the USA's Iraqi policy and the US indifference in the face of Turkish demands on the PKK issue. Especially, when the Bush administration acted with deliberation against a possible Turkish cross-border operation in October 2007, which came to the agenda upon serious upsurge in the PKK terrorist attacks and it showed reluctance even to force the Iraqi Kurdish leaders to move against the PKK, a deep suspicion dominated the Turkish public opinion as to the improvability and sustainability of the "strategic partnership." This situation of course pushed Ankara to seek a new balance policy in terms of its own security. In other words, in the course of the post-March 1 crisis, the deteriorating Turkish-American relations and the growing anti-American sentiments in the Turkish public consolidated the multidimensional foreign policy paradigm of the ruling Erdoğan leadership.¹⁰⁴

5.3.7. A common ground for cooperation albeit strained relations in the Middle East: The Greater Middle East Initiative

Afghanistan and Iraq wars and the corresponding problems indicated to the U.S. government that along with the military methods, other methods and projects were necessary in order to perpetuate its hegemony and to deal with the global and regional problems. As a matter of fact, as the U.S. has been able to carry out the occupations quickly owing to its huge military capabilities, it is not equally successful to bring stability. Afghanistan and Iraq experiences clearly illustrated that international terrorism cannot be rooted out solely by means of military methods. Thus Washington embarked on a quest for a new project with a view to being able to cope with the new problems, to fix its frayed image and to justify its new policy towards the Middle East, just like the Truman Doctrine or Marshall Plan which were put into practice after the Second World War by the US government.¹⁰⁵

At this stage, the Greater Middle East Initiative (GMEI) was launched by the Bush administration as "a forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East" in November 2003. "The policy emerged as a central plank in the 'war on terrorism' just as Operation Iraqi Freedom began to encounter stiff resistance to the US occupation of Iraq. Marketed as a "brand new strategy" of "ending autocracy" in the region and bringing democracy to those deprived of freedom, officials claimed that the policy was designed to "clean up the messy part of the world."¹⁰⁶ However, some claimed that the US aimed in fact with this democratization rhetoric to boost its efficiency in the region and sustain its influence on the global economy

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 32-33.

¹⁰⁵ İdris BAL ve Ayfer Selamoğlu, "Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi: ABD, AB, Türkiye ve Bölge"[The Greater Middle East Project: the USA, EU, Turkey and the Region], in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 195.

¹⁰⁶ Eddie J. Girdner, "The Greater Middle East Initiative: Regime Change, Neoliberalism and US Global Hegemony," The Turkish Yearbook, Vol. XXXVI, (2005): 37.

by means of its control of natural resources.¹⁰⁷ To implement this new project, Washington felt the need to regional allies and this need brought about a new rapprochement in Turkish-American relations. After all, with its unique location in the immediate vicinity of the energy basins of the world, cultural and historical ties with the region; its efforts to integrate with the West, democracy experience as well as its economic and military potential, Turkey offered a great partnership potential for the US project.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, the ruling Erdoğan leadership was advocating an active policy in Turkey's region, and contrary to the Kemalist paradigm it was not hesitating to interfere into the Middle Eastern politics. As noted before, as grandsons of a nation who ruled the region for centuries, Erdoğan leadership argued that Turkey has to deal with the issues in the Middle East and had no luxury of turning away from the region.

In this context, the Erdoğan leadership declared its support to the new American policy which was first called as the GMEI and later as "The New Middle East" or "The Great Middle East Project" whose parameters were not clear enough.¹⁰⁹ President Bush and PM Erdoğan came together in Washington after the terrorist attacks in Istanbul in 15-20 November 2003 and discussed the project. Subsequent to the meeting, PM Erdoğan announced that he and President Bush agreed on a strategic vision. While PM Erdoğan added that Turkey was a model country which was able to combine Islam and democratic culture, he underscored that with its Muslim identity, Turkey would spearhead the efforts to spread the universal values in its region. Yet this would be only in the sense of inspiring. Every society could find its own solutions to its own problems.¹¹⁰ Additionally, by assuming the co-chairmanship of the GMEI, Ankara once again indicated its willingness to establish a close relationship with the United States.¹¹¹

Whereas the AK Party government understood from the GME project economic and democratic development and modernization of the region, the Bush administration understood it differently. It was claimed that this project aimed to solve the security problem of Israel, consolidate American efficiency in the region and preserve its global position.¹¹² Furthermore, the ongoing Palestine-Israel problem and the violation of human rights by the American forces in Iraq (e.g. Abu Gharib torture and prisoner abuse¹¹³) raised doubts about the US project.¹¹⁴ In the end, "the deepening of communal conflict in Iraq, and the reluctance of Arab reformers to being associated with the United States" were further reasons why the GMEI became dysfunctional, "lost its credibility, and was given a backseat in US regional policies. Turkey also lost enthusiasm for the project, initially in tandem with its embroilment in the security risks posed by the resurgence of PKK terrorism and later by its initiation of the economic integration projects in the Middle East."¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ Bal and Selamoğlu, "Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi: ABD, AB, Türkiye ve Bölge," 198.

¹⁰⁸ Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?" 30.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Bal and Selamoğlu, "Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi: ABD, AB, Türkiye ve Bölge," 204-205. "Başbakan'dan 'zirve' özrü," *Milliyet*, 25.06.2004, 16. "Model olma hırslarımız yok," *Milliyet*, 30.06.2004, 19.

¹¹¹ Erdoğan's address is available at Daily Motion Web Site, accessed 22.12.2013, http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xccaaz_tayyip-erdoyan-ve-bop-buyuk-ortadov_news

¹¹² Arı, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri: Sistemdeki Değişim Sorunu mu?" 30. For a critical discussion of the Greater Middle East Project see also: Girdner, "The Greater Middle East Initiative: Regime Change, Neoliberalism and US Global Hegemony."

¹¹³ Seymour M. Hersh, "Torture at Abu Gharib," *newyorker.com*, 10.05.2004, accessed 16.02.2013, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/05/10/040510fa_fact

¹¹⁴ Bal and Selamoğlu, "Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi: ABD, AB, Türkiye ve Bölge," 210-211.

¹¹⁵ Şaban Kardeş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s: Revisiting the Basic Parameters of Partnership?" *Perceptions*, Volume XVI, Number 3, (Autumn 2011), 44.

Despite all these difficulties, the Greater Middle East Initiative continued to be a positive element of progress in Turkey-U.S. relations. As a matter of fact, Turkey appreciated the Bush's successor, the Obama administration's quest for dialogue with the Muslim world and its peaceful policy approach as well. "The popular uprisings that swept the Middle East and North Africa in 2011 reiterated once again the two countries' mutual stakes in acting in concert to ensure regional stability and facilitate social and economic transformation in the region."¹¹⁶

5.4. Rising efficacy of the Erdoğan's leadership in Turkey's domestic politics and the re-burgeoning bilateral relations with the Washington administration

Whereas the Erdoğan leadership was in favor of an active foreign policy, Turkey's chronic Kurdish question was continuing to bother Turkey substantially and it was continuing to be a significant impediment against Turkey's policies in the region. Turkey witnessed an explosion of the PKK attacks on Turkish territory in the fall of 2007. The PKK attack against a Turkish military post in Dağlica on the Iraqi border on the 21st October 2007 became the last straw that broke the camel's back. In the wake of this attack, the Erdoğan government came under increasing domestic pressure, including from the Turkish General Staff (TGS), to take unilateral military action against the PKK. Despite the mounting pressure from neo-nationalist groups, the government and the military officials preferred not immediately to launch military operations into northern Iraq as a response to the PKK attacks. Instead, keeping the military option available, the government embarked on a diplomatic effort as well.¹¹⁷ Simultaneously, "to defuse public pressure and underscore his government's determination to deal forcefully with the PKK, in mid-October 2007, Erdoğan obtained parliamentary approval to conduct a cross-border strike into northern Iraq." This parliamentary permission reinforced the government's hand politically both at home and abroad.¹¹⁸ Erdoğan government embarked on a new dialogue with the USA in order to launch a military operation against PKK terrorists as well as to make the Bush administration exert pressure on the Iraqi government and the Iraqi Kurds to change their attitudes towards Turkey. In the end, ironically, such PKK attacks heralded a new period in Turkish-American relations.¹¹⁹

At the same time, in order to pressure the Iraqi central government and the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), Ankara continued to take diplomatic, economic and political measures. In this respect for instance, the Turkish National Security Council adopted a decision as to an economic embargo on northern Iraq. Additionally, the government took further diplomatic initiatives and informed European and Middle Eastern countries about its policies. In the context of an active policy approach of the Erdoğan leadership, the Extended Neighbors of Iraq Conference was organized on 2-3 November 2007 in Istanbul. The participating countries of this Conference adopted a declaration that supported Turkey's perspective on the PKK and the Kirkuk referendum.¹²⁰ In short, Turkey's determination on a military operation and its active diplomatic attempts forced the U.S. government to take

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ertan Efeğil, "Turkey's New Approaches toward the PKK, Iraqi Kurds and the Kurdish Question," *Insight Turkey*, Vol.10, No.3, (2008): 57

¹¹⁸ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," See also Burwell, "Rebuilding U.S.-Turkey Relations in a Transatlantic Context," 6.

¹¹⁹ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 53.

¹²⁰ Efeğil, "Turkey's New Approaches toward the PKK, Iraqi Kurds and the Kurdish Question," 58-59.

Turkish demands more seriously which correspondingly brought about re-bourgeoning of Turkey-U.S. relations.

Another factor promoting the United States to take the Erdoğan leadership's demands into serious was the emergence of the AK Party as a stronger government in the aftermath of the military intervention attempt which is publicly known as "e-memorandum" incident. On April 27, 2007 a warning statement to the government as to the presidential election was published on the Web site of the TGS. In the statement," the General Staff threatened "action" if the government does not take action to preserve the secular tradition of the republic. The statement mainly targeted the AK Party after its decision to nominate then-Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül as a presidential candidate, whose wife wears a headscarf. The military believed that a headscarf-wearing first lady would threaten the secular order in Turkey."¹²¹ Following this so called e-memorandum, while the U.S. authorities remained silent nearly for one week and adopted a policy of wait and see, "the AK Party government gave an equally harsh response to the statement. In its response, the government stressed that the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) was an institution at the command of the government and added that "it is regrettable that there were utterly wrong expressions about the relation between the government and the General Staff. All the institutions of our state should be more sensitive and careful."¹²² In essence, whereas the Turkish democracy was used to military interventions into democratic processes and institutions, reaction of the government as well as the civil society was extraordinary which called "the military to return to its barracks and refrain from expressing its opinion on politics-related issues."¹²³ In addition to the democratization process of the country in the recent years, this strong reaction of the government might be also associated with the strong leadership of Erdoğan who has been sensitive to protect Turkish politics from non-democratic interventions.

In the aftermath of the e-memorandum, the government decided to turn to the electorate and achieved to win the support of 47% of the public; government thereby sent a strong signal to the top rank military officials along with their likeminded secular civilian allies in terms of its determination not to step back from its power in the government. Furthermore, the beginning of the Ergenekon case¹²⁴ and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül's election as the new president of the country consolidated the position of the Erdoğan leadership which led to a shift of all accounts on Turkey. In consequence of all such developments, Washington began to see the Erdoğan leadership as a permanent actor and

¹²¹ Betül Akkaya Demirbaş, "Reactions to April 27 e-memo a milestone for Turkish democracy," **Today's Zaman**, 27.04.2011, accessed 15.02.2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=242139

¹²² Demirbaş, "Reactions to April 27 e-memo a milestone for Turkish democracy."

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ergenekon is the name given to an underground group which includes writers, four-star generals and other military officers, professors, as well as underworld figures. Having begun in 2008, the Ergenekon case still continues as of today too (April 2013), which was originally intended to uncover and dismantle Turkey's deep state. "Alleged members have been indicted on charges of plotting to foment unrest, among other things by assassinating intellectuals, politicians, judges, military staff, and religious leaders, with the ultimate goal of toppling the incumbent government." Jason Burke, "Mystery of a killer elite fuels unrest in Turkey," **The Guardian**, 04.05.2008, accessed 15.02.2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/may/04/turkey.thefarright>. Andre Bank and Roy Karadag, "The Political Economy of Regional Power: Turkey under the AKP," GIGA Research Unit: Institute of Middle East Studies, No: 204, Hamburg, (September 2012): 18. Dan Bilefsky, "In Turkey, Trial Casts Wide Net of Mistrust," **The New York Times**, 21.11.2009, accessed 15.02.2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/22/world/europe/22turkey.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

decided to review its relations with Ankara which had been troublesome in the post- March 1 crisis process.¹²⁵

Additionally, Erdoğan leadership's proactive policy on the Iraq question helped to prove its value as a significant partner for the US government to bring peace and stability to Iraq after the US invasion of the country. For instance, "Iraq's Neighboring Countries Process", which was initiated by Turkey on the eve of Iraq's invasion in 2003, might be counted in this context. The initial goal of this process was to prevent the U.S. invasion of Iraq during the Saddam regime and to find a peaceful solution to the problem through diplomatic ways. The American government strongly opposed this initiative of Turkey. Despite the US objection, the first meeting of this process was held on 23 January, 2003 in Istanbul with the attendance of foreign ministries of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran and Syria. The Bush administration criticized the attendance of Iran and Syria to the meetings in particular. However, in the face of its troubles to bring peace and stability to Iraq, the value of the Iraq's Neighboring Countries Process increased as it provided a platform to discuss the troubles in Iraq and find a settlement for them. Eventually, the U.S. came together with Iran and Syria after a long time in a meeting organized in this context on March 10, 2007 in Baghdad.¹²⁶ Consequently, "this initiative of Turkey evolved into the Enlarged Ministerial of Neighboring Countries Meetings, now comprising the neighbors of Iraq, P-5 and G-8 Countries, as well as the UN, OIC, Arab League and the European Commission."¹²⁷

Furthermore, Turkey's rising influence in the region as a result of its active role in Iraq to ensure the involvement of Sunnis into political process and its contributions to the resolution of conflicts also urged the U.S. government to put the relations back on track with Ankara.¹²⁸ Consequently, Erdoğan leadership's effective political activism and diplomatic success in the Middle East and in Iraq in particular mounted its value as a partner to cooperate in the face of the American troubles experienced in the post-war process of Iraq.

5.4.1. Turning point in Turkey-U.S. relations: Meeting of PM Erdoğan and President Bush in November 2007

PM Erdoğan's visit to Washington on 5 November 2007 marked a turning point in Turkish-U.S. relations. At the end of a historic meeting, PM Erdoğan and President Bush agreed on cooperation on sharing intelligence against the PKK. This agreement signaled the beginning of a new period of cooperation between Ankara and Washington, which stipulated cooperation for the reconstruction of not only Iraq, but also Middle East in general.¹²⁹ In addition to the "actionable intelligence," Bush reportedly gave up objecting Turkey's limited cross-border military operations to the PKK camps in northern Iraq.

As a matter of fact, after Erdoğan's November 2007 visit to Washington, Turkish-U.S. military cooperation against the PKK has markedly improved. Initially, "launching the first operation on 1 December 2007 against the PKK camps in northern Iraq, Turkey has carried

¹²⁵ Nuh Yılmaz, "Stratejik Ortaklıktan Model Ortaklığa: Türkiye'nin Bağımsız Dış Politikasının Etkileri"[From Strategic Partnership to Model Partnership: Impacts of Turkey's Independent Foreign Policy], in *Türk Dış Politikası Yılığ* 2010, eds. Burhanettin Duran et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları, Ekim 2011), 565-566.

¹²⁶ "Irak'a Komşu Ülkeler girişimi nasıl başladı?" **CNNTURK**, 02.11.2007, accessed 20.02.2013, <http://www.cnnturk.com/2007/dunya/11/02/iraka.komsu.ulkeler.girisimi.nasil.basladi/402105.0/>.

¹²⁷ Hasan Turunc, "Turkey and Iraq," in *Turkey's Global Strategy*, Special Report 7, LSE IDEAS, (May 2011), accessed 20.02.2013, <http://www.lse.ac.uk/ideas/publications/reports/pdf/sr007/iraq.pdf>.

¹²⁸ Yılmaz, "Stratejik Ortaklıktan Model Ortaklığa," 567.

¹²⁹ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 53.

out a number of cross-border strikes against the PKK—reportedly with the aid of U.S. intelligence. The attacks have been aimed at striking PKK camps and units, not attacking the Iraqi Kurdish population or the KRG leadership.” Secondly, Bush administration decided to carry out another Turkish request as to exerting “stronger pressure on the KRG to crack down on the PKK.”¹³⁰ This begin of cooperation has also brought about a slight decrease in the anti-American sentiment among Turkish citizens.¹³¹

5.4.2. Changing U.S. attitude towards Turkey

In the changing U.S. attitude towards Turkish demands, together with Turkey’s seriousness on a military operation against the PKK camps in northern Iraq as well as its playing its cards well, undoubtedly, the troubles of Washington in ensuring security and stability in Iraq played a key role. The everlasting turmoil in Iraq forced the Bush administration to search for new policy alternatives. At this point, as a result of its active and effective policy in Iraq, Turkey arose as a valuable partner and gaining its support would be to the interest of Washington. Baker-Hamilton Iraqi Report of 2006 played a decisive role in the construction of this idea. The report underlined the troubles of U.S. policy towards Iraq as well as the region and the necessity of a policy shift to reverse the process in a positive direction. Whereas the first dimension of the new policy was to integrate all Iraqi groups in the government, the other pointed out the indispensability to start cooperation with the neighbors of Iraq, particularly with Turkey. An implementation of the second dimension of the report required correspondingly a radical change in Bush administration's policy approach towards Turkey. "It realized the importance of Turkey’s key role in the restructuring of Iraq and in the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq. Thus, the structural and institutional importance of Turkey-USA relations was ‘suddenly’ re-discovered. In the following period, the Bush administration accelerated rapprochement with Turkey."¹³²

Put it differently, just as Turkey's problems to ensure internal security caused by the PKK had been imposing Ankara to seek the American support,¹³³ the troubles to ensure security and stability in Iraq pushed the USA to re-define its "ideas" about its long-standing ally and mount the collaboration with it. As a matter of fact, while the U.S. administration was in trouble to stop the Sunni resistance, Turkey managed to get in touch with all groups, the Sunnis in particular and increased its influence in Iraq. Furthermore, Turkey developed its relations with Syria, mediated the Israel-Syria indirect talks and became one of the main actors in Iraq ensuring participation of Sunni groups into political processes, all of which pointed out a rise of Turkish influence in the region,¹³⁴ which consolidated the Turkish identity as a peace and stability producing regional actor. The success of the new proactive foreign policy approach of the Erdoğan leadership should be underlined at this point. Such an influential Turkey might have been helpful to the U.S. purposes which were intending to implement a policy change in the Middle East and needed allies in the region.

5.4.3. 2008: Relations revitalize, yet divergences still exist

The year of 2008 witnessed a positive impact of the intelligence sharing agreement on Turkey-United States relations. The positive atmosphere in the relations commenced towards

¹³⁰ Larrabee, “Troubled Partnership,” 19-20.

¹³¹ Ibid., 20.

¹³² Gözen, “Turkish-American Relations in 2009,” 52

¹³³ Kardeş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 42.

¹³⁴ Yılmaz, “Stratejik Ortaklıktan Model Ortaklığa:...,” 564-565.

the end of 2007 and the decision to cooperate against the PKK was reinforced by President Abdullah Gül's visit to Washington in January 2008.¹³⁵ In the aftermath of this visit, Turkish land forces conducted cross-border operations against the PKK in February and March. These operations mattered in view of materializing the oral agreement between the two countries for intelligence sharing.¹³⁶

On the other hand, the surging PKK attacks were increasingly pothering the AK Party government and the need to the intelligence provided by the Bush administration following the agreement of November 5, 2007 was soaring. This need resulted in the establishment of a new mechanism in fighting against the PKK. Turkish Interior Minister Beşir Atalay paid a visit to Baghdad and held a tripartite meeting on November 19, 2008 with the representatives of the Iraqi central government and the United States. At the end of the meeting, the parties agreed "to establish a permanent commission to streamline Turkish, American and Iraqi efforts in fighting the PKK and to regulate Turkey's access into Iraqi airspace and territory to carry out cross-border operations."¹³⁷

While mutual high-level visits continued unabated between Turkey and the United States with a view to developing bilateral relations, Erdoğan leadership's proactive foreign policy understanding produced another fruit. Turkey was elected to the non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council with 151 votes of 192 countries. This increased Turkey's value even more as an ally for the United States.¹³⁸ This success of Turkish diplomacy might be considered also as an outcome of the Erdoğan leadership's proactive foreign policy understanding.

However, despite the upwards momentum in the relations, Russia-Georgia war of August 2008 revealed the tenuous nature of bilateral relations. Reminding the Montreux convention to the NATO ships intending to enter the Black Sea to help Georgia, Turkey did not make any exception and this gave rise to negative reactions in the U.S. capital.¹³⁹ Even though the American ships were allowed in compliance with the limits of the Montreux

¹³⁵ Prominent Journalist Ruşen Çakır evaluated President Gül's visit to the U.S. in January symbolically important for the revival of relations. He also added that the U.S. administration was making a kind of confession against Abdullah Gül who was then sitting at the Prime Ministry seat and was held responsible for the failure of the governmental bill which would permit the U.S. forces to invade Iraq through the Turkish land. Ruşen Çakır, "Amerikan Yönetimi Günah Çıkartıyor," **Vatan**, 08.01.2008, accessed 13.03.2013, <http://www.rusencakir.com/Amerikan-yonetimi-gunah-cikartiyor/889>

¹³⁶"2008'de Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri," **Milliyet**, 19.12.2008, accessed 13.03.2013, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/---de-turkiye-abd-iliskileri/dunya/sondakikaarsiv/19.12.2008/1030070/default.htm>

¹³⁷ Nihat Ali Özcan, "Turkey's PKK Responds to AKP Flirtation with the Kurdistan Regional Government," *Terrorism Monitor*, Volume 6, Issue 23, (December 8, 2008). For Turkey's changing attitude towards the Kurdistan Regional Government as of 2007 see also Meliha Benli Altunışık, "Turkey's Changing Middle East Policy," *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, No.23, (May 2010): 151-152. Şaban Kadaş, "Turkish-Iraqi-American Trilateral Mechanism Focuses on PKK Terrorism," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Volume 6, Issue 70, (April 13, 2009).
¹³⁸"2008'de Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri," **Milliyet**, 19.12.2008.

¹³⁹ The American demand to dispatch warships to the Black Sea caused a trouble in Ankara as it insists all passages through the Turkish Straits, the only sea outlet to the Black Sea, must be in compliance with the international Montreux Convention. In fact, Washington had planned to send two Navy hospital ships that each weigh 70,000 tons, far above the maximum weight allowed in the Montreux Convention. When Ankara declined the U.S. request, further negotiations took place to find a compromise. Eventually, the three ships then headed to Georgia all met the standards set by the Montreux Convention. "US warship sails through straits, Russia suspicious," **Today's Zaman.com**, 23.08.2008, accessed 13.03.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-151006-us-warship-sails-through-straits-russia-suspicious.html>

convention¹⁴⁰ to pass through the Turkish straits and carry aid to Georgia,¹⁴¹ this trouble between the two allies demonstrated that the relations had a much different nature in comparison to the pre-March 1, 2003 period. More importantly yet, the financial crisis emerged initially in the U.S. influenced nearly the whole world and the contraction in the world economy correspondingly brought about the obligation also for the U.S. administration to cut spending in some certain areas. As a result of this crisis which led to a relative retreat of the Washington in world politics, countries like Turkey which felt the negative repercussions of the global economic crisis relatively less continued to pursue a more influential foreign policy.¹⁴²

5.5. Obama's Presidency: A new term along with a new paradigm in the bilateral relations (Model Partnership)

Barack Hussein Obama's assumption of the USA's administration on 20 January 2009 might be regarded as a cornerstone in the Turkish-American relations. Obama has proved that his foreign policy approach would be different from that of his predecessor George W. Bush both in terms of its content and geopolitical priorities. Obama's motto in his election campaign had been "change," therefore he had been contemplating to alter the foreign policy style of the United States as well. He intended to develop a different and positive relationship with the Islamic world and with the Middle Eastern countries. The new American President Obama declared the main lines of his new approach in his Cairo speech on June 5, 2009.¹⁴³ He announced that he wanted to make "a new beginning" with the Islamic world, "terminating the mistaken practices of the past, and to develop a new kind of relationship based on mutual interests and respect."¹⁴⁴ Obama's famous Cairo statement along with other accounts¹⁴⁵ have been implying that he would pursue a more multilateral, peaceful and pro-dialogue orientation in the new American foreign policy; albeit without any change in the focus of the US foreign policy, towards the Islamic world, Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asia.¹⁴⁶

For the implementation of his policy, Obama needed allies in the region to cooperate with, among which Turkey would be the most appropriate and significant actor.¹⁴⁷ Turkey's rising prestige in its region owing to Erdoğan leadership's proactive foreign policy had made it a significant potential partner for the materialization of Obama's vision. Stated differently, Erdoğan leadership's and Obama administration's foreign policy positions overlapped or closely coincided with each other on a number of points such as the spread of certain values

¹⁴⁰ For details of the passage regime of Turkish straits see: Hasan Kanbolat, "Montreux Convention after South Ossetia War (2) Legal Status of Turkish Straits and passage regime," **Today's Zaman.com**, 23.08.2008, accessed 13.03.2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/columnistDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=150983.

¹⁴¹ "Turkey allows U.S. ships to take aid o Georgia," **Today's Zaman.com**, 21.08.2008, accessed 14.03.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-150835-turkey-allows-us-ships-to-take-aid-to-georgia.html>.

¹⁴² Yılmaz, "Stratejik Ortaklıktan Model Ortaklığa:...", 568.

¹⁴³ "Text: Obama's Speech in Cairo," **nytimes.com**, 04.06.2009, accessed 14.03.2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/04/us/politics/04obama.text.html?pagewanted=all& r=0>.

¹⁴⁴ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 53-54

¹⁴⁵ " 'Americans are not your enemy' Obama tells Muslims," **CNN.com**, 27.01.2009, accessed 15.03.2013, <http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/01/27/obama.arabia/index.html>.

¹⁴⁶ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 53-54.

¹⁴⁷ This case was articulated by some authors like the former U.S. ambassador to Turkey, Mark Parris, with these words: "George W. Bush's successor faces perhaps the most daunting international environment of any American President since Harry Truman. As he seeks to rebuild American credibility and leadership, some countries will be able to help – or hurt – more than others. Turkey is such a country." Parris, "Common Values and Common Interests? The Bush Legacy in US-Turkish Relations," 14.

like democracy, human rights, peace and international legitimacy.¹⁴⁸ “Just like Obama’s foreign policy, the AK Party’s seven-year foreign policy was based on a “vision of peace as well. All of the AK Party’s practices in the context of the EU’s Copenhagen criteria, its performance in the Cyprus problem and relations with Greece, and even its attitude towards the American-led invasion of Iraq, were aspects of this vision of peace. Turkey’s foreign policy within this content found support both in the east and in the west. Its liberalism-oriented foreign policy was well perceived by the whole world, including the US and other western countries in particular. As a result of such a growing sympathy, Turkey was elected (after a long time) as a non-permanent member to the UN Security Council for the period 2009-2010.”¹⁴⁹

Turkey’s election to the non permanent UNSC membership might be regarded as a factor promoting the development of Turkey-U.S. relations in 2009. After all, Obama had shown rhetorically that the UN would play an important role in US diplomacy under his rule.¹⁵⁰ Given the principally peace-promoting nature of the UN and its potential contribution to the peaceful foreign policy understandings of Obama and Erdoğan administrations, it might be concluded that the UN provided a good platform for the cooperation of both countries. Stated more precisely, considering the mission of the UNSC on the solution of international problems, the increased cooperation between the US and Turkey is easy to comprehend.”¹⁵¹

In fact, even before Obama’s inauguration, there had already existed a hope in Turkey that bilateral relations would foster when Obama takes the office over due to the likely common ground where Obama’s peace- and dialogue-oriented foreign policy and Turkey’s vision of peace could have met. Then Foreign Minister of Turkey, Ali Babacan, attending a program on private NTV channel, said that Turkey and USA’s priorities in foreign politics were totally in line with each other.¹⁵² Then Chief Foreign Policy Advisor of PM Erdoğan, Ahmet Davutoğlu had expressed his expectation with respect to Ankara-Washington relations after Obama’s inauguration with these words: “Turkish-American relations are about to enter a golden era.”¹⁵³

As a matter of fact, by paying his first overseas trip to Turkey, Obama demonstrated the importance he attached to Turkey. He officially visited Turkey on 5-6 April 2009, met President Gül as well as PM Erdoğan and addressed the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Obama came also with civilian groups together such as religious, cultural groups and students and thereby launched a public diplomacy initiative in order to fix the existing negative image in the eyes of the Turkish public regarding the USA. In fact, as revealed in the media channels, the perception about the Obama administration was different from that of Bush in the Turkish public opinion.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, one can see that there was a warming climate in the

¹⁴⁸ F. Stephen Larrabee, “Obama’s Foreign Policy: Opportunities and Challenges,” *Insight Turkey*, Vol.11, No:1, (2009): 9. Bülent Aras, “A golden era for US-Turkey relations?” *Guardian*, 04.04.2009, accessed 15.03.2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2009/apr/03/obama-administration-usa>

¹⁴⁹ Gözen, “Turkish-American Relations in 2009,” 54. “Türkiye’nin üyeliği kabul edildi,” *Hürriyet.com.tr*, 17.10.2008, accessed 16.03.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=10149253&tarih=2008-10-17>

¹⁵⁰ Larrabee, “Obama’s Foreign Policy: Opportunities and Challenges,” 3.

¹⁵¹ Gözen, “Turkish-American Relations in 2009,” 54.

¹⁵² “New era started in Turkish-U.S. relations, Turkey’s foreign minister,” *Today’szaman.com*, 08.03.2009, accessed 15.03.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-168992-new-era-started-in-turkish-us-relations-turkeys-foreign-minister.html>

¹⁵³ Aras, “A golden era for US-Turkey relations?”

¹⁵⁴ Gözen, “Turkish-American Relations in 2009,” 55-56.

Turkey-U.S. relations thanks to Obama's warm approach to Turkey, his gestures that show the importance he attached to Turkey by performing his first overseas trip to Turkey.

Apart from the concepts used until that day such as "strategic partnership" or "durable alliance," Obama described Ankara-Washington ties in his visit to Turkey with a new concept used for the first time: "Model Partnership,"¹⁵⁵ which gave strong hints of the start of a new period between the two countries. Even though President Obama connoted partly what he meant with "model partnership" in his address in the Turkish parliament, initially, this new concept led to an ambiguity which brought about a number of speculations.¹⁵⁶ As there had been no official definition of this new concept, it was foreseen that the policy practices over time would imply what was really meant with it.¹⁵⁷

Examined in some detail, Obama's model partnership seems to have a couple of messages. Firstly, he demonstrated that he was aware of the fact that a revision was required in the hierarchical nature of the relations formed in the Cold War period. With its independent foreign policy in some certain fields especially since the 2003 Iraq war, Turkey had already indicated that instead of following the U.S. policy as in the Cold War, it was keeping its own interests at the forefront, and in this respect it implicitly showed its demand to be seen as an equal partner.¹⁵⁸ Although President Obama's revisionist approach to the relations could not fully meet Turkey's demand, he demonstrated his awareness that relations were not sustainable with its Cold War structure. Secondly, with the partnership to be formed with Turkey, Obama declared that he was aiming to overcome the anti-American sentiments raised in the Muslim world particularly during the Bush era. In other words, with this new partnership model, it was intended to establish a "model" for the future partnerships in the Middle East, Central Asia, Caucasus and Balkans.¹⁵⁹

President Obama stressed in his speech in the Turkish parliament the common points, values as well as historical ties between Ankara and Washington and tried to explain why

¹⁵⁵ After meeting with President Gül, Obama articulated Turkey's importance and the model partnership with these words: "I'm trying to make a statement about the importance of Turkey not just to the United States but to the world. This is a country that has been often said lies at the crossroads between East and West. It's a country that possesses an extraordinarily rich heritage, but also represents a blend of those ancient traditions with a modern nation state that respects democracy, respects rule of law and is striving towards a modern economy. (...) I think that where -- where there's the most promise of building stronger U.S.-Turkish relations is in the recognition that Turkey and the United States can build a model partnership in which a predominantly Christian nation and a predominantly Muslim nation, a Western nation and a nation that straddles two continents -- that we can create a modern international community that is respectful, that is secure, that is prosperous; that there are not tensions, inevitable tensions, between cultures, which I think is extraordinarily important." Joint Press Availability with President Obama and President Gül of Turkey, 06.04.2009, accessed 18.03.2013, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/joint-press-availability-with-president-obama-and-president-gul-turkey>

¹⁵⁶For instance, Yılmaz describes the model partnership as follows: "Model partnership stipulates the comprehension of the countries that they may have different views on certain issues, exploring the potential cooperation opportunities, political, economic and cultural diversification of actors, ensuring the coordination and dealing with the problems promptly at high-level before they turn into a crisis, highlighting the cooperation areas and demonstrating more effort to understand the sensitivities of the countries."

Nuh Yılmaz, "Erdoğan ile Obama'nın 'model ortaklık' zirvesi," *Anlayış*, No.80, (Ocak 2010).

¹⁵⁷ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 56.

¹⁵⁸ Yılmaz, "Stratejik Ortaklıktan Model Ortaklığa:...", 569-570.

¹⁵⁹Mustafa Gün, "Stratejik Ortaklıktan Model Ortaklığa: Obama-Erdoğan Görüşmesi," *BİLGESAM*, 15.12.2009, accessed 19.03.2013, http://www.bilgesam.org/tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=529:stratejik-ortakliktan-model-ortakla-obama-erdoan-goeruemesi&catid=98:analizler-abd&Itemid=135

both countries should have cooperated. He underlined that leaving aside the tensions in the past; the deep-rooted relations between the two parties ought to be developed on the basis of cooperation. Obama put also emphasis on the need for multilateral cooperation to cope with the challenges that the world faces such as economic crisis, terror, climate change and proliferation of the world's deadliest weapons. Thereby, "Obama reconfirmed his strategy based on multilateralism, diplomacy, peace and dialogue, and signaled a clear departure from Bush's unilateralist strategy." Furthermore, the new American President added that Turkey and the U.S. share common interests in a number of regional issues: (1) both countries favor the "two states" solution in the Israel-Palestine question, (2) they both desire an Iraq which is secure, united and does not serve the terrorists as a safe heaven, (3) Turkey and the U.S. regard terrorism as a common threat, (4) they share the common goal of denying Al Qaida a safe haven in Pakistan or Afghanistan. As the successor of the Bush administration, Obama insisted that Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions were a policy priority for his administration. However, unlike his predecessor, President Obama underscored the diplomatic methods, rather than war and conflict. In a nutshell, Obama's interest in Turkey was heavily influenced by his multilateralist and peaceful foreign policy strategy and correspondingly Turkey's potential contribution to his new diplomatic approach.¹⁶⁰ One should also not forget at this point the role of Erdoğan leadership's proactive foreign policy and Turkey's rising soft-power in international politics. Erdoğan leadership's unique identity which reconciles both eastern and western values was also essential for Obama's interest in Turkey which has been showed as a model for the Muslim world.

Obama's new strategy and his new definition of Turkey-U.S. relations as "model partnership" were welcomed by the AK Party government which had already been uncomfortable with the policy strategy of the Bush government.¹⁶¹ Foreign Minister Davutoğlu expressed Turkey's positive approach in a speech he made before his departure to the US on 31 May 2009, soon after his appointment to the office on 1 May 2009, with these words:

"The main point of these contacts is a sort of follow-up to President Obama's visit to Turkey and meetings with him thereof. In the coming period, there are a number of issues in the international agenda that the USA and Turkey must together deal with. Iraq, Caucasus, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Middle East and Cyprus are the issues on which Turkey and the USA should have a close coordination."¹⁶²

5.5.1. New dynamism in relations

After Barack Obama's presidency, bilateral diplomatic contacts between the USA and Turkey have significantly increased. Following Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's and President Barack Obama's visits in March and April 2009 respectively; PM Recep Tayyip

¹⁶⁰Obama stated that he wanted to "send a message" that "Turkey is a critical ally. Turkey is an important part of Europe. And Turkey and the United States must stand together and work together to overcome the challenges of our time." Full text of the US President Obama's speech at Turkish Parliament on 6 April 2009 is available at Whitehouse.gov, accessed 22.12.2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-President-Obama-To-The-Turkish-Parliament

¹⁶¹ Bülent Alırza, "President Obama's Trip to Turkey: Building a "Model Partnership," Center for Strategic International Studies (CSIS), (April 8, 2009), accessed 20.03.2013, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090408_turkey_update.pdf

¹⁶² Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sayın Bakanımızın ABD Ziyareti Öncesi Havaalanında Yaptıkları Basın Toplantısı, (Press meeting of our Minister at the airport before his visit to the USA) Istanbul, (31 May 2009), accessed 20.03.2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sayin-bakanimizin-abd-ziyareti-oncesi-havaalaninda-yaptiklari-basin-toplantisi.tr.mfa>

Erdoğan visited Washington twice, while Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu paid three visits to the U.S. Additionally, a number of contacts were held at bureaucratic, ministerial as well as NGO levels.¹⁶³ Hence, this intensity of the bilateral contacts indicated a clear momentum in Turkey-U.S. relations in comparison to the Bush era. In these contacts, of course, both parties had various expectations from each other. The Turks expected the U.S. backing on several issues like fighting against the PKK, promoting security, resolving financial and economic problems, Armenian question, the Cyprus problem as well as EU membership of Turkey. The Americans on the other hand expected to utilize Turkey's increasing prestige and its efficiency in the Middle East which might be viewed as a result of Erdoğan's proactive and pro-soft power FP practices. In this respect, they expected support from Ankara to play a role in the resolution of problems in Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan in the process of withdrawal of American military forces from Iraq, especially in the Arab-Israeli peace process, and in other regional and global issues.¹⁶⁴

Turkey's increasing foreign policy efficacy at international and global institutions also contributed to the dynamism in Turkey-United States relations. As noted above, Turkey's election as a non-permanent member to the UN Security Council for the period 2009-2010 had already paved the way for cooperation. As a matter of fact, Ankara and Washington advocated similar views in the UNSC meetings held in 2009 with respect to several issues such as Afghanistan and Palestine. Moreover, Obama administration gave support to the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) initiative proposed initially by Spain at the 59th General Assembly of the UN in 2005 and was co-sponsored by Turkey.¹⁶⁵ In this respect, along with many other world leaders, President Obama attended the Alliance Summit held in Istanbul on 6-7 April 2009.¹⁶⁶

Another element consolidating Turkey's international structural position and increasing its value as a partner for the U.S. was Turkey's involvement in the G-20 process, which started in 2009. Turkey participated in two G-20 summits in April and September and these summits both strengthened Turkey's position in the global financial system and witnessed, in parallel with Turkey's rising economic power, another fostering dimension of Turkey-U.S. relations through bilateral contacts at the level of heads of states.¹⁶⁷ Along with the dynamism in other fields, the security field, which had traditionally constituted the main basis for cooperation, also endured to be another area of dynamism in bilateral relations.

The first close contact between the Obama administration and the AK Party government took place in the NATO summit held at the level of Heads of States in 3-4 April 2009 in Strasbourg and Kehl. The Afghanistan question and the election of the new Secretary General of NATO were at the top of the agenda in this summit. Represented by President Abdullah Gül, other members' consensus notwithstanding, Turkey objected to the appointment of former Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen as Secretary General of NATO because of his handling of a 2006 crisis over cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad in

¹⁶³ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 58-59

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 59.

¹⁶⁵ For detailed information about the UN initiative, see the official Web site of the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative: <http://www.unaoc.org/>

¹⁶⁶ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 60-61. No doubt, the US support for this initiative which has been strongly advocated by Turkey points out in a sense an irony as the anti-thesis of this initiative, clash of civilizations, was initially put forward by an American scholar, Samuel Huntington, and the policies of Bush administration in some sense validated Huntington's thesis. President Obama's positive approach to the alliance of civilizations initiative might be seen as a reflection of the change in the American policy.

¹⁶⁷ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 61.

a Danish newspaper.¹⁶⁸ Yet after long negotiations and adoption of some of Turkish requests such as the appointment of a Turk as assistant secretary general as well as with the intervention of President Obama, Turkey gave its consent to the appointment of Rasmussen to the post of secretary general.¹⁶⁹ In further ministerial meetings of the NATO in June in Brussels, in October in Slovakia and in December in Brussels again, the main agenda was again the Afghanistan issue. It was decided at the end of the meeting in Brussels in December that member states would send more combat troops to Afghanistan. However, Turkey once again raised its voice to the NATO demand which had been in line with Obama's new strategy on Afghanistan. Instead of combat troops, Turkey preferred to send peace-making forces only. Though this attitude of Turkey seems as a refusal to the US request, it was appreciated by the U.S. government. Turkey's "soft power role" in Afghanistan (e.g. training Afghan soldiers and police, constructing infrastructure) made a significant contribution to the restructuring of Afghanistan as well as by implication to the war on terror.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, "Turkey found the US policy of singling out Taliban problematic, and argued that a lasting solution would require the inclusion of all factions into Afghanistan's political processes. In line with this policy, Turkey spearheaded many regional initiatives such as the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA), which brought together representatives from various Afghan groups as well as Afghanistan's neighbors. The support such initiatives received from the Western powers is an important indication of the receptivity towards Turkey's sui generis approach, as it was seen in Washington's acknowledgement that it would maintain bilateral relations by taking into account Turkey's priorities."¹⁷¹

As a result, whilst Turkey increased its efficacy in the political as well as economic structure of the world, Turkey's assertiveness and its relatively more independent FP rooted in the high self-confidence of the Erdoğan leadership engendered frictions with the Bush administration. The Bush government desired to see a Turkey which would adapt its policies to the US policies compliantly. However, defining Turkey as a central state and regarding proactive foreign policy as a necessity because of Turkey's historical and geopolitical depth, the Erdoğan leadership had its own foreign policy agenda. Therefore, it was not very willing to accept the unilateral policy approach which led to rising disputes in the bilateral relations especially until November 2007. As of this date, bilateral relations entered into a re-definition process. However, it is hardly possible to claim that the relations in this term were smooth. Obama's election to the Presidency in 2009 has constituted another cornerstone and the mutual adaptation process has gained another dimension. In addition to the commonalities between Erdoğan and Obama leaderships' foreign policy approaches, Obama has demonstrated a consenting attitude as regards the Erdoğan leadership's identity definition and tried to make use of it. As a matter of fact, an additional value has been attached to Turkey's

¹⁶⁸ "Rasmussen declares NATO candidacy, but Erdoğan opposed," **Today's Zaman**, 04.04.2009, accessed 23.03.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-171414-rasmussen-declares-nato-candidacy-but-erdogan-opposed.html>

¹⁶⁹ "Obama played a key role in brokering a deal with Turkey on the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's next leader and in persuading a reluctant Turkey to accept the Danish Prime Minister as the next head of the alliance. Ankara had opposed Rasmussen's bid because of his handling of a 2006 crisis over cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad in a Danish newspaper. When Turkey threatened to torpedo his candidacy, US officials said Obama pulled Rasmussen and Turkish President Abdullah Gül together, helping avert a damaging row that could have derailed the summit and hurt all three leaders." "NATO names Rasmussen as new secretary-general," **Today's Zaman**, 05.04.2009, accessed 22.03.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-171530-nato-names-rasmussen-as-new-secretary-general.html>. "Türkiye ikna oldu," **Hürriyet**, 04.04.2009, accessed 22.03.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=11364545&tarih=2009-04-04>

¹⁷⁰ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 62.

¹⁷¹ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 41.

identity which proves that Islam and democracy can co-exist and it has been depicted by the US government as a model for the Muslim world. Moreover, the long-standing alliance relationship between the two countries has been qualified by the Obama leadership as a "model partnership" for the Islamic world. The common norms that Erdoğan and Obama leaderships share such as multilateralism and emphasis of diplomacy in the solution of problems paved the way for the development of relations. Even though the interests and policies of both countries were not identical, a clear dynamism in bilateral relations was visible after President Obama took the office. In addition, Turkey maintained its policy during the Obama era as well which had been implying its willingness to sustain a partnership with the U.S. on the basis of equality. However, despite the positive signals from both sides, Turkey's independent foreign policy approach caused some tensions between Ankara and Washington particularly in 2010, especially on the Iran's nuclear activities question.

5.5.2. The Iraq question and Turkish-U.S. relations after Obama's inauguration

The cooperation on Iraq launched after the meeting of President Bush and PM Erdoğan on November 5, 2007 continued after Obama's take over too. In essence, both countries share a common ground on the protection of Iraq's territorial integrity and ensuring the domestic stability. Likewise, in parallel with the development of relations between Turkey and Iraq in the post-November 2007 period, a trilateral security mechanism had been formed by Turkey, U.S. and Iraq with the intention of streamlining the efforts of three countries against the PKK and "to regulate Turkey's access to Iraqi airspace and territory to carry out cross-border operations in northern Iraq." This mechanism maintained its activities also during the Obama era. Even though it is hard to see concrete outcomes of this cooperation, this mechanism continued to work and constituted a significant platform for dialogue among the related countries.¹⁷² For instance, despite the temporary decrease in PKK attacks in 2010 also as a result of actionable intelligence provided by the U.S. authorities, this decline did not indicate a quality of sustainability. Following the end of ceasefire declared unilaterally by the PKK in 2010, PKK's terrorist attacks increased again.

Considering northern Iraq, Ankara's attitude towards the KRG had already begun to change as of November 2007 and since then the Turkish government had already been increasing its dialogue with the Iraqi Kurds. This dialogue increasingly continued after Obama's inauguration as well. In this respect, a number of high level reciprocal visits took place between Turkey and the KRG. The President of Iraqi Kurdistan Region, Massoud Barzani, paid an official visit to Ankara in June 2010 and held meetings with President Gül, PM Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Davutoğlu.¹⁷³ In the following period, on 29 March 2011, Erdoğan became the first Turkish PM ever visited the Kurdish Regional Government in northern Iraq. While Erdoğan consolidated Turkey's ties with the KRG, he expressed his satisfaction with the increase in the welfare of Kurdish people and also put a special emphasis on the integrity of Iraq.¹⁷⁴ As the mutual contacts were maintained in the following period,¹⁷⁵ Turkey-KRG relations intensified both in political and economic spheres.

¹⁷² Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 63-64.

¹⁷³ Ramazan Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010"[Turkey's USA Policy 2010], in Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2010, Burhanettin Duran et a.ş., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları, Ekim 2011), 275.

¹⁷⁴ "Erdoğan'ın ilklerle dolu Irak ziyareti," **Hürriyet**, 29.03.2011, accessed 24.03.2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/17403074.asp>

¹⁷⁵ IKYB Başkanı Barzani'nin Ankara ziyareti: "Davutoğlu, Barzani ile Görüştü," **Hürriyet**, 20.04.2012, accessed 25.03.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=20386179>. Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun Kuzey Irak ziyareti, "Dışişleri'nden 'Kuzey Irak Ziyareti' açıklaması," **Cnnturk.com**,

On the other hand, Turkey's political activism continued in the Middle East and it assumed a key role in ensuring stability in Iraq in the Obama term as well. To this end, Ankara demonstrated a significant effort to ensure the participation of all Iraqi groups, the Sunnis in particular, in the political process and accomplished it considerably. Additionally, following the general elections in 2010, by forming dialogue with all groups in Iraq, Turkey played an active mediator role in the process of the establishment of the government. As all groups in Iraq paid high-level visits to Ankara in 2010, its role in this process might be easily seen when the reciprocal visits within 2010 are reviewed.¹⁷⁶

In the process of the establishment of the government in Iraq, Turkey and the U.S. were favoring Ayad Allawi owing to his secular and pro-West views. Another motive of this preference was the stronger position of the Allawi-led Iraqiya bloc in comparison to the former elections. However, the fact that Allawi did not possess the majority in the parliament and he failed to convince the Shiites and the Kurds to form a coalition government indicated once again the limits of Turkey-U.S. cooperation in Iraq. Some commented on this issue that the U.S. and Turkish reluctance notwithstanding, Maliki's establishment of the government instead of Allawi demonstrated the weak position of Ankara-Washington facade against Iran. Therefore, one might claim that Turkey felt a short-term 'resentment' against the Shiites and the Maliki government. This sense of resentment could be overcome only with PM Erdoğan's visit of Iraq on 28-29 March 2011.¹⁷⁷

Turkey and the U.S. cooperated also in the process of pulling the US soldiers out of Iraq. Turkey's contribution to this process occurred both directly and indirectly. Ankara kept its all military facilities and its geographic advantage open to the U.S. forces to support the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. Turkey allowed the Americans to have access to the Incirlik airbase, Turkish air space as well as other related military zones for the US withdrawal operation. Turkey's indirect contribution was its assistance to the peaceful and secure restructuring of Iraq. This contribution was materialized through Ankara's role in the establishment of the government after the 2010 elections, through its active role in the trilateral mechanism as well as its improving diplomatic and economic relations with Baghdad.¹⁷⁸

The High Level Strategic Cooperation Council formed in July 2008,¹⁷⁹ led to further development of economic, commercial, diplomatic and security relations between Turkey and Iraq. In this context, after President Gül's visit to Baghdad on 23-24 March 2009, which had been the first presidential level visit to Iraq after 33 years,¹⁸⁰ 48 Memoranda of Understanding were signed in many fields, ranging from security to energy, education, transportation and health.¹⁸¹ While these agreements aimed to improve cooperation between the parties in

07.08.2012, accessed 25.03.2013,
<http://www.cnnturk.com/2012/turkiye/08/07/disislerinden.kuzey.irak.ziyareti.aciklamasi/671988.0/index.html>

¹⁷⁶ Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 276.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 276-277.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 277.

¹⁷⁹ "Joint Political Declaration on the Establishment of the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council between Governments of the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Iraq" is available at the official website of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Accessed 04.01.2013,
<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/data/DISPOLITIKA/Bolgeler/ortadogu/irak/Ortak%20Siyasi%20Bilirge%20Ingilizce.pdf>

¹⁸⁰ Official Website of Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 23.03.2009, accessed 22.03.2013,
<http://www.tccb.gov.tr/foreign-visits/388/49888/irak.html>

¹⁸¹ "Irak'la 48 anlaşma imzalandı," **Sabah**, 15.10.2009, accessed 24.03.2013,
http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2009/10/15/irakla_48_anlasma_imzalandi

several areas, they meant differently for Turkey and its ally, the United States. "From the Turkish point of view, the rapprochement with Iraq was important for such goals as cleansing PKK terrorists from northern Iraq, preventing the establishment of a Kurdish state, and promoting the territorial, national and political integrity of Iraq. It was important from the US point of view for such goals as ensuring an easy withdrawal of US military forces from Iraq, ensuring Iraq's stability after the withdrawal, and reducing the influence of Iran in particular or any other country in general in Iraq's domestic affairs."¹⁸² Consequently, Ankara-Baghdad relations became routine, and contrary to the post-2003 period, the crisis of confidence or mutual threat became exceptional cases in bilateral relations. This positive momentum took place in parallel with the improving Ankara-Washington ties.¹⁸³ Put it differently, "Turkey's close relationship with Iraq, the struggle to form a new order, and the launch of military operations in northern Iraq were all implemented in coordination with, and support of the United States."¹⁸⁴

However, in the subsequent period, especially in 2012, relations have started to deteriorate between Turkey and the Iraqi central administration. In the course of time, Turkey and the KRG increasingly re-approached and oil and natural gas agreements were concluded between the KRG and Turkish firms by excluding the Iraqi central government. Arbil administration intended in this way to sell the energy resources to be produced in the region to the world markets via Turkish territory. As the KRG and Turkey did not consult Baghdad with respect to their bilateral relations, the Iraqi central government demonstrated a harsh reaction and this downgraded Ankara and Baghdad relations once again. Moreover, the fact that Turkey has been playing host to the former vice-President Tariq al-Hashimi who was convicted and sentenced to death by the Central Criminal Court of Iraq on 9 September 2012 and that it has been expanding already strong economic and commercial cooperation with the northern Iraq through energy cooperation outraged the Maliki administration.¹⁸⁵ Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki openly accused Turkey of intervening in the internal affairs of Iraq and of orchestrating a sectarian approach.¹⁸⁶ Turkey's answer to this harsh criticism did not delay and mutual accusations continued with a verbal note of protest of Iraq.¹⁸⁷ Undoubtedly, these tensions in the relations have impeded the momentum of bilateral relations which had

¹⁸² Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 65.

¹⁸³ Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 277.

¹⁸⁴ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 65.

¹⁸⁵ Seda Kırdar, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkilerinde Politika Farklılıkları Derinleşirken," Türkiye Ekonomi Politikaları Araştırma Vakfı (TEPAV), Değerlendirme Notu, Aralık 2012, accessed 22.12.2013, [http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1356176399-](http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1356176399-1.Turkiye%20ABD%20Iliskilerinde%20Politika%20Farkliliklari%20Derinlesirken.pdf)

[1.Turkiye ABD İlişkilerinde Politika Farklılıkları Derinleşirken.pdf](http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1356176399-1.Turkiye%20ABD%20Iliskilerinde%20Politika%20Farkliliklari%20Derinlesirken.pdf), 2-3.

¹⁸⁶ Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki criticized sharply the official contacts of former Iraqi vice President Hashemi in Turkey about whom there was an arrest warrant in Iraq. Accusing Turkish PM Erdoğan of meddling Iraq's internal affairs and adopting a sectarian approach, Maliki stated "If Turkey maintains this policy, its interests will be harmed and Turkey will become an enemy country for everyone in the region." "Maliki: Türkiye düşman haline geliyor," *ntvmsnbc*, 20.04.2012, accessed 27.03.2013, <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25342158>. Perpetuating his explanations against Turkey, Maliki used these words in a statement to es-Sumeriya TV channel in early 2013: "Turkey's interference in Iraq's internal affairs provokes other countries in this regard. (...) Turkey's policy towards Iraq's Kurdish region will endanger not only this region but also the entire Iraq." "Maliki yine haddini aştı," *Sabah*, 01.01.2013, accessed 22.03.2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Dunya/2013/01/01/maliki-yine-haddini-asti>. Undoubtedly, it is interesting that Shi'i Maliki administration accuses Turkey of sectarianism because of its host to former Vice President of Iraq, al-Hashemi, and its booming relations with the Sunni Kurdistan Regional Government, whereas he reapproaches with Shiite Iran.

¹⁸⁷ "Maliki'den küstahlık," *Habertürk*, 24.04.2012, accessed 28.03.2013, <http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/736583-malikiden-kustahlık>

been upwards until then.¹⁸⁸ In this context, for instance, Turkish Energy Minister Taner Yıldız's jet which took off to go to Arbil had to land in Turkish province Kayseri upon the closure of Iraqi airspace for international flights by Baghdad.¹⁸⁹ This unconventional maneuver of Baghdad reflects actually its reaction to the Turks who bypass the Iraqi central government in their relations with the Iraqi Kurds.

Regarding the issue of how the tensions in Ankara-Baghdad line reflected to the Turkish-American ties, one might conclude that the U.S. administration did not want to interfere in them much, as the U.S. interest was inward-looking due to the presidential elections in 2012. It might be foreseen that aware of the oil agreements of the U.S. firms signed with the northern Iraq, Obama administration would not desire to exclude the Maliki-led Iraqi Shiites and make them more dependent on Iran. Hence, despite the calls of the Turks, it seems difficult that Washington would adopt an attitude against the Baghdad regime.¹⁹⁰ The U.S. has been pursuing a conservative policy towards Iraq and seeking to protect the delicate balance both within the country and in the region in order to preclude the fragmentation of Iraq. Therefore, as Henry Barkey points it out, Iraq would probably retain its potential crisis position between Turkey and the U.S.¹⁹¹

To conclude, the relatively rapprochement of Ankara and Washington on the Iraq question gained momentum as of November 2007 and increasingly continued with Obama's inauguration in 2009 in parallel with the mutual redefinition process of both countries and with the evolving ideas about Turkey on the American side. However, it is hardly possible to come to the conclusion that Ankara-Washington interests as well as policies on Iraq are totally on the same line. Therefore, Iraq continues to carry its potential of tension between the two allies. Furthermore, Iraq has not been the sole point of divergence for Turkey and Ankara in the Middle East. As the world and Turkey change, Turkish and American policies diverge from time to time on some other issues as well. Thus, from this point on, these issues, namely the Iran, Syria and Palestine questions which become now and then theme of tension in Ankara-Washington line will be discussed.

5.6. The Iran dimension of Turkey-U.S. relations

Examining the history of Turkey and Iran, one could easily see a never ending competition between them. These two have been heirs to the Ottoman and the Persian Empires respectively. In retrospect, a number of wars and military conflicts took place between Iran, which has been the center of Shiism since the Safavid Empire in 1501, and the Ottoman Empire which had been the center of caliphate and Sunni Islam. The border between these two countries has not changed since the Kasr-i Sirin treaty of 1639 and this treaty is still in effect today. Despite the historical rivalry between the two neighbors, ironically, this border drawn in 1639 might be seen as the oldest border that Ankara and Tehran have had.

¹⁸⁸ "Irak'la üçlü mekanizma tehlikeye düştü," **Milliyet**, 29.01.2012, accessed 28.03.2013, <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/irak-la-uclu-mekanizma-tehlikeye-dustu/dunya/dunyadetay/29.01.2012/1495252/default.htm>

¹⁸⁹ "Iraq bars minister's plane from landing in Arbil amid tensions," Today's Zaman, 04.12.2012, accessed 28.03.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-300121-iraq-bars-ministers-plane-from-landing-in-arbil-amid-tensions.html>. "Havada 'Kürt petrolü' krizi: Bakan Yıldız'ın uçağı Erbil'e gidemedi," **Radikal**, 04.12.2012, accessed 28.03.2013, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=1110546&CategoryID=78>.

¹⁹⁰ Kırdar, "Türkiye-ABD İlişkilerinde Politika Farklılıkları Derinleşirken," 3.

¹⁹¹ "Irak konusunda kriz olabilir," **Milliyet**, 01.01.2013, accessed 28.03.2013, <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/irak-konusunda-kriz-olabilir/dunya/dunyadetay/01.01.2013/1649608/default.htm>

In the wake of the Iranian Islamic Revolution (1979), Ankara and Tehran positioned themselves in different camps. Turkey's secular political structure which might be labeled nearly as the anti-thesis of the Iran's Islamic regime escalated the rivalry between the parties. Fearing a possible export of the Iranian revolution, Turkey was careful to stay politically away from Iran. Tehran on the other hand "resented its neighbor, a NATO member, a staunch regional ally of the United States, and a strong supporter of Israel."¹⁹² In spite of the U.S. opposition, Turkey followed the so called "active neutrality" policy during the Iran-Iraq war and sought to improve its economic relations with Iran as well as with Iraq.¹⁹³ Then PM Turgut Özal, was of the opinion that close economic relations with Iran was in the interest of Turkey, thus he objected to the isolation of Tehran in a term when almost the entire world sided against Turkey's south-eastern neighbor. In return, Tehran attached Turkey a special importance in the field of economic cooperation, particularly during Özal's Prime Ministry. With the attempts of PM Özal, the Regional Cooperation for Development was revived and the ECO's membership portfolio was extended.¹⁹⁴ Thus, mutually constructed ideas of Turkey and Iran in terms of constructivism were in favor of the economic interests while the political competition remained behind economic cooperation during the Özal era.

In the course of 1990s, relations of these two old neighbors were not very positive for various reasons. First of all, Turkey and Iran embarked on a competition to increase their influence on the Muslim-Turkic states which emerged after the dissolution of the Soviets in the Central Asia and Caucasus.¹⁹⁵ In this competition, whereas Turkey was in cooperation with Washington, Iran preferred to side with Moscow. Another reason of low-profile relations of Ankara and Tehran throughout the 1990s was the anti-Iran standing of the ruling Turkish elite because of the pro-security understanding that then prevailed in Turkish domestic politics. Advocating the homogenous identity of the state and taking a tough line against the Islamists, the secular Turkish security elite regarded the Islamist identity as a danger to the security of Turkey and viewed Iran as a threat owing to its Islamist regime. Furthermore, the PKK terrorism which had been considerably annoying Turkey during the 1990s was another complicated issue of Ankara-Tehran relations. The claims that Iran was backing the PKK were another significant motivation of the Turkish security elite to be at odds with the Iranians.¹⁹⁶ Turkey-Israel rapprochement on the other hand materialized during the 1990s also with the urge of the USA was the leading issue bothering the Iranian side in terms of Ankara-Tehran relations.¹⁹⁷

5.6.1. Improving relations with Iran in the 2000s

After a long break, Turkey-Iran relations have begun to revive in the new millennium. The AK Party government which has been advocating foreign policy principles like multi-dimensional foreign policy and zero problems with neighbors and has been underscoring that rising economic interdependence in its region would bring about a "welfare circle," sought to

¹⁹² Richard Javad Heydarian, "Iran-Turkey-Syria: An Alliance of Convenience," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, 19.07.2010, accessed 28.03.2013, http://fpif.org/iran-turkey-syria_an_alliance_of_convenience/.

¹⁹³ Daphne McCruddy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Volume 7, Number 2, (Summer 2008): 89.

¹⁹⁴ Bülent Aras, "Türk-İran İlişkileri: Değişim ve Süreklilik"[Turkish-Iranian Relations: Transformation or Continuity], *Avrasya Dosyası*, Vol. 12, No 2, (2006): 63.

¹⁹⁵ Nilüfer Karacasulu, İrem Aşkar Karakır, "Iran-Turkey Relations in the 2000s: Pragmatic Reapproachment," *Ege Academic Review*, Vol.11, Number 1, (January 2011): 112.

¹⁹⁶ Aras, "Türk-İran İlişkileri: Değişim ve Süreklilik." 65-70.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 74-76.

develop its relations with Iran as well, particularly in the economy field.¹⁹⁸ Contrary to the secular Turkish elite who dominated Turkish politics during 1990s, Erdoğan leadership has viewed Iran as a significant economic partner and has not considered the Islamic regime as a danger for Turkey. This change of idea about Iran which is rooted in the identity and interest definition of the Erdoğan leadership has brought about the development of Ankara-Tehran ties particularly in the economic sphere.

As in the case of Iran-Iraq war, even though the Turkish and American approaches have not always coincided, Ankara and Washington's interests were largely in conformity regarding Iran. This country has been perceived by the U.S. as a serious threat since the 1979 Revolution. Hence, it is hardly possible to claim that the U.S. welcomed the revival of Turkey-Iran relations in 2000s. It is widely known that the U.S. has been opposing Iran's efforts to develop its own nuclear technology on the ground that this would enable Tehran also to develop its own nuclear weapons. In order to hinder the Iranian efforts, Washington has been exerting pressure on the Iranian administration with both diplomatic and economic means. A possible military attack against Iran is by no means desired by Ankara since this might lead to the destabilization of the region and directly influences Turkey as neighbor of Iran and damage its interests. Consequently, Iran has been in recent years a major point of divergence in U.S.-Turkey relations.

5.6.2. Rising commercial relations

The cooperation in the energy realm which had been launched even before the AK Party came to power, continued also in the 2000s. The natural gas pipeline was activated in December 2001 which had been built in accordance with an agreement signed between Turkey and Iran in 1996 and created strains in relations with Washington as it had undermined directly the U.S. efforts to constrict trade and investment with Iran.¹⁹⁹ Thereby, despite the problems emerge from time to time in gas supply, Iran has become the second largest natural gas supplier after Russia. Additionally, Turkey and Iran signed a memorandum of understanding in July 2007 for the purpose of building a new pipeline and to carry 30 billion cubic meters of gas per year from Iran to Turkey and then to Europe. To this end, the Turkish state petroleum corporation TPAO would develop Iran's South Pars gas field, which was planned to produce 20 billion cubic meters per year.²⁰⁰ When this project failed to get international financing, TPAO announced in October 2007 that it would fund the \$3.5 billion project from its own resources and thereby it indicated its determination about the completion of the project.²⁰¹ The main motive behind Turkey's determination was its dependence on Russia for natural gas and its aim to reduce this reliance. This project was also in line with Erdoğan leadership's active FP in its region and building interdependencies with neighboring countries. In this respect, Erdoğan leadership shares Turkey's strategic goal "to act as a major conduit for non-Russian gas to central and eastern Europe, via the planned Nabucco pipeline project. In this way, Turkey's approaches to Iran were tied in to its hopes of becoming an important energy corridor between the Caspian Region, the Middle East, and Europe."²⁰²

The strongest opposition to this enlarged gas pipeline project came from Washington. "Reminding Turkey that under the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 any foreign company

¹⁹⁸ McCrudy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," 88.

¹⁹⁹ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 35.

²⁰⁰ William Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,'" *Insight Turkey*, Vol.11, No.3, (2009): 153

²⁰¹ McCrudy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," 90.

²⁰² Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,'" 153.

investing more than 20 million dollars in Iran's gas and oil sector was subject to U.S. sanctions, US officials repeatedly expressed their disapproval.²⁰³ In fact, no company had been subjected to these sanctions as the U.S. President could officially ignore them on grounds of national security. However, a stricter legislation passed by Congress in September 2007 removed this loophole and the field of action in this regard was narrowed. As a matter of fact, two energy majors, Royal Dutch Shell and Total S.A. along with Spain's Repsol, pulled out of deals to develop Iran's South Pars field under pressure from the U.S. authorities.²⁰⁴

Despite the U.S. warnings, Turkey did not step back from its energy cooperation with Iran. In August 2008, for example, American and Israeli objections notwithstanding, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad paid an official visit to Turkey for the first time since coming to power in 2005. Though there was an expectation as to a final agreement on the South Pars project, this expectation was not met. Even though some explained this with the U.S. pressure, Turkish officials announced that the two parties failed to reach a deal due to Iran's tough buy-back conditions.²⁰⁵

In terms of international trade, Iran has been one of the most important partners of Turkey. While Turkey exported to Iran more than \$3.5 billion in 2011, it imported approximately \$12.5 billion.²⁰⁶ Due to Turkey's large amount of energy import from Iran, as the figures clearly illustrate, the trade balance is by far against Turkey. In spite of the problems stemming from Iran's domestic market conditions and the difficulties created by Iranian authorities to open Iran's market,²⁰⁷ bilateral trade relations continue to improve. Turkish contractors on the other hand, who have continued to hold onto second place in 2011 in the world behind their Chinese counterparts, have increased their investments in Iran.²⁰⁸ In this context, total amount of projects undertaken by Turkish contractors in Iran reached today nearly to the level of \$2 billion, almost half of which was undertaken in 2010.²⁰⁹

In the banking sector, Turkish-Iranian relations are in trouble because of the U.S. and UN Security Council sanctions against Iran on trade, trade financing and oil sector in particular. Whilst the U.S. prohibits its banks to open letters of credit to Iran, it tries simultaneously to prevent other countries from mediating Iranian trade. In this respect, the

²⁰³ "US criticizes Turkey for continuing energy cooperation with Iran," **Turkish Daily News**, 22.09.2007, accessed 30.03.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/us-criticizes-turkey-for-continuing-energy-cooperation-with-iran.aspx?pageID=438&n=us-criticizes-turkey-for-continuing-energy-cooperation-with-iran-2007-09-22>

²⁰⁴ D. McCurdy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," p.91

²⁰⁵ Ibid, p.91

²⁰⁶ Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), Foreign Trade Statistics, December 2011, Number: 10739, 31.01.2012

²⁰⁷ For example, Turkey's largest mobile phone operator, Turkcell, had won the right to get the first private license in an international tender conducted in Iran in 2004. However, this \$3billion tender, which would be Iran's largest foreign investment in decades, was then blocked by the Iranian parliament accusing Turkcell of links to arch foe Israel. In another case, Turkish-Austrian Consortium (TAV) poured \$15 million in to Tehran's new Imam Khomeini airport on a goodwill basis. But the Revolutionary Guard closed the airport just hours after it was opened in May 2004 over suspicions of Israeli involvement in the project. "Turkcell sees risks in Iran GSM license after bill," **Hurriyet Daily News**, 15.02.2005, accessed 30.03.2013, [http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkcell-sees-risks-in-iran-gsm-licence-after-bill-2005-02-15](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkcell-sees-risks-in-iran-gsm-licence-after-bill.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkcell-sees-risks-in-iran-gsm-licence-after-bill-2005-02-15)

²⁰⁸ "Contractors rise in int'l list despite crisis," **Hurriyet Daily News**, 25.08.2012, accessed 30.03.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/contractors-rise-in-intl-list-despite-crisis.aspx?pageID=238&nID=28583&NewsCatID=345>

²⁰⁹ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ekonomi Bakanlığı Tahran Ticaret Müşavirliği, Müteahhitlik Hizmetleri Ülke Profili: İran İslam Cumhuriyeti, Nisan 2012, Tahran, accessed 22.12.2013, [http://www.musavirlikler.gov.tr/upload/IR/2012%20IRAN%20muatehhitlik%20hizmetleri%20raporu%20\(paylasilir\).pdf](http://www.musavirlikler.gov.tr/upload/IR/2012%20IRAN%20muatehhitlik%20hizmetleri%20raporu%20(paylasilir).pdf)

U.S. administration has frequently expressed its discomfort about Turkey-Iran cooperation in the banking sector and has warned Turkish banks cooperating with their Iranian counterparts.²¹⁰ Turkey, however, underlines that only UN Security Council resolutions on sanctions against Iran are binding for itself, not the individual decisions of states.

Suffering from the sanctions, the Iranian companies have turned to Turkey and sought to overcome the impact of the sanctions through their activities in Turkey.²¹¹ The troubles arose between Ankara and Tehran with respect to the banking services are sought to be solved through the banks like the Iranian Bank Mellat operating in Turkey and Turkish state-owned banks, Halkbank and Ziraat Bankası operating in Iran. However, activities of the Bank Mellat reduced in Turkey to a large extent owing to the U.S. pressures.²¹² Nevertheless, the Iranian banks maintain their applications for banking license to operate in Turkey.²¹³

Turkish-Iranian economic cooperation has also expanded in the tourism industry and tourism has constituted another significant economic tie between the two countries.²¹⁴ The number of Iranian tourists visiting Turkey for instance have constantly increased since 2000 and reached 1.879 thousands in 2011. Thereby, Iran became the fourth among the countries sending the most visitors to Turkey after Germany, Russia and England.²¹⁵

In the face of the measures taken by the U.S. against Iran, a risk emerged that Turkish firms could be subjected to the U.S. sanctions. "It was stipulated in a US law signed by Obama in December 2011 that countries have to greatly reduce oil imports from Iran until 28 June or those banks which work with the Iranian Central Bank because of oil import will be subjected to the sanctions. Upon Turkey's reduction of the oil purchased from Iran and its turn to other providers such as Saudi Arabia and Libya, the US administration exempted Turkey along with South Korea, Malaysia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Taiwan from the sanctions."²¹⁶ The US did not sustain its requests from Turkey on cutting oil import from Iran and another likely trouble between the U.S. and Turkey was overcome.²¹⁷

Last of all, the commercial relations between Turkey and Iran has been booming despite the structural problems, the troubles stemming from domestic politics and the strong U.S. pressure. The Erdoğan leadership continues to see the economic relations with Iran as a significant part of its project to establish interdependencies with neighbors. Thus, Ankara has been trying to resist the U.S. pressure. Moreover, the Erdoğan leadership seeks to make a

²¹⁰ "ABD'li heyet İran'ın terör finansmanı için bizi uyardı," **Milliyet**, 20.08.2010, accessed 30.03.2013, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-abd-li-heyet-iran-in-teror-finansmani-icin-bizi-uyardi-/ekonomi/haberdetay/21.08.2010/1279096/default.htm>

²¹¹ "İranlı iş adamları ortak banka istiyor," **Hürriyet**, 04.09.2012, accessed 30.03.2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/21378285.asp>

²¹² "Bank Mellat artık Türk bankalarla iş yapamıyor," **Milliyet**, 18.05.2011, <http://ekonomi.milliyet.com.tr/bank-mellat-artik-turk-bankalarla-is-yapamiyor/ekonomi/ekonomidetay/19.05.2011/1392045/default.htm>

²¹³ "İranlı banka BDDK'ya lisans için başvurdu," **ntvmsnbc.com**, 18.06.2012, accessed 30.03.2013, <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25359334/>

²¹⁴ McCurdy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," 93.

²¹⁵ "Bakanlık açıkladı: İşte Türkiye'nin 2011 yılı toplam ziyaretçi sayısı," **Turizm Güncel.com**, 24.01.2012, accessed 30.03.2013, <http://www.turizmguncel.com/haber/bakanlik-acikladi-iste-turkiyenin-2011-yili-toplam-ziyaretci-sayisi-h9033.html>

²¹⁶ "US exempts seven states from sanctions over Iran oil," **BBC**, 11.06.2012, accessed 30.03.2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18405298>

²¹⁷ "Turkey says no new US request to cut Iran oil imports," **Ahram online**, 05.12.2012, accessed 30.03.2013, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/59854/Business/Economy/Turkey-says-no-new-US-request-to-cut-Iran-oil-impo.aspx>

distinction between political and trade issues pertinent to the relations with Turkey's old neighbor. In this manner, it aims to preclude a possible damage of political tension on trade relations.

5.6.3. Rising cooperation against the PKK terrorism

Erdoğan leadership's proactive foreign policy approach has had reflections on its policy about the Kurdish question as well. Accordingly, while it sought to develop its relations with the neighboring countries in the context of zero-problems policy, Erdoğan leadership tried to increase cooperation with Iran and Syria against the PKK terrorism. Moreover, the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and its chaotic aftermath had already provided an appropriate ground for Turkish-Iranian cooperation in this respect. Additionally, Turkish losses as a result of PKK attacks which were re-started after a five-year unilateral ceasefire by the PKK led to a serious trouble in the Turkish public opinion.²¹⁸ The rising pressure on the government in this regard might be regarded as a further factor pushing the Erdoğan leadership to intensify its cooperation with Tehran as well.

Turkey and Iran signed a security cooperation agreement during PM Erdoğan's visit to Tehran in July 2004 and named the PKK a terrorist organization. Furthermore, both countries revitalized Turkey-Iran High Security Committee, which was established in 1988 but largely remained ineffective in the subsequent period.²¹⁹ On the other hand, since 2004, Iran has also faced a Kurdish insurgency which was organized as the Free Life Party of Kurdistan (PJAK), which is based in the Qandil Mountains in northern Iraq and has close ties with the PKK. Consequently, defeating the PKK/PJAK has become a point of convergence for Turkey and Iran and the two countries have stepped up cooperation to protect their borders.²²⁰

The reviving Turkish-U.S. relations as from November 2007 did not damage Turkish-Iranian cooperation on terrorism. Iran remained silent about the Turkish cross-border military operations against the PKK camps in northern Iraq towards the end of 2007 and early 2008. Tehran "took a sympathetic posture and reinforced the Iraqi border to prevent the PKK members from escaping into Iran. During a historic visit to Iraq in March 2008, President Ahmadinejad explained that he understood the concerns about the PKK that had motivated Turkey to send troops across the border, but that Iraq's sovereignty needed to be respected and there needed to be coordination between Turkey, Iran and Iraq."²²¹

Both countries maintained their cooperation on the PKK/PJAK question in 2008 as well. Turkey-Iran High Security Commission, which had been hold for more than a decade, gathered 12th times in Ankara in April 2008 to discuss fight against terrorism and declared determination on joint struggle against the PKK and PJAK. Additionally, in order to increase security cooperation and exchange intelligence to combat these two groups, as well as to fight organized crime, drug trafficking, extradition of criminals and the maintenance of border security, a memorandum of understanding was concluded between the parties. Then Chief of Staff, İlker Başbuğ, affirmed that this MoU did not remain on paper, but implemented to a

²¹⁸ Soner Cagaptay and Zeynep Eroğlu, "The PKK, PJAK, and Iran: Implications for U.S.-Turkish Relations, The Washington Institute, Policywatch 1244, June 13, 2007, accessed 02.04. 2013, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-pkk-pjak-and-iran-implications-for-u.s.-turkish-relations>.

²¹⁹ Altunışık, "Turkey's Changing Middle East Policy." 155.

²²⁰ Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,' 154.

²²¹ Ibid., 97-98.

great extent and he stated that Turkey and Iran, even though not conducting joint operations against the terrorists, were sharing information and coordinating their operations.²²²

On the other hand, the close cooperation between Ankara and Tehran on terrorism worried Washington on the grounds that Turkey may be sharing the U.S. intelligence with Iran. Although Turkey repeatedly guaranteed that it was not accurate, the U.S. allegations that Iran's Quds Forces (the elite and covert foreign operations wing of the Revolutionary Guard) are supplying, training and funding Shiite militias in Iraq put Turkey in a difficult position to defend its security cooperation with Iran.

Despite Turkish-Iranian cooperation on the PKK/PJAK question, it is hard to claim that this cooperation eradicated the Ankara-Tehran rivalry entirely. A nagging mistrust, for instance, still exist among the Turkish military about Iran given their history of supporting subversive activity within Turkey and the two countries' major policy differences. While the Iranian side is not happy about Turkey's rising activism and increasing soft power in Iraq, Turkey does not welcome Iranian interference in Iraqi politics.²²³ Likewise, whereas Turkish military has strongly advocated a slow, staged pullout in order to prevent a sudden security vacuum in Iraq, Tehran advocated that the U.S. troops should have withdrawn immediately.²²⁴

Turkish-Iranian cooperation against terrorism continued until the fall of 2011.²²⁵ However, Turkey's reviving relations with the U.S. undermined to a certain extent the sustainability of Turkish-Iranian cooperation. Ankara's consent to host the NATO missile shield on its soil in September 2011 as a result of strong U.S. insist²²⁶ has become so to say a

²²² Karacasulu and Karakır, "Iran-Turkey Relations in the 2000s: Pragmatic Reapproachment," 115.

²²³ McCurdy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," 99.

²²⁴ Ibid., 99. Turkey's rightfulness at this point has been proved in recent years. Following the completion of U.S. withdrawal from Iraq in December 2011, Iranian influence in Iraq increased to an undesired level for both Turkey and the U.S. "Amerika Irak'tan çekildi, yerini İran'a bıraktı," *Zaman*, 19.12.2011, accessed 04.04. 2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?haberno=1216627. "Türkiye-İran-Irak Son Gelişmeler," Dış Politika ve Savunma Araştırmaları Grubu, Bilgesam.org, 22.02.2012, accessed 02.04. 2013, http://www.bilgesam.org/tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2088:tuerkiye-ran-irak-son-gelimeler&catid=77:ortadogu-analizler&Itemid=150. Intending to reinforce his authority in the country, Shi'i Prime Minister of Iraq, Nouri al-Maliki, sought to gain Iranian support by siding with it on the Syria issue. In the course of time, the bridges between Maliki and Erdoğan governments were burned and Turkey began to act in a manner that ignored the Maliki administration. As a matter of fact, this was clearly observed during Turkish foreign minister Davutoğlu's Arbil and Kirkuk visits in early August 2012. As these visits were paid without informing the Iraqi central government, Baghdad was irritated and even mentioned their right to arrest foreign minister of Turkey. Upon Ankara's sharp reaction, Baghdad delivered a note to Turkey. Consequently, while Iranian influence soared in Iraq, Turkey's relations with the Iraqi central government were deteriorated. Erol Kurubaş, "Türkiye-İran ilişkilerinde gerilim," Ankara Strateji Enstitüsü, 09.08.2012, accessed 22.12.2013, <http://www.ankarastrateji.org/yazar/prof-dr-erol-kurubas/turkiye-iran-iliskilerinde-gerilim/>.

²²⁵ Kemal İnat and İsmail Numan Telci, "Türkiye'nin İran, İsrail/Filistin ve Suriye Politikası" (Turkey's Iran, Israel/Palestine and Syria Policy) in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2009*, Burhanettin Duran et al. (Ankara, SETA Yayınları, Mart 2011), 100. "Turkey, Iran step up fights on PKK, PJAK," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 26.07.2011, accessed 04.04. 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=turkey-iran-step-up-fights-on-pkk-pjak-2011-07-26>

²²⁶ With the Missile Shield Project, also known as an early warning system, deployment of an early radar system was envisaged to Turkey. The deployment of this early warning radar to Turkey had been decided in the context of developing a defense system which had been agreed in the Lisbon Summit of NATO in November 2010 with a view to make a contribution to the deterrence of NATO against a ballistic missile. "Türkiye, füze kalkanı kabul etti," *Sabah*, 03.09.2011, accessed 04.04. 2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2011/09/03/turkiye-fuze-kalkani-kurulmasini-kabul-etti>

turning point for Ankara-Tehran cooperation.²²⁷ The AK Party government engaged in serious negotiations with the NATO allies that the missile shield would not directly target Iran,²²⁸ and became successful in its attempts and ensured that Iran was not mentioned in the project.²²⁹ Nevertheless, Iran disregarded Turkey's efforts and began to see its ties with it in a distinctive manner. Stated differently, seeking to pursue a multilateral foreign policy, Turkey has been attempting to maintain good relations both with Iran and the U.S. and in this respect tried not to damage its bonds with Iran because of the missile shield project. However, its achievement in this regard remained limited so much so that Iran declared that it could strike Malatya, the Turkish city where the NATO radar base is located, in case of a U.S. or Israeli attack against Iran.²³⁰ As of this date, threatening statements from Iranian officials began to be heard more frequently.²³¹ Moreover, Iran accomplished to eliminate the PJAK as a result of its military operations to a large extent and it was claimed that the Iranian administration made an agreement with the PKK/PJAK and resumed its support for the terrorist organization.²³² According to the Turkish media reports the Iranian government would turn a blind eye to the terrorist organization's outposts along the Turkish border. This deal led also to PKK's acquisition of Russian-made heavy weapons from Iran and these weapons were used in the August 2012 attacks by the PKK in the Şemdinli district of the eastern province of Hakkari.²³³

The turmoil in Syria began in the wake of the so called Arab Spring constituted another turning point in terms of Turkey-Iran relations. Explaining this case from a constructivist perspective, as it was noted in the first chapter, constructivism does not

²²⁷Kurubaş, "Türkiye-İran ilişkilerinde gerilim." In fact, it was not hard to foresee that Iran would react to the deployment of radars to Turkey. Iran's fierce opposition notwithstanding, Turkey's consent to the installation of radars to its territory might be explained with Ankara and Tehran's taking place in different camps in the face of the uprisings in Syria. As a matter of fact, while the divergence on Syria deepened over time between Turkey and Iran, the same reason became a significant catalyst for cooperation between Ankara and Washington. Henry Barkey, "Turkey's hard stance on Syria hides its conflicted loyalties," **The National Conversation**, 21.11.2011, accessed 06.04. 2013, <http://www.thenational.ac/thenationalconversation/comment/turkeys-hard-stance-on-syria-hides-its-conflicted-loyalties?pageCount=2>

²²⁸"Ankara will not harm Tehran," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 17.11.2011, accessed 06.04. 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/ankara-will-not-harm-tehran.aspx?pageID=438&n=8216ankara-will-not-harm-tehran8217-2011-11-17>

²²⁹ "Türk topraklarından komşularımıza saldırılmasına izin vermeyiz," **Hürriyet**, 05.01.2012, accessed 06.04. 2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/planet/19606953.asp>

²³⁰ "Iran renews threat to attack Turkey," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 12.12.2011, accessed 06.04. 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/iran-renews-threat-to-attack-turkey.aspx?pageID=238&nID=8923&NewsCatID=352>

²³¹ For example, Iran's religious leader Ali Khamenei's military adviser Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi criticized Turkey's policies in the region as well as its attitude against Iran and claimed that Turkish approach served the US interests, thus he harshly asked Ankara to change its policies. Safavi said "if Turkey (Turkish government) does not abandon this political behavior, Turkish people would reconsider its ties with Syria, Iran and Iraq." Iran Air-Space Forces Commander Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh went on even further saying that "in case of any threat, Iran would not hesitate to attack NATO's missile shield facilities in Turkey." "İran-Türkiye ilişkileri neden bozuldu?" **Radikal**, 13.03.2012, accessed 06.04. 2013, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=1081604>

²³² See: Abdulkadir Selvi, "Reyhanlı'da espionaj savaşı"(War of espionage in Reyhanlı), **YeniŞafak**, 16.05.2013, accessed 06.04. 2013, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/AbdulkadirSelvi/reyhanlida-espionaj-savasi/37718>. Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, "İran'dan Kandil'e 'çekilmeyin' baskısı"(Pressure from Iran on Kandil 'do not withdraw'," **Milliyet**, 29.04.2013, accessed 06.04. 2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/iran-dan-kandil-e-cekilmeyin-baskisi/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/29.04.2013/1699964/default.htm>

²³³ "İran PJAK'la anlaştı," **Sabah**, 10.10.2012, accessed 06.04. 2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2012/10/10/iran-pjakla-anlasti>. "Iran strikes deal with terrorist PJAK against Turkey," **Today's Zaman**, 10.10.2012, accessed 09.04. 2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-294922-iran-strikes-deal-with-terrorist-pjak-against-turkey.html>. "PJAK sorumlusu: İran'da PKK'nın resmi evleri var," **Türkiye**, 22.11.2012, accessed 09.04. 2013, <http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/haberdetay.aspx?newsid=27993>

disregard the material factors such as balance of power. Yet it argues that the ideational meaning attached to the material factors by actors are more determining on their behaviors. In this context, even if Iran and Turkey regarded each other as rivals until 2011, Erdoğan leadership's zero-problems policy and the chaotic situation in Iraq in the post US operation in 2003 paved the way for the development of bilateral relations. However, The Syrian civil war has brought about the rising role of identities. Thus, although Ankara and Tehran have sustained their economic relations, the role of their identities has gained a certain weight in their perception about each other. Consequently, Turkey and Iran positioned themselves in different camps.²³⁴ With its Muslim conservative-democrat identity, Erdoğan leadership aimed to see Muslim-democrat regimes in the Middle East which are able to reconcile democratic western values (such as respect for human rights, respect for people's will and secularism) with the values of Islam. Thus, the Erdoğan leadership defined its attitude in favor of democratic demands of the Syrians and sided with the Syrian opposition.²³⁵ On the other hand, with its strong Shiite identity, Tehran provided unconditional support to the Assad regime with a view to preserving the "Shia crescent" extending to Israel.²³⁶

Whilst the developments in the process of the Arab Spring have undermined Turkey's zero problems policy, they gave rise to the escalation of Turkish-Iranian competition in the region. The increasing rivalry between Turkey and Iran because of its unconditional support for the Syrian regime as well as its rising influence in Iraq and Lebanon led the Turkish government to regard Iran as the leader of an emerging de facto Shia front seeking to curb Turkish influence in the Middle East and thereby pushed Ankara towards its traditional security allies.²³⁷ Therefore, one might conclude that although the Turkish government set the goal of "zero-problem with neighbors," the events taking place out of its control forced the Erdoğan leadership to redefine its policies in the region in accordance with its identity definition. Considering that the massacres in Syria are compatible neither with Islam nor with the norms of human rights, the government has felt the need to push the zero problems policy to a secondary position and has tried to adopt a "moral" approach. At this point, Ankara has embarked on a political competition with the biggest supporter of Syria, namely with Iran.

²³⁴ Serdar Erdurmaz, "Türkiye İnan İlişkilerinde Bařlayan Yeni Dönem,"[A new era in Turkey- Iran relations] Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Stratejik Analizler Merkezi (TÜRKSAM), 25.01.2012, accessed 10.04.2013, <http://www.turksam.org/tr/a2585.html>

²³⁵ Despite its efforts to develop cooperation with Iran within the framework of 'zero problems and maximum cooperation with neighbors policy, Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan uttered the disappointment that AK Party government experienced owing to Iran's stance on the Syria issue with these words: "It is impossible to understand their support for the Syrian regime. When we analyze codes followed by the Iranian regime and the Iranian revolution, we see that it is an Islamic republic. Yet, we are shocked to see how they support that regime [of Syria] which massacres civilians including women and children every day. This is a great disappointment because we lent much support to Iran in the past. We even acted as their lawyer in the world. We defended Iran in the United Nations, the EU and the US. Why? It is our neighbor." Interview by the Aksam daily, "Iran büyük bir hayal kırıklığı," 01.06.2013, <http://www.aksam.com.tr/ekonomi/iran-buyuk-bir-hayal-kirikligi/haber-211546>. "Deputy PM says Iran stance on Syria 'great disappointment' for Turkey," Today's Zaman, 01.06.2013, accessed 10.04. 2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-317126-deputy-pm-says-iran-stance-on-syria-great-disappointment-for-turkey.html>

²³⁶ Actually, along with other elements of support, the admission of the Iranian foreign minister Salehi that some of the "Iranian pilgrims" captured by the opposition groups in Syria in August 2012 were the retired revolutionary guards revealed the level of the Iranian backing for the Syrian regime. "Iran says retired Guards among hostages held in Syria," **BBC News**, 08.08.2012, accessed 10.04.2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19176528>

²³⁷ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations," 12-13.

5.6.4. Iran's nuclear efforts and indirectly straining Turkey-U.S. relations

Despite Turkey's rising cooperation with Iran in economy and energy fields in particular, the West and Iran's dispute over Tehran's nuclear program left Ankara in the lurch. Iran's ambitious nuclear program and the fear of European countries, Israel and the United States in particular that Tehran enriches uranium with the intention of acquiring nuclear weapons complicated Erdoğan leadership's goals to develop economic interdependence based on good neighborhood relationship in its region; thereby to create a security, peace and stability environment. Even though Turkey and the US have rhetorically had similar goals about Iran's nuclear program in terms of general objectives, -i.e. in principle, Iran can have a nuclear program for peaceful aims, but must not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons- they differed on the methods and means to reach this goal. Whereas the US tended to use coercive methods especially during the Bush era, Turkey has advocated the use of soft-power, persuasive methods such as diplomacy and dialogue²³⁸ and desires by no means a military conflict in the region. Therefore, Ankara sought to spearhead the mediation efforts for the solution of the problem and this indirectly led troubles in the relations with the U.S.²³⁹

By contrast with the relatively tougher stance of the U.S. and Israel, one might claim that Turkey acts somewhat unconcerned about Iran's nuclear program. This relatively unconcerned stance of the AK Party government is explained by some scholars with Turkey's Cold War experience which had to live side by side with the Soviet Union, another super power of that time, for longer than fifty years. Accordingly, the NATO, which protected Turkey during the Cold War against a nuclear power, could do this again. Moreover, it is considered that in view of Ankara's rising cooperation areas with Tehran, there would be no reason for Iran to attack Turkey. After all, Turkey and Iran have not gone to war with each other since the 18th century. However, Ankara would most likely only be at risk if there were an American and Israeli confrontation with Iran.²⁴⁰ Therefore, Turkey has been advocating the diplomatic solution of the problem and aims to stay away from both economic and security damages of an armed conflict that Turkey and its region would face, if the dispute ends up with a war. Given this approach of the AK Party government, "it would be highly unlikely for Turkey to allow its bases or its airspace to be used for an air strike against Iran's nuclear facilities."²⁴¹ Additionally, with its emphasis of the diplomatic channels for the solution of the

²³⁸ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 65.

²³⁹ It is a widely known fact that Iran has been conducting a nuclear program which has been objected and sought to be precluded by the U.S. and Israel. In retrospect, the Western capitals were alarmed when the Mujahedeen e-Khalg, a militant Iranian opposition group, revealed that the government was covertly pursuing nuclear enrichment activities at two nuclear facilities in Natanz and Erak. "The reformist government of Mohammad Khatami agreed to temporarily suspend enrichment and participate in negotiations with the European "troika" of Britain, Germany, and France, but with neo-conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad winning the Presidency in 2005, this conciliatory approach was abandoned and hopes for a diplomatic solution to the problem appeared dim. Ahmadinejad quickly announced that uranium enrichment would resume, and the International Atomic Energy Agency referred the case to the United Nations Security Council. In December 2006, March 2007, and March 2008, the Security Council passed sanctions on Iran that imposed bans on Iran's trade in sensitive nuclear materials and technology and the sale of "dual-use" items, prevented deals with certain Iranian banks, and placed asset restrictions and travel bans on Iranian individuals said to be involved in nuclear work. In addition, the European Union agreed to freeze overseas assets of Bank Melli, Iran's largest state-owned bank in June 2008. Simultaneously, the permanent Security Council members and Germany (P5 + 1) presented a package to Iran that offered technological and economic incentives on condition that Tehran suspend enrichment activities. President Ahmadinejad rejected the offer, stating that demands for Iran to halt nuclear activity were "illegitimate." McCrudy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," 100.

²⁴⁰ Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,'" 154-155.

²⁴¹ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 37.

problem, Turkey's approach seems in parallel with the "constructive engagement policy" of the European Union.²⁴²

On the other hand, Turkey's objection to a military strike should not be interpreted that it welcomes the Idea of Iran obtaining nuclear weapons. Governmental officials repeatedly announced that they were not against Iran's nuclear activities exclusively for peaceful purposes. Yet this does not mean a blindly support for Iran's nuclear program. Turkey by no means desires the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region.²⁴³ In addition, while Turkey objects to Iran's procurement of nuclear weapon, it has also brought a principled approach to the issue. Accordingly, the whole Middle East region should be purified from nuclear weapons. No doubt, this call points out that no single actor, including Israel, should possess nuclear weapons in the region.²⁴⁴ On the other hand, in the face of emerging missile threats in the region, Turkey has been exploring the possibility of acquiring its own anti-missile defense system. In this respect, while increasingly investing in its own defense industry, Ankara seeks to purchase anti-missile defense system from foreign suppliers, such as U.S. and Russia.²⁴⁵

5.6.4.1. Tehran declaration on nuclear fuel swap

While it has advocated the solution of the question through peaceful methods, given its good level of relations with both the U.S. and Iran, Turkey embarked on playing the role of mediator. However, its mediation efforts between Iran and the West and the subsequent incidents caused serious troubles in terms of Ankara-Washington relations. In this context for example, "Turkey made a considerable contribution to the holding of the meeting between the P5+1 and Iran in Geneva on October 1. In this process, an agreement was reached on Turkey's mediation as to the swapping of enriched uranium between the Vienna Group and Iran" in 2009.²⁴⁶ According to the agreement, Iran was supposed to stop its nuclear program, more precisely, its uranium enrichment program. Yet there was a disagreement as to how to make this swap. The P5+1 group demanded that the swap should have been realized by means of Russia or France in a manner that all of the enriched uranium that Iran possessed should have been included. But neither the amount of the uranium nor the arbitrators were accepted

²⁴² "According to (then) Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan, rather than imposing sanctions and isolating Iran, Turkey prefers dialogue and diplomacy. Babacan repeated in July 2008 after a meeting with Iran's chief negotiator Saeed Jalili that Turkey has supported diplomacy to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue. Karacasulu and Karakır, "Iran-Turkey Relations in the 2000s: Pragmatic Reapproachment," 115.

²⁴³ In this regard, "Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan said, 'the continuation of Iran's nuclear program for peaceful ends is a natural right, but it is impossible to support it if it concerns [the development] of weapons of mass destruction.' In addition, President Abdullah Gül said, 'We don't want to see weapons of mass destruction in this region.' Similar to Erdoğan he told that Iran had a right to develop nuclear energy but not nuclear weapons. Moreover, Foreign Minister Babacan said, 'We believe every sovereign country has the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful aims and to have that technology,' though Turkey is against nuclear proliferation in the region." N. Karacasulu, İ. A. Karakır, "Iran-Turkey Relations in the 2000s: Pragmatic Reapproachment, p.115. Turkey's reservations on Iran to acquire nuclear weapons were summarized by then Turkish Ambassador to Washington, Nabi Şensoy with these words: "clandestine nuclear programs are a threat to Turkey as well as to the U.S. Ankara already takes Iran seriously as a regional actor, and a nuclear Iran would acquire far greater strategic weight in its relations with Turkey, perhaps resorting to diplomatic bullying if need be. Moreover, the emergence of a nuclear Iran could instigate an arms race and destabilize an already volatile region. McCrudy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," 101. Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 36.

²⁴⁴ "Turkish PM wants whole Middle East purified from nuclear weapons," **Today's Zaman**, 09.03.2010, accessed 16.04.2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=203812.

²⁴⁵ McCrudy, "Turkish-Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract," 102.

²⁴⁶ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 66.

by the Tehran administration. Consequently, due to the problems in the implementation of the swap, the Geneva agreement could not be put into practice. In order to break this deadlock, Turkey stepped in to persuade Iran to sign the nuclear fuel swap deal.²⁴⁷

Along with AK Party's proactive foreign policy paradigm, other actors' urges played also a significant role on Turkey's eagerness to play a mediator role and take an initiative to this end.²⁴⁸ President Obama for example requested Muhammad El Baradei, then Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), then Brazilian President Lula da Silva and Turkish PM Erdoğan to make contribution to the process between Iran and P5+1.²⁴⁹ It was reflected to the media organs that President Obama wrote a letter to Lula and Erdoğan with a view that they demonstrate effort for the swap deal with Tehran.²⁵⁰ Similarly, both el Baradei's and Obama's demands from Turkey to persuade Iran for the swap deal reflected also to the explanations of Turkish foreign minister Davutoğlu.²⁵¹ Additionally, Washington's rising pressure on Ankara to support the sanctions against Iran was another motivation for Turkey's intensification of its efforts to solve the problem through diplomatic channels.²⁵²

The main agenda of all talks in the Nuclear Security Summit held 11-13 April 2010 in New York was the efforts of Turkey and Brazil to convince Iran for the swap deal. Immediately after the summit, Turkey and Brazil launched intensive talks with Iran. Following this intense diplomatic traffic, nuclear fuel swap agreement was eventually signed by Turkish, Brazilian and Iranian foreign ministers on May 17, 2010 in Tehran. The swap agreement, which was signed after a tri-partite summit by Turkish PM Erdoğan, Brazilian President Lula Da Silva and Iranian President Ahmedinejad, stipulated the shipping of 1,200kg of low-enriched (3,5%) uranium to Turkey and eventual transfer of this uranium to the Western countries. In return, 120kg more highly enriched uranium (20%) was expected to be delivered to Iran by the P5+1 for a research reactor.²⁵³

The swap deal was essentially regulating the compromise reached at the Geneva meeting. However, this agreement interestingly could not get the support of the U.S. administration. Even before the ink of the agreement dried, the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Israeli officials announced that the deal was not enough to bring the solution, thus it was unacceptable as the Iranian administration did not pledge to completely shut down its nuclear reactors and dissolve its nuclear program.²⁵⁴ Clinton made it clear in a statement one day after the signing of the treaty of swap that the agreement would not be able to hinder a comprehensive embargo decision of the UN Security Council against Iran. She declared also that the U.S. was in agreement with its partners in the Security Council on a package of strong

²⁴⁷ Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 282.

²⁴⁸ Aylin Gürzel, "Turkey's Role in Defusing the Iranian Nuclear Issue," *The Washington Quarterly*, (Summer 2012), 145-147.

²⁴⁹ Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 282-283.

²⁵⁰ "Tahran anlaşması Obama mektubundan farklı değil," *Star*, 16.06.2010, accessed 20.04.2013, <http://www.habertakip.com/component/habertakip/news/2604589-tahran-anlasmasi-obama-mektubundan-farkli-degil.html>. "Batı spekülasyonu artık bırakmalı," *Zaman*, 19.05.2010, accessed 20.04.2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?haberno=985591&keyfield=

²⁵¹ The press conference text of Foreign Minister Davutoğlu on the nuclear deal concluded with Iran as well as on the current foreign policy developments, 18.05.2010, accessed 20.04.2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/bakan-davutoglu-nun-iran-ile-varilan-nukleer-uzlasi-ile-guncel-dis-politika-gelistmeleri-hakkinda-basin-toplantisi-metni.tr.mfa>

²⁵² İnat and Telci, "Türkiye'nin İran, İsrail/Filistin ve Suriye Politikası," 72.

²⁵³ For the full text of the joint declaration by Iran, Turkey and Brazil see: "Iran signs nuclear fuel-swap deal with Turkey" 17.05.2010, accessed 20.04.2013, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8685846.stm>.

²⁵⁴ Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 285-286.

new sanctions to impose on Iran over its suspect nuclear program.²⁵⁵ Subsequently, a draft resolution prepared by the US to impose an embargo on Iran submitted to the UN Security Council and was approved there. The voting in the 15-member council was 12 in favor of the U.S.-drafted resolution, with Lebanon abstaining and Brazil and Turkey voting against.²⁵⁶ Even though Turkey and Brazil's 'no' votes could not change the result, it caused discontent in Washington. According to press reports, President Obama had requested PM Erdoğan at least to remain abstaining.²⁵⁷

Different views of Turkey and the U.S. in the UNSC vote triggered a new tension. It was claimed that the Obama administration realized that it could not trust the AK Party government on strategic and national security issues which implied a confidence crisis between the two allies.²⁵⁸ On the other hand, Turkey maintained to underscore that the whole Middle East region should have been purified from nuclear weapons. Considering in this context that Iran's nuclear problem entered into the path of solution, PM Erdoğan announced that the attentions should have been focused then on the Israel problem. Erdoğan also criticized the international community which has been strongly reacting to the possibility of Iran obtaining nuclear weapons, yet remains indifferent to Israel's nuclear weapons.²⁵⁹

In fact, Turkey's 'no' vote in the Security Council despite the US urges might be assessed in the context of respecting a text for which Ankara demonstrated a great effort. Otherwise, ignoring the swap agreement and voting for the sanctions even before the ink of the deal dried would be able to put Turkey to an unreliable position in the international arena (even to a position of a US agent in the region) which might have also undermined Turkey's "play maker" and "mediator" roles that it has been trying to play in its region.²⁶⁰ Furthermore, in spite of the calls from the Western actors urging Turkey to contribute to the solution of the problem, disregard of the swap deal by these actors disappointed Turkish officials deeply.²⁶¹ One might also come up with the idea that PM Erdoğan believed the swap agreement and trusted Iran. As mentioned before, defending the people and institutions at any price that he

²⁵⁵ "Clinton says deal reached on new Iran sanctions," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 18.05.2010, accessed 20.04.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/clinton-says-deal-reached-on-new-iran-sanctions.aspx?pageID=438&n=clinton-says-deal-reached-on-new-iran-sanctions-2010-05-18>.

²⁵⁶ "UN Security Council approves a new wave of sanctions against Iran," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 09.06.2010, accessed 23.04.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/un-security-council-approves-a-new-wave-of-sanctions-against-iran.aspx?pageID=438&n=un-security-council-approves-a-new-wave-of-sanctions-against-iran-2010-06-09>.

²⁵⁷ Cengiz Çandar, "Türkiye'nin hesaplı 'Hayır'ı," **Hürriyet**, 11.06.2010, accessed 23.04.2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/14991037.asp>.

²⁵⁸ Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 287.

²⁵⁹ İnat and Telci, "Türkiye'nin İran, İsrail/Filistin ve Suriye Politikası," 83.

²⁶⁰ With respect to the Swap Deal, Foreign Minister Davutoğlu said that concerning the deal, Turkey's reputation was in question; thereby he underlined how important the agreement for Ankara was. "İran'a yaptırım etik bulmuyorum," **Sabah**, 19.05.2010, accessed 28.04.2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/YorumOku/cabfle52-353a-46ff-9ba6-663a4216ecc8/1>. In another statement, pertaining to Turkey's "no" vote against the draft bill in the UN Security Council which stipulated sanctions against Iran, Davutoğlu said that "we stood next to Tehran deal, not to Iran (...). Moreover, this decision was a requirement of our respect for ourselves." Cengiz Çandar, "Türkiye'nin hesaplı 'Hayır'ı" (Turkey's calculated 'No'), **Hürriyet**, 11.06.2010, accessed 28.04.2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/14991037.asp>.

²⁶¹ In his seventh and final session, together with the Foreign Ministers of Iran and Brazil, Foreign Minister Davutoğlu worked at it for 18 hours before reaching the Tehran Deal. "Turkey's Rules," **The New York Times**, 20.01.2011, accessed 28.04.2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/23/magazine/23davutoglu-t.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>.

really trusted is one of Erdoğan's personal qualities. Therefore, one might conclude that Turkey's 'no' vote was also a requirement of Erdoğan leadership's personal character.²⁶²

Consequently, on the Iran issue, instead of acting blindly with the U.S., Turkey gave its own policy a higher priority and acted independently. Thereby it once again indicated that the hierarchical relationship of the Cold War era between Ankara and Washington would not be sustainable any longer and that the relationship between the two long-standing allies should have been conducted on the basis of equality.²⁶³ Additionally, Erdoğan leadership highlighted its mediator role and adopted a policy line accordingly. For the sake of being consistent and of preventing any doubt about its role, it voted against the sanctions on Iran, the US insistence to the contrary notwithstanding.

On the other hand, the U.S. reaction to Ankara's 'no' vote in the UN Security Council was not as heavy and long-lasting as some expected.²⁶⁴ As it was mentioned above, Turkish-American relations entered into a new positive path owing to the factors such as the uprisings in Syria, Iran's sectarian policy line and its anti-Turkey activities in this respect. This process in which Turkey and the United States have closely cooperated in the initial years of the so called "Arab spring" and Ankara gave its consent to the radars of NATO missile shield was qualified by some political analysts as another "golden age" of Turkish-U.S. relations.²⁶⁵

5.7. The Syrian dimension of Turkish-US relations

Turkish-Syrian relations have been problematic for decades. Cold War rivalry, legacy of the Ottoman past and the stereotypical images of each other were the basic sources of this troubled relationship. The questions of water (i.e. the waters of the Euphrates which originates in eastern Turkey and flow through Syria and Iraq to join the Tigris in the Shatt al-Arab, which empties into the Persian Gulf) and territory (Syria's claims on Hatay/Alexandretta located in southern Turkey) were further points of tension in bilateral relations of the two neighbors.²⁶⁶ Once the Damascus administration began to use terrorism as a diplomatic leverage against Turkey as of 1980s, terrorism was added to the list of problems between the two countries. Syria allowed the terrorist PKK to use its soil, harbored its leader Öcalan and supported also the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA which targeted especially Turkish diplomatic representatives. In order to solve the problems with Damascus and get rid of the terrorism handicap, then Prime Minister Turgut Özal paid a visit in July 1987 to Syria, signed a protocol with the Damascus regime and pledged to give 500m3 water per second to Syria. During this visit, the PKK terror was also on the table and Özal was able to get some support

²⁶² Again, in connection with Turkey's "no" vote in UN Security Council, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan said in the Turkish-Arab Cooperation Forum held in Istanbul that "If we had not said "no," we would have denied ourselves, we would have denied our signatures, this would have been a dishonorable act. We could not have accepted this dishonor. We do not want to be a part of such a mistake. Because, the history would not forgive us. Nor would forgive the next generations. This is why we said that we had to demonstrate a vertebrate stance and took this step." "Hayır' demesek, kendimizi inkâr ederdik," **Zaman**, 10.06.2010, accessed 28.04.2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?haberno=993909.

²⁶³ See Yılmaz, "Stratejik Ortaklıktan Model Ortaklığa: Türkiye'nin Bağımsız Dış Politikasının Etkileri."

²⁶⁴ İnat and Telci, "Türkiye'nin İran, İsrail/Filistin ve Suriye Politikası," 93.

²⁶⁵ Ömer Taşpınar, "Türkiye-ABD ilişkileri 2012'de zorlandı," **Sabah**, 31.12.2012, accessed 02.05.2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Yazarlar/taspinar/2012/12/31/turkiyeabd-iliskileri-2012de-zorlandi>

²⁶⁶ Özlem Tür, "Turkish-Syrian Relations - Where are we going?" Unisci Discussion Papers, No:23, (May 2010), 164.

from Syrian policy makers which was also reflected in a security protocol signed at that time. "Several security protocols were signed over time, but Syria never fully granted support to Turkey in its war against the PKK and continuously denied the existence of the PKK members in Syrian and Lebanese territories."²⁶⁷

However, whenever Turkey hardened its policy to a large extent and put a military conflict into perspective, Ankara-Damascus relations came to a turning point.²⁶⁸ Turkey threatened in October 1998 to wage a war against Syria if it did not stop supporting the PKK. "Faced with Turkey's overwhelming military superiority, Syria backed down, expelling PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, closing PKK training camps on its soil as well as terminating the logistical support for the organization. The expulsion of Öcalan and the closing of the PKK camps opened the way for a gradual improvement in Turkey's relations with Syria, a trend that has gained increased momentum"²⁶⁹ when Turkey's candidacy for EU membership was declared in 1999.

The upwards trend in Turkey-Syria relations continued also during the AK Party government. Bilateral relations boomed in economy, security and political fields significantly and reached such a good point that Ankara-Damascus relations were described as the cornerstone of AK Party's zero problems policy with neighbors.²⁷⁰ Seeking to ensure security and stability by increasing interdependence in its region, Turkey improved its economic relations with Syria considerably. The two countries signed a free trade agreement in 2004. The foreign trade volume which has largely been in favor of Turkey reached over \$2.5 billion in 2010, whereas it had been \$729 million in 2000.²⁷¹ Even though this figure corresponds to a small proportion of Turkey's total foreign trade, it matters for two countries which nearly came to the brink of a war almost a decade ago.²⁷²

During the 2003 Iraq war, the Bush administration realized that it would not be able to get support from Damascus, thus it put pressure on Syria to force it to withdraw the Syrian troops from Lebanon and end its interferences into Lebanese domestic politics. To this end, the UN Security Council adopted under the leadership of the United States the resolution 1559 in September 2004 and called for Syria to withdraw from Lebanon. Despite the Bush government's efforts against Syria which was described in the "axis of evil" by the US President, Turkey demonstrated its reluctance to join the international pressure to be established on the Syrian regime through PM Erdoğan's visit to Damascus in December 2004.

²⁶⁷ Bülent Aras and Hasan Köni, "Turkish-Syrian Relations Revisited," Arab Studies Quarterly, Volume 24, Number 4, (Fall 2002), 54. Altunışık, "Turkey's Changing Middle East Policy," 151-152.

²⁶⁸ Tayyar Arı, "Geçmişten Günümüze Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu Politikasının Analizi ve İlişkileri Belirleyen Dinamikler (From Past to Present Analysis of Turkey's Middle East Policy and Dynamics Determining Relations)," in 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 21.Century), ed. İdris Bal, (Ankara: Lalezar Kitabevi, 2006), 724.

²⁶⁹ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 39.

²⁷⁰ In the press conference held following the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council First Cabinet Meeting held by Turkey and Syria in October 13, 2009 with the participation of relevant Ministers from both countries in Gaziantep and Aleppo, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed that he was hoping the spread of this understanding to the region which would ensure the economic integration of both countries and bring the peoples of both countries closer, and thereby foreign minister Davutoğlu showed Turkish-Syrian relations as an example to be emulated in the region. Veysel Ayhan, "Türkiye-Suriye İlişkilerinde Yeni Bir Dönem: Yüksek Düzeyli Stratejik İşbirliği Konseyi," [A new term in Turkish-Syrian relations: the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council], ORSAM, Ortadoğu Analiz, Cilt 1, Sayı 11, (Kasım 2009): 32.

²⁷¹ "Anti-Türk vergisi!" **Haber Türk**, 27.12.2011, accessed 02.05.2013, <http://ekonomi.haberturk.com/makro-ekonomi/haber/700746-anti-turk-vergisi>.

²⁷² Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,'" 152-153.

Moreover, beyond the Kurdish concern, due to the antagonist approach of the U.S. towards Damascus and the fact that they became neighbors after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Syria was more uncomfortable about its own fate within the US plans to reconfigure the Middle East.²⁷³ In the face of the rising US-led international pressure following the assassination of the Lebanese President Rafic Hariri in February 2005, whereas even traditional allies of Damascus such as Russia, France and Saudi Arabia did not side with the Syrian regime, Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer paid a visit to Syria and thereby indicated that Turkey would not join the international pressure against its southern neighbor.²⁷⁴ Furthermore, Turkey and Syria signed even a security cooperation agreement a few months after President Sezer's visit.²⁷⁵ In short, as in the case of Iran, Erdoğan leadership's preference for engagement has conflicted with the U.S. desire to isolate Damascus and Ankara has independently followed its own FP priorities. Eventually policies of Turkey and the United States diverged once again.²⁷⁶

While developing its ties with Syria in the context of zero-problems policy with neighbors, Ankara sought to make use of this close relationship to find a solution for the PKK terrorism as well. The Assad regime responded Ankara positively in this respect and cooperated with Turkey against the PKK until 2011 when the uprisings in Syria began. The two countries entered also into close military cooperation and conducted even joint military exercises in 2009 and 2010.²⁷⁷

On the other hand, Ankara-Damascus relations gained a new dimension when the High Level Strategic Cooperation Agreement signed on September 16, 2009. This agreement stipulated also mechanisms, such as the Turkey-Syria High Level Strategic Cooperation Council²⁷⁸ and concrete steps to help develop Turkish-Syrian relations in every sphere. In this framework, visa requirements were lifted for visits under 90 days for both countries' citizens. In addition, Turkey and Syria held even joint cabinet meetings.

This rapprochement with Syria brought about also the ignorance of the problems rooted in the past. Syria's claim for example to the province of Hatay (Alexandretta), which was annexed by Turkey in 1939, was effectively shelved.²⁷⁹ The long-standing Hatay dispute moved towards de facto resolution with Prime Minister Erdoğan's groundbreaking visit to Damascus in December 2004, when both sides publicly acknowledged that there were no

²⁷³ Tür, "Turkish-Syrian Relations - Where are we going?," 166.

²⁷⁴ Ayhan, "Türkiye-Suriye İlişkilerinde Yeni Bir Dönem," 27-31.

²⁷⁵ Tür, "Turkish-Syrian Relations - Where are we going?," 166.

²⁷⁶ F. Stephen Larrabee, "Turkey as a U.S. Security Partner," Rand Project Air Force, Santa Monica, (2008):14 accessed 10.05.2013, www.rand.org.

²⁷⁷ "Turkey and Syria conduct military drill, Israel disturbed," **Today's Zaman**, 28.04.2009, accessed 10.05.2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=173723.

"Türkiye-Suriye Sınır Birlikleri Tatbikatı yarın başlıyor," **Zaman**, 26.04.2010, accessed 10.05.2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?haberno=977426

²⁷⁸ The Strategic Cooperation Council contained mechanisms which would help the development of Ankara-Damascus relations in every field and stipulated concrete steps to this end. The Cooperation Council stipulated a co-chairmanship model at the level of prime ministers from Turkey and Syria and it was also stipulated that the Council of Ministers of the Cooperation Council would be composed of 16 ministers from both countries, including foreign ministers, energy, trade, defense, internal affairs, transportation and agriculture ministers. The Council of Ministers would gather twice in a year, areas of cooperation between the parties would be discussed and, if necessary, treaties, protocols and memoranda of understanding would be signed. The implementation of the action plans prepared in the Council of Ministers would be decided in the Cooperation Council meeting gathered at least once in a year under the co-chairmanship of Turkish and Syrian Prime Ministers. Ayhan, "Türkiye-Suriye İlişkilerinde Yeni Bir Dönem," 31-32.

²⁷⁹ Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,'" 153.

longer any border issues between them.”²⁸⁰ Eventually, subsequent to the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s visit to Turkey on 6-8 January 2004, Hatay issue became officially out of agenda in Turkish-Syrian relations when Assad put his signature on documents explicitly recognizing Turkey in its current borders, by implication accepting Hatay as a part of Turkey.²⁸¹ “Apparently the two sides made progress even in settling their long-running dispute over the division of waters of the Euphrates, which flows from Turkey into Syria, and from there into Iraq.”²⁸²

The so called "Arab spring" however became a turning point in terms of Ankara-Damascus relations.²⁸³ Demonstrations started in 2011 against the regime began gradually to evolve into conflict towards the midyear and hence an influx of Syrian refugees arose towards Turkish borders.²⁸⁴ In the face of the uprisings in Syria, the U.S. government called on Turkey to break relations with the Assad regime, but Ankara wanted to give the Syrian regime a chance to reform and remained determined on its own policies.²⁸⁵ While the AK Party government criticized the operations against the civilians, it called at the highest level on the Syrian leader, Assad, to undertake reforms and thereby to ensure the transition to democracy without bloodshed.²⁸⁶ Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's visit to Syria on August 9, 2011 and his three-hour meeting with President Assad as well as three and a half hour meeting with other Syrian officials was a milestone in terms of Turkey's calls for the Syrian regime to stop the bloodshed and take the demands of Syrian people into consideration.²⁸⁷ Despite few positive steps taken by Damascus after FM Davutoğlu's visit, the bloodshed did not cease and the regime maintained its operations against the opposition groups. Following the Houla massacre of the Assad forces on May 25, 2012, in which according to the UN, 108 people were killed, including 34 women and 49 children, Turkey made a declaration through the Web site of foreign ministry. In a move to protest this deadly Syrian attack in Houla town,

²⁸⁰ Graham E.Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey As A Pivotal State in The Muslim World*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, (2008): 94.

²⁸¹ Tür, "Turkish-Syrian Relations - Where are we going?,"168.

²⁸² Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,'" 153. Dams and irrigation projects carried out in South East Anatolia concerned Syria especially over the potential decrease of waters of Euphrates river. In the face of Iraq's and Syria's objections, Turkey pledged to give 500m3 per second to Syria and declared that it would not use water as a weapon against the neighboring countries, nevertheless Syria did not feel satisfied on this issue. Therefore, the Damascus regime used alternative methods, such as terrorism as a weapon against its northern neighbor, to put Ankara in trouble and indirectly prevent the materialization of big projects in southern Turkey. Arı, "Geçmişten Günümüze Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu Politikasının Analizi," 724-725.

²⁸³ Aslı Aydıntaşbas, "Turkey's New Policy on Syria," **The Washington Institute**, 04.10.2011, accessed 18.05.2013, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/turkeys-new-policy-on-syria>.

²⁸⁴ "Syrian town empties as government tanks mass outside," **The Guardian**, 07.06.2011, accessed 18.05.2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/07/government-tanks-mass-outside-syrian-town>.

²⁸⁵ "Lally Weymouth interviews Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan," **Washington Post**, 20.09.2012, accessed 18.05.2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/lally-weymouth-interviews-turkish-prime-minister-recep-tayyip-erdogan/2012/09/20/a837da66-01c7-11e2-b260-32f4a8db9b7e_story_3.html.

²⁸⁶ "‘We do not want to see another Hama massacre,’ says Turkish PM," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 02.05.2011, accessed 18.05.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/we-do-not-want-to-see-another-hama-massacre-says-turkish-pm.aspx?pageID=438&n=8220we-do-not-want-to-see-another-hama-massacre8221-turkey8217s-premier-says-2011-05-02>.

²⁸⁷"Assad under pressure," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 09.08.2011, accessed 19.05.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/assad-under-pressure.aspx?pageID=438&n=assad-under-pressure-2011-08-09>. "Davutoğlu: Suriye ile mutabık kaldığımız konular oldu," **Zaman**, 09.08.2011, accessed 20.05.2013, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/ana-sayfa/davutoglu-suriye-ile-mutabik-kaldigimiz-konular-oldu/1167410.html>

Turkey gave a diplomatic note to the Syrian authorities, demanded the diplomatic personnel to leave Turkey in 72 hours and suspended its diplomatic relations with Syria.²⁸⁸

In the coming period, the Syrian regime adopted also a hostile attitude against its northern neighbor. An unarmed Turkish jet was shut down by Syria on 22nd July 2012 which launched another crisis between the two countries and brought them nearly to the brink of a war.²⁸⁹ Even though Damascus announced at the outset that they did not know that F-4 Phantom belonged to Turkey and expressed sorrow about the issue, it did not apologize from Ankara.²⁹⁰ Furthermore, Syrian shells killed five Turkish civilians in Akçakale, a town on the Turkey-Syria border on October 3, 2012, which prompted military retaliation from Turkey and caused the death of 34 Syrian soldiers.²⁹¹

Other factors annoying Turkey with respect to the Syrian question have been the danger of sectarianism and Damascus' resumption of support to the PKK terrorism. As Aliriza and Aras noted:

"The cruelty and sectarianism of the Syrian regime has provoked a similar response from the insurgents and consequently made it inevitable that sectarian radicalism will be a major factor in the post-Assad equation in Syria and probably beyond. This is especially unwelcome for Ankara, which has endeavored to avoid a Sunni-Shia divide in the Middle East. It is also concerned with the possibility of a Kurdish autonomy in northern Syria as the conflict worsens, coupled with the resumption of Syrian support for the terrorist activities of the PKK inside Turkey."²⁹²

On the other hand, the refugee flow to Turkey continued and reached over one million in June 2014.²⁹³ Spending these refugees nearly \$ 3 billion, Turkey has been one of few countries sensing the Syrian question most closely.²⁹⁴ Therefore, Ankara has been ambitiously seeking to solve this problem. Trying to use also diplomatic channels, Erdoğan leadership has been supporting the opposition groups logistically and provide them food and medicine.²⁹⁵ Turkey's success however in solving the crisis remained limited as the Syrian crisis quickly escalated from a purely domestic conflict into an international crisis. Whilst Damascus

²⁸⁸ "Türkiye Suriyeli diplomatları geri gönderiyor," **BBC Türkçe**, 30.05.2012, accessed 22.05.2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2012/05/120530_syria_turkey.shtml. "Turkey Expels Syrian Diplomats over Houla Massacre," **Turkish Weekly**, 30.05.2012, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/136842/turkey-expels-syrian-diplomats-over-houla-massacre.html>

²⁸⁹ "Turkey confirms that Syria shot down warplane," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 23.06.2012, accessed 22.05.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-confirms-that-syria-shot-down-warplane.aspx?pageID=238&nID=23869&NewsCatID=338>

²⁹⁰ "Özür diemedik," **Sabah** 24.06.2012, accessed 22.05.2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2012/06/24/ozur-dilemedik>. "Suriye özür dilemedi Türkiye'yi suçladı," **Sabah**, 25.06.2012, accessed 22.05.2013, <http://www.haber7.com/dis-politika/haber/895465-suriye-ozur-dilemedi-turkiyeyi-sucaladi>.

²⁹¹ "Turkey border town quiet after Syria shelling," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 05.10.2012, accessed 22.05.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-border-town-quiet-after-syria-shelling.aspx?pageID=238&nID=31737&NewsCatID=352>.

²⁹² Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 10.

²⁹³ "Atalay: Suriyeli mülteci sayısı 1 milyon oldu," **Zaman**, 19.06.2014, accessed 24.05.2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_atalay-suriyeli-multeci-sayisi-1-milyon-oldu_2225478.html.

²⁹⁴ "Dünya Mülteciler Günü," **haberler.com**, 20.06.2014, accessed 22.06.2014, <http://www.haberler.com/dunya-multeciler-gunu-2-6175421-haberi/>.

²⁹⁵ "Lally Weymouth interviews Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan," **Washington Post**, 20.09.2012, accessed 22.05.2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/lally-weymouth-interviews-turkish-prime-minister-recep-tayyip-erdogan/2012/09/20/a837da66-01c7-11e2-b260-32f4a8db9b7e_story.html.

enjoyed the backing of Russia at the diplomatic level and Iran at the operational level, the opposition groups were supported by Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia as well as by the Friends of Syria group including the United States and a wider international consensus backed by the UN General Assembly.²⁹⁶ Consequently, given this international quality of the problem, Turkey's influence on the crisis remained limited.

In spite of all U.S.-Turkish cooperation on the Syria crisis noted above, it has not been effective enough from Ankara's perspective. "As the crisis has become protracted, the financial, human, and diplomatic costs of the conflict have mounted for Turkey. As Ankara has repeatedly made clear, dealing with the Syrian crisis alone is beyond its own capabilities. Turkey needs the United States to give more concrete support for it to be able to exercise its own regional influence to help end the conflict."²⁹⁷ However, Washington seems reluctant to spearhead the effort in Syria as part of the Obama administration's multilateral "leading from behind" approach.²⁹⁸ Moreover, it has been argued that "having fought with Islamist extremists for over a decade after the September 11 attacks, there has been a very real reluctance on the part of Washington to provide greater backing for the Syrian opposition due to the presence of what it considers to be potentially hostile radicals in its ranks. The paradox is that this approach has had the effect of forcing the opposition in its desperate struggle to look elsewhere not only for arms, but also for additional volunteers from the extremist fringe. At the same time and even more importantly, it has led Ankara to question the scope and depth of U.S.-Turkish cooperation, which has seen its limitations exposed in the face of a challenge to the entire Arab Spring process."²⁹⁹ In addition, despite Obama's victory, Turkey's expectations for more intensive U.S. backing following the November 6, 2012 US presidential elections have still not been fully met.³⁰⁰

In short, the Syrian dimension of US-Turkey relations has been a significant theme in bilateral relations in the Erdoğan era. Despite the opposition of the United States, Turkish government eagerly developed the Ankara-Damascus relationship in many fields in accordance with Erdoğan leadership's identity and interest definitions until early 2011. In the pre-Arab spring period, Erdoğan leadership's zero-problem policy found reciprocity in Syria and relations soared so extensively that they became the flagship of Turkey's good neighborhood policy. However, the events in the Middle East started with the so called Arab Spring and spread to the Syria as well constituted virtually a breaking point in Turkey's stance towards the Middle East. From a constructivist point of view, as a result of the Arab spring, identity began to occupy a wider space in the foreign policy perception of the actors. At this point, with its Muslim and democrat credentials, the Erdoğan leadership preferred to see similar regimes in the Middle East which could reconcile Islamic and democrat western values. Thus it supported the democratic demands of the Arab peoples and sided with them

²⁹⁶ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 9.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 10.

²⁹⁸ Stating that Turkey would avoid unilateral actions, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan expressed the inadequacy of US support with these words: "So far, the United States has been part of the process through their statements but has not had any other contribution." "Lally Weymouth interviews Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan," *Washington Post*, 20.09.2012,

²⁹⁹ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 10.

³⁰⁰ Mustafa Karaalioglu, "Obama'nın seçimi Türkiye'nin yolu ve Esad'ın kaderi," *Star*, 09.11.2012, accessed 27.05.2013, <http://haber.stargazete.com/yazar/obamanin-secimi-turkiyenin-yolu-ve-esadin-kaderi/yazi-702917>. "Turkey presses Obama for help in Syria," *Deutsche Welle*, 08.11.2012, accessed 27.05.2013, <http://www.dw.de/turkey-presses-obama-for-help-in-syria/a-16367134>.

against the autocratic regimes in the neighboring countries.³⁰¹ Consequently, civil unrests in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria have brought Ankara and Washington closer, as they both initially shared fairly similar attitudes regarding the democratic demands of peoples owing to their common democratic credentials.

Nonetheless, American and Turkish policies towards the region have diverged to a certain degree in the ongoing process. Considering the Syrian instance, while Turkey has been sensing the negative impact of the conflicts in Syria very closely, the Erdoğan government has plunged into the Syrian question in favor of the opposition groups. Turkey has been providing logistical support for the Syrian opposition groups as well as pursues an active diplomacy, whereby it has been expecting the overthrow of Assad regime as soon as possible. Simultaneously, the AK Party government has been hoping the end of bloodshed in Syria and more concrete steps from the U.S. to this end as well as its leadership on the Syrian question. However Obama administration has preferred the regime change to take place through its own dynamics instead of direct US intervention as in Iraq and Afghanistan. In other words, Obama prefers a method of "managing behind the scenes." Therefore, one might conclude that the unity of purpose but difference in the method is once again in question between Ankara and Washington just like in the case of Iran.³⁰² While Ankara has objected American hard-line approach towards Iran, Turkey's demands for a more active U.S. policy in Syria are ignored by Washington.

5.8. Israel-Palestine dimension of Turkish-US relations

As mentioned before, security was in the forefront during 1990s in TFP mainly because of the 'paranoia' that Turkey was surrounded by enemies. The problems caused by the PKK terror as well as the support supplied by neighboring countries to the PKK were further reasons for Turkey's security-oriented foreign policy. Therefore, Ankara was in search for allies in the region and with its 'secular' and 'democrat' identity, Israel was presenting a good potential for the Turkish policy makers. Furthermore, some other internal and external factors encouraged also Turkish-Israeli cooperation. In the face of rising Islamist and Kurdish movements, the civil and military bureaucracy increased its weight in Turkish politics, which has traditionally dedicated itself to the protection of "democratic" and secular nature of the country. Having also a voice in foreign policy issues in a manner which was incompatible with contemporary democracy practices, these civil and military bureaucratic elite considered that Turkey and Israel had common denominators in the fields of secularism and democracy as well, thus pursued a policy of collaboration with Tel Aviv. With other words, for the ruling Turkish elite who was extremely sensitive on the secular part of Turkish identity even on foreign political issues, Israel was presenting a good potential with its secular and democrat identity.

Additionally, one may claim that the American encouragements were also influential on booming Turkish-Israeli relations whose support was essential in terms of securitization of

³⁰¹ PM Erdoğan expressed his views about the future of the Assad regime in an interview with these words: "...sooner or later in Syria, if people take a different decision, that decision is going to be catered to such as in Egypt, such as in Tunisia, such as in Libya. People want to be free, and they are struggling to earn that freedom. One by one, dictatorial systems are burning down to the ground. Autocratic systems are getting eliminated once and for all to move toward democratic systems." Interview with PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan by Fareed Zakaria in CNN TV, 25.09.2011, accessed 28.05.2013, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/110925/fzgps.01.html>

³⁰² Interview with Bülent Alirıza by Vatan Daily, "İsrail'le tansiyon ilişkileri geriyor!" *Vatan*, 30.12.2012, accessed 28.05.2013, <http://haber.gazetevatan.com/israile-tansiyon-iliskileri-geriyor/503003/30/Haber>

TFP.³⁰³ Finally, the need to get the support of the Jewish lobby - whose backing depends on good relations between Turkey and Israel- in order to balance the influence of anti-Turkey Armenian and Greek lobbies in the United States motivated Turkish policy makers for closer relations with Israel. Turkey's links with Tel Aviv can thus be seen as heavily influenced by its relations with the USA.³⁰⁴ Consequently, Turkey-Israel relations reached an unprecedented good level particularly in the second half of 1990s.³⁰⁵ Several agreements were signed between the two countries which stipulated cooperation especially in military and intelligence fields.

At the end of 1990s, Turkey's security oriented foreign policy began to lose its influence and relations with Syria, Iran and Greece started to soften. It might be claimed that Turkey's EU membership candidacy, its increasing democratization process, expansion of civil politics, decreasing 'Islamism' danger as a result of the closure of Islamist parties such as Welfare and Virtue Parties as well as the diminishing terror danger after the capture of PKK leader, Abdullah Öcalan, played significant roles in this new term of TFP. Moreover, Israeli violence against the Palestinians increased in the wake of the Second Intifada which triggered a great deal of reaction among the Turkish public who has traditionally been sensitive about the fate of the Palestinians.³⁰⁶ This reaction of Turkish public opinion reflected also to the rhetoric of politicians and it narrowed the movement area of Turkish generals to direct the relations with Tel Aviv.³⁰⁷ AK Party's "zero problems with neighbors" policy and correspondingly acceleration of the de-securitization process in foreign policy as well as reforms undertaken in the context of EU membership process were further reasons which reduced the weight of military and civil bureaucracy in Turkish politics and expanded the space for civil politicians.³⁰⁸ Civil politicians on the other hand have not hesitated to criticize heavily the Israeli violence against Palestinians. PM Tayyip Erdoğan for instance accused Israel of practicing "state terrorism" after the assassination of HAMAS leader Ahmed Yasin and described Israeli military operations in Gaza in May 2004 as "state-sponsored terrorism," and these statements caused a great discomfort in Tel Aviv.³⁰⁹

As a leadership attaching special importance to Turkey's historical and cultural heritage and coming from a strong religious cultural background, Erdoğan leadership has always put special emphasis on the Palestine issue. This special interest was also closely related to the identity definition of Erdoğan leadership and the social circle that it was coming from. However, whereas the AK Party government harshly criticized the hard-line stance of the Israeli government at the rhetorical level, it refrained from retreating from the military agreements as well as from cooperation on intelligence sharing and from the steps which could interrupt the trade relations. Therefore, one might conclude that until the Mavi Marmara

³⁰³ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 13.

³⁰⁴ Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,'" 149.

³⁰⁵ Ali Balcı, "Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası ve İsrail: 1990'lar ve 2000'lere İlişkin Bir Karşılaştırma" (Turkish Foreign Policy and Israel: a Comparison of 1990s and 2000s), *Ortadoğu Etütleri*, Cilt 2, Sayı 4, (Ocak 2011), 120-126.

³⁰⁶ As Hale also puts it, "this sympathy is not purely based on religion, since the centre-left and secularist leaders in Turkey have, in their time, been as critical of Israeli actions as those of the conservative right." Hale, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 'New Era,'" 149. Moreover, several polls conducted in Turkey showed that "Palestine is among the few issues that the Turkish electorate forced politicians and policy makers to take positions on in foreign policy." Bülent Aras, "Turkey and the Palestinian Question," *Today's Zaman*, 19.01.2009, accessed 29.05.2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=164614.

³⁰⁷ Balcı, "Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası ve İsrail: 1990'lar ve 2000'lere İlişkin Bir Karşılaştırma," 127-128.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 128.

³⁰⁹ Bülent Aras, "Turkey and the Palestinian Question," *Today's Zaman*, 19.01.2009, accessed 30.05.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-164614-turkey-and-the-palestinian-question.html>

raid in 2010, “the shift in Turkish policy towards Israel has largely been one of tone and style rather than substance.”³¹⁰ Furthermore, the Erdoğan leadership sought to make use of its ties with Israel pragmatically within the framework of its mediation efforts in its region³¹¹ and tried to play a mediator role in the Arab-Israeli question. In this respect, Turkey made many mediation attempts between Syria and Israel in the course of 2005-2008.³¹²

“Despite Turkey’s facilitation of proximity talks between Israel and Syria, which was also supported by the US, Israel’s aggressive policy on Gaza undermined the Turkish-Israeli relationship.”³¹³ Israeli military launched an operation in Gaza only four days after the Israeli PM’s visit to Turkey to discuss the Syria-Israel peace on December 22, 2008.³¹⁴ This act of the Israeli government disappointed and irritated Turkish PM Erdoğan considerably.³¹⁵ Considering to be deceived by Israel,³¹⁶ he demonstrated a strong response to Israeli assault on Gaza and described Israeli actions as disrespect against Turkey, which was striving for peace in the region.³¹⁷ Under the influence of this disappointment, PM Erdoğan participated in Davos World Economic Forum in early 2009 and this forum witnessed an emotional reaction which could be rarely seen in diplomacy history. As the moderator allowed the Israeli President Peres to speak nearly twice as long as the other participants and did not give a chance for PM Erdoğan to respond to President Peres appropriately, PM Erdoğan reacted to the moderator sharply and stormed out of the forum where the Israel-Palestine question was discussed. While he stormed out, Erdoğan announced that Davos was over for him and he would not come back to Davos ever again.³¹⁸ Even though President Peres called PM Erdoğan and attempted to soften the climate after this incident which is publicly known as "one minute" crisis,³¹⁹ the impact of this event has been profound on Turkey-Israel relations. For instance, Israel was excluded from the Anatolian Eagle Exercise in October 2009 by means of canceling international participation which had been regularly held until then. The exclusion of Israel by Turkey from the exercise caused criticism from Washington.³²⁰

However, the impact of the deteriorating Turkish-Israeli relations on Washington-Ankara relations did not become as bad as it was expected. The heavy critics of the US media notwithstanding, the newly-elected Obama administration did not want the relations with its ally to be worsened in the context of its new foreign policy understanding which overlapped with Erdoğan leadership’s foreign policy principles in a number of points. Stated differently,

³¹⁰ Larrabee, “Troubled Partnership,” 43.

³¹¹ Aras, “Turkey and the Palestinian Question.”

³¹² Balcı, “Türkiye’nin Dış Politikası ve İsrail: 1990’lar ve 2000’lere İlişkin Bir Karşılaştırma,” 130.

³¹³ Kardaş, “Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s,” 43-44.

³¹⁴ “Olmert Turkey talks tackle Syria,” **BBC**, 23.12.2008, accessed 04.06.2013, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7796936.stm.

³¹⁵ “İsrail’den Erdoğan’a özür gibi yanıt,” **Hürriyet**, 30.12.2008, accessed 04.06.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=10672518&tarih=2008-12-30>.

³¹⁶ M. B. Altunışık, “Turkey’s Changing Middle East Policy,” 159

³¹⁷ “Türkiye ve dünyadan İsrail tepkisi,” **Hürriyet**, 27.12.2008, accessed 06.06.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=10655033&tarih=2008-12-27>.

³¹⁸ “Leaders of Turkey and Israel Clash at Davos Panel,” **The New York Times**, 29.01.2009, accessed 04.06.2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/30/world/europe/30clash.html?_r=0.

³¹⁹ “Peres: Türkiye ile çatışma istemiyoruz,” **Hürriyet**, 29.01.2009, accessed 07.06.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=10887548&tarih=2009-01-29>.

³²⁰ “US chide Turkey for excluding Israel from NATO drills,” **Hürriyet Daily News**, 14.10.2009, accessed 04.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/us-chides-turkey-for-excluding-israel-from-nato-drills.aspx?pageID=438&n=us-criticizes-turkey-for-canceling-nato-air-exercises-2009-10-14>.

“the Obama administration supported Turkey, simply because Turkey’s efforts were compatible with the US general strategy and interests.”³²¹

In fact, Turkey and the U.S. have had a partially overlapping approach on the Israel-Palestine question. During the Bush era, the United States was supporting the Roadmap for Peace Plan with the target of a two-state solution and this goal was maintained by the Obama administration as well. Delivering a major speech on the Middle East and North Africa, President Obama said:

"The United States believes that negotiations should result in two states, with permanent Palestinian borders with Israel, Jordan, and Egypt, and permanent Israeli borders with Palestine. We believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps, so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states..."³²²

So, advocating a two-state solution, the Obama administration and the Erdoğan leadership are in this regard principally in the same camp. However, as any tangible progress in the peace process was not materialized in the continuing period, the two parties began to take place in different camps.

Erdoğan leadership’s distinctive approach towards Hamas became a source of tension between Turkey and the U.S. just like between Ankara and Tel Aviv. Following Hamas’s victory in the Palestine Legislative Council elections, Ankara advocated recognition of Hamas as a legitimate political actor and hosted Hamas leader Khaled Mashal in February 2006. However, this visit was arranged without consulting Washington and Tel Aviv, and "it provoked strong irritation in both capitals because it directly undercut U.S. and Israeli efforts to isolate Hamas until it meets a series of specific conditions, including acceptance of Israel’s right to exist."³²³ This movement of the AK Party government was capitalized on by both neo-conservative groups and the pro-Israeli lobby to start a new debate on the alleged axis shift of TFP. Nonetheless, such discussions accusing Turkey of changing its major foreign policy direction from the West towards East did not alter AK Party's stance on the Palestine question, rather Turkey "started to vocally criticize Israel’s blockade over Gaza and the inhumane treatment of the Palestinians on international platforms."³²⁴ Turkish policy makers were justifying their policy with the argument that they were striving not to marginalize the Hamas and keep it in the game. Accordingly, “Hamas was in search of allies in the Middle East to put an end to the economic and political blockade it was facing from the international system. In such an environment, without Turkey’s intervention, the only possible entry for Hamas was the Iran-Syria-Hezbollah axis.”³²⁵ Therefore, instead of marginalizing Hamas, AK Party government advocated to bring it into the game.

The Mavi Marmara raid of summer 2010 brought Turkish-Israeli relations on the verge of collapse which had already been in trouble for a few years.³²⁶ Israeli commandos raided the Gaza flotilla in the international waters of the Mediterranean which consisted of six ships and included activists from 32 different countries. The flotilla was carrying

³²¹ Gözen, “Turkish-American Relations in 2009,” 69-71.

³²² Obama calls for Israel's return to pre-1967 borders," 20.05.2011, CNN, accessed 07.06.2013, <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/POLITICS/05/19/obama.israel.palestinians/index.html>

³²³ Larrabee, “Troubled Partnership,” 43.

³²⁴ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 43-44.

³²⁵ Aras, “Turkey and the Palestinian Question.”

³²⁶ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 43-44.

humanitarian and construction materials with the intention of breaking the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip. In the Israeli raid, eight Turkish nationals and one American national killed as well as many were wounded. This event has brought Turkish-Israeli relations to a point difficult to fix. In the wake of this attack, Turkey withdrew its ambassador to Israel, suspended joint military exercises, and barred Israeli military aircraft from Turkish airspace.³²⁷ Turkey declared that a rapprochement between Turkey and Israel depended on the meeting of three conditions; namely Israel's official apology, payment of compensation for the families of victims and lifting of the blockade imposed by Israel on Gaza. Simultaneously, Ankara has tried to isolate Israel in international platforms and sought to put pressure on it through diplomatic channels.

However, Turkey encountered the U.S. backing of Israel when it tried to take concrete steps against Tel Aviv.³²⁸ Actually, although the U.S. also did not entirely approve of the Israeli attack against the Mavi Marmara flotilla, it abstained from openly blaming Israel³²⁹ and opposed radical sanctions or decisions against it.³³⁰ This case was more clearly seen when the US sided against the demands of a UN investigation into the Mavi Marmara raid.³³¹ Washington has blocked the demands at the UNSC for an international inquiry into Israel's bloody assault on the Turkish ship. Furthermore, the United States "also blocked criticism of Israel for violating international law by assaulting a ship in international waters in a Security Council statement proposed by Turkey, the Palestinians and Arab nations. The US instead forced a broader statement that condemned "those acts which resulted in the loss" of life."³³² Again the U.S. was the sole country which voted against the report prepared by the U.N. fact-finding mission in September 2010 that accused Israeli commandos of executing six passengers on a Turkish aid flotilla in May 2010.³³³ Ultimately, unable to find the American support against the Israeli aggression in the Mavi Marmara affair, Turkish policy makers disappointed. On the other hand, the strong pro-Israel lobby in the US capital launched a campaign against Turkey in general and the AK Party government in particular.³³⁴

Even though a UN Inquiry panel (publicly known as Palmer Commission) set up by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon with the US initiative with a view to ending the tension between Ankara and Tel Aviv and normalizing their relations was initially welcomed by both Turkey and Israel,³³⁵ it caused later new tensions between them, let alone ensuring the

³²⁷ "Turkey expels Israeli diplomats after UN report," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 2.9.2011, accessed 10.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-expels-israeli-diplomats-after-un-report.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkey-slams-uns-mavi-marmara-report-announces-measures-against-israel-2011-09-02>

³²⁸ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 43-44.

³²⁹ "Obama'dan İlk Tepki," **Sabah**, 31 Mayıs 2010, accessed 10.06.2013, http://www.sabah.com.tr/Dunya/2010/05/31/obamadan_ilk_tepki

³³⁰ Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 288.

³³¹ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 43-44.

³³² "Israel should lead investigation into attack on Gaza flotilla, says US," **The Guardian**, 01.06.2010, accessed 10.06.2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/01/israel-investigation-attack-gaza-flotilla-us>

³³³ "U.N. panel endorses report accusing Israel of executions aboard aid flotilla," **Washington Post**, 30.09.2010, accessed 12.06.2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/29/AR2010092907110.html?wprss=rss_print/asection

³³⁴ N. Yılmaz, "Stratejik Ortaklıktan Model Ortaklığa: Türkiye'nin Bağımsız Dış Politikasının Etkileri," p.571

³³⁵ Semih İdiz, "İsrail'in kararı ne anlama geliyor?" **Milliyet**, 04.08.2010, accessed 12.06.2013, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/Yazar.aspx?aType=YazarDetay&ArticleID=1272048&AuthorID=76&b=Israilin%20karari%20ne%20anlama%20geliyor&a=Semih%20Idiz&KategoriID=4>. Soli Özel, "The Israel-Turkey crisis," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 04.09.2011, accessed 12.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/the-israel-turkey-crisis.aspx?pageID=438&n=the-israel-turkey-crisis-2011-09-04>.

desired improvement.³³⁶ Following the release of the Palmer Report, Israel declined the Turkish demands for compensation, apology and lifting the Gaza blockade, whereupon Turkish government decided to expel Israel's ambassador and senior Israeli diplomats and to suspend military agreements.³³⁷ In the face of this situation, the United States has called for restraint for both countries.³³⁸

Despite the strong encouragement of the US government to develop Turkish-Israeli ties since 1990s, gradually deteriorating Ankara-Tel Aviv relationship since early 2000s has negatively influenced Turkish-American relations as well. Recently, the U.S. has been trying to ease Turkish-Israeli tensions while continuing to maintain the closest possible cooperation with Turkey. "However, due to sustained U.S. backing of Israel and in contrast, because of Turkey's increasing advocacy of Palestinian rights," the troubles in Turkish-Israeli relations will continue to have grave repercussions on Ankara-Washington ties as well as to be one of the troublesome dimensions of bilateral relations.³³⁹

The most recent samples of this case have been seen during the Israeli bombing of Gaza in November 2012 and in the recognition process of Palestine as an "observer state" on 29 November 2012. Turkey harshly criticized Israel when it bombed Gaza on the ground of carrying out operation against Hamas and killed approximately 100 civilians including women and children.³⁴⁰ The United States on the other hand declared its support for Israel's "right to self-defense from rocket attacks" as many other western states did.³⁴¹ PM Erdoğan criticized the U.S. without openly naming Obama with these words: "They say Israel is using its right to self defense. Israel is the attacker, yet they say it defends itself. What kind of justice is this?"³⁴² Foreign Minister Davutoğlu expressed with a softer tone the wide divergence of opinion in this way: "Turkey cannot agree with the U.S. rhetoric over the deadly Gaza strikes but this does not signal a rift between Ankara and Washington."³⁴³

³³⁶ Deniz Üke Arıboğan, "Palmer Raporu'nun ardından," **Akşam**, 07.09.2011, accessed 20.06.2013, <http://www.aksam.com.tr/palmer-raporunun-ardindan-3677y.html>. "UN report leak spoils last-ditch effort to mend ties," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 02.09.2011, accessed 20.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/un-report-leak-spoils-last-ditch-effort-to-mend-ties.aspx?pageID=438&n=un-report-leak-spoils-last-ditch-effort-to-mend-ties-2011-09-02>.

³³⁷ "Turkey expels Israeli diplomats after UN report," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 2.9.2011, accessed 20.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-expels-israeli-diplomats-after-un-report.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkey-slams-uns-mavi-marmara-report-announces-measures-against-israel-2011-09-02>. "Turkey sends Israeli diplomats back home," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 04.09.2011, accessed 20.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-sends-israeli-diplomats-back-home.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkey-sends-israeli-diplomats-back-home-2011-09-04>.

³³⁸ "Turkey, Israel should keep diplomatic channels open: US envoy," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 09.09.2011, accessed 23.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-israel-should-keep-diplomatic-channels-open-us-envoy.aspx?pageID=438&n=0908153209852-2011-09-08>.

³³⁹ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review," 13.

³⁴⁰ "Turkish PM accuses Israel of ethnic cleansing," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 20.11.2012, accessed 23.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pm-accuses-israel-of-ethnic-cleansing.aspx?pageID=238&nid=35051>

³⁴¹ "Ferocious Israeli Assault on Gaza Kills a Leader of Hamas," **New York Times**, 14.11.2012, accessed 23.06.2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/world/middleeast/israeli-strike-in-gaza-kills-the-military-leader-of-hamas.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>. Ramazan Gözen, "The Israeli attack on Gaza," **Today's Zaman**, 25.11.2012, accessed 23.06.2013, http://todayzaman.com/news-299185-the-israeli-attack-on-gaza-by-ramazan-gozen*.html.

³⁴² "US official reluctantly rejects Turkish 'rhetorical attacks' on Israel," **Today's Zaman**, 20.11.2012, accessed 23.06.2013, http://www.todayzaman.com/mobile_detailn_action?newsId=298747.

³⁴³ "Turkey 'cannot agree' with US Gaza rhetoric," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 26.11.2012, accessed 23.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-cannot-agree-with-us-gaza-rhetoric.aspx?pageID=238&nid=35451>.

The second example was witnessed in Palestine's application for recognition as a state by the United Nations and during the subsequent process. Turkey supported Palestine in this regard strongly.³⁴⁴ FM Davutoğlu even addressed the UN General Assembly and sought to persuade other countries to vote "yes" for the recognition of Palestine as a state.³⁴⁵ By contrast with Turkey, the U.S. sided with Israel and advocated that recognition of Palestine as a state at that stage would be counterproductive and would not help solve the problem.³⁴⁶ In the voting held on November 29, 2012, 138 countries voted in favor of the resolution while along with the United States only 9 voted against. The resolution has elevated Palestine's status from "non-member observer entity" to "non-member observer state."³⁴⁷ PM Erdoğan criticized the US opposition openly: "You were the ones, who wanted a two-state solution. Now, why do you stand against Palestine as a state? I can't understand that." He also underscored Turkey's decisiveness to support Palestine until it gains the full membership to the UN as a state.³⁴⁸

To sum up, in view of Turkey's deep historical and cultural ties with Palestine and the value that the Erdoğan leadership attaches to them, it has always been interested in the Palestine question. That seems a reasonable choice for Erdoğan leadership who takes the bonds emerged during the four centuries-long Ottoman rule into account. However, though the AK Party government criticized Israel rhetorically on a number of occasions, it practically maintained its commercial, economic and political relations with Israel until 2010. As of May 2010 however, considering the stern policy of the Israelis against the Palestinians, Turkey took openly its place in the anti-Israel camp. A psychological quality of PM Erdoğan, namely his emotional personality played also a significant role in the relations with Tel Aviv. Firstly, despite the continuing negotiations between Israel and Syria mediated by Ankara, the Israeli attack against Palestine in 2008 caused a deep disappointment for PM Erdoğan. Considering that he was cheated by the Olmert administration, Turkish PM criticized Israel with severe words. Another emotional reaction of him against the "injustice" that he was subjected in the Davos forum of 2009 and his louder critiques against the Israeli governments further strained the relations. Eventually, the Mavi Marmara raid of 2010 led to a breaking point in the bilateral relations.

The U.S. on the other hand has tried to oversee a certain balance with respect to the relations with Turkey and Israel, particularly after Obama's inauguration. In spite of its traditional pro-Israeli stance, Washington has been careful not to burn the bridges with Turkey given its need to Turkey regarding the Syria, Iran and Iraq issues. Likewise, even though it criticized the US government now and then, Turkish government has not been eager to see a deep crisis with Washington and by maintaining close dialogue with the Americans, Ankara sought to ensure the U.S. support with regards the Palestine question. Nevertheless,

³⁴⁴ "PM harshly criticizes UN, Israel on human rights, **Hürriyet Daily News**, 23.09.2012, accessed 27.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/pm-harshly-criticizes-un-israel-on-human-rights.aspx?pageID=438&n=pm-harshly-criticizes-un-israel-on-human-rights-2011-09-23>.

³⁴⁵ "Albania refused to bow down to PM's pressure on Palestine vote: Report," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 2.12.2012, accessed 27.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/albania-refused-to-bow-down-to-pms-pressure-on-palestine-vote-report.aspx?pageID=238&nid=35915>.

³⁴⁶ "Clinton laments 'counterproductive' UN vote on Palestinians," **Reuters**, 29.11.2012, accessed 27.06.2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/29/palestinians-statehood-un-clinton-idUSL1E8MTGJO20121129>.

³⁴⁷ "U.N. approves Palestinian 'observer state' bid," **CNN**, 30.11.2012, accessed 27.06.2013, <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/11/29/world/meast/palestinian-united-nations/index.html>.

³⁴⁸ "Erdoğan: "We will not stop, until Palestine becomes a UN member," **TRT English**, 12.12.2012, accessed 27.06.2013, <http://www.trt-world.com/trtworld/en/newsDetail.aspx?HaberKodu=be4c965c-7487-4f2f-a6ae-09e09c286dd6>.

the Israel-Palestine question and pro-Israeli stance of the United States on critical issues will apparently continue to be another subject of tension between Turkey and the United States.³⁴⁹

5.9. “Arab Spring” and Turkish-U.S. relations

"Turkish model" has actually been put into words by various US presidents since the end of Cold War. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey was presented as a model to the newly independent republics of Central Asia as an attempt to counter the Iran's efforts to fill the power gap in the region. Its market economy, secular as well as democratic system was crucially important to present it as a model.³⁵⁰ For instance, President George H. W. Bush underscored the changing nature of the relationship in his visit to Turkey in July 1991. He highlighted that "Turkey's importance as an ally had developed beyond being purely the "bulwark of NATO's southern flank." Accordingly, Turkey served as a "model" to the newly independent Turkic states.³⁵¹ Embracing the role of being a "model", Ankara tried to play a "big brother" role for the newly independent Turkic states.³⁵²

The concurrence in this context continued also in the new millennium. With regards the Greater Middle East Project (GMEP), which allegedly aimed to transform the autocratic regimes into democratic ones in the Middle East, Turkey has been offered by Washington as a model this time to the Middle Eastern countries.³⁵³ Turkey volunteered again and even assumed the co-chairmanship of the project. However, underlining that every country has its own special dynamics and circumstances, Ankara has expressed its desire to be seen only as a source of inspiration to the Middle East and it still maintains the same argument.³⁵⁴

The actors of the democratization movements (the so-called "Arab Spring")³⁵⁵ arose in the Middle East in 2011 turned their attention to Turkey in view of its democracy experience, Islamist-leaning AK Party government in power and its strong steps towards democratization. As a matter of fact, Turkish model refuted the thesis that conservative Islamist values cannot be reconciled with democracy.³⁵⁶ Furthermore, the Erdoğan leadership has showed that "religious political movements in the Muslim World can take the lead in introducing greater social, political and economic freedom to their societies."³⁵⁷ Turkey's success in combining Islamic and Western values, and interest of the Middle Eastern societies in the Turkish experience led the Western countries to support more Turkish involvement in the Arab spring process.³⁵⁸

³⁴⁹ Interview with Bülent Aliriza by Vatan Daily, "İsrail'le tansiyon ilişkileri geriyor!" **Vatan**, 30.12.2012

³⁵⁰ Bülent Aras, "Turkish Policy toward Central Asia," SETA Policy Brief, No:12, (April 2008): 2.

³⁵¹ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 5.

³⁵² See the title in the previous chapter "Cooperation in the Central Asia"

³⁵³ Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey's 'Demonstrative Effect' and the Transformation of the Middle East, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.3, No.2, 2011, pp.33-55, p.34

³⁵⁴ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 9.

³⁵⁵ Arab Spring refers to the process of change and democratization started initially in Tunisia and spread with a domino effect to the entire Arab geography. Fuat Keyman, "Arap Baharı, Türkiye Modeli ve Avrupa Birliği" (Arab Spring, The Turkish Model and the European Union), *Analist*, USAK Yayınları, Sayı 6, Ağustos 2011, Ankara, s.42

³⁵⁶ Tuğçe Ersoy Öztürk, "Yeni Dönem Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri: Fırsatlar ve Riskler"[New Era in US-Turkey Relations: Opportunities and Risks], *TASAM*, Stratejik Rapor No:48, (2011): 34

³⁵⁷ E. J. Girdner, "The Greater Middle East Initiative: Regime Change, Neoliberalism and US Global Hegemony"p.57

³⁵⁸ Mustafa Kibaroğlu, "Arap Baharı ve Türkiye"[Arab Spring and Turkey], *Adam Akademi*, 2011/2, pp.26-36:p.32

AK Party government supported also the democratization movements in the Arab world and declared with the US backing that more freedom and democracy demands of Arab peoples must have been met.³⁵⁹ Having perceived the beginning of a new term in the Middle East, Turkey made a strong and early call in favor of the Arab peoples.³⁶⁰ In the early days of the Arab spring, while no strong voice rose even from the EU which was expected to be the most rigorous advocate of democracy,³⁶¹ Turkish PM Erdoğan made a strong call to the President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, in his address broadcasted live in several TV channels, including the Al-Jazeera, to meet his people's demands for change and hand over the administration.³⁶² Likewise, on the occasion of public revolts in Tunisia and Libya, PM Erdoğan stressed again the norms such as democracy and human rights and called the leaders of these countries to take into account the demands of their people.³⁶³ The AK Party government displayed a similar approach also in the process upon the victory of HAMAS in the Palestinian elections in January 2006. While the United States and the European Union halted financial assistance to the Hamas-led administration, the Turkish government criticized their attitude, hosted Hamas leaders several times in Ankara and declared that all the related parties should respect the result of democratically conducted elections.³⁶⁴

Actually, from Erdoğan leadership's point of view, it is understandable that it demonstrates effort to spread the values it advocates and supports the proliferation of regimes with similar qualities of its own, namely Muslim and democratic. More importantly however, the AK Part government envisages that it could establish closer relations with the regimes which take the demands of people more into consideration.³⁶⁵ In other words, Erdoğan leadership expects that the transformation of the autocratic regimes in the Middle East towards democratic ones would constitute an appropriate ground for the collective identity definitions in the region. With Wendt's conceptualization, a possible "homogeneity" of political regimes has been regarded useful for the construction of collective identities. Although this argument seems accurate considering the Tunisia and Libya cases, it has been severely criticized in terms of relations with Syria. Turkey's approach to the Arab spring led

³⁵⁹ Jack Shenker, "Turkey's PM rallies Arab World in Cairo with call for UN to recognise Palestine," **Guardian**, 13.09.2011, accessed 27.06.2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/13/turkey-rallies-arab-world>.

"Turkey tells Mubarak to listen the people," **Today's Zaman**, 01.02.2011, accessed 27.06.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-234138-turkish-pm-urges-mubarak-to-listen-to-egyptian-people.html>.

³⁶⁰ Veysel Ayhan, "Arap Baharının ABD-Türkiye İlişkilerine Etkisi"[Impact of the Arab Spring on U.S.-Turkey relations], ORSAM, Oratadoğu Analiz, Cilt 3, Sayı 36, (Aralık 2011): 19. "Turkish PM Erdoğan urges Mubarak to heed Egyptian outcry," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 01.02.2011, accessed 29.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=turkey-calls-on-mubarak-to-heed-calls-for-change-2011-02-01>

³⁶¹ As a matter of fact, Guy Verhofstadt, former Belgian Prime Minister and the leader of the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, pointed out that point and stated that during the revolts in Egypt, the most "European" reaction came from Turkish PM Erdoğan. "Erdoğan tüm Avrupa Birliği liderlerine iyi bir ders verdi"[Erdoğan gave a good lesson to the leaders of the European Union] 12.02.2011, **Zaman**, accessed 29.06.2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber_do?haberno=1092425

³⁶² "Turkish PM Erdoğan urges Mubarak to heed Egyptian outcry," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 02.01.2011, accessed 29.06.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=turkey-calls-on-mubarak-to-heed-calls-for-change-2011-02-01>

³⁶³ "Erdoğan, Libya'da insanlık şıkkı işaretlenmeli," **ntvmsnbc**, 26.02.2011, accessed 29.06.2013, <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25186698/>

³⁶⁴ Fikret Bila, "HAMAS'ın Ankara Ziyaretinin Hassas Yönleri," **Milliyet**, 17.02.2006. Bülent Aras, "Turkey and the Palestinian Question," **Today's Zaman**, 19.01.2009, accessed 29.06.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-164614-turkey-and-the-palestinian-question.html>.

³⁶⁵ Hasan Duran and Çağatay Özdemir, "Türk Dış Politikasına Yansımalarıyla Arap Baharı"[The Arab Spring with its reflections on Turkish foreign policy], *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi (Journal of Academic Inquiries)*, Volume 7, Number 2, (2012): 187-188.

to the collapse of Turkish-Syrian relations, which had been viewed as the cornerstone of AK Party's zero problems with neighbors policy, as well as brought about the comments that the "zero problems" turned into "zero neighbors" considering Turkey's recent relations with Syria, Iran and Iraq.³⁶⁶

When the Assad regime turned a deaf ear to the calls of Turkish government to reform, the ruling AK Party government left aside the "non-interference" principle, one of the most important foreign policy principles of the republican era, and took a clearly negative stance against the Syrian regime.³⁶⁷ It did not confine itself solely verbal backing and provided logistical support for the opposition groups and pursued an "open-door policy" in favor of Syrian refugees. It has carried hundreds of millions US dollars cost of them. Even though this policy of AK Party government has seemed contradictory with its "zero-problems policy with neighboring countries", it seems that there is certain logic in itself. As it was noted above, the Arab spring triggered the rise of identity politics in the region. As a Muslim-Democrat leadership, Erdoğan leadership aimed to see Muslim-democrat regimes in the Middle East which are able to reconcile democratic western values (such as respect for human rights, respect for people's will and secularism) with the values of Islam. Therefore, it supported the democratic demands of Arab peoples. This should be seen as a natural outcome of the Erdoğan leadership's identity which adopted the western values such as democracy, state of law and respect for human rights as an integral part of its identity as a result of long societal and transnational socialization processes.

Erdoğan leadership's attitude during the Arab spring has received also critiques especially with respect to the future of zero problems policy. In the face of critiques as to the fate of the zero problems policy, FM Ahmet Davutoğlu discusses a hierarchy of norms.³⁶⁸ Accordingly, the zero problems policy which aims to solve the problems and develop mutual cooperation with neighbors hierarchically comes after the norms such as human rights and justice. Moreover, a country which is respectful for human rights norms cannot ignore the human rights violations at its doorstep. These words of the FM underscore actually how Erdoğan leadership's identity has been determinant in its policy about the turmoil in the Arab countries.

³⁶⁶ Rim Arango, "Turkish Public Sours on Syrian Uprising," **the New York Times**, 18.09.2012, accessed 02.07.2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/19/world/europe/turks-weary-of-leaders-support-for-syria-uprising.html?pagewanted=1&ref=timarango>. Nazlı Ilıcak, "'Sıfır Komşu' politikası," **Sabah**, 05.10.2012, accessed 02.07.2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Yazarlar/ilicak/2012/10/05/sifir-komsu-politikasi>. "Türkiye sıfır sorun noktasından, sıfır komşu noktasına geldi," **Milliyet**, 24.07.2012, accessed 02.07.2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-turkiye-sifir-sorun-noktasindan-sifir-komsu-noktasina-geldi-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/24.07.2012/1571134/default.htm>.

³⁶⁷ Kibaroğlu, "Arap Baharı ve Türkiye," 32.

³⁶⁸ "Now, if you will not have any problem with Syria, then you will have problem with humanity. As we have come to such a point, as the Syrian regime goes on, all our efforts notwithstanding, committing crimes against humanity, we have had to make a choice. There is nothing more important than justice in terms of the hierarchy of norms. In this sense, there is no other country we experience statically crisis, except for Syria. Nor is there a relationship model that we face a trouble to work on. In this respect, the zero problems with neighbors principle has never been left. (T.b.A.)," Interview with FM Ahmet Davutoğlu by Ahmed Arpat, Yakın Plan Programı, NTV Channel, 12.11.2013, Ankara, accessed 02.12.2013, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-sayin-ahmet-davutoglu-ntv_de-yayinlanan-_yakın-plan_-programina-konuk-oldu_-12-kasim-2013_-ankara.tr.mfa. Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Zero Problems in a New Era, Realpolitik is no answer to the challenges posed by the Arab Spring," *Foreign Policy Magazine*, 21.03.2013, accessed 02.07.2013, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/03/21/zero_problems_in_a_new_era_turkey (access date 18.02.2014).

Considering the US approach to the Arab spring, as noted above, “President Barack Obama has sought, from the start of his presidency, a “new beginning” for America’s problematic relationship with the Muslim world. He has given unqualified support to those campaigning for change in the major Arab capitals, actively encouraging the overthrow of one of Washington’s longest-serving allies, Egypt’s President Hosni Mubarak, and backing the military campaign to overthrow Libya’s Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.”³⁶⁹ In this context, the overlapping interests have given rise to a new area of cooperation between Turkey and the United States. Moreover, Turkey’s political activism and its efficiency in its region as well as in the Arab spring process enhanced Turkey’s value to a higher level for the Obama administration.³⁷⁰ Consequently, the Arab spring paved the way for the revival of Turkish-US relations which had been fluctuated due to the Mavi Marmara incident and Iran’s efforts on nuclear technology in 2010. The rising “phone diplomacy” between President Obama and PM Erdoğan in 2011 indicated the re-improving relations between the two allies. As a matter of fact, after British PM Cameron, Obama held quantitatively the utmost telephone conversations with PM Erdoğan.³⁷¹

On the other hand, despite the American support for the change in the Middle East, a possible evolution of the regional countries from autocratic regimes towards more radical administrations initially worried Washington. In fact, materialization of this likelihood could put the USA in a difficult position in view its already negative image in the Middle East owing to its traditional pro-Israel policy with respect to the Israel-Palestine question and its backing the authoritarian regimes in the region. Even though one might claim that the US image underwent a positive change after Obama came to power in the United States,³⁷² it has highly been possible that the approaches of the new administrations could be against Washington in case the demands of local people are represented in the new governments.³⁷³ Furthermore, a prospective radicalization would isolate Tel Aviv more in the region.

Along with the U.S. and Israel, Turkey did not welcome a transition from autocratic regimes to radical administrations as well. Hence, the common goals of the United States and Turkey to facilitate the transition as smooth as possible away from dictatorship to democracy while countering the appeal of radicalism constituted another point of convergence.³⁷⁴ Turkish

³⁶⁹ Con Coughlin, “The Arab Spring turns sour for America,” **Telegraph**, 12.09.2012, accessed 03.07.2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/9538493/The-Arab-Spring-turns-sour-for-America.html>

³⁷⁰ Aliriza and Aras, “U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning,” 8.

³⁷¹ “Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan poses challenge for Obama,” **Los Angeles Times**, 10.10.2011, accessed 03.07.2013, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/10/world/la-fg-us-turkey-20111011>. “Erdoğan and Obama’s phone chats reveal Turkey’s ascent,” **Today’s Zaman**, 16.10.2011, accessed 03.07.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-259995-erdogan-and-obamas-phone-chats-reveal-turkeys-ascent.html>.

³⁷² “Despite repeated expressions of support by President Barack Obama for democratic change during the “Arab Spring,” most Arabs, according to the new poll, (Arab Public Opinion Survey” conducted by Shibley Telhami of the Brookings Institution in 2011) continue to believe that Washington’s policies in the Middle East are mainly driven by its desire to control oil and protect Israel from its Arab neighbors. Only 5% said they believed the US was driven by the desire to spread human rights or democracy.” Jim Lobe, “Turkey is ‘biggest winner’ of Arab Spring,” **Asia Times**, 23.11.2011, accessed 03.07.2013, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/MK23Ak01.html.

³⁷³ Stating that the United States demonstrated effort after the Cold War to prevent democracy in Egypt and in other Middle Eastern countries, American Professor John Mearsheimer said: “because, the answer of the Egyptian people had become clear as to the question of how its state should have acted towards Israel. This response would be clearly in favor of a hostile attitude towards Israel and the United States.” “İsrail lobisi Türk-Amerikan ilişkilerine zarar veremez,” **Radikal**, 04.10.2012, accessed 03.07.2013, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=1102758&CategoryID=81>.

³⁷⁴ Aliriza and Aras, “U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning,” 8.

PM Erdoğan's call for the new Egyptian government to adopt a secular government model in his visit to Egypt has constituted an outstanding example in terms of preventing radicalism in the region as well as promoting the spread of western values in the Middle East.³⁷⁵ Thereby, the Erdoğan leadership emphasized also the western side of its identity which has been improved through socialization processes.

Likewise, when the Egyptian army intervened in the Egyptian politics in the summer of 2013 and overthrew the Mohammed Morsi government, who had come to power through democratic elections, considering their own interests, many countries, including the United States and the European Union, did not qualify the military intervention as a "coup" and tried to exhibit a balanced approach.³⁷⁶ The Turkish government on the other hand clearly declared that the army's intervention was illegitimate and that the legitimate government has still been the Morsi administration which had taken over the power by democratic means. Turkish PM Erdoğan criticized also the West for not terming the army intervention a "military coup" and stated that this does not fit into the values of the West.³⁷⁷ Stated differently, the democratic norm which stipulates that the shift of government should certainly take place through democratic ways has been disregarded on the ground of "undemocratic" practices of the Muslim Brotherhood. Whereas the military intervention has been indirectly tolerated by the West, Erdoğan leadership has not regarded the undemocratic takeover of the government convenient to democratic norms. For this reason, it has sided on another camp with respect to the Egypt question contrary to the United States and the European Union.

All in all, the rising identity politics in the course of the so called Arab spring initially triggered the booming relations between Ankara and Washington. The norms such as democracy, respect for human rights and liberalism which constitute the common denominators of the United States and Turkey brought about similar interests and a shared attitude in favor of the democratic demands of the Arab peoples. However, the close dialogue and cooperation between Ankara and Washington in 2011 on Tunisia, Egypt and Libya has begun to lose momentum. Because, despite their common goal, Turkey and the United States have diverged on methodology as to how to deal with the Syria issue. Moreover, they took place in different camps on the Israel-Palestine problem.³⁷⁸ More importantly, while the Erdoğan leadership severely reacted to the military intervention in Egypt and has not recognized the putschist regime as the legitimate administration of the country, the Obama leadership did not qualify the military intervention as a coup d'état and recognized the military rule legitimate.³⁷⁹ This case might be explained with the varying norms that they have adopted during the Arab revolts, despite the expectations to the contrary considering their democrat identities. In other words, whereas the U.S. implicitly regarded the "undemocratic" practices of the Muslim Brotherhood as a sufficient reason for the Army intervention into

³⁷⁵ "Erdoğan tell Arabs his secularism remarks mistranslated," **Today's Zaman**, 16.09.2011, accessed 03.07.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-257047-erdogan-tell-arabs-his-secularism-remarks-mistranslated.html>. "Turkey urges Egypt not to fear secularism," **Today's Zaman**, 30.05.2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-281912-turkey-urges-egypt-not-to-fear-secularism.html>.

³⁷⁶ Ian Black, "Egypt's revolution and diplomacy: when a coup is a 'military intervention'," **The Guardian**, 04.07.2013, accessed 03.07.2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/04/egypt-revolution-coup-military-intervention-analysis>.

³⁷⁷ "Erdoğan slams West for not calling Egypt army intervention a 'coup,'" **Today's Zaman**, 05.07.2013, accessed 06.07.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-320102-erdogan-slams-west-for-not-calling-egypt-army-intervention-a-coup.html>.

³⁷⁸ Interview with Bülent Aliriza by Vatan Daily, "İsrail'le tansiyon ilişkileri geliyor!"

³⁷⁹ "Army Ousts Egypt's President; Morsi Is Taken Into Military Custody," **The New York Times**, 03.07.2013, accessed 19.02.2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/04/world/middleeast/egypt.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

politics, the Turkish government has declared that no single reason could justify the overthrow of a democratically elected government.³⁸⁰

5.10. Turkey and USA's Reciprocal Foreign Policies towards the post-Soviet Domain

As it was mentioned before, Turkish policy makers tried to show on a number of occasions that Turkey did not lose its strategic importance in the new world order in the aftermath of the Cold War. In this context, Turkey aimed to develop its relations with the newly established Turkic republics in the Central Asia and Caucasus with which Turkey enjoyed historical, cultural as well as religious ties. Under the President Turgut Özal leadership, Turkey sought also to seize the opportunities emerged in the wake of the Cold War with the American support. The United States on the other hand presented Turkey as a model for the new Turkic republics in Central Asia and sought to ensure the adaptation of these states to the international system under the U.S. tutelage. Both countries' interests converged on the point of bolstering the political freedom of Central Asian and Caucasian countries and precluding these states from falling under the hegemony of other major actors in the region, Russia and Iran in particular. To put it more clearly, the United States supported Turkey in the Central Asia with the intention that it would fill the power vacuum in the region in the post-Soviet course. Additionally, it offered Turkey as a model for these countries. On the other hand, cognizant of its inadequate economic, military and political power for its projects in the region, Turkey aimed to increase its influence in the region by utilizing the American backing. This close Turkish-American cooperation in the Central Asia led even to such comments that Turkey was actually a US agent in the region.

While Özal leadership was ambitiously interested in the Central Asia, following President Özal's death in 1993, it began to move out of the sphere of interest of Turkish policy makers for several reasons. First of all, the securitization process of TFP on account of the terror problem during the 1990s and other domestic reasons, such as rising Islamism, brought about an inward-looking policy. Considering foreign policy, 1990s were described as "lost years" for Turkey which followed mainly a security and conflict oriented foreign policy. Thus, Central Asia was not as meaningful as early 1990s. Furthermore, the severe economic crises in the country in the 1990s and early 2000s prevented Turkey from deepening its economic ties with the region. Finally, in the wake of the declaration of Turkey's EU membership candidacy in 1999, the interest of TFP was again focused on Europe which indirectly downgraded the importance of the Central Asia for Turkish policy makers.³⁸¹

After Erdoğan leadership's takeover of the government in 2002, it launched a multi-dimensional foreign policy which aimed also to improve relations with the neighboring countries. This policy has also had reflections on policies towards the Caucasus and Central Asia. Yet, AK Party's interest towards these regions began actually to increase as of 2008. AK Party's relatively indifferent attitude in the pre-2008 period lied in the intense agenda of the government with international and domestic developments such as the US intervention in Iraq, ups and downs in Turkish-EU relations, Cyprus-related domestic discussions, the PKK terrorism, Kurdish issue and lastly the possibility of closure of the AK Party by the Constitutional Court. The relatively political indifference towards the Central Asia notwithstanding, AK Party focused on developing economic relations with the Caucasus,

³⁸⁰ "Başbakan Erdoğan, 'Tüm darbeler gayri meşrudur'," [iha.com.tr](http://www.iha.com.tr), 11.07.2013, accessed 19.02.2014, <http://www.iha.com.tr/basbakan-erdogan-tum-darbeler-gayri-mesrudur-politika-285801>.

³⁸¹ Aras, "Turkish Policy toward Central Asia," 2

particularly through the pipeline projects. Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum natural gas pipeline which became operational in March 2007 might be regarded in this respect. Additionally, Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan agreed in February 2007 on a railway project which bypassed Armenia and connected Turkey with these countries as well as with the Central Asia. In terms of its political and economic meaning, this project became one of the most important developments in the Caucasus region in the pre-2008 period.³⁸²

2008 was an important year in terms of Turkey's policies towards the Caucasus, because Turkey refocused its attention on the region in a serious way. August 2008 crisis between Georgia and Russia, which showed once again the very volatile nature of the region, was important in this sense and it necessitated Turkey's proactive involvement to ensure peace and stability in the region. In the aftermath of this crisis, Turkey began to pay more attention to the regional developments and took its own initiative with respect to the future of the Caucasus: The Caucasus Stability and Economic Cooperation Platform which brought together Turkey and Russia with the three Caucasian states.³⁸³

Furthermore, with regards to the Central Asia, "Turkey has recently moved to revitalize platforms to facilitate cooperation among Turkic nations too. Notably, in coordination with Kazakhstan, Turkey spearheaded multi-lateral initiatives to contribute to the regional stability. Such initiatives in Central Asia were not directly coordinated with the United States, and were shaped on the basis of Turkey's own priorities."³⁸⁴ Thus, one might conclude that Erdoğan leadership's relatively independent and self-confident foreign policy understanding has weakened the perception that Turkey's relations with the Central Asia was an extension of the US agenda about the region and consolidated the perception that AK Party began to pursue a foreign policy strategy which keeps Ankara's own interests and priorities in the foreground.³⁸⁵

Learning its lesson from the past, another novelty that the AK Party government applied with respect to the relations with the regional countries has been its effort to revitalize and diversify its relations with these countries on the basis of principles such as equality and brotherhood. Put it differently, to improve its relations with the Turkic republics, Turkey continued to see its cultural and historical ties with the region as the most important point of reference. However, as a result of the process of mutual construction, Ankara has realized that the "big brother" role has not been sustainable with respect to the relations with the Turkic republics; therefore, it has tried to develop a relationship with these countries based on mutual respect and equality.³⁸⁶

Considering Turkish-American cooperation in the region, Turkey and the United States' interests converge on a number of issues regarding the Central Asia, such as ensuring stability in the region, undermining the Russian and Chinese influence by consolidating the institutional capacity of the regional states, help them carry out democratic reforms, ensuring the transition to a free market economy as well as respect for human rights.³⁸⁷ "The United

³⁸² Mustafa Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," UNISCI Discussion Papers, No:23, (May 2010): 181-182.

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 45.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ertan Efeğil, "Türkiye'nin Orta Asya Politikası 2009"[Turkey's Central Asia Policy 2009], in Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2009[Yearbook of Turkish Foreign Policy 2009], Burhanettin Duran et al. (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 499-501.

³⁸⁷ Ertan Efeğil, "Turkish AK Party's Central Asia and Caucasus Policies: Critiques and Suggestions," *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, Vol.2 (3), (Summer 2008): 3-4, 6.

States and Turkey have overlapping interests also concerning regional security issues in the region. They both support better relations between the Central Asian states and NATO through the Partnership for Peace program, which helps to counter the destabilizing influences of turmoil in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. In addition, the United States and Turkey have closely cooperated on drug trafficking, organized crime, and terrorism issues in the Central Asia. Ensuring the safety of the Northern Distribution Network for Afghanistan has been yet another common interest of the United States and Turkey.³⁸⁸

Considering the political reforms in the region, the common part of Turkish and American identities attract attention, namely democratic, respectful for human rights and the terms of free market economy. However, despite Washington and Ankara's long-standing backing of democratization processes in the region, which has been intensified following Kyrgyzstan's Tulip Revolution in 2005, the authoritarian regimes in the region began to abstain from "further developing their relations with the United States and Turkey, partly due to their ruling elites' fear of losing their privileges during the democratization process. As a result, despite the greater push for democratic political reform in these countries, both the United States and Turkey still have a lot to do to enhance their bilateral cooperation as they promote democratic reforms in this region."³⁸⁹

5.10.1. The Russian dimension

In the framework of multidimensional diplomacy, zero problems and maximum cooperation with Neighbors policies, Turkey markedly developed its relations with Russia particularly in the field of economy. Moscow has been Turkey's largest trading partner and its biggest natural gas supplier. It is also a significant market for the Turkish construction industry. "Projects in Russia account for about one-fourth of all projects carried out by Turkish contractors around the world. Energy has been an important driver of the recent intensification of ties between Ankara and Moscow. Russia supplies 65 percent of Turkey's natural-gas imports and 40 percent of its crude-oil imports."³⁹⁰

In the last decade, Turkish-Russian political ties have improved too. Paying a visit to Turkey in December 2004, Putin became the first Russian head of State to visit Ankara in 32 years. The visit was crowned by a joint declaration on the "Deepening of Friendship and Multi-Dimensional Partnership" which makes reference to a wide range of common interests, to the mutual trust and confidence that have developed between the two countries in recent years."³⁹¹ Through this "multidimensional partnership", "the two countries have endeavored to deepen their bilateral relationship while trying to approximate their positions on neighborhood issues in the Caucasus and Black Sea."³⁹² Moreover, since then high-level contacts between Ankara and Moscow have visibly increased. President Gül's visit to Moscow in 2009 was considerably important in this respect. In order to show the importance they refer to Gül's visit, Russia hosted him at state level, the highest level of protocol. During the visit, President Gül and Medvedev signed a joint declaration highlighting their

³⁸⁸ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 15.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 48.

³⁹¹ Ibid., 49.

³⁹² Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 14.

commitment to mutual friendship and multi-dimensional cooperation.”³⁹³ As of April 2011, even the visa requirements of the Russian and Turkish nationals for visits until 30 days were mutually lifted.³⁹⁴

Booming ties between Turkey and Moscow have made Ankara more sensitive to the Russian concerns in the Caucasus and Central Asia.³⁹⁵ Thus, throughout the 2000s, Turkey had to think twice when it was called by the West to coordinate its policies against Moscow. “As the United States focused its attention on the Middle East following the Iraq war, Russia increasingly consolidated its power in Eurasia. Despite the West gaining advantage by advocating democratic regimes, epitomized by the colored revolutions, such gains were soon reversed. The United States was generally acquiescent towards Russia’s attempts to regain influence and to balance US power in the Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Black Sea basin in the second half of the decade.”³⁹⁶

Turkey has tried to follow a balanced policy in the undeclared competition between Russia and the West, and, in contrast to the 1990s, has avoided taking actions that could be perceived as anti-Russian. Both Turkey’s relatively independent foreign policy which self-consciously distanced itself from the US agenda in its neighborhood and its concern to dampen political tensions with Russia in order to maximize gains from commercial exchanges (as well as Turkey’s dependence on Russia in terms of energy) played their roles in producing this outcome.”³⁹⁷ However, Turkey’s “neutral” posture led now and then to frictions in Ankara-Washington relations. For instance, “while Turkey was lukewarm towards U.S. efforts to expand U.S. and NATO military power into the Black Sea basin, it was comfortable cooperating with Russia to bolster maritime security in the Black Sea. “Black Sea has been one strategic area of US-Russia competition, with significant implications for Turkey. On the one hand a resurgent Russia is trying to firm its grip over the stormy shores of the Black Sea, while on the other; the United States and NATO are also aiming to increase their presence and influence in this volatile, yet highly strategic area.

Both Turkey and the United States are trying to promote peace, stability and economic cooperation in this region and there is a strong convergence of interests in this respect. There is some divergence of approach, however, in the Black Sea strategies of the two allies. Whereas the United States wants to increase its presence and NATO’s naval power in the Black Sea region, Turkey believes that increasing NATO’s naval presence would raise tensions in the region. Instead, Turkey, already as the representative of NATO in the Black Sea basin, argues that in line with the Montreux Treaty, regional cooperation among and ownership by littoral countries should be the main focus of international efforts.”³⁹⁸ In accordance with the logic that the Black Sea should remain under the sovereignty of regional

³⁹³ Vügar İmanov, “Türkiye’nin Rusya Politikası 2009”[Turkey’s Russia Policy 2009], in Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2009[Yearbook of Turkish Foreign Policy 2009], Burhanettin Duran et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 338-339.

³⁹⁴ “Visa-free travel between Turkey and Russia to begin on Saturday,” **Today’s Zaman**, 15.04.2011, accessed 06.07.2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=241113.

³⁹⁵ Larrabee, “Troubled Partnership,” 49. For the developing relations of Turkey and Russia see also, İmanov, “Türkiye’nin Rusya Politikası 2009,” 334-337.

³⁹⁶ Kardaş, “Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s,” 44-45.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 45.

³⁹⁸ Soli Özel, Şuhnaz Yılmaz and Abdullah Akyüz, “Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations for a New Era, a Turkish Perspective,” TÜSİAD, Publication no-T/2009-04/490, (İstanbul, Graphis Matbaa, April 2009), 72-73.

states and no interference from outside should occur,³⁹⁹ the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (BLACKSEAFOR) was formed in 2001 with Turkey's initiatives. This Group aims to protect the Black Sea against threats and challenges such as terrorism, organized crime, illegal trafficking and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.⁴⁰⁰ American demands however to participate in this structure has not yet received any positive response from Ankara.⁴⁰¹

Likewise, Turkey's approach to the "color revolutions" and European energy security was sometimes far from alignment with the American position, while its policy seemed closer to that of Russia. These kinds of differences became most visible during the Russian-Georgian War of 2008.⁴⁰² "Russia's attack against Georgia in August 2008, when Georgia used force in an attempt to recapture its separatist pro-Moscow region of South Ossetia, caused significant turmoil in the region. Against condemnations by the United States and European Union about troop deployments and bombings deep inside Georgia,"⁴⁰³ Ankara tried to take again a balanced position. Invoking the terms of the Montreux Convention, Turkey restricted the passage of U.S. warships through the Turkish straits into the Black Sea on their way to Georgia and this led friction with its American ally.⁴⁰⁴ Furthermore, Turkish decision makers acted carefully during the Russia-Georgia crisis with the aim of easing the tension and offered a regional platform idea, "the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform" to solve the regional problems.⁴⁰⁵ "This move, combined with its subsequent shuttle diplomacy in the region, stemmed from Ankara's belief in the notion of regional ownership and its ability to help solve regional problems without external involvement."⁴⁰⁶

Seeking to establish a balanced relationship with all international actors instead of preferring one to another, a possible tension between Russia and the West has been undesirable for the Erdoğan leadership. "Turkey has a strong stake in a benign climate between Washington and Moscow. As Lesser has noted, Turkey's ability to conduct a policy of breadth rather than depth—to engage diverse partners with conflicting interests simultaneously—would be severely constrained by more-overt competition between Russia and the West. Since the end of Cold War, Turkey has had the luxury of not having to choose between its Western and Eurasian interests. However, a sharpening of US-Russian competition would make it more difficult for Turkey to balance these competing interests, particularly in the Caucasus, and increase the pressure on Ankara to choose."⁴⁰⁷ For such

³⁹⁹ Bahadır Bumin Özarlan, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Karadeniz'de Güvenlik Politikaları ve Türk-Rus İlişkileri" (Turko-Russian Relations and Security Policies in the Black Sea After the Cold War), *Journal of Turkish Studies*, XII/1 (Yaz 2012): 156

⁴⁰⁰ Orhan Babaoglu, "The Black Sea Basin: A New Axis in Global Maritime Security," *The Washington Institute*, PolicyWatch 1027, 24.08.2005, accessed 11.07.2013, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-black-sea-basin-a-new-axis-in-global-maritime-security>.

⁴⁰¹ Özarlan, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Karadeniz'de Güvenlik Politikaları ve Türk-Rus İlişkileri," 146.

⁴⁰² Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 14.

⁴⁰³ Özel, Yılmaz and Akyüz, "Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations," 69.

⁴⁰⁴ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 14. "US survey vessel transits straits hours after naval destroyer returns," *Today's Zaman*, 0 3.09.2008, accessed 11.07.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-151998-us-survey-vessel-transits-straits-hours-after-naval-destroyer-returns.html>.

⁴⁰⁵ Bülent Aras and Pınar Akpınar, *Türk Dış Politikasında Davutoğlu Dönemi: 2009 Değerlendirmesi* [Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy: Evaluation of 2009], in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2009* [Yearbook of Turkish Foreign Policy 2009], Burhanettin Duran et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 36-37.

⁴⁰⁶ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 14.

⁴⁰⁷ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 50-51.

reasons, Turkey warmly welcomed the U.S. policy of "reset" with Russia⁴⁰⁸ as it promised some relief from the burden of balancing its ties with the United States and Russia.⁴⁰⁹

Furthermore, Ankara has been encouraging nearly every development which has the potential of stabilizing the relations between Russia and the West. In this context, Turkey "has been supporting Russia-NATO security cooperation and continued talks on the missile shield, the future of nuclear weapons in Europe, the application of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe in the Caucasus, and the enlargement of NATO parallel to its bilateral dialogue with its northern neighbor. Given Washington's own commitment to developing its own non-confrontational relationship with Moscow, it seems unlikely that the Turkish-Russian relationship will cause serious problems in the U.S.-Turkish relationship."⁴¹⁰

However, in recent years, Turkey has inclined to keep its deep-rooted alliance with the West in foreground and this has begun to strain the relations with Russia at least at political level. Turkish government's decision for instance to consent to the installation of NATO's early warning radar system despite Moscow's opposition led to another theme of friction between Ankara and Moscow. Similarly, "Ankara gradually came to the conclusion that Moscow was not as forthcoming as it had hoped it would be on neighborhood issues, such as the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute."⁴¹¹

On the other hand, as it was noted above, the so called Arab Spring led to rising identity politics. It pushed Ankara to make choice in the face of the Arab revolts against autocratic regimes. As a Muslim-democrat leadership, Erdoğan leadership's interests converged with the US interests to side with the Arab peoples' democratic demands. In this context, Ankara-Washington relations entered into a new period of golden age. However, this case resulted in a relative decline in Ankara-Moscow political bonds.⁴¹² In contrast to Russia's backing of the Assad regime, Turkey's actively anti-Syrian regime stance caused sometimes disputes between Turkey and Russia. For example, Turkey forced a Syrian passenger plane took off from Moscow to land in Ankara based on the information that it was carrying military material. According to Turkish officials, "military" equipment was found in the plane and confiscated. This event caused a temporary tension between Turkey and Russia.⁴¹³ Whereas the US government expressed support for Turkey, Moscow criticized Ankara's behavior.⁴¹⁴ However, Turkey and Russia were scrupulous about not confronting⁴¹⁵ and this

⁴⁰⁸ "Vice President Joseph Biden set the line of the Obama administration on US-Russia relations in his speech in Munich on February 7, 2009, when he stated: "It is time to press the reset button and to revisit the many areas where we can and should work together." He also stated that "the United States and Russia can disagree and still work together where our interests coincide." Anders Aslund and Andrew Kuchins, "Pressing the 'Reset Button' on US-Russia Relations," CSIS Policy Brief, Number PB09-6, (March 2009): 6. This positive process sparked by Vice President Biden continued with the meeting of US Secretary of State, Clinton, and Russian Foreign Minister, Lavrov, on March 6, 2009 in Geneva. Özel, Yılmaz and Akyüz, "Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations," 71.

⁴⁰⁹ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 14.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² For Turkey's stance on the Arab Spring and its implications on Turkish-Russian relation see: Gökhan Bacik, "Turkey and Russia in the Arab Spring: Straining Old Rifts Further?" The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Analysis on Turkey, (August 16, 2012).

⁴¹³ "Syrian passenger plane forced to land in Turkey," **BBC**, 11.10.2012, accessed 29.07.2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19905247>

⁴¹⁴ "Russand Sauer: USA stellen sich hinter die Türkei," **Focus**, 12.10.2012, accessed 29.07.2013, http://www.focus.de/politik/ausland/krise-in-der-arabischen-welt/syrien/tid-27670/erzwungene-landung-in-ankara-russland-sauer-usa-stellen-sich-hinter-die-tuerkei_aid_836997.html

incident did not reach a level of crisis.⁴¹⁶ As a matter of fact, Putin postponed his visit to Turkey in the wake of the passenger plane event, which had been planned before the Syrian plane was forced to land by Turkish jets.⁴¹⁷ Yet President Putin paid this visit on December 4, 2012. During this visit, he attended also the Turkey-Russia High-Level Cooperation Council Meeting⁴¹⁸ and a total of 11 cooperation agreements were signed between companies, institutions and ministries of both countries.⁴¹⁹ Considering his cancel of all external trips due to health problems for two months, President Putin's visit to Ankara was associated with the political and economic importance that Russia attaches to Turkey.⁴²⁰

Last but not least, Russia also expressed its unease about the Patriot air defense system that Ankara requested from NATO against the possible threats from Syria. Turkish call received a positive response from the United States, Germany and Netherlands and the Patriot missiles were deployed in the near of the Turkish-Syrian border in early 2013. The Russian government on the other hand announced at various levels its opposition against the deployment of these missiles in Turkey.⁴²¹

In consequence, Erdoğan leadership has developed Turkey's relations with Moscow in the context of multi-dimensional foreign policy understanding. In some cases, it even disregarded the American demands and followed its own foreign policy priorities with a relatively independent FP approach. However, along with the so called Arab spring, an identity-oriented foreign policy understanding began to be dominant in the Middle East. While this case reflected to Turkey's relations with the United States positively, Turkish-Russian relations have been adversely affected from this development. Turkey and Russia have sided in the rival camps on the Syrian civil war. While Ankara actively supported the opposition groups, Moscow sustained its staunch backing of the Assad regime. Nevertheless, the economic relations have not been heavily influenced by this political friction and continued to develop.

⁴¹⁵ "Ahme Davutoğlu, "Sorun Rusya değil, Suriye krizi," **CNNTURK**, 19.10.2012, accessed 29.07.2013, <http://www.cnnturk.com/2012/dunya/10/19/ahmet.davutoglu.sorun.rusya.degil.suriye.krizi/681255.0/index.html>.

Fikret Bila, "Türkiye, Rusya ile kriz istemiyor," **Milliyet**, 13.10.2012, accessed 29.07.2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/turkiye-rusya-ile-kriz-istemiyor/siyaset/siyasyazardetay/13.10.2012/1610889/default.htm>.

⁴¹⁶ "İndirilen Suriye uçağının yükü için net açıklama," **CNNTURK**, 30.11.2012, accessed 30.07.2013, <http://www.cnnturk.com/2012/dunya/11/30/indirilen.suriye.ucaginin.yuku.icin.net.aciklama/686718.0/index.html>.

⁴¹⁷ "Putin sagt wegen abgefangenen Flugzeugs Türkeireise ab," **Die Zeit**, 11.10.2012, accessed 30.07.2013, accessed 30.07.2013, <http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2012-10/syrien-tuerkei-flugzeug-waffen>.

⁴¹⁸ "Russia's Putin meets Turkey PM Erdogan for Syria talks," **BBC**, 03.12.2012, accessed 30.07.2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-20576197>.

⁴¹⁹ "Turkey, Russia agree to differ on Syria, cement ties," **Today's Zaman**, 03.12.2012, accessed 30.07.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-300099-turkey-russia-agree-to-differ-on-syria-cement-ties.html>.

⁴²⁰ Fikret Bila, "Putin'in Türkiye ziyaretinin anlamı," **Milliyet**, 04.12.2012, accessed 30.07.2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/putin-in-turkiye-ziyaretinin-anlami/siyaset/siyasyazardetay/04.12.2012/1636761/default.htm>.

⁴²¹ "Grenze zu Syrien: Russland warnt vor 'Patriot'-Raketen in Türkei," **Der Spiegel**, 22.11.2012, accessed 30.07.2013, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/russland-gegen-patriot-raketen-an-grenze-zwischen-tuerkei-und-syrien-a-868704.html>. "Russia worried over plans to deploy Patriot missile systems at Turkish-Syrian border," **Itar Tass**, 27.11.2012, accessed 02.08.2013, <http://pda.itar-tass.com/en/c154/583053.html>.

5.10.2. The Energy dimension

In recent decades, the world energy demand has been rapidly increasing and the global struggle over access to and the control of energy resources has intensified. In this world, with their wide energy resources, the Caucasus and Central Asia have come into prominence and the delivery of these resources to the world markets has constituted another point of convergence between Ankara and Washington. By utilizing its geopolitical advantage -located at the center of East – West, North – South and South – North energy corridors- Turkey aims to become an important energy transit country, energy terminal as well as the fourth energy source of Europe after the North Sea, Russia and the Middle East.⁴²² Furthermore, in order to meet its energy need which is expected to increase 4% annually by 2020, Ankara intends to diversify its energy sources and wants to secure more reliable energy imports as both the Iraqi-Turkish and Iranian-Turkish pipelines are undependable. For these reasons, Ankara aims to host oil/natural gas pipeline projects.⁴²³ While trying to use the energy card as a political tool for integration into the EU, Ankara simultaneously regards the pipelines as a means for peace and stability in its region and desires to ensure a "welfare circle" also by increasing energy ties with its neighbors such as Iran and Russia.⁴²⁴ Thus, pipelines might be regarded as significant cornerstones of Erdoğan leadership's efforts to generate and strengthen interdependencies in Turkey's region.

The United States, on the other hand, aims to ensure the safety of the world's energy supply and reduce the dependence of the Caucasus and Central Asian states on Russia to deliver their hydrocarbon resources to the world markets. Thereby, the American administration desires to prevent Russia re-gaining power by re-creating energy-cartel in the region and to hinder its efforts to become a superpower again.⁴²⁵ The U.S. also plans to forestall the rising influence of China in the region which has increased its energy ties with the region in view of its booming energy need.⁴²⁶

Considering Turkish energy policy, Turkey defined its energy policies in a pro-Western direction throughout the 1990s and "sought to gain a place in oil and natural gas transportation through its integration into the US-led East-West energy corridor, which was championed by the West against the North-South corridor supported by Russia and Iran."⁴²⁷ "The East-West Energy Corridor, initiated through intensive collaboration between Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the United States, aims primarily at transporting the Caucasian and Central Asian crude oil and natural gas to international markets via safe alternative routes to Russia and Iran. The major components of this sizeable energy outlet include Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) crude oil pipeline, the Shah-Deniz natural gas pipeline (Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum), as well as the other Trans-Caspian Natural Gas Pipeline projects (i.e., the Turkey-Greece-Italy Inter-connector Project and the Nabucco Project), railroads and complementary infrastructure. The completion of the BTC pipeline project has been particularly significant in

⁴²² Efeğil, "Turkish AK Party's Central Asia and Caucasus Policies: Critiques and Suggestions," 4

⁴²³ Anthony H. Cordesman, Bryan Gold, Robert Shelala, and Michael Gibbs, "US and Iranian Strategic Competition, Turkey and the South Caucasus," CSIS, (February 6, 2013): 14, 17

⁴²⁴ Mert Bilgin, "Turkey's Energy Strategy: What Difference Does It Make To Become An Energy Transit Corridor, Hub or Center," UNISCI Discussion Papers No: 23, (May 2010): 115-116

⁴²⁵ Emre Baysoy, "Rusya, AB, ABD İlişkileri Bağlamında Enerjinin Ekonomi Politikası ve Küreselleşmenin Jeopolitiği," *Journal of Security Strategies*, Issue:10 (2009): 71

⁴²⁶ Bilgin, "Turkey's Energy Strategy: What Difference Does It Make" 118.

⁴²⁷ Kardeş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 39-40.

terms of Western energy security by opening an oil transit route that would present an alternative to Russia in order to get the landlocked Caspian oil to global energy markets.”⁴²⁸

The BTC pipeline, completed in 2006, is the first and most important leg of the East-West Energy Corridor through which one million barrels of Caspian crude oil is pumped everyday to mostly Western markets. “The feasibility of the BTC pipeline increased further when Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan signed a Transit Agreement in June 2006 to connect Kazakh oil to BTC. Both countries’ parliaments have ratified the agreement, and as of October 2008, Kazakh oil started to flow into BTC. Consequently, BTC opened a very significant new East-West energy corridor providing an alternative energy route to Russia and Iran for crude oil. Hence, it also enhanced the geo-political significance of Turkey by turning it into a critical energy corridor.”⁴²⁹

Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) natural gas pipeline constitutes the second component of the East-West Energy Corridor through which gas began to be pumped in May 2006. This pipeline, through which approximately 6.6 billion cubic meters Azerbaijan’s gas would be annually exported, might be viewed as the second most important ring of the East-West corridor.⁴³⁰ One should additionally note that both the BTC and BTE could be realized thanks to the strong U.S. and Turkish backing and coordinated action.⁴³¹

The third and the most important part of the East-West Energy Corridor was the Nabucco project. Through this project, it was aimed to transport the Central Asian, Caucasian as well as the Middle Eastern natural gas to Europe. To diversify the energy resources of Europe and reduce its dependence on Russian gas were also crucially important.⁴³² With the completion of this project, which was backed by the United States and the European Union, the transportation of 31bcm natural gas to Europe through Turkey, Romania, Hungary and Austria was envisaged. It was expected that the Nabucco Project would consolidate Turkey's position as an energy corridor, reinforce its role as a regional actor and offer an alternative source for Turkey's booming energy need. For all such reasons, Ankara has provided a serious support for the project.

However, the construction of the project could not be launched yet. There are a number of reasons for this result. Firstly, Moscow has sought to preclude this project through alternative projects such as the South Stream. Besides, it concluded accords with the potential suppliers of the Nabucco, like Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.⁴³³ On the other hand, although it is the main beneficiary of the Nabucco project, the EU did not take the expected lead on the Nabucco and the project gave rise to squabbles among the EU countries especially in terms of its financing. The dispute between Turkey and the EU about the issue of pricing led also setbacks on the project. Furthermore, the question marks over the suppliers of the pipeline project were also not cleared. The turmoil and uncertainties in other potential suppliers of the project, like Egypt and Iraq, raised doubts about the future of the project as well. A possible join of Iran in the Nabucco project was strongly blocked by the United States. Eventually, in the face of the troubles pertaining to the other suppliers, given its potential, Azerbaijan as the

⁴²⁸ Özel, Yılmaz and Akyüz, “Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations ,” 64.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., 64.

⁴³⁰ Sina Kısacık, “ABD’nin Avrasya Enerji Politikası Bağlamında Azerbaycan ve Orta Asya Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri,” Uluslar arası Politika Akademisi, 03.01.2013, accessed 22.12.2013, <http://politikaakademisi.org/?p=3713>

⁴³¹ Kardeş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 39.

⁴³² Özel, Yılmaz and Akyüz, “Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations ,” 64.

⁴³³ Ibid., 65.

projected main supplier of the Nabucco did not seem likely to meet the 31bcm potential of the natural gas pipeline.

In January 2009, when Russia decided to cut off gas to Ukraine and left much of Southern and Eastern Europe to face a bitter winter with no gas for weeks, many European countries were forced to accelerate their search for other alternatives to reduce their dependence on Russian energy, natural gas in particular. In this respect, with the strong support of the USA and the EU, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria and Turkey signed an intergovernmental transit agreement on July 13, 2009. This agreement was expected to give Nabucco a new impetus and enhance its credibility with suppliers.⁴³⁴ However, the problems and uncertainties did not come to an end, which pushed Ankara and Baku to explore other alternatives.

One of the projects proposed in this context is the Trans Anatolian Gas Pipeline (TANAP) project, whose finalization and imminent construction of the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline most likely ends the Eastern end of the Nabucco.⁴³⁵ TANAP stipulates the delivery of Azerbaijan's gas to Turkey's western border. This \$7 billion project, which is expected to be completed in six years in accordance with the agreement signed on June 26, 2012,⁴³⁶ will make Turkey a gas transit corridor for nearly 100 years. For the European market, which has been in search of an alternative to the Russian gas, the TANAP is very important both economically and politically. For the transfer of the Shah Deniz 2 natural gas from Turkey's western border to Europe, the Nabucco West, a scaled down version of the Nabucco and Trans Adriatic Project (TAP) are discussed. It is envisioned that the Nabucco West or TAP will be fed by the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline.⁴³⁷

On the other hand, the troubles associated with the Nabucco project pushed the United States to review its policy. As a matter of fact, Washington signaled that it maintains its support for the Southern Corridor to transfer the Caspian gas to Europe. However, considering that the projects in this regard should have been also commercially viable, the US government signaled that Nabucco constituted no longer the center of gravity in its energy politics.⁴³⁸ Thereby, the United States implied indirectly that it was inclined to give support to the projects such as TANAP, Nabucco West and TAP, offered as alternatives to the Nabucco.

To make an overall appraisal, in comparison to the effective cooperation between Ankara and Washington on strategic energy collaboration throughout the 1990s, as Mark Parris, former United States ambassador to Turkey, stated, the past eight years seems a tragic loss of opportunity.⁴³⁹ The poor state of cooperation seems to lie largely in a lack of US interest in these projects, as it increasingly involved in Middle Eastern affairs and this resulted in limiting room for joint action in Eurasia. Recently, US-Turkish coordinated action in Eurasian affairs has gained pace again with the Obama administration's appointment of Richard Morningstar as special envoy for Eurasian Energy.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁴ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 59-61.

⁴³⁵ Cordesman, Gold, Shelala, and Gibbs, "US and Iranian Strategic Competition," 16.

⁴³⁶ "Caspain gas Project set to start in 2013: Ankara," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 08.02.2013, accessed 8.8.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/caspain-gas-project-set-to-start-in-2013-ankara.aspx?pageID=238&nID=40715&NewsCatID=348>

⁴³⁷ Merve Erdil, "Şahdeniz 2'de 'hat kapmaca,'" **Hürriyet**, 13.09.2012, accessed 8.8.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=21450684>

⁴³⁸ "Nabucco ABD'nin gözünden düştü," **Hürriyet**, 18.11.2011, accessed 8.8.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=19275711>

⁴³⁹ Özel, Yılmaz and Akyüz, "Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations ," 67-68.

⁴⁴⁰ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 40.

As a matter of fact, Turkey and the United States have been in close cooperation to encourage Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to export their oil and natural gas through Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipelines, which could be materialized as a result of close cooperation of the U.S. and Turkey, as well as that of Azerbaijan and Georgia. "The United States and Turkey have also been in agreement on the need to resolve tensions between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. Particular sources of tension between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan stemming from the status of the Caspian Sea and conflict over the Kepez/Sardar oilfield have undermined the development of the Trans-Caspian Pipeline project and consequently of the EU-backed Southern energy corridor."⁴⁴¹

On the other hand, Erdoğan leadership's multidimensional foreign policy, based on a delicate balance between Russia, Iran and the United States narrows from time to time Turkey's room for maneuver. The US policy towards Iran for example, "based on sanctions and exclusion, set important obstacles to Turkey's efforts to deepen ties with that country in the energy sector, a situation most vividly observed in Turkey's plans to include Iran into the Nabucco project which have been thwarted by the United States."⁴⁴² Nonetheless, Ankara insists on the multidimensional policy. Despite the suspicion of some circles in Washington about Turkey's growing ties with Moscow in energy sector, the Turkish government continues to follow its own FP agenda and maintains and even deepens its ties with Russia in the energy sector. Ankara's consent to the Russia-led South Stream, the biggest rival of the Nabucco project, to pass through the Exclusive Economic Zone of Turkey, which created confusion in some quarters in the West, might be explained in this context.

5.11. The Armenian question dimension of Turkey-U.S. relations

The Armenian question has been dangling like the sword of Damocles since early 1980s over the Turkish-American relations and has been a matter of tension in bilateral relations. Ambitious efforts of the Armenian Diaspora to introduce a "genocide" resolution condemning Turkey for the tragic events of 1915⁴⁴³ and its endeavors to put Turkey in a troublesome position in the international arena causes so to say a vicious circle in Turkey-US relations. When the Armenian question comes to the agenda of the US Congress or its lower bodies, such as the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, this gives rise initially to a discord between Ankara and Washington and this dispute results sometimes even in the recall of Turkish ambassador to Ankara for consultations contingent upon how likely the Armenian draft resolution to be accepted by the relevant institution. Subsequently, the Armenian draft resolution is hindered usually with the last-minute attempts of the American administration and eventually Turkish-American relations get through another "crisis" successfully. This scenario was lastly repeated in 2007 and 2010.

Moreover, the Armenian issue comes periodically to the agenda of bilateral relations every year in April and causes a concern in the Turkish side. In accordance with a decision

⁴⁴¹ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 15.

⁴⁴² Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 40.

⁴⁴³ For the official arguments of Turkey on the Armenian issue, see the official web site of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs: accessed 01.09.2013, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-events-of-1915-and-the-turkish-armenian-controversy-over-history_-an-overview.en.mfa: See also Taner Akçam, "A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility," (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007). Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri*, (İstanbul: Babıalı Kültür Yayıncılığı, 2003).

taken in 1975, the US Presidents were asked to make a statement on every April 24 condemning the terrible events that Armenians exposed in 1915. Although the concept of "genocide" was used only once during the presidency of Ronald Reagan in 1981, every year in April the Turkish authorities experience an excitement, anxiety and even fear, whether the American President will use the term of "genocide" pertaining to the events of 1915.⁴⁴⁴

Pursuing zero problems and maximum cooperation policies with neighbors and aiming to make Turkey first a regional and then a global power, Erdoğan leadership intended to solve and get rid of this problem which has been an impediment to TFP for decades.⁴⁴⁵ In this context, with the intention of reducing the pressure over Turkey, the Turkish Grand National Assembly issued a declaration in 2005 and called for both Yerevan as well as the other relevant countries to form a common commission to scrutinize the 1915 events and to open the archives mutually to this end.⁴⁴⁶ However, this call got a positive response neither from the Armenians nor from the international public opinion to the extent that Ankara desired. In the coming period, despite the efforts of the Bush administration, an Armenian draft resolution containing the Armenian claims was approved in October 2007 by the House Foreign Affairs Committee with 27 votes, against the 21 negative votes.⁴⁴⁷ Even though this draft resolution was later shelved with the attempts of the Bush administration,⁴⁴⁸ it strained once again Ankara-Washington ties.⁴⁴⁹

During the Obama administration, the Armenian question maintained its importance in the US-Turkish agenda. During his election campaign, Obama was clearly labeling the 1915 events as genocide. He announced during the campaign that as President he would recognize the Armenian Genocide.⁴⁵⁰ Therefore, one might conclude that in addition to Erdoğan leadership's aspiration to get rid of the foreign policy impediments with a view to making Turkey a global player, Obama's victory of December 2008 elections had been one of important factors urging Ankara to normalize its relations with Yerevan. Along with the international pressure that Turkey faced until then,⁴⁵¹ Obama administration's pro-Armenian stance pushed the Erdoğan leadership to take steps on the Armenian question. In this context, it was not a surprise that Turkey's search for a dialogue with Armenia gathered pace following President Obama's calls for the solution of the problem during his visit to Turkey on 5-6 April 2009.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁴ Birol Akgün and Murat Çemrek, *Türk Dış Politikasında Ermeni Sorunu (Armenian Problem in Turkish Foreign Policy)*, **Institute of Strategic Thinking**, Ankara, (April 2010), 5-6.

⁴⁴⁵ Diba Nigar Göksel, "The Rubrik's Cube of Turkey-Armenia Relations," UNISCI Discussion Papers, No: 23, (May 2010), 197.

⁴⁴⁶ "Ermenilere karşı 'hodri meydan' ilanı," **Hürriyet**, 23.04.2007, accessed 01.09.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=6388718&tarikh=2007-04-23>.

⁴⁴⁷ "100 yıllık ortaklığın sonu mu," **Hürriyet**, 10.10.2007, accessed 01.09.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=7463605&tarikh=2007-10-10>.

⁴⁴⁸ "Soykırım' tasarısı rafa kalktı," **Sabah**, 26.10.2007, accessed 01.09.2013, http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2007/10/26/haber_395F46BAA58B49CAB722C8AE0BFED9B0.html.

⁴⁴⁹ "Ortak çıkarlarımız üzerine yoğunlaşmalıyız," **Hürriyet**, 13.10.2007, accessed 01.09.2013, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=7479692&tarikh=2007-10-13>. "İnceldiği yerden kopsun," accessed 01.09.2013, **Hürriyet**, 12.10.2007, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=7474942&tarikh=2007-10-12>.

⁴⁵⁰ Göksel, "The Rubrik's Cube of Turkey-Armenia Relations," 199.

⁴⁵¹ At least 20 countries other than Armenia have recognized the Ottoman-era deaths as genocide in some way, including 11 of the 27 EU member states. Jim Zanotti, "Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations," 39.

⁴⁵² Akgün and Çemrek, "Türk Dış Politikasında Ermeni Sorunu," 15.

In fact, after long and secret negotiation traffic, Turkish President Abdullah Gül had paid a visit to Armenia in 2008 in order to watch the World Cup qualification match between the Turkish and Armenian national teams and thereby he had commenced the so called "football diplomacy."⁴⁵³ The softening climate arose as a result of the football diplomacy, "culminated with the signing of two protocols in October 2009, establishing diplomatic relations and paving the way to start examining their troubled history."⁴⁵⁴ The American side on the other hand supported the efforts to normalize the bilateral relations between Ankara and Yerevan with a constructive attitude. As a matter of fact, "there were in the meantime statements and signals emanating from the US administration that Washington would caution against taking any steps that might disrupt the ongoing efforts of Turkey and Armenia to reconcile and normalize. This meant for the most observers that the word "genocide" would not be uttered if "the process" was ongoing."⁴⁵⁵ Through its pro-solution stance, the American administration was hoping to attain two strategic results. Firstly, a possible rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia could facilitate the Armenia's move away from the Russian sphere of influence towards the US/NATO sphere of influence. Secondly, a likely improvement of Ankara-Yerevan relations could facilitate the flow of the rich energy resources of the Caucasus and Central Asia to the West.⁴⁵⁶

The protocols signed in October 2009 stipulated the formation of a joint history commission to investigate the events of 1915 and mutual opening of the archives with a view to meeting Turkish demands. A rebuilding of political and diplomatic relations cut in 1992 was stipulated in the second phase. The third step required the opening of borders between Turkey and Armenia to trade and tourism which had been closed in April 1993 by Ankara upon the Armenian invasion of the Azerbaijan's Nagorno Karabakh region. In spite of some preliminary steps taken by both Armenia and Turkey to implement the protocols, some reasons such as the domestic political calculations, mutual distrust between the parties as well as the reaction of the third parties like Azerbaijan hampered the implementation of the protocols.⁴⁵⁷ In this respect, Turkey's efforts to link "the implementation of the protocols to significant developments in the Karabakh issue and Armenia seeking to change the meaning of some of the articles of the protocols through the Constitutional Court" might be regarded as further important factors hindering the implementation of these protocols.⁴⁵⁸

On March 4, 2010, the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs voted 'yes' with 23-22 votes to a draft resolution recognizing the 1915 events as "genocide" and the American administration remained indifferent to prevent the approval of the resolution until the last minute.⁴⁵⁹ This led to a new tension in Turkish-US relations⁴⁶⁰ and in order to protest the

⁴⁵³ Bülent Aras, "A New Era in Turkish-Armenian Relations," European Union Institute for Security Studies, (September 2009), 1-2.

⁴⁵⁴ Göksel, "The Rubrik's Cube of Turkey-Armenia Relations," 193.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., 199.

⁴⁵⁶ Gözen, "Turkish-American Relations in 2009," 68.

⁴⁵⁷ Akgün and Çemrek, "Türk Dış Politikasında Ermeni Sorunu," 15-16. "Armenia coalition halts ratification of Turkey deal," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 22.04.2010, accessed 10.09.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/armenian-coalition-halts-ratification-of-turkey-deal.aspx?pageID=438&n=armenia-coalition-halts-ratification-of-turkey-deal-2010-04-22>.

⁴⁵⁸ Ömer Engin Lütem, "The US and Turkey-Armenia Relations," **Turkishny**, 19.06.2012, accessed 10.09.2013, <http://www.turkishny.com/omer-engin-lutem/73-omer-engin-lutem/92337-the-us-and-turkey-armenia-relations>.

⁴⁵⁹ For instance, contrary to the former US Presidents, Obama did not send a letter to the members of the House of Representatives emphasizing the strategic importance of Turkey. Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 289.

resolution of the Committee, Ankara recalled the Turkish Ambassador to the United States and announced that Turkish-American relations would be damaged in case the process would be completed. "This warning was commonly interpreted as including a threat to curtail at least partially or temporarily U.S. access to Turkish bases and territory for transporting non-lethal cargo to missions in Iraq and Afghanistan"⁴⁶¹ Turkish Ambassador stayed nearly a month in Ankara and he returned to Washington only after US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had a one-hour talk with her Turkish counterpart, Ahmet Davutoğlu, on the phone.⁴⁶² Consequently, as the resolution had to reach the floor for an up-or-down vote of the full U.S. House of Representatives, this effort also could not be successful just like the other former three attempts in the last eleven years.⁴⁶³ President Obama did not use also the term "genocide" in his April 24 statement, commemorating the Armenian Remembrance Day and another crisis rooted in the Armenian question was temporarily resolved.⁴⁶⁴ Even though new efforts were launched for the passage in the U.S. Senate of an "Armenian genocide" resolution in June 2011⁴⁶⁵ and March 2012, no success could be accomplished mainly on account of US administration's stance against the bills as well as the Republicans' attitude against the Armenian resolutions who took control of the chamber in 2011.⁴⁶⁶ Nevertheless, "this issue might be brought to the US agenda depending on the changing political climate, and hence poison bilateral relations."⁴⁶⁷

To sum up, in the context of zero problems with neighbors policy, the Erdoğan leadership aimed to solve the chronic problems of Turkey and pave the way for its development. However, Turkey's steps in this regard towards the resolution of the problems with Armenia notwithstanding, the success of its efforts remained very limited due to the parties' inability to conclude this process. Though the U.S. urged and welcomed the efforts of both parties to normalize their relations, the process could not be completed; hence the Armenian issue continues to be a potential flashpoint in Ankara-Washington relations. Despite the pledges of the Obama administration during the election campaign to recognize the "Armenian genocide", it has not yet kept its word and even precluded a debate in the

⁴⁶⁰ Semih İdiz, "Ankara Obama yönetimine tepkili," *Milliyet*, 05.04.2010, accessed 10.09.2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/ankara-obama-yonetimine-tepkili/semih-idiz/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/06.03.2010/1207669/default.htm>.

⁴⁶¹ "Ankara continue to chill relations," *Hürriyet Daily News*, 24.03.2010, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/cold-winds-between-washington-ankara-continue-to-chill-relations.aspx?pageID=438&n=cold-winds-between-washington-and-ankara-yet-to-end-2010-03-24>. "Turkey threatens 'serious consequences' after US vote on Armenian genocide," *The Guardian*, 05.03.2010, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/mar/05/turkey-us-vote-armenian-genocide>.

⁴⁶² "Ambassador Tan returns to US after 'genocide' row," *Today's Zaman*, 07.04.2010, accessed 15.09.2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=206663

⁴⁶³ Gözen, "Türkiye'nin ABD Politikası 2010," 289-290. "New 'Armenian genocide' bill looming in US Congress," *Hürriyet Daily News*, 16.06.2011, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/new-armenian-genocide-bill-looming-in-us-congress.aspx?pageID=438&n=new-8216armenian-genocide8217-bill-looming-in-us-congress-2011-06-15>.

⁴⁶⁴ "Obama avoids 'genocide' label in remarks on Ottoman-era Armenian deaths," *Hürriyet Daily News*, 24.04.2010, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/obama-avoids-genocide-label-in-remarks-on-ottoman-era-armenian-deaths.aspx?pageID=438&n=obama-cites-devastating-chapter-in-armenia-past-2010-04-24>.

⁴⁶⁵ "New 'Armenian genocide' bill looming in US Congress," *Hürriyet Daily News*, 16.06.2011, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/new-armenian-genocide-bill-looming-in-us-congress.aspx?pageID=438&n=new-8216armenian-genocide8217-bill-looming-in-us-congress-2011-06-15>.

⁴⁶⁶ "US senators introduce 'Armenian genocide' resolution," *Today's Zaman*, 20.03.2012, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-274908-us-senators-introduce-armenian-genocide-resolution.html>. "US Senators launch new 'genocide' bill," *Hürriyet Daily News*, 22.03.2012, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/us-senators-launch-new-genocide-bill.aspx?pageID=238&nid=16571>.

⁴⁶⁷ Kardeş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 45-46.

House of Representatives on draft legislation concerning Armenian claims of genocide in March 2010. In this manner, he indicated the importance attached to Turkey's strategic value.⁴⁶⁸ In other words, considering Turkey's strategic value and its unique political system which reconciles Islam and western norms, Obama leadership is not willing to alienate Turkey from the Western structure. However, as the year of 2015, the 100th anniversary of the supposed "Armenian genocide," has been determined as the "target year" by the Armenian Diaspora, and the Diaspora aims to ensure the recognition of the Armenian claims in all over the world, including the United States,⁴⁶⁹ it is highly possible that the Armenian question will strain Turkish-American relations in the short term again.⁴⁷⁰

5.12. Greece and Cyprus dimensions of Turkey-US relations

Despite the American reluctance, Turkish-Greek relations have been occupying the US-Turkish agenda for decades. As the leader of the western block, Washington had to repeatedly interfere in the tensions between Ankara and Athens. This case was repeated again during the Imia/Kardak crisis, which brought both countries to the brink of a war in 1996 and a military conflict could be prevented only with the last-minute intervention of the United States. Likewise, "while the Cyprus dispute itself has not been an issue of equal significance for the United States, its importance for Ankara and its implications in the international arena have helped to ensure it a place on the U.S.-Turkish agenda."⁴⁷¹

In the aftermath of the capture of the PKK leader in 1999 and the "détente process" emerged between Ankara and Athens in the wake of the earthquakes occurred in August 1999 in Turkey and in September 1999 in Greece, Turkish-Greek relations began to foster in the areas of trade and tourism.⁴⁷² Cooperation on energy has also gained momentum which was "bolstered by the opening of a \$300-million gas pipeline (November 2007) that creates an energy corridor connecting the rich natural-gas fields in the Caucasus with Europe."⁴⁷³ With a view that it could develop better relations with a country obeying the norms and standards of the European Union, Greece supported Turkey's EU membership prospect and this contributed to the ease of tensions between Ankara and Athens.⁴⁷⁴ In addition, AK Party government's zero problems with neighboring countries policy and its willingness in this respect to maintain the positive climate already existed between the parties before it came to power ensured the continuation of the positive momentum in bilateral bonds.

Along with the confidence building measures, the first meeting of the High Level Cooperation Council was held in 2010 in Athens with the attendance of Prime Ministers of Turkey and Greece, and 22 Memorandum of Understandings were signed between the parties

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ Ahmet Cemal Ertürk, "Ermeni Diasporası'nın 2015 Yılı Hedefleri Doğrultusunda İzlediği Politikalar" [Policies of the Armenian Diaspora towards the goal of 2015], BİLGESAM, 27.04.2011, accessed 15.10.2013, http://www.bilgesam.org/tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1026:ermeni-diasporasnn-2015-yl-hedefi-dorultusunda-zledii-politikalar&catid=86:analizler-kafkaslar&Itemid=148

⁴⁷⁰ Mehmet Ali Birand, "Fighting genocide calls for radical steps," *Hürriyet Daily News*, 21.12.2011, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/fighting-genocide-calls-for-radical-steps-.aspx?pageID=238&nid=9637>.

⁴⁷¹ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 17.

⁴⁷² Fuat Aksu, "Turkish-Greek Relations and the Cyprus Question: Quo Vadis?" UNISCI Discussion Papers, No.23, (May 2010): 212-213

⁴⁷³ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 72.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 73.

which stipulated cooperation in a wide range of areas. Even though the second round of the Council could not be gathered owing to the outbreak of world economic/financial crisis, both sides have expressed their will to continue the meetings.⁴⁷⁵ This rapprochement of Turkey and Greece reduced the potential of Ankara-Athens relations to occupy the Turkish-American agenda. After all, the United States has been so busy with issues such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria that the last thing it would desire has been a crisis between its two allies in the East Mediterranean.⁴⁷⁶

On the other hand, considering the chronic problems between Turkey and Greece such as the Aegean and Cyprus problems,⁴⁷⁷ despite the positive climate and developments in bilateral relations, there has been little progress in resolving them. As long as these disputes remain unresolved, "there is always a danger that some incident could lead to an unwanted confrontation, as almost happened in 1996 when the two countries nearly went to war over the islet of Imia/Kardak."⁴⁷⁸

It seems that the Cyprus question occupies in this context a relatively wider space. In essence, the AK Party government endeavored seriously between 2002 and 2004 to throw off the burden in foreign politics caused by the Cyprus question. Despite the rising opposition within the Turkish society, the government assumed the risk and demonstrated a great effort to convince the Turkish Cypriot community to vote "yes" in the referendum for the Annan

⁴⁷⁵ Dış politika Araştırmalar Grubu, "Balkanlar ve Türkiye," BİLGESAM, 19.02.2013, accessed 25.03.2013, http://www.bilgesam.org/tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2333:balkanlar-ve-tuerkiye&catid=95:analizler-balkanlar&Itemid=143

⁴⁷⁶ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 124.

⁴⁷⁷ These chronic problems between the two neighbors have been disturbing bilateral relations for decades. They were exploited by weak governments in both countries especially during 1980s and 1990s to generate domestic popularity considering the emotional approach existed in both Turkish and Greek societies. Of them, the Aegean Sea problem consists of several interlinked disputes, namely territorial waters, continental shelf and air-space related problems. In terms of territorial waters, whereas the Greeks claim that, though currently operating a six-mile limit, they entitled to a twelve-mile territorial sea both for their mainland and for their numerous islands in the Aegean, the Turks regards it as a *casus belli* on the grounds that if a 12 mile limit is implemented, there would be no room of movement for Turkey in the Aegean and it would turn into completely a Greek lake. Continental shelf in the Aegean has been viewed valuable as it allows the coastal state to exercise exclusive rights of exploration and exploitation of resources (e.g. oil and natural gas) under the seabed. At the heart of the continental shelf dispute lies the fact that Greece and Turkey have never had a delimitation agreement in the Aegean, therefore there exists no maritime boundaries between the two countries. While the Greeks argue that most of the Aegean continental shelf belonged to them owing to the numerous Greek islands and deny any Turkish right in areas to the west of the Greek islands, the Turks argue that much of the Aegean continental shelf is geologically an extension of the Anatolian mainland, thus it should be delimited on an equitable basis. Moreover, the width of the national airspace is another theme of dispute between the two neighbors. Whereas Greece claims 10 miles national airspace in the Aegean, Turkey acknowledges only 6 miles. Finally, based on conflicting interpretations of the rules about Flight Information Right (FIR) set by International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the right of Greece to exercise flight control over Turkish military activities within the international parts of the Aegean is also a controversial issue between Ankara and Athens. Mustafa Aydın, "Cacophony in the Aegean; Contemporary Turkish-Greek Relations," *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol.XXVII, (1997): 115-121. Patricia Carley, "U.S. Foreign Policy and the Future of Greek-Turkish Relations," in *Greek-Turkish Relations and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Tozun Bahçeli et al., United States Institute of Peace, Peaceworks No.17, Washington, (August 1997), 1-20.

The starting point of the Cyprus problem was the Greek efforts to unite Cyprus with Greece and Turkey's opposition to protect the rights of the Turkish minority on the island. As of 1950s, several crises were occurred between the Turks and Greeks in this context. With Turkey's intervention in the island in 1974, the problem gained a new dimension. The Turkish side declared its independence in 1982 and it was recognized only by Ankara, while almost all of other states in the world recognize the Greek side as the legitimate state on the Cyprus Island.

⁴⁷⁸ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 72-73.

Plan.⁴⁷⁹ However, although 65 percent of the Turkish Cypriots voted in favor of the Annan Plan, 75 percent of the Greek Cypriots voted against the Plan on 24 April 2004 and thereby showed their determination towards deadlock.⁴⁸⁰ The admittance of the Greek Cypriots to the European Union in May 2004 despite the lack of solution in the island has changed the context and dynamics of the Cyprus issue in important respects. In this manner, Cyprus has become the major issue in Turkish–EU relations,⁴⁸¹ and consequently, the focus of attention on Cyprus has shifted from Washington to Brussels.⁴⁸²

Simultaneous to the accession of Cyprus into the EU, U.S. attention to the Cyprus question has also declined.⁴⁸³ “While the United States remains committed to its position that the problem should be solved, its focus has been on pursuing joint policy goals with Turkey in other areas without the Cyprus problem getting in the way. This is not only because it gives a much higher priority to the other issues on which it cooperates closely with Turkey, but also because it does not have a sense of urgency about this “frozen conflict,” particularly after the collapse of the UN effort” between 2002 and 2004.⁴⁸⁴

On the other hand, though the US administration has appreciated the positive contribution Ankara made to the peace process by supporting the Annan plan, Turkish policy makers find this attitude of Washington insufficient and expect the Americans to put greater pressure on the Greek Cypriot side, which was rewarded with the EU membership, their rejection of the UN plan notwithstanding. Whereas the Greek Cypriots have utilized the prerogatives of international recognition and used its EU membership as a political leverage against Turkey, the Turkish side felt disappointed as it could not receive a recompense for its efforts, and because the promises were not kept with respect to the international recognition of the Turkish Cypriots.⁴⁸⁵

In recent years, as the Greek Cypriot administration has conducted oil and gas exploration in the south of the island and has concluded oil and gas agreements to this end with the Mediterranean countries, it has faced a fierce Turkish opposition and its activities led to a new tension in the region.⁴⁸⁶ “Turkey has assertively opposed efforts by the Republic of Cyprus and other Eastern Mediterranean countries—most notably Israel—to agree upon a division of offshore energy drilling rights before Cyprus’s political future is resolved. In response to drilling initiated in September 2011 by the Republic of Cyprus in the Aphrodite

⁴⁷⁹ The Annan Plan was a United Nations proposal to resolve the Cyprus question. The plan suggested to restructure the Republic of Cyprus as a “United Republic of Cyprus” and stipulated a federation of two states, the Turks and Greeks.

⁴⁸⁰ Jim Zanotti, “Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations,” 26

⁴⁸¹ For an analysis of how the Cyprus question on EU-Turkey relations see: Aksu, “Turkish-Greek Relations and the Cyprus Question: Quo Vadis?,” 216-219.

⁴⁸² Larrabee, “Turkey as a U.S. Security Partner,” 14-15.

⁴⁸³ Carol Migdalovitz, “Turkey: Selected Foreign Policy Issues and U.S. Views,” CRS Report for Congress, August 29, 2008, accessed 22.12.2013, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL34642.pdf>, 13.

⁴⁸⁴ Aliriza and Aras, “U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning,” 18.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ James Kanter, “Race for Gas by Cypriot Rivals Adds to Tensions,” **New York Times**, 30.08.2012, accessed 15.09.2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/31/world/europe/in-cyprus-race-for-natural-gas-adds-to-tensions.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>. Stephen Glain, “Gas Field Off of Cyprus Stokes Tensions with Turkey,” **New York Times**, 12.12.2012, accessed 19.09.2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/13/world/middleeast/gas-field-off-of-cyprus-stokes-tensions-with-turkey.html?pagewanted=all>. İpek Yezdani, “Turkish-Greek Cypriot disputes to grow next year,” **Hürriyet Daily News**, 19.11.2012, accessed 16.11.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-greek-cypriot-disputes-to-grow-next.aspx?pageID=238&nid=34943>.

gas field off Cyprus's southern coast, Turkey sent its own seismic research ships with a naval escort to the waters off the Cypriot shore in agreement with the Turkish Cypriot regime. Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots oppose Greek Cypriot drilling without a solution to the larger question of the island's unification."⁴⁸⁷ Against these developments, "the United States has voiced concern about tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly because the Greek Cypriot offshore drilling is being conducted by Texas Company Noble Energy."⁴⁸⁸ "Washington is also concerned about the dangers of a new arena of confrontation between Turkey and Israel because of the latter's growing cooperation with the Greek Cypriots, as they both exploit gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean."⁴⁸⁹

To sum up, while the relations between Turkey and Greece gained a relative stability particularly in the EU membership process of Turkey, unresolved issues, such as the Aegean, and Cyprus problems might threaten Turkish-Greek relations and thus such issues might occupy again the Turkish-US agenda. Despite the strong efforts of the Erdoğan leadership in accordance with its new foreign policy paradigm to settle the Cyprus question and to get rid of this impediment in international relations, it fell short of getting a positive result. Additionally, since the Turkish and Greek communities are a long way from reaching a negotiated settlement based on a bi-zonal and bi-communal federal arrangement, the Cyprus question continues to be another potential flash point and retains the potential to affect Turkey-U.S. relations negatively, especially in view of the strong Greek lobby in the United States which is directly interested in the issues related to Turkey and Greece.⁴⁹⁰

5.13. Balkans dimension of Turkey-U.S. relations

Balkans has been a stable cooperation area in terms of Turkey-US relations in the aftermath of the Cold War. Close cooperation developed during the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts in 1990s continued in the 2000s particularly in the field of ensuring security and stability. However, since the resolution of the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts as well as the problems in Macedonia, U.S. interest in the Balkans has been eroded and consequently, the level of cooperation between Washington and Ankara has been less intensive in comparison to 1990s.⁴⁹¹ Nevertheless, this cooperation continues at a certain level. For instance, both Ankara and Washington supported the independence efforts of Kosovo during 2000s and while the U.S. became the second country after Costa Rica to recognize Kosovo when it declared independence on February 17, 2008, Turkey became the third to recognize it.⁴⁹²

Even though the U.S. interest in the Balkans relatively decreased in the new millennium,⁴⁹³ it is a significant region for Washington particularly owing to the NATO connection. One of the most important missions of the NATO is ensuring the European

⁴⁸⁷ Zanotti, "Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations," 26

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., 26

⁴⁸⁹ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 17.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 18

⁴⁹¹ Mehmet Özkan, "Balkanlardaki Politikamızı Duygusalıktan Kurtarmalıyız," SETA (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research), 19.02.2013, accessed 22.12.2013, <http://setav.org/tr/balkanlardaki-politikamizi-duygusaliktan-kurtarmaliyiz/yorum/4496>. Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 19.

⁴⁹² Kader Özlem, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde ABD'nin ve Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikalarının Bosna Hersek, Kosova ve Makedonya Krizleri Örneğinde İncelenmesi" Trakya University, Journal of Balkan Research Institute, Volume 1, Number 1, (December 2012): 32

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 36.

security. Therefore, considering its strategic importance for the security of Europe, the NATO and indirectly the United States would never disregard the security and stability of the Balkans. Furthermore, the Balkans has always carried a great crisis potential due to its historical ties, strategic location as well as the interest of some particular countries, like Russia and some of the EU member states.⁴⁹⁴ Together with the EU, the US administration aims to take this unstable region under control over time which may pose in the long run a threat to the security and order of Europe. Washington seeks also to integrate the regional countries into the Euro-Atlantic institutions and, in this way, to hamper potential crises requiring NATO intervention.⁴⁹⁵

In terms of its geostrategic location, connecting Turkey to Europe, the Balkans is a significant region for Ankara as well. Additionally, just like during the Özal era, Erdoğan leadership views Turkey's existing cultural and historical as well as social ties with the Balkans as a significant part of new Turkish identity and feels itself responsible for the former subject people of the Ottomans, especially Bosnians and Kosovons. This increases Turkish interest in the peace and stability of the region. For instance, as Turkish FM Ahmet Davutoğlu stated, there were more Bosnians in Turkey than in Bosnia-Herzegovina and more Albanians than in Kosovo.⁴⁹⁶ In fact, Turkey's close interest in the region is not a new phenomenon, because the Balkans was one of the most significant application fields of the so called neo-Ottomanist foreign policy approach during the Özal era of early 1990s. The Erdoğan leadership reiterates particularly since the mid 2000s a similar approach, and aims at enhanced cooperation and integration with the Balkans as with other surrounding areas. "Since the AK Party government feels, in tune with its foreign policy paradigm, responsible towards this geography which remained under Ottoman rule for several centuries, through its activism in the Balkans, Turkey has been seeking to create bilateral and multilateral dialogue mechanisms"⁴⁹⁷ and contribute to the peace and stability in the region. The Balkans gained a renewed place in TFP agenda particularly after 2008. "Having highlighted the risks posed by the West's neglect of the ongoing inter-communal tensions and inability to establish a sustainable peace in Bosnia, (Foreign Minister) Davutoğlu initiated preventive diplomacy in an effort to prevent the outbreak of a new conflict."⁴⁹⁸

In recent years, the most constructive initiative of Ankara to ensure peace and stability in the Balkans as well as to normalize the relations between Sarajevo and Belgrade has been the formation of the Trilateral Consultation Mechanism of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in October 2009.⁴⁹⁹ It is evaluated that this mechanism operated at the level of foreign ministers repeatedly has made a significant contribution to the peace in the region.⁵⁰⁰ In this context, a Tripartite Balkans Summit was held on 24th April 2010 in Istanbul with the participation of the Heads of States of Turkey, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the end of the Summit which had brought the leaders of Serbia and Bosnia together for the first time since the war, the Istanbul declaration was

⁴⁹⁴ F.Stephan Larrabee, U.S. Policy in the Balkans: From Containment to Reengagement, Santa Monica RP-713, (1988): 8

⁴⁹⁵ Tayyar Arı & Ferhat Pirinççi, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında ABD'nin Balkan Politikası," Alternatif Politika, Cilt.3, Sayı.1, (1-30 Mayıs 2011): 25-26

⁴⁹⁶ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 17.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 41.

⁴⁹⁹ Official Website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 17, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-with-the-balkan-region.en.mfa>.

⁵⁰⁰ Loic Poulain and Akis Sakellariou, "Western Balkans: is Turkey back?" CSIS, 25.04.2011, accessed 22.12.2013, <http://csis.org/blog/western-balkans-turkey-back>.

issued.⁵⁰¹ With this declaration, while three Balkan countries pledged to improve cooperation and work towards EU integration, Ankara appeared as a key player in the stability of Southeastern Europe. Furthermore, aiming for a psychological breakthrough in the region, which suffered from wars, ethnic conflicts and destruction in the previous century, Turkey has achieved a considerable progress in improving previously difficult relations with Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece. AK Party government attaches also a great importance to promoting regional cooperation through the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) and seeks to lay foundations for economic interdependence with a view to ensuring peace and stability in the region. All of Turkish activities in the Balkans aim to buttress regional peace and stability.⁵⁰²

Turkish-US interests pertaining to the Balkans overlap in many respects, particularly in terms of ensuring security and stability in the region. Therefore, the U.S. welcomes Turkey's efforts to in the region. Furthermore, Ankara's perspective on the Balkans has been to encourage the integration of all countries of the region to the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions which also parallels American objectives.⁵⁰³ Additionally, "energy security in the Balkans is also a major concern for both the United States and Turkey. Turkey's potential contribution through various pipeline projects is an example of Turkish-American cooperation in this region."⁵⁰⁴

As a result, the Balkans has been an important region for the global power, the United States, owing to its geostrategic location. However, it has become a zone of secondary importance to Washington following the NATO enlargement and the acquisition of military bases in the Balkans. By contrast, this region matters for the Erdoğan leadership in many respects, including historically, ethnically, religiously as well as strategically. Thus, in line with its recent foreign policy paradigm, Ankara has been making attempts to secure peace and stability in the region and its initiatives generally receive support also from the American administration. After all, the procurement and maintenance of security and stability in the Balkans, is important also for the United States. Hence, the Balkans sustains its position of being a stable cooperation area for Turkey and the United States.

5.14. Economic relations of Turkey and the U.S.

Economic relations continue to be the weakest link in Turkish-American relations in the 2000s as well. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, economy has been occupying a significant place in TFP agenda since early 1980s, when export-oriented development model was adopted under the Turgut Özal leadership. In this connection, Ankara sought to develop its economic relations with Washington alongside the already advanced military and security oriented ties. The famous slogan of PM Turgut Özal on this subject at that time is still remembered: "trade not aid." Although the US-Turkish economic bonds have progressed considerably in consequence of Özal's efforts and of the focus of the U.S. on big emerging markets that included Turkey in the early 1990s, the situation has not changed much, hence

⁵⁰¹ Official website of the South East European Cooperation Process, Turkish Chairmanship in Office 2009-2010, "24 April Istanbul Trilateral Summit Declaration, 24.04.2010, accessed 12.12.2013, <http://www.seecp-turkey.org/icerik.php?no=60>.

⁵⁰² Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 19.

⁵⁰³ Official Website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed 18.12.2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-with-the-balkan-region.en.mfa>

⁵⁰⁴ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 19.

U.S.-Turkish economic relations remain far behind the level of political strategic/military relations.⁵⁰⁵

Turkey has demonstrated in the decade since 2002 a serious economic growth performance with an average annual growth of 5.45%.⁵⁰⁶ Though nearly the whole world was affected from the economic crisis emerged initially in the United States in 2008, the Turkish economy maintained its growth. In parallel with this performance, Turkey's foreign trade volume has expanded dramatically as well. While the Turkish foreign trade volume was around \$82.776 billion in 2000, it reached, with almost five-fold increase, \$389 billion in 2012.⁵⁰⁷ However, Turkish-American trade volume has not mounted with the same speed. Whereas it was \$7,046 billion in 2000, this number has come to \$19,31billion in 2012 which indicates that Turkey-U.S. trade has increased less than three-fold.⁵⁰⁸

Turkey exported \$5.6 billion to the United States in 2012 with an increase of 22.5% compared to the previous year, while imported \$14.131billion with 11.9% decrease in comparison with 2011. Whilst the U.S. has constituted the 9th biggest market for Turkish products, it is the fourth country that Turkey has imported most in 2012.⁵⁰⁹ It is easily visible in the figures that foreign trade balance has continued to be to the disadvantage of Turkey as for decades, which lies mostly in the sales by U.S. aviation and defense industries to Turkey.⁵¹⁰ With the figures of 2012, whereas the Americans has been the fifth biggest partner of the Turks in terms of foreign trade volume,⁵¹¹ Turkey's share in US trade seems trivial, with 4 per thousand in American foreign trade of around \$4.931 trillion.⁵¹² Furthermore, in terms of foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to Turkey, the United States ranked fifth in 2011, and its share in the overall total FDI of \$11.1 billion was only \$1.4 billion or 12.6 percents. In order to improve this situation, Turkish policy makers has been demanding from their American counterparts to designate Turkey as one of the six preferential markets in the World, yet this request has received so far no positive response from Washington.⁵¹³

Although economic bonds remained behind political and military relations, a joint desire for the improvement of economic relationship has been on the agenda for both Turkish and American authorities.⁵¹⁴ With a similar understanding, the Framework for Strategic Economic and Commercial Cooperation (FSECC) was established by Presidents Gül and Obama in 2009 and is the only Cabinet-level mechanism for discussion of U.S.-Turkish

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁶ Association of Treasury Controllers, Output&Growth, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3432.htm> , (accessed 26.02.2013).

⁵⁰⁷ Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, <http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=7155BE01-D8D3-8566-45208351967592CF> (accessed 26.02.2013).

⁵⁰⁸ Turkish Statistical Institute, Foreign Trade Statistics, http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?alt_id=12 , (accessed 26.02.2013)

⁵⁰⁹ Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, <http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=7155BE01-D8D3-8566-45208351967592CF> (accessed 26.02.2013).

⁵¹⁰ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 19.

⁵¹¹ Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, <http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=7155BE01-D8D3-8566-45208351967592CF> (accessed 26.02.2013).

⁵¹² U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services, December 2012, accessed 26.02.2013, <http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/international/trade/tradnewsrelease.htm>.

⁵¹³ Aliriza and Aras, "U.S.-Turkish Relations, a Review at the Beginning," 20.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., 19.

commercial and economic relations.⁵¹⁵ Institutionalized bilateral mechanisms such as the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement, bilateral investment and tax treaties, as well as a variety of high-level dialogues, including the FSECC and Economic Partnership Commission indicate the joint will to develop Turkish-American economic ties.⁵¹⁶

In sum, “the significantly low level of investments in both directions and the slowly increasing, but still limited level of bilateral trade volumes do not help change the perception of Turkey for the US policy-makers only as a political and strategic pivotal actor. The lack of economic elements supports the traditional and Cold War era perception of this partnership, which prevents new openings that might significantly contribute to reshaping it with the new realities on the ground.” Stated differently, less-developed economic ties hinder the development of interdependency by adding a strong economic dimension to the long-standing alliance relationship. Finally “the lack of economic foundations in the larger picture makes this partnership more vulnerable to political fluctuations and considerations in both countries.”⁵¹⁷

5.15. Military relations

Turkish-American military relations have traditionally been at a high level since the early years of the Cold War and constituted the strongest link of bilateral relations. In the wake of the Cold War yet, military relations have suffered a setback at some dimensions. For instance, whereas approximately 15.000 US soldiers were deployed in the Incirlik Base in southern Turkey towards the end of 1980s, this figure has declined to 2000 today. Moreover, in accordance with its self-confident and relatively independent FP paradigm, Turkey has set serious limitations to the American operations to be conducted from the Incirlik Air Base and modified its stance towards the use of the base mainly for logistic purposes. Thus, the Washington administration "cannot automatically assume that it can use Incirlik for purposes beyond those spelled out in the 1980 Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement, particularly combat missions in the Middle East."⁵¹⁸

Considering the issue in terms of cooperation on defense industry, whereas Turkey had possessed an "infant" defense industry before entering into the NATO, after joining the Alliance, it left its domestic industry aside, sought to modernize its army by means of NATO as well as American assistance and preferred to meet its needs through import and foreign assistance. The fallacy of this policy was proved in the wake of the Johnson letter of 1964 and the American arms embargo imposed on Turkey due to the Cyprus Peace Operation of 1974. Consequently, Turkish policy makers began to give more weight to the development of domestic defense industry and thereby to decrease the dependence on import and foreign aid. Özal era witnessed in this respect a major breakthrough in terms of improving Turkish defense industry. Özal leadership stimulated the investment of foreign firms in Turkish defense industry with a view to realizing technology transfer and ensured the establishment of joint ventures in Turkey by foreign companies. Through the joint venture model, cooperation

⁵¹⁵ U.S.-Turkey Framework for Strategic Economic and Commercial Cooperation (FSECC), Embassy of the United States, Ankara-Turkey, 26.06.2012, accessed 26.02.2013, http://turkey.usembassy.gov/fscecc_ankara_2012.html.

⁵¹⁶ U.S. Department of State, U.S. Relations with Turkey, Fact Sheet, 07.01.2013, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3432.htm>.

⁵¹⁷ Özel, Yılmaz and Akyüz, “Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations ,” 81-82.

⁵¹⁸ Larrabee, “Troubled Partnership,” 80-82.

with the American companies was also ensured and in this way, for instance, manufacture of some parts of the F-16 fighter jets and their assembly were completed in Turkey. In this manner, Turkey sought simultaneously to meet the needs of Turkish army as well as to obtain export revenues by selling them to other countries, like Egypt.⁵¹⁹

Efforts to develop domestic defense industry continued throughout the 1990s as well as 2000s. However, as in the 1980s, the Cyprus question and allegations of human rights violations in Turkey continued to cast shadow over the military relations of Ankara and Washington. The US Congress delayed or prevented a number of major weapons sales to Turkey on the grounds of its policy towards Cyprus and its human rights policy. Therefore, one might infer that the role of Congress has maintained its damaging role on U.S. Turkish-defense cooperation.⁵²⁰ Moreover, the strained relations due to the motion crisis of 2003 and the U.S. disregard of Turkish requests until the end of 2007 to support its fight against the PKK as well as the pro-Israeli US stance during the Mavi Marmara crisis indicated that the U.S. was not much reliable in terms of security and this reinforced Turkish policy makers' determination to improve Turkey's own defense industry. Therefore, without destroying the military ties with the U.S.,⁵²¹ Ankara has been seeking to foster its own defense industry and decrease its dependence on import. On the other hand, given the limitations imposed by US regulations on some technology transfers as well as the blockade of the American Congress, US arms producers have failed to compete with other suppliers from rival countries in tenders for supplying arms and equipment to the Turkish army.⁵²²

Turkey has been investing huge amounts of money both in research and development projects as well as in the joint projects with foreign companies. In this framework, "Turkey has undertaken joint projects with Italy and South Korea to produce attack helicopters and main battle tanks, respectively, as well as developing national warship and unmanned aerial vehicle projects. Partly as a reaction to the exclusion of US producers from defense contracts, the United States is said to be reluctant to sell some advanced weapons systems to Turkey, which arguably has led to deficiencies in Turkey's anti-terrorism struggle."⁵²³ Turkish major efforts notwithstanding, it has still not been able to finish its military dependence on the United States, particularly in intelligence gathering, anti-missile defense systems, and attack helicopters. Ironically, this dependence plays a stabilizer role in Ankara-Washington bonds and acts as a brake against a total breakdown in bilateral relations.⁵²⁴

In spite of the independent FP practices of the Erdoğan leadership, the deep-rooted ties of Turkey and the United States in the field of defense industry might be regarded as one of the main stabilizers of bilateral relations. However, anti-Turkey stance of the US Congress as well as the US laws restricting the technology transfer to other countries put the American

⁵¹⁹ Adnan Karakuş, "Türk Savunma Sanayiinin Gelişimi, Türkiye'nin Savunma Harcamalarının Boyutları ve Bazı NATO Ülkeleri ile Karşılaştırmalı Ekonometrik Analizi" (Development of Turkish Defense Industry, Dimensions of Turkey's Defense Spending and comparative econometric analysis with some NATO countries), (master thesis, Military Academy, Defense Sciences Institute, Department of Operational Research, Ankara 2006), 73-76.

⁵²⁰ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 77.

⁵²¹ For instance, "Turkey is set to buy new fighter aircraft and related services worth \$15 billion over the next 10-15 years, including 100 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters, 30 F-16s, and the modernization of older Turkish F-16s." Ümit Enginsoy and Burak Ege Bekdil, "Turkey Increasingly Shuns US Weapons," **Defense News**, July 7, 2007b.

⁵²² Kardeş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 46-47.

⁵²³ Ibid., 47

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

firms in a disadvantageous position in competition with South Korean and Italian companies. Turkish army is in trouble especially to purchase critical equipments from the United States in fight against terrorism. For example, even though the Pentagon announced its decision to sell the AH-1 Super Cobra helicopters to Turkey,⁵²⁵ the sale has still not been materialized. As such, there is also no significant development on Predators issue, another important subject on the US-Turkish agenda. Ankara has been intending to buy American unmanned aerial vehicle Predators since 2008, yet it has been facing again the blockade of US Congress.⁵²⁶ Ambitious in developing its national defense industry, Turkey has been collaborating with companies of other countries outside the United States, thereby aims for technology transfer and to increase the domestic share in meeting its defense needs.

In consequence, Turkish defense industry sustained the strategy introduced in the Özal era and accomplished to produce the T-129 ATAK helicopter in the 2000s. Additionally, tanks, unmanned aerial vehicles, warships (the MILGEM Project) and medium-range missile systems (e.g. 2.75-inch laser-guided missile CIRIT, the anti-tank long-range and medium-range MIZRAK-U and MIZRAK-O, Stand-Off Missile (SOM)) could be produced with domestic capabilities. While the ratio of domestic production in the military procurement total was only 20 percent in 2004, it reached 52.1 percent in 2010.⁵²⁷ Consequently, the accomplishments both in economy and defense industry fields have constituted two important elements increasing the self confidence of the Erdoğan leadership.

Another dimension of Turkish-American military relations has been occurring under the NATO umbrella. In this respect, Turkey's reflexes have varied from those during the Cold War in parallel with the transformation in TFP and complications in Turkey-NATO relations became more visible. In fact, Turkey has repeatedly announced that NATO is still the backbone of its security and defense policies. "In this regard, for instance, it became a major contributor to peace support operations, took a leading role in the Partnership for Peace program and supported the Alliance's transformation."⁵²⁸ However, seeking to pursue a more influential policy in its region in the post-Cold War process and to foster its bonds with neighbors, the Erdoğan leadership has adopted an attitude aiming to have more weight in the Alliance and demanding to be treated as an equal partner like all other members. Turkey's initial effort to block the selection of Danish PM Anders Fogh Rasmussen as NATO Secretary General because of his role in the widely publicized Islamic cartoon crisis in 2006,⁵²⁹ Ankara's avoid of approving the return of France to NATO's integrated command structure until 2009, its opposition to the NATO missile shield project up to September 2011 and its restriction of the American ships' entrance in the Black Sea without conceding the rules of the Montreux convention during the 2008 Russia-Georgia war might be explained only in this context.

However, aside from the divergence of opinion on the Georgia Crisis of 2008, it is hard to call such events as "crisis" in terms of Turkey-US relations as they hardly led to deep

⁵²⁵"US agrees to sell three helicopters to Turkey," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 02.11.2011, accessed 26.12.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/us-agrees-to-sell-three-helicopters-to-turkey.aspx?pageID=438&n=us-agrees-to-sell-three-helicopters-to-turkey-2011-11-02>.

⁵²⁶ Ümit Enginsoy, "U.S.-Turkish military cooperation not without problems," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 09.08.2012, accessed 26.12.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/us-turkish-military-cooperation-not-without-problems.aspx?pageID=449&nID=27365&NewsCatID=440>.

⁵²⁷"Murad Bayar: TSK'nın dış bağımlılığı yarıya düştü," **Bugün**, 21.08.2013, accessed 26.12.2013, <http://gundem.bugun.com.tr/savunmaya-mill-i-damga-haberi/764664>.

⁵²⁸ Kardeş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 46.

⁵²⁹ Larrabee, "Troubled Partnership," 86.

crises in Ankara-Washington relations. To the contrary, Turkey usually withdrew its objections after the United States involved in the issues and indicated that it did not desire its ties neither with the United States nor with the NATO to be damaged.⁵³⁰ For instance, Ankara removed its objection on the selection of Rasmussen as NATO Secretary General in the wake of Obama's intervention in the subject.⁵³¹ Similarly, Ankara gave its consent to the NATO missile shield project despite its improving relations with Tehran and Moscow and the rising objections from these capitals. Although it tried to take the sensitivities of Russia and Iran into consideration,⁵³² in the final analysis, Turkey has used its preferences in favor of its traditional ally, the United States and NATO.

Consequently, with its high self-confidence, the Erdoğan leadership conducts a proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy. This reality has also had some reflections on the relations with NATO. Turkey has raised its voice on NATO-related issues with a view to increasing its role and weigh in the NATO. In recent years however, Ankara-NATO relations have revived in parallel with the progress in Turkey-U.S. relations as well. As a matter of fact, Turkey's permission to the deployment of the radar system on its territory in the framework of NATO Missile Defense System led to the comments of a new "Golden Era" in Turkey-Alliance relationship.⁵³³ Additionally, upon Ankara's request of the Patriot missile systems against the potential threats from Syria, the Patriots have been deployed in southern Turkey and this has also become a significant factor which has consolidated the description of "Golden Era."⁵³⁴

5.16. Conclusion

By contrast with the 1990s, the beginning of new millennium witnessed serious fluctuations in terms of Turkey-United States relations which rooted mostly in the issues related to the third countries. In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the US administration focused its attention on the Middle East, more precisely on the countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Iran. Therefore, as a country sharing common borders with the countries in question, the new orientation and foreign policy approach of the United States closely influenced Turkey, and Ankara-Washington relations revolved mostly around the issues in the Middle East.

Defining Turkey as a central state with multiple identities, the Erdoğan leadership has drawn a parallel in terms of Turkey's efficacy in the east and the west. Accordingly, the more weigh it has in the east, the more value it would be attached by the western states. Moreover, considering its historical and geographic depth, it has been argued that a central state would not be able to avert its face away from the events happening around it, especially in the territories with which Turkey shares common history and culture. Such an identity description and the great targets to make Turkey a global player have brought about an interest definition which stipulates leaving aside the passivist and reactive attitude and underscores the necessity

⁵³⁰ Kardaş, "Turkish-American Relations in the 2000s," 46.

⁵³¹ "Obama'nın hatırına Rasmussen'e evet," **Radikal**, 05.04.2009, accessed 11.11.2013, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=929591&CategoryID=100>

⁵³² "Ankara will not harm Tehran," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 17.11.2011. "Türk topraklarından komşularımıza saldırılmasına izin vermeyiz," **Hürriyet**, 05.01.2012, accessed 11.11.2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/planet/19606953.asp>

⁵³³ Ömer Taşpınar, "Türkiye-ABD ilişkileri 2012'de zorlandı," **Sabah**, 31.12.2012, accessed 15.11.2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Yazarlar/taspinar/2012/12/31/turkiyeabd-iliskileri-2012de-zorlandi>

⁵³⁴ "NATO, Türkiye-Suriye sınırına Patriot kararını onayladı," **BBC Türkçe**, 4.12.2012, accessed 19.11.2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2012/12/121204_nato_patriot_update2.shtml

of a multi-dimensional, initiative-taking proactive foreign policy approach for the Erdoğan leadership.⁵³⁵

Adopting a multi-dimensional, self-confident and independent foreign policy approach, while it has been trying to give priority to its own interests, Erdoğan leadership has sought in the 2000s to conduct a balanced foreign policy in terms of the relations with global powers instead of a strict pro-western diplomatic approach as in the Cold War era. This approach has signaled that the Cold War mentality of the state elite which sustained its influence throughout the 1990s was being replaced by a new and self-confident mindset which was giving prominence to its own interests and seeking a more equal relationship with the United States instead of a hierarchical one of the Cold War era. This demand on the other hand has caused a fluctuating relationship model between the two allies.

The first serious test in the Erdoğan era with respect to the relations with the U.S. took place on the occasion of the March 1 governmental motion. Even though the Erdoğan leadership intended to allow the US army to invade Iraq from north by using Turkish territory, the Turkish Parliament refused the governmental bill on March 1, 2003. Thereby, Erdoğan leadership fell short of achieving to realize its policy due to a number of reasons explained above and this culminated in an unusual recession process in the alliance history of both countries. Stated differently, it might be argued that the anti-war norm predominated in Turkey and the Muslim-conservative identity of the Turkish society prevailed over Erdoğan leadership's active FP aspirations about Iraq and its northern part in particular. In the recession process which was ignited by the crisis of motion, as the constructivism strongly underlines, the meaning of their alliance and the correspondingly converging or diverging interests began to be re-assessed at the ideational level.

In the post 2003 period, although Turkey has gradually demanded to be seen as an equal partner of the United States, the unilateral foreign policy style of the Bush administration tended to sustain the Cold War habits and expected Turkey to adjust its position to the American policies as in the Cold War era. When Ankara did not meet its expectations, the neo-conservative US government wanted to punish Turkey and did not respond Turkish demands positively especially in terms of the chronic terrorism trouble of Turkey. This turbulent period in the bilateral relations gained a new dimension as of November 2007 and entered into a transition process. Nevertheless, it is hardly possible to evaluate that relations were smooth in this period. Obama's victory in the elections of presidency has signaled a new term considering the mutual-construction of the long-standing alliance. In addition to the commonalities as regards the foreign policy approaches, Obama leadership has demonstrated a consenting attitude towards the Erdoğan leadership's active and independent FP practices and tried to make use of it. Furthermore, an additional value has been attached to Turkey's identity which proves that Islam and democracy can co-exist. In this regard, Turkey has been depicted by the US government as a model for the Muslim world. Moreover, the long-standing alliance relationship between the two countries has been qualified by the Obama leadership as a "model partnership" for the Islamic world. The common norms that Erdoğan and Obama leaderships share such as multilateralism and

⁵³⁵ Prime Minister Erdoğan expressed in his visit to Malaysia on January 10, 2014: "We as Turkey have preferred not to follow the silence of the dominant powers but preferred the legacy that our history, civilization and ancestors impose us. (T.b.A.)" In this manner, he explicitly declared how his identity definition attaching importance to Turkey's historical and cultural ties reflected on foreign policy approach. "Özgürlüğün olmadığı yerde...!" *Zaman*, 10.01.2014, accessed 11.02.2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_ozgurlugun-olmadigi-verde_2192689.html.

emphasis of diplomacy in the solution of problems as well as the spread of democratic norms in the Middle East paved the way for the development of relations. Even though the interests and policies of both countries were not identical, a clear dynamism in bilateral relations was visible after President Obama took the office. In addition, Turkey maintained its policy during the Obama era as well which had been implying its willingness to sustain a partnership with the U.S. on the basis of equality.

However, contrary to the expectations for the development of bilateral relations, 2010 witnessed several disputes between Ankara and Washington, as it was seen in the case of Iran's nuclear program and the Mavi Marmara event. Together with Brazil, Turkey's "no" vote to the sanctions against Iran in the UN Security Council gave rise to discontent in Washington. Whilst the members of the AK Party government tried to explain this "no" with moral values (accordingly, it would be an unprincipled behavior to ignore an agreement signed with their intensive contribution), American officials avoided as much as possible to make Turkey's attitude a subject of criticism and thereby showed that they were not willing to see another crisis similar to the one experienced in March 2003. In fact, such disputes have implied once again that Ankara has been conducting its foreign relations no longer on the basis of Cold War parameters and that it was inclined to see the end of the hierarchical order of the Cold War times. Whereas such demands for equality were not widely acknowledged by the Bush administration, Obama's approach highlighting dialogue and multilateralism has seemed closer to Turkey's demands.

Liberation movements in the Middle East have re-approached the interests of the two countries again in 2011. As previously detailed, the so called Arab spring led to the rise of identity politics in the Middle East region. In the face of the democratic demands of the Arab peoples, with its conservative Muslim-democrat identity, Erdoğan leadership wanted to see similar regimes in the Muslim world where western and Islamic values can co-exist. In this context, Erdoğan leadership's interests converged with the US interests to side with the pro-democracy and human rights demands of the Arab people. However, there are still disagreements between Ankara and Washington about their policies towards the Middle East, e.g. the military putsch against the Morsi government took place in Egypt in July 2013 and how to deal with the Syrian problem.

On the other hand, varying intensities notwithstanding, as in the Özal era, Turkey and the United States have sustained their collaboration in the Erdoğan era as well in terms of their policies in the Central Asia, Caucasus and Balkans. While this cooperation has focused mainly on ensuring peace and stability as well as promoting the establishment of democratic regimes in these regions, it has encompassed also the economy field as it has been seen in the pipeline projects, like the BTC oil pipeline, the BTE gas pipeline and the TANAP project. However, whereas this US-Turkish collaboration took place in the Balkans relatively smoothly, Russia factor has caused on occasion disagreements between the two NATO allies. Turkey's strong economic ties with Moscow which reaches in the energy field nearly a level of dependency forces Ankara at least to a certain extent to remain neutral in the undeclared competition between Russia and the west. However, Ankara's ties with the West as well as its NATO commitments still constitute its priority engagement. This case was viewed especially during the Arab spring and Syria crisis. Even though Turkey has been developing its relations with its northern neighbor in economic, political and cultural terms, and tries to follow a balanced policy between Russia and the West, in the final analysis, the rising identity politics in the Middle East led Moscow and Ankara to side in different political camps.

In terms of economic relations, “the significantly low level of investments in both directions and the slowly increasing, but still limited level of bilateral trade volumes do not help change the perception of Turkey for the US policy-makers only as a political and strategic pivotal actor. The lack of economic elements supports the traditional and Cold War era perception of this partnership, which prevents new openings that might significantly contribute to reshaping it with the new realities on the ground.” Stated differently, less-developed economic ties hinder the development of interdependency by adding a strong economic dimension to bilateral relations. Finally “the lack of economic foundations in the larger picture makes this partnership more vulnerable to political fluctuations and considerations in both countries.”⁵³⁶

The accomplishments both in the economy and defense industry fields have been crucial in the self-confident foreign policy of the Erdoğan leadership. This self-confident approach has also had certain reflections on the relations with the North-Atlantic Alliance. With its self-confident identity structure and rising economic and technological power, Turkey has sought to increase its weigh within the NATO as well. However, it has been careful not to allow the emergence of a crisis between Ankara and the western alliance. In recent years, in parallel with the progress in Turkey-U.S. relations, Ankara-NATO relations have revived as well. As a matter of fact, Turkey's permission to the deployment of the radar system on its territory in the framework of NATO Missile Defense System led to the comments of a new "Golden Era" in Turkey-NATO relationship.⁵³⁷ Additionally, upon Ankara's request of the Patriot missile systems against the potential threats from Syria, the Patriots have been deployed in southern Turkey and this has also become a significant factor which has consolidated the description of "Golden Era."⁵³⁸

To sum up, with its high self-confidence rooted basically in Turkey's historical and regional depth, Erdoğan leadership has defined Turkey as a central country and specified its interests accordingly. In this respect, it has advocated that Turkey is a significant regional actor and it should follow an active and multi-dimensional foreign policy instead of a passivist and status quo oriented FP line. This approach has had reflections on the U.S.-Turkish relations as well. In this context, instead of engaging in the US foreign policy agenda as in the Cold War period, Turkey has exhibited in the new millennium a new foreign policy approach which gives priority to its own interests and foreign policy agenda not only on the issues related to the Middle East but also on the relations with Russia, Iran and Armenia. Therefore, Ankara has not hesitated to say "no" to the US demands in the cases that it deemed Turkish-American interests were not overlapping. While this attitude of Turkey led to a serious crisis in bilateral relations in the post-March 1 motion crisis, the two countries have felt the need over time to re-determine their ideas towards each other. Consequently, the interactions and troubles in the March 1, 2003 process have brought about the re-construction of ideas of the two actors about each other, just like it is argued in the mutual construction thesis of the constructivists. It has been understood in this process that the plans about Turkey would not be taken for granted as in the Cold War period. In terms of Turkey on the other hand, the changing political structure of the world and the emerging economy of Turkey consolidated the self confidence of the Erdoğan leadership who already has enjoyed it on account of Turkey's historical and cultural credentials.

⁵³⁶ Özel, Yılmaz and Akyüz, “Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations ,” 81-82.

⁵³⁷ Ömer Taşpınar, “Türkiye-ABD ilişkileri 2012’de zorlandı,” **Sabah**, 31.12.2012, accessed 21.11.2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Yazarlar/taspinar/2012/12/31/turkiyeabd-iliskileri-2012de-zorlandi>

⁵³⁸ “NATO, Türkiye-Suriye sınırına Patriot kararını onayladı,” **BBC Türkçe**, 4.12.2012, accessed 21.11.2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2012/12/121204_nato_patriot_update2.shtml

In the ongoing process, considering the new structure of bilateral relationship which was first severely shaken and got gradually back on the track, Ankara-Washington relations have been continuing to transform. In this process, the democratic nature of both countries led Turkey and the U.S. to define their interest as standing next to the democratic demands of the Arab peoples at least until the summer 2013. This identity-based convergence of interests triggered the beginning of a new golden era which resulted also in Turkey's positive response to the US demand in favor of the NATO missile shield project at the expense of its improving relations with Russia and Iran. All in all, being aware of the need they feel to each other, the bilateral relations take place today at the level of a "balanced" partnership.

CHAPTER 6: A GENERAL EVALUATION AS TO THE ACCURACY OF THE HYPOTHESES AND CONCLUSION

6.1. An analogy of Özal and Erdoğan foreign policies

This final chapter will be stressing two major subjects: 1) Firstly, the foreign policy commonalities as well as the differences of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships will be repeated briefly at the theoretical level. In doing this, the identity concept will keep its primary position as a point of reference to explain the foreign policy understandings of both leaderships. 2) Subsequently, the reflection of the theoretical approach to the practical level of each leadership will be handled in the case of Turkey-U.S. relations and the common as well as the diverging policy practices will be stressed in short. At this point, a reasonable explanation will be sought as to, why, despite their similar identity definitions, different policy practices emerged. Finally, the strong and weak sides of constructivism in explaining TFP of 1980s and 2000s will be highlighted.

It has been aimed in this dissertation to prove the thesis that constructivism and identity offer a great explanatory power for the analysis of foreign policy. In this context, it has been advocated that the distinctive foreign policy line observed in the Erdoğan era is actually an extension of the foreign policy line of the Özal era. It has been intended to prove that just like in the Özal period, along with exogenous reasons, indigenous factors like the identity of the groups coming to power in the country and their identity and interest perceptions have an essentially explanatory power for someone who seeks to comprehend the current distinctive foreign policy understanding of Turkey. Hence, it has been argued that without an appropriate analysis of identity and its transformation, a comprehensive explanation of the transformation of TFP in the last decade would be incomplete. It is also hypothesized that TFP has been undergoing a transformation process since the early years of the new millennium and there are several factors exerting influence on the transformation of Ankara's foreign policy understanding, ranging from leaders personalities to domestic dynamics and to changing international structure, among which the identity and interest definitions of the government members have a special place.

The focus of this dissertation has been mainly on the ruling Erdoğan leadership's foreign policy with an additional reference to the Turgut Özal era with a comparative approach. Therefore, while the impact of identity on foreign policy is analyzed, identities of the Turgut Özal and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan leaderships, both of whom come from Islamist backgrounds, were analyzed and the "middle way" they have developed in their political lives with respect to Islamist and Western values and the reflection of these "middle ways" to the TFP are discussed.

In this connection, the main research question followed in this study has been "is the Erdoğan leadership's foreign policy seriously "new" or it represents a continuity considering a foreign policy line which already exists in the past of the Turkish Republic¹ and how could it be explained with an identity based approach. While searching for answers to these questions, foreign policy paradigms as well as principles of Özal and Erdoğan terms have been analyzed

¹ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "İki Yüzyılın Hikâyesi: Türk Dış ve Güvenlik Politikasında Süreklilikler," in Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2009, Burhanettin Duran et al., (Ankara: SETA Yayınları XIII, Mart 2011), 623. Gülistan Gürbey, "Wandel in der Türkischen Aussenpolitik unter der AKP-Regierung?," Südosteuropa Mitteilungen, (02/2010). Ahmet Sözen, "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges," Turkish Studies, 11:1, (2010): 103-123.

by emphasizing the identities of both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships. Finally, as Ankara-Washington relations cover a wide area; Turkish-U.S. relations have been selected for empirical analysis. This long-standing alliance relationship offers a good opportunity for comparison because similar subjects retain their places in Turkish-U.S. agenda in both Özal and Erdoğan eras.

6.1.1. Theoretical level

Considering the common points of Özal and Erdoğan eras, one would realize that both leaders come from religious families and Islam constitutes a significant part of their identities. They both perform ritual prayers on a regular basis, their paths intersected at the Nakshibendi order of dervishes and their discourses bear the stamp of Islamic sources such as Quran and Hadith. They both have similar civilization understandings, that is, they represent an analogous line which does not deny Turkey's historical legacy stemming from the Ottoman past and share a similar point of view vis-à-vis the West. They are westernist indeed, yet in a different sense. Both consider that just as the East, the West has positive as well as negative sides. Therefore, without ignoring the "virtues" of their respective civilization, they adopt the modern/western values. Furthermore, a combination of their self-confident stances as regards the West with their Muslim identities paves the way for a multidimensional foreign policy, i.e. without changing the conventional direction of Turkey; they develop alternative relations with the Islamic world and other countries. Consequently, their common Muslim identities as well as their unique posture towards the western values bring them to a distinctive position.

Both leaderships have adopted a proactive foreign policy and associated it with the historical, cultural and geographical qualities of Turkey. One of the main elements of the Erdoğan era foreign policy philosophy has been the historical responsibility of Turkey in its region emanating from the Turkish history. More precisely saying, the Erdoğan leadership has been of the opinion that Turkey carries a responsibility on account of its historical bonds, particularly against the nations which lived in peace under the Ottoman rule for several centuries. This argument has been regarded by Erdoğan as the most important point of reference for his proactive foreign policy approach. This idea actually seems to a large extent in parallel with one of the main arguments of President Özal's ideas in the post-Cold War process in the face of the emerging events/conflicts in Turkey's region. President Özal's great efforts to stop the bloodshed in Bosnia during the Bosnia war were also a result of the historical sense of responsibility rooted in the Ottoman past which was named by some as "neo-Ottomanism." Therefore, the historical and cultural ties of Turkey constituted one of the main reasons pushing the Özal leadership towards a proactive policy as well.

Moreover, Turkey's geopolitical location has been also one of the basic reasons of proactive policy preferences of both leaderships. However, there is a rhetorical difference between Özal and Erdoğan leaderships' foreign policy approaches with respect to the geopolitical definition of the country. While the Erdoğan leadership defines Turkey as a "central country," Özal leadership defined it as a "bridge" between the east and west. Nevertheless, this rhetorical difference seems trivial when one reviews the reflections of these concepts to the policy field. As a matter of fact, both leaderships agree that the importance of Turkey in the eyes of the west is a positive function of its efficacy in the east. Consequently, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships converge on the point that the most appropriate policy option for Turkey has been a proactive one. In this respect, considering its historical and cultural ties as well as its geopolitical location, Turkey would not be able to afford to remain indifferent to

the events around it. Hence, a reactive and passive foreign policy is no longer an option for Ankara.

Furthermore, both leaderships have attached a considerable importance to ensure unity within the country by means of democratic reforms and regarded the strong domestic peace as a precondition of assertive foreign policy. Thus, they have taken very serious steps on the way of democratization of the country. Though it was in varying degrees, both leaderships have adopted a multi-dimensional foreign policy understanding. Likewise, both leaders are economists and economy has been among the top foreign policy priorities of both leaderships. Ensuring peace and stability in the region by means of constructing economic interdependencies has been another commonality of both leaderships. The strong leadership traits of Özal and Erdoğan have brought about the rise of their weight in the foreign policy arena as well. In this case, both leaderships' strong steps towards the democratization of the country as well as towards decreasing the weight of military and civil bureaucracies in the country have also played their roles.

On the other hand, although the role of identity is undeniable at the theoretical level, some differences emerge when it comes to the practical level. Because, the varying domestically and internationally shared ideas and norms might impose different policy practices, the similar identity and foreign policy goals notwithstanding. Additionally, one has to stress the role of psychological factors which have been ignored by the constructivists in terms of policy practices. From this point on, the practical level of Özal and Erdoğan foreign policy understandings will be handled and especially the different policy practices in terms of Turkey-United States relations and their reasons will be in concern.

6.1.2. Practical level

In order to empirically analyze the commonalities and differences of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships' foreign policies, Turkish-U.S. relations have been selected as the case study. It might be concluded at the end of the analysis that the analogy between the foreign policy paradigms of Özal and Erdoğan eras at the theoretical level exists in general terms at the practical level as well and that both leaderships have attached a critical importance to the relations with the United States. However, a nuance attracts attention considering the perspectives of both leaderships in connection with Turkey-US relations. Though Özal envisaged a balanced relationship with the regional and global actors because of Turkey's "bridge role," he did not give up regarding the USA as the main axis of TFP. As noted above, his ultimate goal was to install Turkey as an influential regional power under the protective umbrella of the USA. In other words, whilst Özal regarded the USA as the main axis of TFP, he sought to decrease Turkish dependency on the United States by improving relations with other actors (e.g. with the European Community). On the other hand, by defining Turkey as a "central country," Davutoğlu vision has been stricter in terms of developing balanced relations with all actors. In this respect, this vision did not see the dimensions of "new" foreign policy as alternative to each other. Hence, as long as the Turkish interests are concerned, it saw no harm in developing closer relations with the Middle Eastern neighbors, such as Iran and Syria, increasingly at the expense of its ties with the U.S.² Consequently, a slight difference in the role and in the ideational meaning that Özal and Erdoğan leaderships attach to the United States draws attention. Even though a high level collaboration has been

² Nicholas Danforth, "Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Atatürk to the AKP," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Volume 7 No.3, (Fall 2008): 91

aimed during the Erdoğan era as well, a relatively more equality-based relationship model has been demanded instead of a hierarchical one as in the Cold War period and this has caused relatively more disputes between the long-standing allies especially in the Middle Eastern dimension of bilateral relations.

In fact, in spite of the “golden age” descriptions of Ankara-Washington relations during the Özal era which peaked particularly during the Gulf war, relations with the United States did not take place smoothly either. As a matter of fact, disagreements arose on the Armenian question and on the US aid issues. Likewise, despite the American urges, Özal leadership maintained the neutral stance of Turkey during the Iran-Iraq war. As such, Ankara and Washington advocated also different arguments in the Armenian- Azerbaijani conflict. However, Özal leadership regarded the transatlantic relations as an important leverage to create both an economically and politically influential Turkey in its region. From Özal leadership's perspective, it did not seem possible to realize the goals set by Özal without the assistance of the Americans in the Balkans, Central Asia and Middle East only by making use of Turkey's own resources. Furthermore, Özal sought to seize the opportunities with a proactive policy and tried pragmatically to turn the crises into opportunities for Turkey, as it was seen in the Gulf war.

It is possible to make similar observations for the Erdoğan era as well. In fact, a relatively more independent foreign policy has been visible in the 2000s, in comparison to the 1980s. However, when the interest perceptions overlap, one might conclude that Turkey-U.S. bilateral relations have peaked now and then in the Erdoğan era too. On the other hand, the relatively more assertive foreign policy in the course of Erdoğan era caused repercussions on the relations with Washington. Eventually, the Turkish-American relations entered into a turbulent period after the Iraq war of 2003. In this period, the US indifference about the PKK terrorism until the end of 2007, Russia-Georgia war of 2008, the Mavi Marmara crisis of 2010, Iran's nuclear program, Turkey's mediation efforts about it and eventually Turkey's 'no' vote for the sanctions against Iran in the UN Security Council have constituted further tension points in bilateral relations. In a nutshell, even if there existed troubles with respect to Turkey-U.S. relations in the Özal era as well, the disputes of both countries have relatively more deepened in the Erdoğan era owing to relatively more assertive FP of the Erdoğan leadership.

Turkey and the United States have sustained their collaboration in the Central Asia, Caucasus and Balkans, varying intensities notwithstanding, in both Özal and Erdoğan eras. However, whereas this US-Turkish collaboration took place in the Balkans relatively smoothly, Russia factor has caused on occasion disagreements between the two NATO allies in the Erdoğan era. Turkey's strong economic ties with Moscow which reaches in the energy field nearly a level of dependency forces Ankara to remain, at least to a certain extent, neutral in the undeclared competition between Russia and the west. While seeking to form a welfare circle around Turkey by developing economic interdependencies, Erdoğan leadership attaches significance to the relations with the neighboring countries and tries not to damage particularly the economic relations.

On the other hand, considering Turkey-U.S. relations during the Özal and Erdoğan eras, one might come to the conclusion that the real divergences have been experienced in the context of Middle East. Although a general analogy might be drawn between Özal and Erdoğan eras considering the Middle East dimension of bilateral relations with the U.S., it is observed that both leaderships' policy practices towards the Middle East took place at some points differently. The most important issues in this context are the US interventions into Iraq

which allow a comparison between the Özal and Erdoğan eras as these military interventions into Iraq took place in both leaderships' terms. What draws primary attention at this point is the serious analogy between the policies that both leaderships aimed to follow during the US invasions of Iraq both in 1991 and 2003. In essence, as previously detailed, both leaderships aimed to pursue a proactive FP in Turkey's region; therefore it would not be appropriate remaining neutral in case of a crisis in the immediate neighborhood. Furthermore, as they considered a war inevitable, both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have aimed to collaborate with the United States during its war against Iraq and thereby sought to avoid the negative consequences of the war. Additionally, they hoped pragmatically to turn it into an opportunity for Ankara. The main concern and goal of both leaderships was to gain a seat at the negotiating table to be set up after the military operation.

However, despite the analogous intentions of both leaderships, the support that they were able to provide for the United States took place at varying levels. While the US government was able to get the support that it expected from the Özal leadership during its operation to Iraq to a large extent, it fell short of receiving a similar level of assistance, the ruling Erdoğan leadership's intention to collaborate with the Americans notwithstanding. Despite the opposition from both his own ruling Motherland Party and from the opposition parties, President Özal did not give up active policy during the Gulf crisis. As a matter of fact, being uncomfortable from the leading role of President Özal in the foreign policy making, firstly FM resigned in October 1990 and later Defense Minister and Chief of Staff resigned in the December 1990 in protest of President Özal's political stance. However, AK Party foreign policy throughout the 2003 Iraq war was relatively low-profile in favor of the United States in comparison to the first Gulf War policy of the Özal leadership. This case and the slightly different policy practices of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships towards the U.S. in terms of the ME dimension of bilateral relations might be explained at domestic and international levels:

From a domestic point of view;

the first gulf war in 1991 coincided with a time period when President Özal's impact on the government peaked and he enjoyed his high political experience in directing the political processes. In other words, President Özal who psychologically carried an ambitious leadership quality was at the zenith of his political power. The Iraq war of 2003 however coincided with the early months of the Erdoğan leadership in the office. Therefore, it had less experience in the government, and the country had more sensitive conditions both economically and politically. The repercussions of the February 28 post-modern putsch were still felt within the country. Even though the AK party came to office, it was not powerful enough to direct the whole political processes in the country.³ As a matter of fact, the plans of military putsch like Balyoz and Ayıışığı whose accuracy have been later approved by the judiciary authorities demonstrate indeed how slippery the political ground was at that time. On such a variable and instable political atmosphere, considering the strong resistance from its own party members as well as from the other circles of the society, the Muslim-conservative people in particular, the Erdoğan leadership could not be very insisting on the March 1 governmental motion. That is, in the face of the possible interventions into politics by non-democratic actors and the relatively less developed democratic norms, the Erdoğan leadership felt hardly safe against such threats and refrained from weakening its ground; hence it did not take a binding decision for its members in the Parliament to force them to vote for the March 1 motion.

³For the meaning of the dialectic of "iktidar-muktedir" which was used for the AK Party government in its initial years in power, see the footnote 48 in chapter 5.

On the other hand, considering the political actors with the capacity to influence the government, a sociological difference between the two terms draws attention. Although the NGO's and alternative power centers representing the Muslim-conservative circles of the Turkish society (e.g. Anatolian tigers) began to burgeon during the Özal era, they did not sufficiently develop to exert influence on the political processes. In the 2000s yet, the circles with conservative-Muslim line have achieved a considerable progress in terms of organizing themselves within the society. It is clear today that the conservative quarters supporting the AK Party government do not only consist of the lower layer of the society and that they demand to participate in the administrative processes. As a matter of fact, the Islamic-conservatives have gained critical positions in the economy field through the rising Anatolian capital and its organizations such as MUSIAD and TUSKON. Additionally, the rising number of TV channels, news papers as well as the internet media reflecting the demands of the conservatives has granted them a significant capacity and means of power to influence foreign policy processes and outcomes. These groups began to emerge especially in the Özal era and they have been living their period of maturity in the 2000s along with the democratization in the country. The bottom line about the rising influence of these circles on Turkish politics is the impact of religious identity on their strong resistance against the Erdoğan leadership's pro-U.S. policy. The Muslim-conservative quarters strongly opposed to help the United States to invade another Muslim country by using Turkey.

Along with their religious and humanitarian sensitivities, the past experiences were also influential in the opposition of the Islamic-conservative circles to Erdoğan leadership's pro-US policy. The economic bill of the first Gulf crisis had been too severe for the Turkish economy as Turkey had lost one of the biggest export markets as well as one of the biggest trade partners. More importantly, in the wake of the war, Turkey began increasingly to be disturbed by the PKK terrorism which had effectively made use of the vacuum of authority in northern Iraq. In view of all these experiences, the majority of the Turkish society opposed the Erdoğan leadership's intention to allow the United States to open a northern front by using the Turkish territory. In consequence, a relatively more democratic participation of the Muslim-conservative groups to the policy-making processes as well as their higher capacity to influence the foreign policy of the country through their NGOs and media institutions has been salient in the Erdoğan era. These groups' opposition was determinant in the failure of the Erdoğan leadership to convince all of the members of the conservative-democrat AK Party to cooperate with the U.S. This observation about the development of the civil society in Turkey seems one of the most important major differences between the Özal and Erdoğan eras which resulted in different policy practices of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships, their similar policy approaches notwithstanding

On the other hand, although the high self-confidence of both leaderships rooted in the historical and cultural values of Turkey constitutes an important commonality, the infrastructure backing it presents a different view in the Özal and Erdoğan eras. Above all, the country has a much different economic outlook in the 2000s both quantitatively and qualitatively by comparison with the 1980s. The export-oriented development model introduced by the Özal leadership has been sustained in the new millennium too and the Turkish economy indicated a considerable growth in the Erdoğan era. This upwards momentum of the economy has made a considerable contribution to the rise of the self-confidence of both the rulers of Erdoğan leadership and its supporters. The GDP was \$131.6 billion at the end of the Özal era and the export volume of the country was \$41 billion in

1994.⁴ In the wake of the AK Party government, the Turkish economy has demonstrated a significant performance and while the GDP reached \$786 billion in 2012, the foreign trade volume became \$388 billion.⁵ Today, Turkey has the world's 17th largest nominal GDP and 15th largest GDP by PPP. Turkey has demonstrated in the decade since 2002 a serious economic growth performance with an average annual growth of 5.45%. and it passed even China in 2004 with 9.9%. Though nearly the whole world was affected from the economic crisis emerged initially in the United States in 2008, the Turkish economy has maintained its growth and has still been among the countries which have been least affected by the global economic crisis. This economic success story of the Turkish economy has become one of the most important factors increasing the self-confidence of the Erdoğan leadership.

The strong steps taken in the field of defense industry has further consolidated the self-confidence of the Erdoğan leadership. The development strategy for Turkish defense industry introduced by the Özal leadership in 1980s has increasingly been adopted by the Erdoğan leadership as well. Accordingly, Turgut Özal stimulated the establishment of joint ventures in Turkey by foreign companies; thereby he aimed simultaneously to meet the needs of Turkish army as well as to obtain export revenues by selling them to other countries, yet more importantly to realize the technology transfer to Turkey. In the 2000s, Turkish defense industry sustained the strategy introduced in the Özal era and accomplished to produce the ATAK helicopter, tanks, unmanned aerial vehicles, warships and medium-range missile systems with domestic capabilities. While the ratio of domestic production in the military procurement total was only 20 percent in 2004, it reached 52.1 percent in 2010. Consequently, the accomplishments in the defense industry and in the economy fields have become elements underlying the self-confidence of the Erdoğan leadership.

Finally, although the Turkish-US relations seriously damaged in the wake of the decline of the governmental motion of March 1, 2003, over time the need to revive bilateral relations re-emerged. This case, inter alia, has demonstrated that it was not as costly as in the Cold War circumstances to say 'no' to the American demands. As a matter of fact, the horror scenarios were not materialized and the relations had to be restored. Eventually, as of the meeting of PM Erdoğan and President Bush in November 2007 Turkish-American cooperation resumed particularly on combating PKK terrorism. This case also strengthened the self-confidence of the Erdoğan leadership and paved the way for a more independent TFP.

All in all, even though the Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have similar identity definitions and they have shared similar goals in the course of the US interventions into Iraq both in 1991 and 2003 respectively, their policies reflected to the practical field differently. This difference firstly emanated from their divergent abilities to direct the political mechanisms under the terms of the day. Besides, varying economic, political and sociological structure of the country played also their roles. Particularly, the rising influence of the Muslim-conservative groups in the country and their identity-based approach to the issue was of particular significance. After all, it was too optimistic to convince all members of a Muslim-democrat political party to support the invasion of another Muslim country by a western power.

⁴ Cevat Gerni, Ö.Seçuk Emsen and M.Kemal Değer, "İthalata Dayalı İhracat ve Ekonomik Büyüme: 1980-2006 Türkiye Deneyimi," (paper presented at the 2.National Economics Congress, DEÜ İİBF İktisat Bölümü, İzmir, 20-22 February 2008, accessed 11.11.2013, http://www.deu.edu.tr/userweb/iibf_kongre/dosyalar/deger.pdf

⁵"Dış ticaret açığı 2012'de 83.9 milyar dolar oldu," **Milliyet**, 31.01.2013, accessed 1.1.2014, <http://ekonomi.milliyet.com.tr/dis-ticaret-acigi-2012-de-83-9-milyar-dolar-oldu/ekonomi/ekonomidetay/31.01.2013/1662730/default.htm>.

From an international point of view;

in order to be able comprehend the divergences of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships' foreign policy practices; one has to consider the foreign policy lenses of both leaderships as well. Turgut Özal was in power immediately before and after the end of Cold War. In this era, the Cold War circumstances as well as the post-Cold War conditions drew attention. There was nearly a consensus about the existence of a unipolar international political structure after the dissolution of the SU. Özal leadership aimed to get pragmatically the backing first one of the worlds' two super powers which remained as the only one after the collapse of the SU and thereby to make Ankara influential in the regional and global politics. Therefore, first the limits of the Cold War conditions imposed on the TFP; subsequently the ideas about the unipolar structure of the world were the significant facts while conducting TFP in general and during the Gulf crisis in particular. Saying with other words, the ideas as to the unipolar world structure consolidated the perception in the eyes of the Özal leadership that Turkey did not have multiple alternatives in case of a US operation against Iraq. These ideas were also consolidating the argument that Özal leadership would not be able to reach the desired goals in the Central Asia, Balkans and in the Middle East without the backing of the sole super power of the world. Consequently, by siding with the allies during the Gulf war, Özal leadership wanted to indicate Turkey's importance both for the super power U.S. and for the rest of the western states.

In the Erdoğan era however, though the U.S. has sustained its position as a super power, the ideas about the US position as the only super power of the world has not been as evident as it was in the Özal era. The European Union, Russia and China have increased their powers in the world politics and a judgment has begun to be prevalent about the nature of a multipolar world.⁶ As a matter of fact, while Washington had not faced much trouble to form a coalition against Iraq in 1990 and had got the support of the major actors of world politics, it fell short of building a consensus in the UN Security Council against Iraq because of French, German, Chinese and Russian oppositions.

In this international political structure, Turkey's EU membership process entered into a significantly dynamic process in the early years of the AK Party government and the negotiations for the full membership of Ankara began in 2005. This case led to the rise of EU oriented norms in TFP making, particularly until a few years ago. One should remember that in the first Gulf war there was a Turkey whose application for the full EU membership had been refused and it had been alienated by Brussels. In 2003 however, there was a country whose EU membership candidacy had been declared in 1999 and there was also a strong governmental will to make Turkey an EU member. Owing to this optimism about the prospect of Turkey's EU membership, there was a wing within the ruling AK Party which did not feel entirely compelled itself to accept the American demands contrary to the case in the first Gulf war. After all, the European Union was also against an operation towards Iraq and this fact was an important factor reinforcing the anti-war shared idea of the Turkish society.

In short, the circumstances as well as Özal and Erdoğan leadership's ideas about them were considerably different especially in terms of international politics and this situation constitutes one of the major elements of the different policy practices of both leaderships in

⁶ Daniella Huber, et al., "The Mediterranean Region in a Multipolar World: Evolving Relations with Russia, China, India and Brazil," GMF paper series, Mediterranean paper series 2013. Ulf Engel and Manuel João Ramos, African Dynamics in a Multipolar World, (Leiden: BRILL, 2013).

terms of the U.S.-Iraq-Turkey triangle, their analogous identity and interest definitions notwithstanding.

6.2. Strengths and weaknesses of the constructivist approach in explaining TFP

Considering the identity construction processes of Özal and Erdoğan, a two-dimensional socialization process is salient. Firstly, as a result of societal socialization processes, Özal and Erdoğan have strongly adopted the values of their society whose religious and cultural references are strong and gained thereby a conservative identity structure. The conservative identity structure of both leaderships has heavily influenced their world views and this has had a considerably constructive impact on their interest definitions in every field of their lives, ranging from social to political fields. Another dimension of Özal and Erdoğan's identity has been constructed as a result of the transnational socialization process and this has ensured them to adopt the modern western values. Even though both leaders have not gone through identical processes, Özal and Erdoğan have eventually made similar western values an integral part of their identity. As both leaders belong to the excluded sectors of the society and as they are the close victims and witnesses of the military interventions into politics, they have adopted the values such as democracy, respect for human rights, and liberalism which are rooted mostly in the west as a way out in order to be able to secure their political existences. Consequently, when Özal and Erdoğan leaderships came to power in 1983 and in 2002 respectively, they had conservative-democrat-liberal identities which aim to combine both eastern and western values and create an alternative identity structure. This has also had significant reflections on their foreign policy paradigms and practices.

It would be useful to remember the importance that constructivists attach to social identities of individuals and states in order to explain the interest formation process with a view to being able comprehend the impact of identity definitions of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships on their foreign policy approaches. As the constructivists put it, “identities inform interests and, in turn, actions.” Considering TFP, policy makers' decisions are deeply influenced how they see the world through their lenses which is closely connected to their identity definitions. As noted above, Özal leadership defined Turkey as a bridge country and viewed a close relationship with its activity in the east and its weigh in the west. Likewise, while Erdoğan leadership defined Turkey with a different concept, it agreed with the Özal leadership with respect to the positive correlation between Turkey's weigh in the east and the west. As a result, in accordance with the "logic of appropriateness" argument of constructivism, both leaderships have considered proactivism and multi-dimensionalism as the appropriate policy choice for a bridge or central country which enjoys deep historical and cultural ties as well as a unique geopolitical location.⁷

The identity definitions of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships and the correspondingly specified foreign policy principles and practices have undoubtedly had determining effects on Turkey-United States relations as well. In this context, aiming to follow an active policy, Özal leadership set getting the backing of the United States, the leader of the western block and after the end of Cold War the only super power of the world, at the center of its foreign policy

⁷ Prime Minister Erdoğan expressed in his visit to Malaysia on January 10, 2014: “We as Turkey have preferred not to follow the silence of the dominant powers but preferred the legacy that our history, civilization and ancestors impose us (T.b.A.)” In this manner, he explicitly declared how his identity definition attaching importance to Turkey’s historical and cultural ties reflected on foreign policy approach. “Özgürlüğün olmadığı yerde...!” *Zaman*, 10.01.2014, accessed 15.01.2014, http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_ozgurlugun-olmadigi-verde_2192689.html.

understanding. Furthermore, Özal aimed to seize other foreign policy alternatives, hence tried to take other policy dimensions into consideration and thereby sought to a certain extent to diversify TFP. Aiming first to increase Turkey's influence in its region and then to make it a global player, Erdoğan leadership's foreign policy understanding on the other hand has been based on developing balanced relations with the global actors instead of regarding them alternatives. In this respect, while establishing relations with Washington whose role as the only super power of the world has begun to be undermined in the 2000s, it has sought not to disregard other global actors along with its own interests. In other words, instead of indexing TFP to the western block as in the Cold War, Erdoğan leadership tried to follow its own foreign policy agenda.

As it is argued in the mutual construction thesis of constructivists, the troubles and the corresponding interactions in the March 1 process have brought about the reconstruction of ideas that both actors have had about each other. It has been understood in this process that the United States would not be able to make its calculations about Turkey as taken for granted as in the Cold War era. This approach might be interpreted as a demand of the Turkish government for a more equality-based relationship model with the US government instead of a hierarchical one as in the Cold War period. This demand however has given rise to fluctuating relations with the United States depending on the converging or the diverging interest definitions of both countries. In the end, one might conclude that while foreign policies of Ankara and Washington overlapped to a larger extent in the Özal era, a relatively visible increase in the divergences of the allies has been salient in the 2000s.

On the other hand, this study seems to support the accuracy of another constructivist thesis: "normative or ideational structures are as important as material structures in shaping the behaviors of social and political actors, e.g. individuals or states." Considering the foreign policies of Özal and Erdoğan eras, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have not adopted the traditional ideological foreign policy approach which stipulates the understanding that Turkey is surrounded in its geography by enemies and that Turkey should turn its face only towards the west. Again these leaderships have left aside the prejudices and the hostile attitude that some groups in Turkey have traditionally had against the Arab countries due to the alliance of some Arab groups with the Great Britain against the Ottomans during the World War I. Instead, they have highlighted the common historical and cultural past which exists between Turkey and other nations from the Balkans, Caucasus and Middle East all of which lived together under the Ottoman rule for centuries. They have regarded this shared past as a reason for responsibility to deal with the troubles of the former Ottoman subjects and a significant ground for cooperation. Consequently, the ideational change in the perception of friends and enemies of policy makers which is rooted basically at their identity definitions have brought about a multidimensional foreign policy understanding, namely taking into account of the eastern dimension of Turkish diplomacy without ignoring its western dimension.

Furthermore, in accordance with their multidimensional foreign policy practices, Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have neither given prominence to the Islamic world nor pushed the ties with the west to a secondary position just like the Islamic Welfare Party government did in 1997. Instead, while sustaining Turkey's western connection, both leaderships aimed to use Turkey's until then ignored historical and cultural ties pragmatically. For instance, despite the strong Islamic tendency in the party base, no decline was observable in Turkish-Israeli relations in the first years of the AK Party government. Conversely, the provisions of the military agreements signed in the 1990s continued to be applied and the commercial relations increasingly advanced. This case began to change upon the Israeli attack against Palestine in

2006 and PM Erdoğan severely criticized the Tel Aviv government. In this reaction of the Erdoğan leadership, along with the sensitivities of the Turkish public on the Palestine question, its own susceptibilities to the events in the former Ottoman geography became influential. In other words, it seems unthinkable to remain indifferent towards the Palestine issue for a government which defines Turkey as a central country and underscores the historical and geographical depth of it.

Evaluating TFP in the context of another thesis of constructivism, namely "agents and structures are mutually constituted," it might be observed that the Erdoğan leadership has been seeking to play a more active role than the Özal leadership did. In essence, both leaderships have demonstrated effort to spread the western values in the world that they have adopted as a result of socialization processes. In this respect, the Özal leadership closely cooperated with the US government for the establishment of democratic and human rights norms in the newly emerged Turkic states after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, Erdoğan leadership cooperated with the Bush government on its Greater Middle East Project and even assumed its co-chairmanship. In the face of the rising identity politics in the Middle East after the eruption of the revolts in the Arab world in 2011, Erdoğan leadership collaborated this time with the Obama administration and supported the democratic demands of the Arab peoples in accordance with its Muslim-democrat identity. In these ways, both leaderships have tried to make western norms more prevalent in the world. However, the Erdoğan leadership has gone one step further in contributing to the international norms by assuming the co-chairmanship of the UN-sponsored Alliance of Civilizations project. In doing this, PM Erdoğan has been attaching a particular importance to the issue of fighting with Islamophobia and he has made several appeals for the international recognition of it as a crime against humanity.⁸ He has undoubtedly used for such appeals predominantly the platform of Alliance of Civilizations and in this manner has tried to contribute to the construction of an internationally shared norm.

Repeating the weaknesses of constructivism briefly in terms of explaining TFP and its transformation which have been elaborated in the first chapter, Wendt has explicitly bracketed state identities and interests to be explained by mutual constitution, that is, identities and interests of states are assumed to be formed through inter-state interaction. Consequently, "social construction at the level of individual agents, or more generally, at any domestic level is neglected." However, neither the political and historical context in which national interests are shaped nor the intersubjective meanings which define state identities and interests can be limited to those meanings constructed solely in inter-state relations. Therefore, adopting Wendt's systemic approach would preclude comprehending the socialization processes of the domestic actors, the identities that they acquired at the end of these processes and their impact on the foreign policies of the countries. In this respect, neglecting the domestic dimension would prevent to see the whole picture. Thus, a holistic approach to TFP which seeks to take the domestic and international as two faces of a single social order and engages in accommodating all factors affecting the identities and interests of state seems a more useful way to make a foreign policy analysis.

⁸ PM Erdoğan: "Islamophobia is also a very serious hate crime trampling humanitarian values just like terror, racism, violence and anti-semitism"(T.b.A.), "Özgürlüğün olmadığı yerde...!" Zaman. "PM Erdoğan: Islamophobia should be recognized as crime against humanity," Today's Zaman, 16.09.2012, accessed 15.01.2014, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-292579-pm-erdogan-islamophobia-should-be-recognized-as-crime-against-humanity.html>. "Turkish PM Erdoğan: Islamophobia, anti-Semitism same," **Hürriyet Daily News**, 28.02.2013, accessed 15.01.2014, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pm-erdogan-islamophobia-anti-semitism-same.aspx?pageID=238&nID=42019&NewsCatID=338>.

At this stage, one should repeat an issue that constructivism has difficulty to explain. While constructivist concepts such as identity, mutual construction, highlighting the ideational factors vs. material factors provide very important tools for analysis to explain TFP of 1980s and 2000s, constructivists leave a very important point open by disregarding the psychological qualities of the decision makers which might be regarded as a material factor rather than a social one. Thus analyzing the psychological qualities of the decision makers might be complementary to the constructivist thinking. The inborn psychological features of the decision makers such as being emotional, not avoiding taking risk and being ambitious might occasionally be the basic factors directing the behaviors of the leaders, in the face of unexpected events in particular. Therefore, their personal characteristics would be crucial in understanding Turkey's foreign policy preferences. Especially, if the decision making occurs during a crisis or under certain conditions such as high stress and high uncertainty the impact of psychological factors would be greater.⁹

In this regard, both Özal and Erdoğan's psychological qualities have been decisive on their foreign policy styles. Their risk taking personalities, their warm personal relations with the foreign leaders and their efforts to make use of these relations in favor of Turkey put them at a different point in the Turkish political history. President Özal's initiative-taking, ambitious and strong leadership was determining especially during the First Gulf War who virtually dominated the TFP and directed it with his own political paradigm. Without making a reference to President Özal's psychological qualities, it seems hardly possible to fully explain TFP during the Gulf crisis. Likewise, PM Erdoğan's emotional reaction in the Davos Forum in January 2009 and its subsequent reflections on the TFP can be explained with the terms of psychological factors. His indomitable character has become determinant on a number of domestic and international issues. Hence, anyone analyzing TFP during the AK Party era has to keep psychological features of PM Erdoğan in mind, in order to be able make a comprehensive analysis. Therefore, without taking the psychological traits of the decision makers into consideration, comprehending the whole picture of TFP seems difficult. In view of this analysis, it might be also concluded that distinctive human natures as material factors have had considerably determining impacts on the foreign policy practices of both Özal and Erdoğan eras.

6.3. Conclusion and final words

In this dissertation, TFP of 1980s and 2000s has been comparatively analyzed using the case of Turkey-United States relations with constructivist lenses. More precisely expressing, foreign policy approaches as well as practices of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have been comparatively analyzed, who have become successful in constructing an alternative identity by reconciling their conservative identities with the western values and defined their interests in line with these alternative identity perceptions. As in many other fields, these leaders have achieved revolutionary transformations in the foreign policy field as well. In this respect, their re-interpretation of Turkey's historical, geographical and cultural identities in accordance with their identity definitions and their corresponding proactive and multidimensional foreign policies attract considerable attention.

It has been advocated throughout this study that the foreign policy principles and practices of the Özal and Erdoğan leaderships are considerably analogous and that the

⁹ Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, Tim Dunne, *Foreign Policy: theories, actors, cases*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 20.

multiplicity of commonalities of these leaderships' foreign policies is closely associated with their identities which have been constructed in consequence of societal and transnational socialization processes. In other words, analyzing the foreign policies of Özal and Erdoğan eras, one would conclude that each leadership is reminiscent of the rings of a Muslim-democrat chain in Turkey and that both leaderships' identity qualities which carry simultaneously the signs of both eastern and western values have been decisive on their foreign policy approaches as well as on their policy practices.

At this point, for the sake of a more consistent analysis, a distinction between theoretical and practical levels has become a significant necessity. In this respect, it has been concluded that the theoretical dimension of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships' foreign policies are to a large extent overlapping. Stated differently, foreign policy principles and approach of Erdoğan leadership seem just like an extension of the foreign policy principles and understanding of the Özal leadership. Yet they have been intellectually more developed by the Erdoğan leadership and set on a better academic foundation. In terms of the practical level of both leaderships' foreign policies on the other hand, it has been aimed to clarify to what extent this theoretical overlapping reflected to the practical field with an empirical analysis of Turkey-U.S. relations.

Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have suggested that Turkey possesses several identities and they have correspondingly followed a multidimensional, proactive and self confident foreign policy. By contrast with the conventional TFP line, they have accepted that Turkey is an eastern as well as a western country which carries both Muslim and western values at the same time. They have also considered that Turkey has strong historical and cultural ties in its region and this was not something to be neglected for the sake of a strict westernization project. They further argued that Turkey's importance in the eyes of the west is a direct function of its efficiency in its region. All these factors have brought about the multidimensional and proactive foreign policy approach and practice. Nevertheless, it has been observed in this case study that both Özal and Erdoğan leaderships have continued to attach a special importance to the relations with the United States. In this case, together with their assertive and proactive foreign policy aspirations, Turkey's limited resources as a regional power have played essential roles. However, the level of the need to cooperate with the U.S. was relatively different in each era. In this situation, how Özal and Erdoğan leaderships perceived and interpreted the domestic and international structure was determinant about their policy towards the United States. One should not forget at this point the role of identity in the construction of the lenses through which both leaderships view and perceive the material world.

In the big part of the Özal era, the Cold War circumstances were dominant and subsequent to the end of it a consensus arose as to the reality of a unipolar world system. Under such conditions, Özal leadership considered getting the support of the United States as a precondition to achieve its foreign policy aspirations. In this perception about the U.S., Özal's identity played also an important role, as he spent a significant part of his transnational socialization process in the U.S. under the Cold War conditions. Additionally, he aimed to diversify Turkey's foreign policy alternatives by utilizing its historical and cultural ties and sought to increase its efficiency in its region.

In the Erdoğan era on the other hand, the domestic and international norms and structures have undergone significant transformations. Domestically, the Muslim-conservative circles have mounted their efficiency on politics and become closely involved with the

governmental policies which resulted in the rising impact of historical and cultural identities on the TFP agenda. Internationally, the unipolar position of the United States has begun to be undermined in the 2000s and other global actors have started to raise their voices in global politics. In the initial half of the first decade of the new millennium, Turkey's EU membership perspective was strengthened and this led to the increasing impact of the soft power norms represented by the European Union on Ankara. Furthermore, the developing relations with the EU have promoted the perception in the country that Turkey possessed other policy alternatives rather than the U.S. and it would not have to necessarily cooperate with the U.S. government during the Gulf War of 2003. Moreover, Turkey has reached a far stronger economic power and technological capacity than it had in the Özal era. All these factors have consolidated the self confidence of the Erdoğan leadership. In this context, Turkey has started to demand a new relationship model with Washington based on equality instead of the hierarchical one as in the Cold War period. This new Turkish approach has increased the number of disputes between the two allies as the "new" Turkey was able to say "no" to the American demands when it deemed that they did not overlap with the Turkish interests.

Both in the Özal and Erdoğan eras, serious parallels have been observed in the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asian dimensions of Turkey-United States relations. However, in the Middle East dimension which constituted the centre of gravity of bilateral relations in both periods, some different policy practices are salient. As it has been elaborated above, despite their similar political approaches of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships, the foreign policy outcome of Turkey during the First Gulf War (1990-1991) and the Iraq War (2003) was different. While in the former case, Turkey supported the US-led coalition forces rather enthusiastically, in the latter case, Turkish support to the U.S. remained relatively limited. This political outcome, namely the failure of the Erdoğan leadership to cooperate with the U.S. government to a larger extent was explained how these leaderships viewed and interpreted the aforementioned domestic and international circumstances of 1980s and 2000s.

In the post March 1, 2003 process, while Erdoğan leadership has been careful not to damage its relations with the U.S. and has been attaching particular importance to gain the American backup for its FP aspirations, it has occasionally ignored the US urges and followed its own foreign policy priorities. For instance, in the face of the rising identity politics in the Middle East after the eruption of the revolts in the Arab world in 2011, Erdoğan leadership closely collaborated with the Obama administration until the military putsch in Egypt and supported the democratic demands of the Arab peoples in accordance with its Muslim-democrat identity. However, Erdoğan and Obama administrations have disagreed about the legitimacy of the change of rule in Egypt in the summer of 2013. While Erdoğan leadership strongly criticized the Army intervention into politics and has not recognized the undemocratic putschist rule, the Obama administration has not seemed to care as to whether the government has changed through democratic or undemocratic ways. Nevertheless, being aware of the need they feel to each other, Turkey-U.S. relations continue today at a "balanced" level.

It has been concluded at the end of this dissertation that constructivist theory provides very explanatory tools to comprehend the TFP approach and practices in the Özal and Erdoğan eras. However, it has been observed that constructivists disregard two important points. Firstly, the inborn psychological qualities of the decision makers such as being emotional, not avoiding taking risk and being ambitious might occasionally be the basic factors directing the behaviors of the leaders, especially in the face of unexpected events. Without taking this point into account, focusing solely on the socially constructed identities

brings about some difficulties in explaining some issues in the Özal and Erdoğan eras. Furthermore, just like Wendt does, excluding the most important source of identity and the changes in it, domestic field, from the analysis for the sake of a systemic analysis limits the empirically explanatory power of constructivism. As a matter of fact, the domestic processes have been crucial in the identity construction of Özal and Erdoğan leaderships and they have had the opportunity to direct TFP again by means of domestic processes. Therefore, rather than focusing only on one dimension to explain foreign policy of a country, a holistic constructivist approach seeking to take all dimensions of foreign policy making into consideration with a view to providing consistent and comprehensive explanations seems a more appropriate method.

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