

THE ROLE OF IDEAS IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY:
THE JDP-DAVUTOĐLU PARADIGM AND ITS ROLE AFTER 2002

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This dissertation posits that ideas had a role in explaining change in Turkish foreign policy during the Justice and Development Party (JDP) era. It is argued this ideational change not only altered policy goals and instruments, but also the nature of Turkish foreign policy as a whole. The assumption is that the political flux and the government's political choice gave leeway to Davutoğlu's ideas to embody the emergent JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm. A twofold theoretical framework is applied first to extract the role of ideas, second to depict the paradigmatic change. To that end, the dissertation brings in the traditional bureaucratic paradigm as a null hypothesis, which has survived the post-Cold War era through a laborious process of adjustment and overcoming anomalies under bureaucratic stewardship.

Early on, the JDP developed a dual approach in foreign policy, embracing status quo and change at the same time. This was seen both as a secure and expedient way to build a power base for the incumbent government. The JDP's early term accommodationist approach went hand-in-hand with an urgent need for new ideas to realize its self-declared transformative agenda. Davutoğlu's ideas supplied this demand, which later on laid the groundwork for a gradual paradigmatic shift. The emerging paradigm got steam under the JDP's political aegis. When Davutoğlu was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm has already been operative. His appointment essentially pointed to a move towards its institutionalization. Yet this was not merely a "Davutoğlu affair." It also reflected political, bureaucratic and institutional changes within the Turkish polity. Despite growing anomalies, the overall response of Turkish foreign policy to the regional upheaval after 2011 has been shaped by adjustments within the parameters of the evolving paradigm.

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Başlık: Türk Dış Politikasında Fikirlerin Rolü: AKP-Davutoğlu Paradigması ve 2002 yılından sonraki Rolü

İşbu doktora tezinde, fikirlerin Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP) döneminde Türk dış politikasında (TDP) gözlenen değişimin izahatında bir rolü olduğu varsayılmaktadır. Tezde, fikri değişimin sadece politika hedeflerini ve enstrümanlarını değil aynı zamanda TDP'nin doğasını da tümünden değiştirdiği argümanı savunulmaktadır. Siyasi karmaşa ve AKP iktidarının siyasi tercihlerinin Davutoğlu'nun fikirlerine alan açarak boy göstermekte olan AKP-Davutoğlu paradigmasının vücut bulmasını sağladığı varsayımından hareket etmektedir. Tezde, ikili bir teorik çerçeve kullanılarak fikirlerin rolü tespit edilmeye çalışılmakta ve paradigma değişimi tasvir olunmaktadır. Tezde bu amaçla, zahmetli bir uyum sürecinden geçen ve bürokratik idareyle aykırılıkların üstesinden gelerek Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde hayatta kalan geleneksel bürokratik paradigma sıfır hipotezi olarak incelenmektedir. AKP erken dönemde eşzamanlı olarak statükoyu ve değişimi benimseyerek ikili bir yaklaşım sergilemiştir. Bu yaklaşım, iktidardaki hükümet için zemin kazanmak adına hem güvenli hem siyaseten tedbirli bir yöntem olarak değerlendirilmiştir. AKP'nin ilk dönemindeki bu uzlaşmacı yaklaşım, kendine vazife biçtiği dönüştürmecî gündemi gerçekleştirmeyi teminen yeni fikirlere duyulan acil ihtiyaçla ele ele yürümüştür. Davutoğlu'nun fikirleri bu talebi karşılamış ve bilahare tedrici bir paradigma kaymasına zemin hazırlamıştır. Ortaya çıkmakta olan yeni paradigma AKP'nin siyasi himayesinde yol almıştır. Davutoğlu, Dışişleri Bakanı olarak atandığında, AKP- Davutoğlu paradigması işler durumdaydı. Bu atama esasen sözkonusu paradigmanın kurumsallaşması yönünde atılan bir adıma işaret etmiştir. Ancak meydana gelen değişim sadece bir "Davutoğlu meselesi"nden ibaret değildir. Aynı zamanda Türkiye'deki devlet yapısında kaydedilen siyasi, bürokratik ve kurumsal değişimlerin bir yansımasını ifade etmektedir. Artan aykırılıklara rağmen, TDP'nin 2011 yılından sonra meydana gelen bölgesel karmaşaya genel anlamda yanıtı evrilmekte olan paradigmanın parametreleri içinde düzeltmelerle şekillenmektedir.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	Association of Caribbean States
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
CFE	Conventional Forces Agreement in Europe
CI	Constructivist Institutionalism
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia
CoE	Council of Europe
CSCP	Caucasia Stability and Cooperation Platform
CU	Customs Union
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress
D-8	Developing 8
Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı	Directorate for Religious Affairs of Turkey
DP	Democrat Party
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization (formerly RCD)
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
ECH	Epistemic Community Hypothesis
EU	European Union
FP	Felicity Party
FM	Foreign Minister (Minister of Foreign Affairs)
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
G-20	The Group of Twenty
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HE	His Excellency
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IR	International Relations
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JDP	Justice and Development Party (also AKP or AK Parti)
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MD	Missile Defense
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (of the Republic of Turkey)
MGK	Milli Güvenlik Kurulu (National Security Council)
MIKTA	Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and Australia
NSC	National Security Council
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIS	Newly Independent States

NMP	Nationalist Movement Party
NOM	National Outlook Movement (<i>Milli Görüş</i>)
OAS	Organization of American States
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
OPC	Operation Provide Comfort
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
P5	Permanent 5 (Permanent members of Security Council)
PKK	Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan
PM	Prime Minister
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RPP	Republican People's Party
SC	(UN) Security Council
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SEECF	South-East European Cooperation Process
TANAP	Trans-Anatolian Pipeline
TIS	Turkish-Islamic Synthesis
TİKA	Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency
TPP	True Path Party
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
TSK	<i>Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri</i> (Turkish Armed Forces)
U.S.	United States (of America)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEU	Western European Union
WP	Welfare Party
ZPP	Zero Problems Policy

PREFACE

Following the emergence of Turkey as a regional and global actor in the late 2000s, understanding the change in Turkish foreign policy became a popular, even global, subject matter. As a Turkish diplomat and student of Turkish foreign policy, I had a professional and personal interest in analyzing and explicating this change.

In fact, my personal story about writing down this dissertation is testimonial to the dynamism of this particular topic. Back in 2002, when I formulated my first dissertation proposal about the change in Turkish foreign policy, my argument was based on structuralism. I thought the end of Cold War had brought systemic level changes that eventually had affected Turkish foreign policy and its regional role. Therefore, it was more about how Turkey was, at that time, perceived from abroad as a regional, axis, and emerging power. I could not find much to argue about whether the domestic dynamics alluded to an endogenous transformation, despite the fact that the literature was more and more dominated by the European Union (EU) membership process and its assumed effects on policy. In short, the assumption was that the post-Cold War environment had given Turkey an important role and the question was whether Turkey was up to fulfilling it.

I proudly served as a Turkish diplomat, both in Ankara and abroad. I had the privilege to represent my country in Iran and, among others, acted as the Deputy Chief of the Cabinet and Deputy Special Advisor to Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Ahmet Davutoğlu. This period turned into one of on-the-job training for my dissertation, which I

restarted in Fall 2011. I earned practical knowledge and experience about Turkish foreign policy and a reinforced willingness to explicate it academically.

The puzzle was how Turkey could turn itself into a country by tapping its potential in the neighborhood and beyond, basing its discourse on soft power tools and sidelining the classic “Turks have no other friends but themselves” belief in favor of a more cooperative foreign policy agenda. Therefore, I became aware in 2011 that I would no longer be able to write the same dissertation I had projected back in 2002.

The Fellowship at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs (WCFIA) at Harvard University provided me a unique opportunity to proceed. I conducted a survey of the literature before my arrival at Cambridge, Massachusetts. Yet it was there that I figured out a theoretical framework to associate my professional perceptions with an academic analysis. My view was that change had occurred in Turkish foreign policy as a whole. This policy shift, I assumed, was linked to Davutoğlu’ s ideas, which had a causal role in foreign policy change under the Justice and Development (JDP) rule.

As will be described, there was an overall consensus in the literature as to a new turn in Turkish foreign policy. A set of Europeanist, structuralist, constructivist, domestic and economic factors explained this change. However, I found out that despite these comprehensive accounts of foreign policy change, none actually dwelled on the role of ideas in making the paradigmatic shift in foreign policy possible. The dissertation’s contribution to the literature might be to open up the ground for the further study of ideas as one of the factors of change in Turkish foreign policy.

The dissertation used primary and secondary sources. Private interviews with former President Abdullah Gül, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Yaşar Yakış and non-

attributable interviews with senior Turkish Ambassadors played important roles in testing thoughts and were rich in anecdotes, which are also utilized in the dissertation. Although the research process built largely on personal and professional experience, sources and references are consistently certified for the arguments put forward throughout the dissertation.

The dissertation employs a descriptive methodology, driven largely from the theoretical framework described in Chapter 2. It applies a twofold conceptual framework that combines the study of role of ideas in foreign change with the Hallian framework for the analysis of paradigmatic (foreign) policy change. This enables an ideational analysis of the role of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm as the backbone of the dissertation. The traditional bureaucratic paradigm, in contrast, with its practice in the 1990s is employed as the null hypothesis to test the validity of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm.

In Chapter 1, the dissertation introduces the background of the subject matter. In Chapter 2, a theoretical framework is carved out to analyze the causal role of ideas in foreign policy change, which builds on international relations theory. A model emerges that enables the ideational study of paradigmatic foreign policy change.

Chapter 3 articulates the conventional traits of Turkish foreign policy as the traditional bureaucratic foreign policy paradigm. It defines three policy principles and policy norms that evolved into an institutionalized paradigm based largely on early Republican experience and worldview. Chapter 4 analyzes the anomalies and adjustments that the paradigm faced in the post-Cold War era.

Chapter 5 reviews the literature about the causes of foreign policy change in the early 2000s. Chapter 6 studies the first term of the JDP. It depicts the basis of the JDP's

foreign policy and introduces its emerging policy norms against the general political and international scenery. Chapter 7 explains why and how the JDP adopted Davutoğlu's ideas. To that end, it delves into his ideational world as well as his political role in the government. It delineates the policy principles and policy norms set out as the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm. Chapter 8 examines the JDP's first term foreign policy practice.

Chapter 9 explains the prevalence of the new paradigm. Chapter 10 puts the JDP's second term practice until early 2011 in perspective within the purview of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm. Chapter 11 analyzes the policy adjustments, which were introduced in the face of the challenging test of the Arab Spring.

The dissertation is finalized with the conclusion part. In this part, findings are summarized and the relevance of this study for future research is underlined.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Turkey was thought to traditionally follow a pro-Western, status quo-oriented and monocultural foreign policy with strict adherence to the premise of non-intervention in other's internal affairs. Predicated on a Republican worldview, this paradigm mostly remained unchallenged until the end of the Cold War.

In the post-Cold War era, however, it became debatable whether a new foreign policy had emerged due to dramatic changes in the external environment. In accord, it was posited that the end of the Cold War and Turkey's developing relations with neighboring regions heralded a new foreign policy with shifting focus.¹ Others countered such arguments about change, alluding to pro-Westernism as still the determinant principle of Turkish foreign policy.² In general, there seemed to be enough material to argue in favor of either continuity or change.

After 1999, those making their case for change clearly gained the upper hand. The Helsinki Summit, whereby Turkey was declared a candidate for EU membership

¹ Sabri Sayarı, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: The Challenges of Multi-Regionalism," *Journal of International Affairs* 54, no. 1 (Fall 2000), pp. 169-182; Ian O. Lesser, "Turkey in a Changing Security Environment," *Journal of International Affairs* 54, no. 1 (Fall 2000), pp. 183-198.

² Criss and Bilgin gave a comprehensive account of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s, in the particular case of the Middle East. They emphasized continuity and adjustment, rather than change and transformation. They even interpreted activism in 1991 Gulf War as a follow-up of Turkey's Western orientation. See Bilge Criss and Pinar Bilgin, "Turkish Foreign Policy Toward the Middle East," *Middle East Review of International Relations* 1, no. 1 (January 1997). Available at <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1997/issue1/jv1n1a3.html> [10 December 2011].

appeared as a watershed moment. Combined by a series of concurrent events, i.e. Turco-Greek “earthquake” diplomacy, the assumed end of the PKK terrorism following the capture of Ocalan and the semblance of political normalcy in the wake of general elections, this led some academics to identify 1999 as a tipping point for Turkey and by inference for Turkish foreign policy.³ The argument quintessentially implied “Europeanization,” leading to a new and arguably rationalized foreign policy.

Yet, even back in 2001, Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz criticized the “national security syndrome” disorienting this allegedly transformative process.⁴ The statement received a backlash from the military. The bureaucracy, on its part, still took the traditional paradigm for granted. The dichotomy between the civilian demands and bureaucracy’s worldview was a growing anomaly, but the paradigm did not wither away.

This was to change with the February 2001 financial meltdown, which led to dramatic changes in the Turkish domestic political landscape. The establishment parties, except the Republican People’s Party (RPP), failed to pass the electoral threshold and the newcomer JDP assumed power. In government, the JDP voiced a double claim to represent both continuity and change. The first aimed to placate the bureaucratic reaction against its very existence; the latter substantiated its emergence as the party of change and renewal. Therefore, this transitional stance led to a symbiosis of the old and the new.

³ See Ziya Öniş, “Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki Era,” *Turkish Studies* 4, no. 1 (2003), pp. 9-34; Kemal Kirişçi, “Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 8, no. 1 (March 2004), pp. 40-41.

⁴ “Speaking at the Congress of the Motherland Party in August 2001, Yılmaz maintained that Turkey’s integration into the EU is delayed by the “national security syndrome” that thwarted changes in Turkey’s Constitution and other reforms demanded by the EU.” Pınar Bilgin, “Turkey’s Changing Security Discourse: The Challenges of Globalization,” *European Journal of Political Research* 44, no. 1 (2005), p. 191.

A similar process was also valid for Turkish foreign policy. The dissertation accordingly attempts to analyze this emergence of a new foreign policy paradigm alongside the gradual falling from grace of the traditional. It argues that while in earlier terms the JDP was ready to accommodate the traditional paradigm, later on it felt emboldened to sideline and even discard it in favor of a new paradigm predicated on Davutoğlu's ideas.⁵ The JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm essentially aimed to introduce a new foreign policy course premised on a broader vision that was envisioned to respond to Turkish foreign policy's contemporary needs.⁶ The overall objective of Turkish foreign policy became turning Turkey into a regional and global actor.

This shift transpired against a set of structural and conjunctural developments that paved the way for ideational change in Turkish foreign policy. First, the EU process and its transformative effects on Turkish politics led to the eventual predominance of civilian authorities in decision-making. This proved consequential for the end of traditionalism in Turkish foreign policy. Second, Turkey's economic and political vigor under a single party government as opposed to earlier coalitional dynamics gave room to new thinking in foreign policy that built on earlier attempts that sought adjustment in the traditional paradigm. Third, the international conjuncture turned out to be conducive as U.S. unilateralism failed in Iraq and Afghanistan and a new multipolar order appeared to be in the making, which largely benefited new contenders for regional and global clout. Given

⁵ See Ahmet Sözen, "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges," *Turkish Studies* 11, no. 1 (March 2010), pp. 103-123. For Davutoğlu's own piece on this foreign policy vision, see Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," *Insight Turkey* 11, no. 1 (2008), pp. 77-96.

⁶ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu* (Strategic depth: The international position of Turkey) (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001).

these dynamics, it was the combination of Davutoğlu's ideas and their political functionality that played a role in the direction of foreign policy change.

Against this backdrop, the issue is to ascertain how ideas⁷ played a causal role in this change. International Relations (IR) theory underlines the role of ideas in foreign policy change. Actors depend on ideas, even if assumed as acting rationally. This is because ideas clarify principles and conceptions of causal relationships, and coordinate individual behavior.⁸ This role becomes more pronounced especially at times of critical ruptures that may bring about paradigmatic shifts.

Philip Robbins was among the few who sensed a looming paradigmatic change in Turkish foreign policy after 2002.⁹ He pointed to what he called an “ideological disharmony” between the two “traditions” that he identified as “Kemalist,” modernizers dating back to Tanzimat, and “post-Islamist,” referring to the JDP's political background.¹⁰ Sözen embraced the idea of a paradigmatic shift, yet did not bother to construct a theoretical framework.¹¹ In general, the dissertation argues that the ideational

⁷ Goldstein and Keohane defined ideas as “beliefs held by individuals.” Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, “Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework,” in *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, eds. Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane (New York: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 3. Haas extended the definition by describing ideas as a specialized and specific understanding about a particular issue or problem, which was reflected in knowledge. Ernst B. Haas, *When Knowledge is Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). Cited in Michael P. Marks, *The Formation of European Policy in Post-Franco Spain: The Role of Ideas, Interests, and Knowledge* (Aldershot, Hants, England; Brookfield, Vt.: Avebury, 1997), p. 29.

⁸ Goldstein and Keohane, p. 3.

⁹ Philip Robbins, “Turkish Foreign Policy Since 2002: Between a ‘Post-Islamist’ Government and a Kemalist State,” *International Affairs* 83, no.1 (2007), pp. 289–304. The dissertation posits that from a theoretical point of view these were the old and emerging paradigms rather than “traditions” in Turkish foreign policy. Yet still, the awareness of the dichotomy is what counts at this point.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 290-291.

¹¹ Sözen's analysis lacks a theoretical framework for explaining paradigmatic change with rather hasty conclusions. See Ahmet Sözen, pp. 103-123.

change in Turkish foreign policy amounted to a paradigmatic policy shift, changing not only policy goals and instruments but also its nature as a whole.

In order to substantiate this argument the dissertation develops a twofold theoretical model. It builds on a conceptual framework that specifies the study of the role of ideas in foreign policy change. To that end, it also integrates the Hallian paradigmatic policy change model, which foresees the institutionalization of ideas as the basis of policy.

The dissertation argues that change in Turkish foreign policy after 2002, *inter alia*, had to do with the role of ideas. To support this assumption, it introduces the traditional bureaucratic policy paradigm as a null hypothesis. It delineates how this paradigm was institutionalized based on certain ideas. These were reflected in policy principles, which informed what is right for the overall policy framework. They also determined the policy norms, which were deemed to draw a causal path to attain the general objective of Turkish foreign policy- traditionally set to secure an embedded place in the Western world.

The traditional policy paradigm was not free from debate and criticism. Transcending its ideational fold, however, emerged as a viable possibility only after the end of the Cold War. While new ideas sprang and traditionalism almost fell into political disrepute, even the systemic change in global politics proved inadequate to bring about a paradigmatic shift. This was largely due both to the bureaucracy's bulwark role and political inability to overcome its resistance thereof. Despite the burgeoning intensity of anomalies, the introduction of new policies in the later stages merely amounted to adjustments in the extant paradigm.

In the literature, a predominant view emerged that emphasized change in this traditional setting in the early 2000s. Europeanization, structural, systemic, economic and identity factors were cited as the main causes of change in Turkish foreign policy. Yet none actually dwelled on the role of ideas in making paradigmatic foreign policy shift possible. This is an area in which the present work contributes to the study of Turkish foreign policy.

The analysis of the JDP's foreign policy practice in view of Davutoğlu's ideas enables the explanation of policy outcomes and institutional changes in Turkish foreign policy. To that end, the dissertation first gives an outline of the JDP's early foreign policy agenda in the light of its political posture. Then it brings in Davutoğlu's ideas through an overview of his written works. It comprehensively analyzes his worldview but puts his increasing political role in perspective. This last point underscores the evolution and in a way politicization of his ideas, through which the civilizational outlook was gradually overshadowed by a preoccupation with the interests of Turkey the nation-state.

Davutoğlu's ideas provide a good measure to comprehend the basis of the JDP's foreign policy. During the earlier term of the JDP government, the EU process was able to obscure his influence on the overall dynamics of Turkish foreign policy. Later on, "EU (reform) fatigue" and significant changes in the domestic political balances paved the way for a prevalence of his ideas and hence, the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm. His ideas defined the policy principles and policy norms of the new paradigm. It also has had a significant effect on Turkish foreign policy towards the neighboring regions, global power centers and even the EU itself. Yet again it all boiled down to the new objective of Turkish foreign policy to rise to the task of "a regional and global power."

The dissertation elaborates on the three electoral terms of the JDP foreign policy practice. It delineates the gradual change in priorities, which made possible the emergence of a new paradigm. The JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm faced its greatest challenge in the Arab Spring, which did not bring to an end but entailed adjustments.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Constructing a Theoretical Model for Ideational Foreign Policy Change

Kenneth Waltz, the father of neorealism in international relations¹² posited that “theory isolates one realm from others in order to deal with it intellectually.”¹³ What he isolated from his theory as a given, i.e. the role of ideas, culture and other non-material variables, has been resuscitated as alternatives to his material understanding of international relations.

International relations theory (IR), in its dominant realist form, postulates an anarchical order of unitary states.¹⁴ Here, anarchy means the lack of a higher authority or a world government that legitimately uses the power of coercion. In such a setting, states

¹² IR in capital letters as an acronym refers to the discipline that studies international relations with lower case. The discipline’s definition goes from the traditional “diplomatic, military and strategic relations of the states” to “cross-border transactions of all kinds”, a definition testing own limits as a result of globalization. See Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley, *Understanding International relations*, 3rd ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 1.

¹³ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 8. Waltz described theories as constructions, which can only be invented. A theory “is a picture, mentally formed, of a bounded realm or domain of activity.” While laws, as facts of observation, were discovered; theories were speculative processes introduced to explain them. “Hypothesis may be inferred from theories. If they are confirmed quite conclusively, they are called laws.” He posited, “knowledge can proceed only from theory.” His general objective was to construct a theory that would explain the laws of IR. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9.

¹⁴ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History*, 7th ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2009), p. 4. The concept of unitary state does not deny the role of other actors, but enables a parsimonious choice to take states as the most important and determinant actors in IR.

are solely responsible for their own survival, which brings about a system of self-help. Thus, “the strong do as they can and the weak suffer what they must.”¹⁵

From Thucydides to Hobbes, Carr, and Morgenthau, realist thinkers have emphasized the conflictual nature of the interstate system. As such, the states are essentially assumed struggling in a balance of power, upon which the order and stability of the system hinges. Caught in an insurmountable “security dilemma,” any independent action taken by one state to increase its own security may in turn make all states more insecure. This gives leeway to aggression with “international anarchy as the permissive cause of war.”¹⁶

Waltz emphasized how the structural role of anarchy shapes states’ interests. In his seminal *Theory of International Politics*, he “extends international anarchy from a cause of war into a systemic ordering principle of the international system, a move which gives birth to the tradition of neorealism.”¹⁷ States’ interests and, by implication, identities were exogenously defined and exclusively characterized by a self-interested urge for power maximization.

The Waltian neorealism sidelined the agency of the statesmen and the states, in favor of the structural limitations of the international system. Whatever changes occur at

¹⁵ Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue,” adapted by Suresht Bald in *Essential Readings in World Politics*, eds. Karen A. Mingst and Jack L. Synder, 3rd ed. (New York; London: W.W Norton Company, 2007), p. 12.

¹⁶ Waltz, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 232.

¹⁷ Cynthia Weber, *International Relations Theory: A Critical Introduction*, 3rd ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 16.

the first two levels of analysis,¹⁸ “the texture of international politics remains highly constant, patterns recur, and events repeat themselves endlessly. The relations that prevail internationally seldom shift rapidly in type or quality.”¹⁹ On the other hand, the balance of power was understood as a systemic trait, functioning with logic of its own.²⁰

This conflict-prone understanding of the international system undermined alternative attempts to postulate a theory of peace and cooperation. Thus, even realism’s alternatives concurred with its general premises, i.e. the anarchic nature of the system and the state system as the primary unit of analysis.

Despite this overall concurrence, neoliberalism, for one, focused on why states do actually cooperate. The kernel of its argument was “states could by adjusting their national policies to one another enhance their ability to serve their national interests.”²¹ In that neoliberalists underlined the role of norms, regimes and institutions as well as “state preferences”²² and beliefs.

Constructivism²³ was even less compromising. It contested the assumed anarchic nature as an inherent trait and underlined the social character of IR.²⁴ Constructivists

¹⁸ Three widely accepted levels of analysis are employed to understand world politics: the individual, state and [international] system(ic) levels.

¹⁹ Waltz, p. 65.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 121.

²¹ For a classical “institutionalist” neoliberal account, see Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

²² Moravchik offered an alternative “liberal” account to explain cooperation in IR with state preferences. See Andrew Moravchik, “Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics,” *International Organization* 51, no. 4 (Autumn 1997), pp. 513–53.

²³ Hopf differentiated between conventional and critical constructivism: “Conventional constructivists wish to discover identities and their associated reproductive social practices, and then offer an account of how those identities imply certain actions. But critical theorists have a different aim. They also wish to surface identities, not to articulate their effects, but to elaborate on how people come to believe in a single version

posited that states were not necessarily monocultural, egoist rational actors acting in compliance with systemic necessities. They assumed an “intersubjective” process of identity-formation,²⁵ whereby state and systemic identities were mutually constituted. The state interests were determined by this process, and contrary to the realists’ arguments were not exogenously driven. Even if the constructivists reservedly accepted the anarchical trait of the international order,²⁶ they innovatively referred to the importance of identities and norms²⁷ that emerge out of social interaction between the states. In general, they “focused on the role of ideas, norms, knowledge, culture, and argument in politics, stressing in particular the role of collectively held or ‘intersubjective’ ideas and understandings on social life.”²⁸

of a naturalized truth. In other words, critical theory aims at exploding the myths associated with identity formation, whereas conventional constructivists wish to treat those identities as possible causes of action.” Ted Hopf, “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory,” *International Security* 23, no. 1 (Summer 1998), pp. 194-195. When the dissertation alludes to constructivism, it will refer to the conventional one throughout the paper.

²⁴ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (Spring 1992), pp. 391–426.

²⁵ Intersubjectivity, inter alia, refers to shared meanings and norms in constructivist theory. As a concept it posits a mutual constitution of state and structural identities. “Constructivism . . . assumes that the selves, or identities, of states are a variable; they likely depend on historical, cultural, political, and social context.” Hopf, p. 176.

²⁶ Wendt offered three cultures of anarchy at the systemic level: Hobbesian culture, Lockean culture, and Kantian culture characterized mainly by enmity, rivalry, and friendship respectively. Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

²⁷ Hopf underlines the significance of norms and practices in the interaction between the states. He posits “Actors develop their relations with, and understandings of, others through the media of norms and practices. In the absence of norms, exercises of power, or actions, would be devoid of meaning. Constitutive norms define an identity by specifying the actions that will cause Others to recognize that identity and respond to it appropriately. Since structure is meaningless without some intersubjective set of norms and practices, anarchy, mainstream international relations theory’s most crucial structural component, is meaningless.” Hopf, p. 172.

²⁸ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (2001), p. 392.

Wendt defined two tenets of constructivism underlining its ideational traits: “(1) that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and (2) that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature.”²⁹ The former point about the primacy debate is there to stay. Yet the latter point constitutes constructivism’s primary contribution to the field.³⁰

In bringing the ideational factors into the picture, constructivism played the role of an iconoclast. Hopf, identified constructivism as “ontologically agnostic”, as “it does not include or exclude any particular variables as meaningful- it envisions no disciplinary divides between international relations and comparative subfields.”³¹ Therefore, a vast scope was opened for study.

In the beginning, constructivists were more willing to integrate domestic social, cultural, and political factors into their analysis.³² A later preoccupation with international politics and its effects on identity formation, narrowed down their focus to the systemic level. Wendt for one, “distinguished international political studies from those that have as their object explaining the behavior of individual states, or ‘theories of

²⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p. 1.

³⁰ Hurd underlined this shift from materialism: “While the shift from a materialist to a socially constructed view of international relations was controversial in the early 1990s, it has now been broadly accepted. The constructivist insight has been largely internalized by the discipline.” Ian Hurd, “Constructivism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 301.

³¹ Hopf, p. 194.

³² Hopf described constructivism as providing “a promising approach for uncovering those features of domestic society, culture, and politics that should matter to state identity and state action in global politics...Any state identity in world politics is partly the product of the social practices that constitute that identity at home. In this way, identity politics at home constrain and enable state identity, interests, and actions abroad.” *Ibid.*, pp.194-195.

foreign policy.”³³ This choice for grand theorizing engendered criticism. Checkel contested that “constructivists, despite their arguments about mutually constituting agents and structures, have advanced a structure-centered approach in their empirical work.”³⁴

Constructivism’s need for analytical rigor also became more visible, once its ideational claims became part of the theoretical debate. “Having demonstrated that social construction matters, they [the constructivists] must now address when, how, and why it occurs, clearly specifying the actors and mechanisms bringing about change, the scope conditions under which they operate, and how they vary across countries.”³⁵

On the other hand, other schools were ready to integrate the constructivist ideational insights into their methodology.³⁶ In effect, with a demonstrated advantage in social scientific research, neoliberal and neorealist schools developed empirical models for studying the effects of ideational factors in IR.³⁷

Epistemic Communities Hypothesis (ECH)

³³ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p. 11.

³⁴ Jeffrey T. Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,” *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (Jan., 1998), p. 342.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 325.

³⁶ “As the socially constructed nature of world politics has been broadly accepted, it has become clear that what remains contestable between constructivists and others is how (not “whether”) this insight affects the study of world politics, both in its methodology and in its substance. The debate over the construction of state interests and their sources follows from this debate.” Hurd, “Constructivism,” p. 302.

³⁷ Finnemore and Sikkink admitted this: “Constructivism is a different kind of theory from realism, liberalism, or marxism [sic] and operates at a different level of abstraction. Constructivism is not a substantive theory of politics. It is a social theory that makes claims about the nature of social life and social change. Constructivism does not, however, make any particular claims about the content of social structures or the nature of agents at work in social life. Consequently it does not, by itself, produce specific predictions about political outcomes that one could test in social science research.” Finnemore and Sikkink, p. 393.

Epistemic communities hypothesis (ECH) symbolized an institutionalist attempt to integrate ideational factors in an empirical model.³⁸ ECH posited “an approach that examines the role that networks of knowledge-based experts- epistemic communities- play in articulating the cause-and-effect relationships of complex problems, helping states identify their interests, framing the issues for collective debate, proposing specific policies, and identifying salient points for negotiation.”³⁹ It was predicated on possible behavioral (i.e. policy) changes upon “the diffusion of new ideas and information.”⁴⁰ The critical point here was “the politicians’ decisions to relinquish political control of certain policy levers”⁴¹ to experts to better position themselves against uncertainty especially in times of turbulent change.⁴²

ECH had “a largely agent-centered view, where state decision makers calculate and reason in response to a changing material environment.”⁴³ In fact, the point was to

³⁸ Checkel highlighted that “Work on epistemic communities and, more recently, on transnational policy networks has brought research on international regimes closer to the insights offered by constructivists.” Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn,” p. 329.

³⁹ Peter M. Haas, “Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Co-ordination,” *International Organization* 46, no.1 (Winter 1992), pp. 1–35. He defines “epistemic community” as “a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area.” *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Alex Balch, “Labour and Epistemic Communities: The Case of ‘Managed Migration’ in the UK,” *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 11, no. 4 (2009), p. 613.

⁴² Haas quoting Alexander George defined conditions of uncertainty as “those under which actors must make choices without ‘adequate information about the situation at hand’ or in the face of ‘inadequacy of available general knowledge needed for assessing the expected outcomes of different courses of action.” Peter M. Haas, pp. 14-15.

⁴³ Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn,” p. 329.

redeem “the possibility that actors can learn new patterns of reasoning and may consequently begin to pursue new state interests,”⁴⁴ which could have nonsystemic origins and lead to the institutionalization of ideas depending on consolidation of bureaucratic power both at the national and international institutions.

Pragmatism is inherent in ECH’s theorizing. Thus, confronted with complexity and technicality of governance, decision makers were supposed to make a practical choice for the expertise of epistemic communities. Haas specified four incentives and reasons for consulting them in cases of uncertainty: Epistemic communities can first “elucidate the cause-and-effect relationships;” second, “shed light on the complex interlinkages between issues;” third, “help define self-interests of a state or factions within it;” fourth, “help formulate policies.”⁴⁵ In sum, the view presented was to depict epistemic communities as “channels through which ideas circulate from societies to governments as well as from country to country.”⁴⁶ Hence, as loci of shared ideas and beliefs, epistemic communities had both a national and transnational role for diffusion.

Its bases on ideational factors notwithstanding, ECH followed a different path than the constructivist research agenda. In essence, the latter saw the intersubjective constitution process as causal, which was supposed to affect political behavior.⁴⁷ ECH, on its part, focused on the causal affect of ideas in a threefold process: First, the process of idea (interpreted information) formation against uncertainty; second, adoption by the political leadership; third, institutionalization by consolidation of bureaucratic power. In

⁴⁴ Haas, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 27.

⁴⁷ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, p. 394.

that sense, ECH followed a bottom up, from agent to structure causal link, as opposed to mutual constitution of agency and structure in constructivism. It was also assigned with a structural trait, once epistemic communities became institutionalized.

Constructivist critiques interpreted ECH as “constructivism in disguise,” better as “structural institutionalism.”⁴⁸ On the one hand, they were supportive of the fact that ideational factors were being integrated into the IR research agenda. On the other, they felt betrayed by the assignment of a secondary role for ideas in order to figure out the unexplained variance between rational interests and policy.⁴⁹ In that sense, they contested the assumption that ideas served as an intervening variable in enabling the purposive actors realize their rational interests. They also disapproved focusing on a single snapshot of watershed moments of increased uncertainty. They rather aspired to a process analysis of the mutual constitution of identities and norms, designated to be *the* independent variable in IR research.

In effect, the research agenda ECH formulated was generally in line with what constructivism sought. Checkel in reply to the question “what kind of constructivism we want?” proposed “developing a middle range theory,⁵⁰ taking domestic politics and

⁴⁸ See, Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, pp. 391-416; Mark M. Blyth, “‘Any More Bright Ideas?’ The Ideational Turn of Comparative Political Economy,” *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 2 (Jan., 1997), pp. 229-250; John Kurt Jacobsen, “Much Ado About Ideas: The Cognitive Factor in Economic Policy,” *World Politics* 47, no. 2 (Jan., 1995), pp. 283-310. Actually, ECH is characterized as structural institutionalism by its founders. See Emmanuel Adler and Peter M. Haas, “Conclusion: Epistemic Communities, World Order, and the Creation of a Reflective Research Program,” *International Organization* 46, no.1, (Winter 1992), pp. 367-390.

⁴⁹ Jacobsen argued that “the authors have not successfully made the case for the ‘power of ideas’-that ideas have a force of their own-but that they do demonstrate that an ideas approach is always a valuable supplement to interest-based, rational actor models.” John Kurt Jacobsen, p. 285.

⁵⁰ Middle range theory, developed by Merton, is an approach to sociological theorizing aimed at integrating theory and empirical research. It stands as an alternative to grand theorizing, starting with an empirical question. See Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: Free Press, 1968).

agency seriously.”⁵¹ He thought this stemmed from constructivism’s quest for “building a rigorous and coherent body of research that speaks to other literatures within IR” in conjunction with the need to define actors and causal mechanisms with clarity.⁵² As such, ECH’s move to integrate ideational factors in its research agenda should be seen as a positive development, eventually working towards constructivism’s objectives specified above.⁵³

Yet the outstanding issue that remained was to set the independent causality of ideational factors, i.e. the power of ideas.⁵⁴ The inherent defect of ECH in that sense was the relationship with political leadership. As Jacobsen aptly underlined “if the decision makers whom members of an epistemic community advise turn out to be themselves, then ‘epistemic community’ simply collapses as a concept.”⁵⁵ As importantly, ECH sidelined the role of public debates and the political environment⁵⁶ in decision making. This was because it remained “a model of elites by elites and for elites.”⁵⁷

⁵¹ Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn,” pp. 347-348.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 348.

⁵³ Adler and Haas highlighted this: “. . . we also offer a research program with which students of world politics can empirically study the role of ideas in international relations.” Adler and Haas, p. 368.

⁵⁴ In this vein, Jacobsen referring to contemporary work on ideas underlined that: “The theoretical snarl is that the strong case—that the ‘power of the idea itself explains its acceptance’—first must demonstrate that interests are interpenetrated by ideas, but then ideas must be shown to exert influence untainted by the interests they have just been shown to interpenetrate.” Despite a general aspiration for the latter, Jacobsen found this agenda “untenable.” Jacobsen, p. 286.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

⁵⁶ Ikenberry, in his analysis of the post-World War II economic order accentuated that: “What ultimately mattered to the ratification of the Bretton Woods agreement was not that it was based on policy ideas advanced by an expert community but, rather, that the political ideas resonated with the larger political environment.” G. John Ikenberry, “Creating Yesterday’s New World Order: Keynesian “New Thinking” and the Anglo-American Postwar Settlement,” in *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, p. 59.

⁵⁷ Jacobsen, p. 303.

Ideas and Foreign Policy

The volume edited by Goldstein and Keohane on “Ideas and Foreign Policy”⁵⁸ addressed these concerns of causality and relationship with the political environment. In essence, they followed ECH’s steps.⁵⁹ As such, they tried to find a middle way between rationalist (i.e. neorealist and neoliberal) and constructivist theories.⁶⁰ In their quest to figure out how ideas affected certain policy outcomes, they asserted “ideas as well as interests have causal weight in explanations of human action.”⁶¹ They defended that ideas still matter even if actors were assumed to act rationally. This was because “ideas clarify principles and conceptions of causal relationships, and coordinate individual behavior.”⁶²

Yet Goldstein and Keohane were still critical of rationalist as well as constructivist approaches. They contested the former’s emphasis on rational choice as the predominant factor of analysis. Conceding that this has a value as “a starting point”, they challenged its explanatory power by pointing to the need to integrate ideas in order to resolve existing anomalies across countries or over time. In the meanwhile, praising constructivists’ commitment to the role of ideas, they challenged its “antiempiricist bias.”

⁵⁸ Goldstein and Keohane, pp. 3-30.

⁵⁹ Goldstein and Keohane verified this. See *ibid.*, p. 11, footnote 18. Following that, the chapter by Ikenberry on postwar economic order exemplified *causal beliefs* based on ECH. See G. John Ikenberry, “Creating Yesterday’s New World Order,” pp. 57-86.

⁶⁰ Jacobsen, p. 289.

⁶¹ In that approach, they were closer to ideational claims and attested the rational approach, which assigned a minor role to ideas. Goldstein and Keohane, p. 4.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

In its place, they offered an empirical model, which sought a social scientific method for analyzing the role of ideas.

The volume, in a constructivist fashion focused on the shared beliefs, which “range from general moral principles to agreement on a specific application of scientific knowledge.”⁶³ Throughout their work, such beliefs were taken as the ideas analyzed. Yet they opted for a different pathway than constructivists. Rather than focusing on the constitutive relationship between ideas and structure, they chose to focus on their effects. As such, ideas were counted as independent variables.

On causality, “the central issue of the volume,”⁶⁴ Goldstein and Keohane warned against equalizing ideas held by policy makers with policies. They looked beyond an intrinsic value of ideas for policy choices. In other words, they pointed to the selection process by policy makers that might reflect their interests. Therefore, they posited that “advocates of an ideational approach to political analysis must begin by identifying the ideas being described and the policy outcomes or institutional changes to be explained.”⁶⁵ In addition, they heeded the need to marshal evidence about conditions of causality between ideas and policy outcomes.

In essence, Goldstein and Keohane adopted a Weberian understanding of causality. Weber expressed that “Not ideas, but material and ideal interests, directly govern men’s conduct. Yet very frequently the ‘world images’ that have been created by ideas have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by

⁶³ Goldstein and Keohane, p. 7. The authors defined ideas as “beliefs held by individuals.” But this definition was also implicitly contested in the edited volume. Also see, footnote 7 in Chapter 1.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 11.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

the dynamic of interest.”⁶⁶ The “switchmen” metaphor was frequently applied to refer to the defining and restrictive role of ideas on agents, whereby they not only prescribed certain pathways, but also proscribed others from political debate.

Goldstein and Keohane identified three types of beliefs, i.e. ideas. *Worldviews*, defined as “conceptions of possibility” are both the broadest and most effective of ideas. Great religions, scientific rationality, sovereignty, human rights, and Stalinism are among general examples. Worldviews “are embedded in the symbolism of a culture and deeply affect modes of thought and discourse,”⁶⁷ which, again for Goldstein and Keohane, entails broader cultural studies to understand their impacts on politics and foreign policy.

Principled beliefs are “normative ideas that specify criteria for distinguishing right from wrong and just from unjust,”⁶⁸ and may have an intermediary role between worldviews and certain policies. *Causal beliefs*, on the other hand, are “beliefs about cause-effect relations which derive authority from the shared consensus of recognized elites.”⁶⁹ There were two key elements about such beliefs: First their role in leading agents on the way to achieve their goals. Second, their efficacy for action being dependent on the diffusion and adoption of shared ideas. Causal beliefs were more amenable to change. In that sense, Goldstein and Keohane outlined a pecking order of

⁶⁶ Max Weber, “Social Psychology of the World’s Religions,” (1913), in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 280. Cited in Goldstein and Keohane, pp. 11-12.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶⁸ “The views that ‘slavery is wrong,’ that ‘abortion is murder,’ and that human beings have the ‘right of free speech’ are principled beliefs.” *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

worldviews, principled beliefs, and causal beliefs, the former with the least likelihood of short-term change.⁷⁰

The editors proposed three causal pathways to delineate the impact of ideas on policy. The first was predicated upon actors' need to identify their preferences or to set a causal relationship between goals and ways to reach them. Ideas thus serve as *road maps*, "when actors believe in the causal links they identify or the normative principles that they reflect."⁷¹ Here, Goldstein and Keohane built on the gap between rationalistic analysis and individuals' preferences for certain ends. They posited that "preferences for particular policy outcomes are not given but acquired [...dependent on] what ideas are available and how people choose among them."⁷² In addition, with imperfect information about the way ahead, the ideas that individuals hold become an important element of explanation. Expected effects of actions compensate for the uncertainty of the results of action, which depend either on causal beliefs or institutional processes. In short, "when we view politics as an arena in which actors face continual uncertainties about their interests and how to maximize them, the need for ideas to act as road maps becomes apparent."⁷³

Following ECH's steps, Goldstein and Keohane assumed that critical political and economic ruptures increased the chances for the adoption of new ideas: "Depressions, wars, the decline of a political party, and the overthrow of a government may all cause

⁷⁰ "Causal beliefs imply strategies for the attainment of goals, themselves valued because of shared principled beliefs, and understandable only within the context of broader world views." Goldstein and Keohane, p. 10.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

ideas to become important because all constitute exogenous shocks that undermine the existing order. At such moments radical shifts in the political agenda may occur because of the common acceptance of some new normative or causal set of beliefs.”⁷⁴ However, this was not a functional approach as the authors made a differentiation between benefits for the public at large and the expected goals of political actors. In that way, there was still an element of political functionality as opposed to public functionality, which determined the causal role of ideas.

The two other pathways were defined primarily by forces of stability. When ideas act as *focal points and glue*, their “key role is to alleviate coordination problems arising from the absence of unique equilibrium solutions.”⁷⁵ For instance, the Cassis de Dijon case in the European Court of Justice functioned as a focal point in leading member states, otherwise with divergent interests, toward a European internal market.⁷⁶ On the other hand, ideas have a long-lasting effect when they become embedded in “political institutions.”⁷⁷ These ideas essentially may be a product of power relations in the group,

⁷⁴ Goldstein and Keohane, p. 17.

⁷⁵ Goldstein and Keohane built on the failure to get to a unique equilibrium in repeated games of game theory. “Thus, from a game-theoretic perspective, ideas may be important precisely because unique predictions cannot be generated solely through an examination of interests and strategic interactions. Because almost all games with repeated play have multiple equilibria, the ideas held by players are often the key to a game’s outcome.” Ibid., p. 17.

⁷⁶ Garrett and Weingast point to the collective action problem without ideas functioning as a focal point. Although member states agreed on principled ideas- that an internal market was good; they disagreed on the way to realize it. The court case, in that sense, acted as a focal point to reach equilibrium. However, the point also was that the court case did not contradict the interests of major actors in the EU, in particular Germany. Geoffrey Garrett and Barry R. Weingast, “Ideas, Interests, and Institutions: Constructing the European Community’s Internal Market,” in *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, pp. 173-206.

⁷⁷ Goldstein and Keohane identified political institutions as administrative agencies, laws, norms and operating procedures. They defined norms as “implicit prescriptions accepted as valid by a particular society to govern relationships within it or by more than one society to govern their relationships with one another.” Though they did not specify when ideas institutionalize, they analyzed such ideas long-term effects. Goldstein and Keohane, p. 20.

but “the interests that promoted some statute may fade over time while ideas encased in the statute nevertheless continue to influence politics.”⁷⁸ Therefore, ideas may develop an independent impact beyond initial reasons of power and interest.

Methodologically, Goldstein and Keohane reiterated their disagreement with the constructivists. They opposed the latter’s position that ideas and interests cannot be separated, which would render it impossible to evaluate whether ideas had an impact on policy. The authors were cognizant of the fact that ideas and interests are “not phenomenologically separate and that all interests involve beliefs, and therefore ideas as we conceive them.”⁷⁹ Yet they still wanted to measure variation stemming from ideas. For that, they tested against the hypothesis, what if actors followed “individual self-interest in a narrowly utilitarian sense.”⁸⁰ However, the causal link was not automatic. It required evidential support. Therefore, evidence was to be brought to assess “the validity of the null hypothesis in relation to the assertion that ideas mattered.”⁸¹

The editors of the volume suggested a twofold analysis of the role of ideas on policy: The first was descriptive inference, whereby the researcher distinguished between random and systematic aspects of behavior and assessed the extent to which self-reported and observed behavior reflects beliefs. This required thinking in counterfactuals to evaluate the limits of possibility. The second was establishing a causal link. For that the initial step was to establish covariation between ideas and policy. Once a link appeared to

⁷⁸ Goldstein and Keohane, p. 21.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

be established, it should still be checked against spurious correlation by checking external factors that might have an impact on both ideas and policy.⁸²

The Definition of “Ideas”

Despite offering a rigorous empirical model, Goldstein and Keohane’s definition of ideas⁸³ stands unclear. First, it undermines their attempt at empirical study. Beliefs are not measurable and observable, and ask for interpretative, if not intuitive, analysis. Moreover, as Marks underlined there should be an element of “knowledge;” which is lacking in their definition. Marks, therefore, listed ideas, interests, and knowledge⁸⁴ as three constitutive elements of politics and society. He suggested taking into account both ideas and knowledge as they jointly inform the definition of interests.

Marks equated ideas with Kuhnian paradigms. “That is to say, ideas are the cultural equivalent of academics’ intellectual frames of reference. Knowledge, on the other hand, is more like scientific theory. It implies a much more rigorous set of rules or

⁸² Goldstein and Keohane hereby call for an industrious effort for the sake of theoretical clarity. While they separate their research format from constructivists in taking ideas and interests as different phenomena, once they establish a causal link they go back to check whether the phenomenological separation was spurious. Though, they conceded that their claim was not “methodological perfection,” it remains open to new venues for further research. Goldstein and Keohane, p. 29.

⁸³ See footnote 63.

⁸⁴ Marks defined ideas as “abstract, yet deeply held, beliefs”; interests as “actor’s set of preferred outcomes;” and knowledge “expressly implies specialized and specific understanding about a particular issue or problem.” “Whereas ideas are frequently- though clearly not always- portrayed as vague generalities, knowledge implies comprehension of truths, facts, or accepted explanation of particular processes” Marks, pp. 27-29.

laws explaining the nature of how the world works.”⁸⁵ His quest for a more comprehensive definition stemmed from the need to differentiate between general concepts determining long-term orientation, i.e. paradigmatic definitions, and general positions delimiting practice, i.e. policy principles.

Positing from an ideational point of view, Marks foresaw a stable relationship between ideas and interests. In that sense, it was knowledge claims that come into play to reconcile uncertainty. This was because while “the political actors must reconcile their past experiences with current political problems,”⁸⁶ ideas may not do the same easily with redefined political interests after a regime change, or ideas hold may prove not consistent with policy implementation.

The dissertation, thus, defines *ideas* as beliefs held by individuals, which are reflected in knowledge. The latter component, as a reflection, renders ideas measurable and observable. Therefore, the general focus of the dissertation will be on the impact of these reflected conceptions, defined as ideas, on foreign policy change. Following Goldstein and Keohane’s steps, the dissertation will deal with this impact, not the sources of ideas.

Paradigmatic Policy Change

Regarding policy change, the dialogue between constructivism and institutionalism is also vivid. Constructivist Institutionalism (CI), accordingly foresaw a

⁸⁵ Marks, pp. 30-31.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 31.

“dynamic interplay of structure and agent and, indeed, material and ideational factors.”⁸⁷

Unlike former studies of institutionalism that tried to discern the elements of institutional equilibrium, CI was also interested in deciphering disequilibrium. Thus, it worked on identifying,

the extent to which [...] established ideas become codified, serving as cognitive filters through which actors come to interpret environmental signals. Yet, crucially, they are also concerned with the conditions under which such established cognitive filters and paradigms are contested, challenged, and replaced. Moreover, they see paradigmatic shifts as heralding significant institutional change.⁸⁸

Among pioneers of CI, Hall accentuated the centrality of ideas to policy change.⁸⁹

To that end, he implicitly identified the institutionalization of certain ideas as a “policy paradigm.”⁹⁰ He defined a policy paradigm as “a framework of ideas and standards that

⁸⁷ Colin Hay, “Constructivist Institutionalism,” in *Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, eds. R.A.W. Rhodes, Sarah A. Binder and Bert A. Rockman (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 62. Hay identifies CI with a focus on key moments of change and conditions of existence of complex institutional change. He differentiated CI from historical institutionalism with its emphasis on post-formative institutional change; as opposed to the latter’s path-dependence, i.e. the preservative character of institutions, once formed hinders change.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁸⁹ “In order to understand how social learning takes place, we also need a more complete account of the role that ideas play in the policy process. After all, the concept of social learning implies that ideas are central to policymaking, even if it says little more than that about the role they play.” Peter A. Hall, “Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State: The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain,” *Comparative Politics* 25, no. 3 (April 1993), p. 279.

⁹⁰ In the particular British case, Hall focused on the change from a Keynesian policy paradigm to a monetarist policy paradigm. Thus, ideational change brought paradigmatic change. *Ibid.*, pp. 275-296.

specifies not only the goals of policy and the kinds of instruments that can be used to attain them, but also the very nature of the problem they are addressing.”⁹¹ “In short, they [policy paradigms] come to circumscribe the realm of the politically feasible, practical, and desirable.”⁹²

Hall applied a Kuhnian model for policy change.⁹³ Kuhn distinguished between three phases of scientific development: The “pre-science or pre-paradigm” phase was characterized by a lack of consensus on any particular theory. There were several competing theories that were incompatible and incomplete. However, once a general consensus on the validity of a particular theory with its methods, terminology and experimental research was reached the second phase of “normal science” began. Here, a dominant paradigm gained general acceptance as the way to research for scientific questions. The third phase of “scientific revolutions” ensued the appearance of anomalies, or as Kuhn called “counterinstances”⁹⁴ in explaining questions within the extant paradigm. As a corollary, underlying assumptions of the field were reexamined and a new paradigm was established. After the new paradigm's dominance, scientists return to normal science, solving puzzles in view of the new paradigm.

Building on this, Hall determined three levels of policy change: He categorized first and second order changes as “normal policymaking” that foresaw adjustments in a policy paradigm. In these, the policy paradigm would not be challenged, but would be modified for adoptable anomalies. The third order change, namely “paradigmatic shift,”

⁹¹ Hall, p. 279.

⁹² Hay, p. 66.

⁹³ See Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

in contrast, accrued from “radical changes in the overarching terms of policy discourse, [...which often pointed to] a more disjunctive process associated with periodic discontinuities in policy.”⁹⁵ On the other hand, first and second order changes in policy did not “automatically lead to third order changes.”⁹⁶ This is because “as Kuhn demonstrates, anomalous events do not falsify a paradigm. A paradigm is disproved only by the creation of an alternative paradigm that accounts for more crucial facts in equally simple or simpler terms.”⁹⁷

In this manner, Hall envisioned a process of “the accumulation of anomalies, experimentation with new forms of policy, and policy failures that precipitate a shift in the locus of authority over policy and initiate a wider contest between competing paradigms”⁹⁸ toward paradigmatic shift. Once this change occurred, however, a policy paradigm was likely to become embedded and “is influential precisely because so much of it is taken for granted and unamenable to scrutiny as a whole.”⁹⁹

Methodology, Theoretical Model and Arguments of the Dissertation

The dissertation mostly concurs with Goldstein and Keohane’s methodological arguments. The menace for analysis is not about whether ideational factors have a role in

⁹⁵ Hall, p. 279.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 279.

⁹⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, “If Not Civilizations, What? Paradigms of the Post-Cold War World,” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 5 (Nov.-Dec., 1993), p. 187.

⁹⁸ For the third order change to occur he identified shifts in the political power and authority equations, along with “instances of policy experimentation and policy failure” as possible causes. Hall, p. 280.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 279.

foreign policy. Rather one needs to depict how ideas matter in affecting certain policy outcomes. For that, a state level of analysis should be the starting point, where observable and falsifiable changes occur that enable empirical study. On the other hand, systemic level analyses are good at giving a broader view of the general picture. When Wendt suggested a threefold study of international systemic identities in their Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian forms, he made his point for the general traits of the international system.¹⁰⁰ However, he ignored the other side of the coin, namely the single country studies. Thus, the dissertation follows the path of Goldstein and Keohane, as it aims at analyzing the role of ideas in the particular Turkish case.

Secondly, it concurs with the assumption that ideational change is more likely to occur at critical moments, what Goldstein and Keohane called “exogenous shocks.”¹⁰¹ This assumption does not necessarily erode the evolutionary process of ideas’ adoption in the political arena, namely their endogenicity. This is because ideas do not emerge and find followers abruptly. However, for them to be adopted it usually takes critical ruptures in political, economic and social fabric that opens new venues for already existing ideas. In short, ideas need to wait for their time to come. This might occur even if they were partly or complementarily applied before. As a result, Goldstein and Keohane’s doing away with the sources of ideas makes sense given the significance of their role after adoption.

Lastly, the authors suggested a twofold methodology for analysis. First, the descriptive model allows the application of social scientific methodology. Testing a null

¹⁰⁰ Wendt, “Social Theory of International Politics.”

¹⁰¹ Goldstein and Keohane, p. 17.

hypothesis, in their case the rational choice theory, their argument was rendered falsifiable.¹⁰² Second, they tried to establish the causal link. In essence, this goal seems to have puzzled ideational research. Yee, inter alia, suggested overcoming this problem through studying the causal mechanisms and capacities through which ideas had an impact on policy.¹⁰³ In the particular case of “ideational institutionalists,” Yee further alluded to “paying greater attention to the effects of symbolic languages, intersubjective meaning, and discursive practices.”¹⁰⁴ Goldstein and Keohane, in that vein, sought a nexus between ideas and policy outcomes, checked against the possible role of external factors.

The dissertation methodologically follows both. First, it applies a descriptive model to depict the processes through which ideas had an impact on foreign policy. This hinges on two ideational policy paradigms, the traditional bureaucratic policy paradigm and the JDP-Davutoğlu policy paradigm, as the backbone of the dissertation. The former acts as a null hypothesis to reveal ideational change in the latter.

Second, the dissertation aims at figuring out the causal link between ideas and policy. In accord, it traces ideational change and concomitant policy changes, while accounting for external factors. The null hypothesis again is functional in showing the causal link. It substantiates the assumption that without the role of ideas, the analysis of policy changes remains incomplete.

¹⁰² Falsifiability has become key to social scientific methodology after Karl Popper’s introduction of the term. See Kenneth R. Hoover and Todd Donovan, *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking*, 10th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010).

¹⁰³ Albert S. Yee, “The Causal Effects of Ideas on Policies,” *International Organization* 50, no.1 (Winter 1996), pp. 69-108.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

Adopting this methodology, the dissertation dwells on the ideational paradigmatic change in Turkish foreign policy (Turkish foreign policy). It posits that the traditional bureaucratic paradigm is being replaced by the emerging JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm. The former policy paradigm was institutionalized with specific principled beliefs, or policy principles. It held sway despite mounting contextual shifts and even a harder process of adjustment against anomalies. The adjustment process especially in the post-Cold War era was characterized more by bureaucratic resistance to change than an inherent adaptability of the traditional paradigm. Yet a complex interplay of internal and external developments gave leeway to a new policy paradigm later on. Changes in domestic political power structure particularly made this puzzling shift possible. Though it is not yet certain whether the new paradigm has been accorded a general consensus and reached an institutionalization level, where “so much is taken for granted,” still the political authority seems to have assigned it a comparable role.

Building on this methodology and theoretical model the dissertation centers around three main arguments:

Argument 1: The traditional bureaucratic policy paradigm, which was significantly molded by the late Ottoman and early Republican heritages, survived the post-Cold War era. A detailed analysis of the period disproves the interpretation that change in the external environment led to “a new foreign policy,” and, by implication, the breakdown of the old policy paradigm. Moreover, the year 1999, when a series of auspicious developments hinted at a transformation in foreign policy, turned out to be the beginning of the end rather than, as argued, the end of the traditional paradigm.

Argument 2: Turkey's internal order was undermined especially after the 2000-2001 financial crises. The unfolding course of events brought about a dramatic change in domestic politics. The consolidation of executive power under a single party government combined with the Europeanization process neutralized the bureaucratic bulwark to effectively defend the traditional paradigm. Combined with the pursuant domestic and external developments that prevented a return to traditionalism, the environmental change amounted to what Goldstein and Keohane called an "exogenous shock" that gave leeway to ideational change.

Argument 3: Davutoğlu's ideas had a causal role in foreign policy change under the JDP rule, which amounted to a paradigmatic shift. Adoption of Davutoğlu's ideas had to do with the JDP's need for ideas in foreign policy that could be associated with the Party's self-declared transformative agenda. In essence, this choice was a direct response to political, economic and electoral demands. At this point the assumption is the more powerful the JDP felt at home,¹⁰⁵ the more it was willing to break away from the traditional bureaucratic paradigm or vice versa.

¹⁰⁵ A key measurement of this power equation is the intensity and relative power of the political-bureaucratic opposition.

CHAPTER 3

TRADITIONAL BUREAUCRATIC FOREIGN POLICY PARADIGM

The Basis of the Traditional Bureaucratic Foreign Policy Paradigm

Before delving into the elements of change after 2002, it will be apposite to articulate the conventional traits of Turkish foreign policy. In the literature, there seems to be an overall consensus on the validity of a traditional approach up until the end of the Cold War.¹⁰⁶ This meant a continuation of the basic principles of Republican foreign policy, despite oscillations throughout the Cold War.¹⁰⁷

As Robins put it, “when the new state of Turkey was created in 1923, it was a *tabula rasa*. It possessed little sense of itself other than what it did not want to be.”¹⁰⁸ In

¹⁰⁶ This is derived from a general reading of the literature. Otherwise, certain accounts defend discontinuity from early Republican era. See the following footnote for an argument along these lines.

¹⁰⁷ Some authors interpreted Turkey’s participation in the Korean War in 1950, followed by accession to NATO in 1952 as a reversal of the Republican tradition of neutrality. See Mustafa Aydın, “Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical Framework and Traditional Inputs,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 35, no. 4, Seventy-Five Years of the Turkish Republic (Oct., 1999), pp. 152-186. Also See Faruk Sönmezoğlu, “II. Dünya Savaşı Döneminde Türkiye’nin Dış Politikası: ‘Tarafsızlık’tan NATO’ya (Turkey’s foreign policy in the second world war era: from ‘neutrality’ to NATO),” in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi* (Analysis of Turkish foreign policy) ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1994), pp. 79-87; Ertan Efeğil, “Türk Dış Politikasında Eksen Kayması Sorunsalı: Batı Yöneliminden Anadolu Merkezli Anlayışa Geçiş mi? (The shift of axis problematic in the Turkish foreign policy: transition from Western orientation to Anatolia-Centered approach?)” in *Değişen Dünyada Türk Dış Politikası* (Turkish foreign policy in a changing world), ed. Murat Ercan (Ankara: Nobel, 2011), pp. 405-430.

Olson and İnce underlined that whether Atatürk pursued a neutral foreign policy was itself debatable: See Robert W. Olson and Nurhan İnce, “Turkish Foreign Policy from 1923-1960: Kemalism and Its Legacy, a Review and a Critique,” *Moderno* 57, no. 5/6 (May-June 1977), p. 232.

¹⁰⁸ Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War* (London: Hurst, 2003), p. 136.

that sense, the Republic wanted to do away with the Ottoman past,¹⁰⁹ though this proved illusionary. Even an escape from the past was shaped largely by the experience of it.¹¹⁰ Yet, this did not prevent the Republic from creating its peculiar ethos with specific ideas and values.¹¹¹

The Republic inherited the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP)'s ideational heritage.¹¹² The CUP, unlike their Liberal rivals, dismissed any idea of Western tutelage.¹¹³ The Unionists were rather “willing to be a part of the Europe-dominated world system but they expected to be treated as partners, albeit junior partners.”¹¹⁴ Thus, “they sought a degree of autonomy and independence sufficient for the creation of a capitalist society in Turkey with the requisite social classes.”¹¹⁵ The Republic, in turn, prioritized sovereignty and independence as cornerstones in its objective to become a modern and Western state.

¹⁰⁹ “Atatürk laid stress on the fact that the regime they were creating had nothing in common with the former Ottoman state and was a complete break with the corrupt past.” Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London; New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Aydın counts “historical heritages” among structural variables of Turkish foreign. Yet, he took them more as past experiences, impressions and images than elements of institutional and ideational continuity. See Aydın, “Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 155.

¹¹¹ For a recent analysis of the Republican nation-building mentality See Zafer Toprak, *Darwin'den Dersim'e Cumhuriyet ve Antropoloji* (The Republic and anthropology from Darwin to Dersim) (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2012).

¹¹² Zürcher gives a comprehensive account of the nexus between the CUP and the Republic. He actually categorizes the period between 1908-1950 as “the Young Turk era in Turkish history,” characterized by political, ideological and economical continuity. See Eric-Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 3rd ed. (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), pp. 93-218.

¹¹³ Hanioglu underlines this difference regarding political autonomy between the Unionist and Liberal factions of the Young Turks. M. Şükrü Hanioglu, “Jön Türkler ve Osmanlı'da İç-Dış Politika Bağlantısı (Young Turks and domestic-foreign policy linkage in the Ottoman [Empire]),” in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, p. 346.

¹¹⁴ Ahmad, *The Making of Modern*, p. 6.

¹¹⁵ Ibid..

Another heritage, mostly overlooked in the foreign policy literature, was the quest for “Westernization against the West.”¹¹⁶ Ziya Gökalp, the ideologue of Turkish nationalism, epitomized this double-edged approach. Gökalp believed that “Either we master the Western civilization or become subjugated by the Western states- there is no other choice.”¹¹⁷ However, he was equally concerned about the Western cultural and implicitly political domination. Hence, his call for a synthesis of the Turkish culture and Western civilization.¹¹⁸ Though the Republic emerged more open to embrace the Western cultural influence, the “deep anxiety about survival”¹¹⁹ also imbued its cadres politically. In that vein, Westernism emerged both as an ideal and reverse motivation for the young Republic.

These ideational heritages had certain influence on the Republican bureaucratic elites including Atatürk, who were Ottoman vestiges.¹²⁰ Yet, Atatürk’s leadership had a definitive role in defining the Republican norms and values. His ideas were shaped

¹¹⁶ Bilgin read this phenomenon from a different angle. She highlighted “non-military and non-specific insecurities” in leading Turkey to Western orientation. See Pınar Bilgin, “Securing Turkey through Western-oriented Foreign Policy,” *New Perspectives On Turkey*, no. 40 (2009), pp. 105-125.

¹¹⁷ Ziya Gökalp, *Makaleler IX* (Articles IX) (İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1980), p. 40. Cited in Orhan Koçak, “‘Westernisation against the West’: Cultural Politics in the Early Turkish Republic,” in *Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem and Philip Robins (Basingstoke [England]; New York: Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan; In association with St Antony's College, 2010), p. 309.

¹¹⁸ Gökalp aspired to free the nascent Turkish culture from Persian and Arabic civilizational influences. He assigned the Western civilization an instrumental role in this process. Yet he warned against a pressing threat of Western cultural subjugation. Koçak quotes that “[Gökalp] had to contend that the culture–civilisation dichotomy was a perennial feature of Turkish history, that Turkish culture had in the past freed itself from Chinese civilisation, only to fall under the influence of the Iranians and Arabs, and that just as it had to fight its way out of their civilisations, it now faced the task of surviving the influence of the European one.” Ziya Gökalp, *Hars ve Medeniyet* (Culture and civilization) (İstanbul: Toker Yayınları, 1995), p. 14. Cited in Orhan Koçak, p. 309.

¹¹⁹ Ibid..

¹²⁰ Aydın, “Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 159.

principally by the late Ottoman experience of decline and a reciprocal quest to halt this through Westernization.¹²¹ Once that goal passed away and an opportunity to start anew emerged, Atatürk felt relieved from the baggage of the past and moved on to create a “European nation-state.”¹²² In that, he was “more a practitioner, than an ideologue, [since] he made few attempts to develop his ideas into a cogent ideology.”¹²³

Three ideas shaped Atatürk’s mission as the founder of the nation-state: First, “the nation was to be built upon an imagined and homogenised Turkish identity, with an ethnic inclusivism born of the necessity of wartime population movements; only the remnants of the religious *millet* would be classified as minorities and hence receive special status within the state.”¹²⁴ Second, this national identity was predicated on a “modern”¹²⁵ Westernist worldview, interpreted politically as secular nation-state. This worldview came to define “the cultural hegemony”¹²⁶ of the center, and a concurrent exclusion of other peripheral identities in the name of monoculturalism.¹²⁷ Third was the idea of strong and central Republican state with political and spiritual power to engineer all aspects of political, economic and cultural life.

¹²¹ For a comprehensive study on Atatürk’s ideational background See M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

¹²² Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 136.

¹²³ *Ibid.*,

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

¹²⁵ As Keyder described “Modernity, in their conception, was a project of ‘embracing and internalizing all the cultural dimensions that made Europe modern.’” Çağlar Keyder, “Wither the Project of Modernity: Turkey in the 1990s,” in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, eds. Resat Kasaba and Sibel Bozdoğan (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), p. 37.

¹²⁶ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 137.

¹²⁷ “The most dramatic result of this thinking was the suppression and exclusion of the other elements, especially Islamic, of collective identity from political discourse.” Yücel Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity: A Constructivist Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 54.

Westernization went hand in hand with monoculturalism, substituting Islamic legitimation of state identity with nationalism and secularism. Turkishness, interpreted more in ethnically and religiously exclusive terms, was assumed to function as a supra-identity. As such, it repudiated alternative ideational claims from the periphery. Secularism, on the other hand, was to curb the Islamic identity from intruding the public sphere and to restrict it to its designed place, i.e. the private sphere. In practice, monoculturalism hindered the development of healthy relations with non-Western countries, as Western orientation was associated with overlooking Turkey's non-Western identities.

Oran identified “Westernism (*Batıcılık*)”¹²⁸ and “status quoism (*statükoculuk*)” as “two pillars of the Republican foreign policy.”¹²⁹ Together with monoculturalism, they functioned as *principled beliefs* in that they came to demarcate the normative boundaries of the Turkish foreign policy. For instance, Western orientation did not only define relations with the Western countries, but also the Turkish foreign policy in its totality. It also determined the direction of monoculturalism *per se* as well as status quoism.

Western orientation first symbolized the continuation of Ottoman modernization. In that sense it had roots in political, intellectual, and developmental foundations of modern Turkey. With *Tanzimat*, modernization efforts were diffused to almost all aspects

¹²⁸ The literature employs “Western orientation” to denote Turkish foreign policy’s general direction. Westernism sounds as more than an orientation or commitment, but identification. The dissertation uses the former as a principled belief, and the latter as a broader worldview.

¹²⁹ Baskın Oran, “Giriş: Türk Dış Politikasının (TDP) Teori ve Pratiği (Introduction: Turkish foreign policy in theory and practice),” in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar* (Turkish foreign policy: phenomena, documents, comments from the War of Independence until today), ed. Baskın Oran, Vol. 1 (1919-1980) (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), pp. 46-53. Also See Baskın Oran, “Türk Dış Politikası: Temel İlkeleri ve Soğuk Savaş Ertesindeki Durumu Üzerine Notlar (Turkish foreign policy: notes on fundamental principles and post-cold war situation),” *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi- Prof. Dr. Oral Sander’e Armağan* (Gift to Prof. Dr. Oral Sander) 51, no. 1-4 (January-December 1996), pp. 353-370.

of the Ottoman polity. These generally aimed at finding Western remedies to local problems. But, the Republic, given its desire to present itself as a rupture from the Ottoman past was to generate a state, nation, culture, citizen, and by default foreign policy anew through Westernization.¹³⁰ According to a common interpretation, followed by the founder of the Republic, “Turkey’s place was in the West, not in the East.”¹³¹ By logical extension, reclaiming Turkey’s deserved status in the international community entailed Western orientation in foreign policy.

Whether Western orientation was based on ideological dispositions or *realpolitik* has been a controversial subject.¹³² For the Kemalist authors, renunciation of other alternatives, such as Pan-Islamism or Pan-Turkism in favor of Western orientation indicated Atatürk’s realism. Atatürk espoused a cautious approach to that end, as he decreed that “let us acknowledge our limits and capabilities.”¹³³ Thereby, his foreign policy line not only realized the foreign policy objective of securing territorial borders, but also ensured Turkey’s status as a sovereign and equal member of the international community. The revisionists, on the other hand, criticized Western orientation as an

¹³⁰ This project predicated on a positivist and secularist political project: “Ottoman political and cultural structure which had sat uneasily and nervously on a bifurcated 'East-West' cleavage was to be replaced by positivism and secularism as the official philosophies of the Kemalist reforms.” Robert W. Olson and Nurhan İnce, p. 229.

¹³¹ Aydın, “Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 176.

¹³² To exemplify, Hale argued that “The Kemalist regime was also pro-Western, in the sense that it was committed to reestablishing Turkey as a Western-style, secular state, but this was no reason for constructing an international alliance with the Western powers unless national security required it. As usual, ideology was much less important than power politics in the formation of foreign policy.” William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000* (London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 71. Others underlined the ideational factors. For example See Bozdağlıoğlu.

¹³³ Hüner Tuncer, “Atatürkçü Dış Politikanın İlkeleri (The principles of the Atatürkist foreign policy),” in *Türk Dış Politikası: Son On Yıl* (Turkish foreign policy: the last decade), eds. Yelda Demirağ and Özlen Çelebi (Ankara: Palme Yayınları, 2011), pp. 26-27.

“obsession” rather than a calculated approach. Thus, they highlighted its incongruity with Turkey’s national interests, if not socio-cultural heritages. Both interpretations, for different reasons, discerned an ideational quest for international recognition in Turkey’s westward alignment.

Western orientation was also predicated on security motives. The Republic espoused a foreign policy line in tune with the existing state of affairs, which entitled it to adjoin the former foes. Thereby, it reformulated threat perceptions not against the West, but with the West to hedge against any threat from the West. Ankara also transcended its non-material insecurities with a decision to embrace the Western civilization.¹³⁴ In both senses, the Republic acted with “pragmatism,” having an ability to “overcome the bitter memories of war and seek cooperation.”¹³⁵ At the end of the day, this elasticity enabled breaking free from the political isolation during the early interwar years. A vital alliance of convenience was conducted with the Soviet Union, but with a rising threat from fascist Italy in the 1930s “Turkey loosened its ties with the Soviet Union and moved towards collaboration with France and England.”¹³⁶ As Ahmad put it:

Ankara recognized that only friendly relations with such major powers as Britain, France, and the Soviet Union could provide true security against another Great Power, even of the second rank, such as Italy. Thus the Turco-Soviet Treaty of

¹³⁴ See footnotes 116 and 118.

¹³⁵ Kemal Kirişçi, “Türkiye Daima Kendisini AB’ye Yakınlaştıracak Politikalar İzlemelidir (Turkey should always follow policies that would get it closer to the EU),” in *Mülakatlarla Türk Dış Politikası* (Turkish foreign policy in interviews), eds. Habibe Özdal, Osman Bahadır Dinçer and Mehmet Yeğin (Ankara: USAK, 2009), p. 9.

¹³⁶ Robert W. Olson and Nurhan İnce, “Turkish Foreign Policy from 1923 – 1960,” p. 232.

Friendship of December 1925 continued to be the basis of the cordial relationship with Moscow. But the warm reception given by the government to the British Mediterranean fleet in October 1929 began the process of reconciliation with London, which was cemented with an alliance in 1939.¹³⁷

Status quoism, likewise, was a principle with roots in the early Republican experience. Atatürk's motto, "Yurtta Sulh, Cihanda Sulh (Peace at home, peace in the world)," which has been the foundational principle of the Turkish foreign policy, "represents nothing but status quoism."¹³⁸ Accentuating the domestic-foreign policy nexus, it underscored holding on to the existing state of affairs. Domestic implications aside, in foreign policy it ordained Turkish acceptance of the post-World War I international order. Thus, Turkey admitted the League of Nations decision on Mosul and Kirkuk, joined the pacifist Kellogg-Briand Pact and eventually became a member of the League of Nations.

Hans Morgenthau distinguished between three usages of power, i.e. foreign policy types: imperial, status quo, and prestige.¹³⁹ For him, status quo powers aimed at keeping the power distribution drawn at a certain point in history, specifically through a peace

¹³⁷ Feroz Ahmad, "The Historical Background of Turkey's Foreign Policy," in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, eds. Lenore Martin and Dimitris Keridis (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), p. 19.

¹³⁸ Oran, "Türk Dış Politikası," p. 355.

¹³⁹ "A nation whose foreign policy tends toward keeping power and not toward changing the distribution of power in its favor pursues a policy of the status quo. A nation whose foreign policy aims at acquiring more power actually has, through a reversal of existing power relations- whose foreign policy, in other words, seeks a favorable change in power status- pursues a policy of imperialism. A nation whose foreign policy seeks to demonstrate the power it has, either for the purpose of maintaining or increasing it, pursues a policy of prestige." Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, revised by Kenneth W. Thompson, 6th ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985), p. 53.

treaty ending war.¹⁴⁰ The Treaty of Lausanne served a similar cause whereby with minor exceptions, Turkey “held on to current borders, rebuffed expansion of territories, and repudiated irredentism [...and] largely reached its territorial objectives in Lausanne.”¹⁴¹ Until the problematic decolonization process in Cyprus in the 1950s, with the exception of the Montreux Convention and Hatay’s self-annexation, Turkey turned a blind eye to its former territories. This approach advocated non-adventurism and territorial nationalism restricted to national borders as the defining elements of Turkish status quoism. On the other hand, such disinterest was facilitated by an almost non-existent public debate on foreign policy notably until the 1960s.

Internationally, Turkey turned overcautious not to misread international power relations once again, having lost the Empire after an alignment with the vanquished Axis Powers in the First World War. Subsequent decisions in favor of either alliances or neutrality bore this in mind unexceptionally. Likewise Western orientation, status quoism was also built on this security calculation. As Oran underlined, “since the existing international order was a Western one, the policies of Western orientation and status quoism were two sides of the same coin.”¹⁴² The Turkish quest for retaining the balance of power, however, amounted to alignment against the prevailing threats through “balancing,” rather than “bandwagoning,” i.e. allying with the source of danger.¹⁴³ Therefore, Ankara stood with Britain and France against revisionist Italy before the

¹⁴⁰ Morgenthau, pp. 53-54.

¹⁴¹ Oran, “Giriş,” pp. 46-47.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹⁴³ Neorealist Walt differentiated between two policies of “balancing” and “bandwagoning” to restore the balance of power in international relations. Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 17.

Second World War and with the Western bloc to ward off the Soviet threat in the wake of it.

Nevertheless, it would be a misinterpretation to depict Western orientation as corresponding to a lack of interest in regional affairs. In effect, “the relative autonomy”¹⁴⁴ of the Turkish foreign policy until 1939 stemmed from its ability to tune a balance between Western orientation and relations with non-Western countries. Oran saw this balancing act as a component of status quoism.¹⁴⁵ On that point, Atatürk did not shy away from cooperation with regional countries. Early on, relations with the Soviet Union particularly appeared indispensable. Back in July 1922 he declared Turkey as sharing the same “cause of the East” with “Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran and Afghanistan.”¹⁴⁶ On his watch, Turkey also developed friendly relations with both Amanullah Khan of Afghanistan and Reza Shah of Iran.¹⁴⁷ In the Balkans, relations with Greece started to normalize once the hurdle of population exchange was overcome by 1930. Moreover, Turkey signed Treaties of Friendship with Albania, Bulgaria and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In this framework, the Balkan Pact and the Sadabad Pact became part and parcel of the status quoist foreign policy, perpetuating the extant balance of power in the region.

¹⁴⁴ Baskın Oran, “Görelî Özerklik-I (Relative autonomy-I),” in *Türk Dış Politikası*, vol. 1, pp. 239-384.

¹⁴⁵ Oran, “Giriş,” p. 49.

¹⁴⁶ Aydın Can, 3 July 2008, “Atatürk Dönemi Türk-İran İlişkileri (Turco-Iranian relations in the Atatürk period),” *Atatürkçü Yol* 23 (Feb. 2006), p. 3.
http://turkoloji.cu.edu.tr/ATATURK/arastirmalar/aydin_can_ataturk_donemi_turk_iran_iliskileri.pdf [1 April 2012].

¹⁴⁷ The Afghan King was the first foreign Head of State to visit Ankara in April 1928. Ankara signed a “Treaty of Friendship and Security” and a border agreement with Tehran in 1926 and 1932 respectively. In 1934 Reza Shah of Iran made a 26-day visit to Turkey upon the invitation of Atatürk. On the other hand, Turkey arbitrated between Iran and Afghanistan on resolution of border problems. These efforts culminated in the quadrilateral Sadabad Pact of 1937 between these countries and Iraq.

Since the domain of foreign policy remained largely exempt from public discussion, a “Kemalist” reflection cemented in this early Republican experience and modified for domestic and international purposes, was perpetuated until the 1980s;¹⁴⁸ when it adopted Islam as a stepchild of nationalism.¹⁴⁹ The national interests were exclusively defined at the center, leaving no room for representation of the periphery. This facilitated the pursuit of a bureaucratic approach with a tripod of Kemalist political parties in power, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in execution, and the military on watch.¹⁵⁰

The bureaucracy had a peculiar role in Turkish modernization. As a “status elite, [...it played crucial role in the country’s transformation from] traditionalism, which imbued with pro-Islamic forces became the embodiment of opposition to this modernizing force.”¹⁵¹ The Republican bureaucracy undertook a corresponding role to initiate and implement public policy based on the Kemalist principles.¹⁵² In foreign policy, the monocultural, Western oriented and status quoist policy principles translated into an institutionalized paradigm. The paradigm became embedded in bureaucratic institutions. Without bureaucratic ownership, in particular the military’s watchful and

¹⁴⁸ Bozdağlıoğlu, p. 55.

¹⁴⁹ Zürcher underlines the role of Islam as a legitimizing force in 12 September regime. Eric-Jan Zürcher, “The Importance of Being Secular: Islam in the Service of the National and Pre-National State,” in *Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity*, pp. 64-68.

¹⁵⁰ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 138.

¹⁵¹ Heper underlines that “While bureaucracy in the industrializing West was being forced to abandon its position of “status elite” and to assume “functional elite” characteristics and an instrumental role, the Ottoman civil bureaucracy became a status elite.” Metin Heper, “The Political Role of Bureaucracy in the Ottoman-Turkish State: Some Observations from the Perspective of Comparative Public Administration Theory,” *Turkish Public Administration Annual 1* (Istanbul), (1974), p. 56

¹⁵² Heper argues that the Republican bureaucracy “almost elevated [the Kemalist principles] to the level of a ‘soft ideology’ and a comparatively static concept of public interest was formulated.” *Ibid.*, p. 57.

corrective role, the paradigm would not have proved sustainable. Hence, *the traditional bureaucratic foreign policy paradigm*.

Aydın summarized the traditional objectives of the Turkish foreign policy as “the establishment and preservation of a national state with complete independence conditioned by modern Turkish nationalism; promotion of Turkey to the level of contemporary civilization by means of Kemalist principles; and attachment to realistic and peaceful means in foreign policy actions.”¹⁵³ In pursuit of these objectives, the Republic also inherited certain “complications from its Ottoman past.”¹⁵⁴ This was reflected in a mood of wariness and suspicion about the external world. Under a siege mentality for more than two centuries, the Republican cadres inherited this traumatic experience of insecurity and a reflexive attitude of caution.¹⁵⁵ Securing non-intervention in internal affairs became a national objective mainly due to this historical background. A concomitant non-intervention in other’s affairs was to serve as a supportive policy. The latter, in practice, usually amounted to staying aloof from external issues.

The Republican anxiety about the national borders as well as sensitivity against foreign intervention is largely associated with “the traumas of the final crisis and collapse of the Ottoman Empire.”¹⁵⁶ Supposed to be *the Versailles* of Turkey, the nationalists were able to abrogate the Treaty of Sèvres through military and political resistance. Nevertheless, this resentful attempt to further divide the Turkish lands has remained deep

¹⁵³ Aydın, “Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical Framework,” p. 171.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid..

¹⁵⁵ Mufti, “Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *Middle East Journal* 52, no. 1 (Winter, 1998), pp. 32-50.

¹⁵⁶ Malik Mufti, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea* (Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 16.

in the Turkish psyche. It cultivated suspicions about “real” Western motives and disentanglement from the scourges of the East. Mufti saw this traumatic experience as a defining element of caution in the Turkish strategic culture.¹⁵⁷ Hence, the defensive and protective mood in Turkish foreign policy that emerged as an insurmountable corollary.

Political succession of Atatürk transpired in the context of Turkey’s growing uneasiness about the disruptions in global politics. Faced with the surging threats of war and polarization, President İnönü perpetuated the traditional line of status quoism. The new Turkish leadership doubled efforts for “balancing.” A policy of “active neutrality”¹⁵⁸ was pursued during the Second World War with utmost caution. In regional policy, the end result of caution was what Mufti articulated as the four principles of “the İnönü doctrine,” which set the general tone until Özal:

1. Reserve, or pursuing correct but aloof relations with all states and eschewing interference in their internal affairs;
2. Neutrality, or not getting identified too closely with any Middle Eastern state and avoiding involvement in regional conflicts;
3. Maintenance of the status quo, or opposing attempts to revise the territorial disposition or balance of power in the region; and
4. Compartmentalization, or isolating Turkey’s regional policies from its relations with the great powers, both in order to avoid being manipulated by the latter for their own ends and in order to avoid being viewed as the West’s ‘gendarme’ by

¹⁵⁷ Mufti, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture*, p. 16.

¹⁵⁸ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War: An "Active" Neutrality* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

local actors.¹⁵⁹

After the Second World War, the Turkish foreign policy was put into the most challenging test,¹⁶⁰ due mainly to the Soviet territorial ambitions.¹⁶¹ Harassed on status quoism Turkish diplomacy increased the intensity of Western orientation with a “balancing” logic. Thus, the 1945-1960 period was almost characterized by “total Western dependence.”¹⁶² In accord, Turkey decided to participate in the Korean War (1950-1953), joined NATO in 1952, and spearheaded efforts to protect the Middle East and the Balkans from communist diffusion via the Baghdad and Balkan Pacts. The zeal in playing the bulwark role for the Western bloc, in turn, tarnished Turkey’s status especially in the Middle East.¹⁶³

What followed was disillusionment with excessive Western orientation. In fact, the end of the Democrat Party epoch hinted at an emerging policy of rapprochement with the Soviet Union. Moreover, the inability to accommodate the shaken status quo in Cyprus within the parameters of the Western alliance highlighted the need for

¹⁵⁹ Mufti, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture*, pp. 31-32.

¹⁶⁰ A recent account on the Soviet designs delineates the extent of this threat. Jamil Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish Crisis of the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2011).

¹⁶¹ For a constructivist interpretation of Turkey’s move away from the USSR towards the West, See Kıvanç Coş and Pınar Bilgin, “Stalin’s Demands: Constructions of the ‘Soviet Other’ in Turkey’s Foreign Policy, 1919–1945,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6, no. 1 (2010), pp. 43–60.

¹⁶² Mustafa Aydın, “Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns and Conjunctures during the Cold War,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 1 (Jan., 2000), p. 105.

¹⁶³ Hale underline that “After... 1960 it was widely recognized in Ankara that the Baghdad pact [sic] had been a mistake, since it strengthened anti-Western sentiment in the Middle East and alienated Turkey from the Arab states at a time when it badly needed support for Cyprus.” William Hale, “Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis,” *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 68, no. 4 (Oct., 1992), pp. 681-682.

rebalancing. Thus, the Turkish diplomacy envisioned closer relations with both the Eastern bloc and the Third World.

Despite tactical moves, however, the fundamental principles of Turkish foreign policy remained in force. A key political figure after 1965, Demirel recounted the forces of continuity:

A country's foreign policy does not start the day a new government assumes power. It has a precedent and in state affairs, continuity is essential. That is, a political party cannot overtake the government and found a new state. This only happens in revolutions... The foreign policy we conducted after 1965 is also marked by continuity. When we assumed power in 1965, Turkey's foreign policy was predicated on the West. Our foreign policy objective was also based on meshing the friendship with the West even more. Turkey, as a party, saw itself on the West's side.¹⁶⁴

Two factors were critical in Turkey's inability to move beyond the traditional principles. Firstly, acting as a flank country in NATO throughout the Cold War, the Soviet threat was mostly deemed imminent. Moreover, the alliance system provided limited room for maneuver. Subsequent attempts to thaw relations with the Soviet Union after 1964 did not amount to a balancing act. They rather signified a desperate move to overcome the disillusionment with the terms Western alliance offered and the resultant

¹⁶⁴ The interview was made in July 2007 with Purtaş. Fırat Purtaş, "Süleyman Demirel'in Dış Politika Felsefesi (Suleyman Demirel's foreign policy philosophy)," in *Türk Dış Politikası, 1919-2008* (Turkish Foreign Policy 1919-2008), ed. Haydar Çakmak (Ankara: Platin, 2008), p. 577.

political isolation Turkey experienced in the international arena. Whether deemed favorable or not, Turkey was unable to generate a viable alternative to the Western ties.

Secondly, the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) was instrumental in restoring the status quo whenever internal political developments tended to tilt otherwise. It became classical for the military command to declare allegiance to the Western alliance and the past agreements to that effect immediately upon assuming power via coups in every other decade. Despite increasing socio-political cleavages, the arena for political competition was squeezed. This in turn disabled a civil resolution of growing domestic conflicts.

The military's insistence on a traditional approach,¹⁶⁵ however, did not prevent counter arguments on foreign relations from emerging. A lively debate began in the 1960s, contrary to previous practice in the Republic.¹⁶⁶ But the criticisms against the traditional paradigm turned into rather ambivalent alternatives.¹⁶⁷ Among them, two made their way into the government.

Ecevit's "haysiyetli dış politika (foreign policy with dignity)," called for an optimal balance between national interests and commitment to the Western alliance.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Following the 12 March 1971 coup, two immediate threats to the Republican regime were judicially confronted. In accord, the Articles 141 and 142 (banned class politics) and 163 (protected secular politics against Islamism) of the Penal Code came under the jurisdiction of the newly established State Security Courts. See William Hale, "Turkish Democracy in Travail: The Case of the State Security Courts," *The World Today* 33, no. 5 (May, 1977), pp. 187-88.

¹⁶⁶ Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns," pp. 116-118.

¹⁶⁷ Ahmad pointed out that "throughout the sixties...the intelligentsia was able to inhibit the activities of the government by constant criticism but [...] never able to force the government to reformulate the policy." Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy, 1950-1975* (Boulder: CO, 1977), p.104. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 123.

¹⁶⁸ "Ecevit's foreign policy was equally ambivalent and unpredictable. He did not renounce NATO or go further than Demirel in cultivating the Soviet bloc or the Third World...Ecevit and the RPP came to regard Turkey as a part of the exploited, developing, non-industrial world which was rapidly left behind by the West and the Soviet bloc. Turkey, one of the first nations to liberate itself from imperialism, ought therefore to play a leading role in the efforts of oppressed and exploited countries to change the world order

His argument was not in favor of dispensing with the NATO alliance.¹⁶⁹ But he emphasized that “Turkey should disassociate itself from the Cold War rhetoric of NATO ... [focusing on her] national interests not those of others.”¹⁷⁰ Ecevit also rebuffed Turkey’s role as a mouthpiece of Western interests in the Middle East, in particular the tarnishing experience of the Baghdad Pact. Thus, he attempted to remake Turkey’s image in the region¹⁷¹ and broadly speaking in the Third World on an anti-imperialist platform, albeit with limited inroads. In general, he criticized the cautious foreign policy of his predecessors. He proved a risk-taker against the United States (U.S.),¹⁷² the European Economic Community (EEC),¹⁷³ but most importantly against the behest of the international community in Cyprus.

Erbakan’s Islamist “şahsiyetli dış politika (foreign policy with character),” on the other hand, carried national and civilizational, i.e. Islamic tones. He was for both

and to close the North-South gap.” Feroz Ahmad, “Military Intervention and the Crisis in Turkey,” *MERIP Reports* 93, Turkey: The Generals Take Over (Jan., 1981), p. 23.

¹⁶⁹ Ecevit rather called for a rearrangement of Turkey’s commitments to NATO. See Bülent Ecevit, “Turkey’s Security Policies,” *Survival* 20, no. 5 (September-October 1978), pp. 203–208.

¹⁷⁰ Süha Bölükbaşı, *The Superpowers and Third World: Turkish-American Relations and Cyprus* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America; [Charlottesville]: The Miller Center, The University of Virginia, 1988), p. 103. Cited in Aydın, “Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns,” p. 128.

¹⁷¹ Erol cites Ecevit’s meeting with the Turkish Ambassadors to the Middle East in 1979, whereby he instructed them for closer and more open relationship with the region. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, “Bülent Ecevit’in Dış Politika Felsefesi (Bülent Ecevit’s foreign policy philosophy),” in *Türk Dış Politikası 1919-2008*, p. 590. Ideological arguments aside, international isolation after 1974 necessitated Turkey’s rapprochement with the Middle East.

¹⁷² Ecevit forced a more independent stance against the United States. After assuming power in 1973, he first legalized opium cultivation while it was banned due to American pressure two years ago. He then had to face an arms embargo after two military interventions in Cyprus. However, the change of climate between Ankara and Washington was not exclusively a product of his, and the complications continued up until the 12 September coup. See Çağrı Erhan, “1960-1980: Görelî Özerklik -3 (1960-1980: relative autonomy-3),” in *Türk Dış Politikası*, Vol. 1, pp. 701-715.

¹⁷³ Ecevit government asked for a five-year recess in relations with the EEC in 1978. See Mehmet Ali Birand, *Türkiye’nin Büyük Avrupa Kavgası, 1959-2004* (Turkey’s big European struggle, 1959-2004) (Bağcılar, İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2005), pp. 263-279.

protection of national sovereignty against the possible encroachments of the EEC and revision of commitments to NATO following changes in global politics.¹⁷⁴ Emphasizing “national outlook,”¹⁷⁵ Erbakan habitually underlined “his key role” as the Deputy Prime Minister in furthering the national cause during the 1974 Turkish military intervention in Cyprus. He also carried the banner of cooperation with the Muslim countries,¹⁷⁶ and anti-Zionism in Turkish politics.¹⁷⁷ Erbakan advocated political relations with neighboring countries based on shared historical and cultural ties as well as pursuing an active foreign policy regarding the Turks living abroad (*dış Türkler*).¹⁷⁸

Ecevit and Erbakan’s respective quests for change shook the foundations of the traditional paradigm. The Turkish intervention in Cyprus symbolized a clear break with the two main pillars of the paradigm, i.e. Western-orientation and status quoism.¹⁷⁹ The immediate result was international isolation and a resultant need to reformulate Turkey’s

¹⁷⁴ Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, “Necmettin Erbakan’ın Dış Politika Felsefesi (Necmettin Erbakan’s foreign policy philosophy),” in *Türk Dış Politikası 1919-2008*, pp. 592-593.

¹⁷⁵ In fact, *Milli Görüş* (national outlook) was literally employed by Erbakan to reflect his nationalist-religious ideology. It is also the name of the Erbakan movement’s diaspora organization, based in Germany and other European countries. See Necmettin Erbakan, *Milli Görüş* (İstanbul: Dergah, 1975).

¹⁷⁶ Erbakan cited, among others, Turkey’s full participation in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and being a founding member of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) as his Party’s foreign policy successes in government between 1974-1978. Necmettin Erbakan, 10 July 2011, *Milli Görüş’ün İktidardaki Hizmetleri* (National Outlook’s services in government) <http://www.necmettinerbakan.net/page.php?act=haberGoster&haberID=986&name=milli-gorus-8217-un-iktidardaki-hizmetleri> [15 March 2012].

¹⁷⁷ Erbakan attacked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ “pro-Israeli” policies. He differentiated between his *Milli Görüş* and those of the establishment (parties). For his general views See Necmettin Erbakan, 30 November 2011, *Prof. Dr. Necmettin Erbakan ile Dış Politika Öncelikleri Üzerine* (On foreign policy priorities with Prof. Dr. Erbakan) (excerpt from Interview with Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan, *Dış Politika* ?, no. 3, (Ekim 1988)). <http://www.necmettinerbakan.net/haberler/prof-dr-necmettin-erbakan-ile-dis-politika-oncelikleri-uzerine.html> [15 March 2012].

¹⁷⁸ Erol, “Necmettin Erbakan” p. 593.

¹⁷⁹ As a matter of fact, Turkey was held back from an earlier intervention in 1964.

international relations.¹⁸⁰ Thought as a lawful, even if a nationalist and unilateralist, attempt at redressing contravention of international law, it ended up risking Turkey's alliance with the West, in particular with the U.S.. Though traditionalism made a comeback with successor governments, the Cyprus issue has continued to haunt the Turkish foreign policy both internationally and internally.¹⁸¹

On the eve of the 12 September 1980 coup, with “increasing law and order problems, Kurdish separatism, a political system that seemed completely deadlocked and an economy in tatters... [and] the threat of Islamic fundamentalism,”¹⁸² Turkey looked domestically paralyzed. In foreign policy, the principles of the traditional foreign policy paradigm were susceptible to change. The attempts to that end started to make certain inroads. However, economic and military dependence on the Western bloc in the Cold War setting limited Ankara's room for maneuver. In addition, Turkey's quest for political and economic support from the communist and Muslim capitals for various reasons proved ephemeral and eventually inadequate.

¹⁸⁰ Uzgel points at the adoption of a new “National Defense and Foreign Policy Doctrine” by the Ecevit government in 1978. This foresaw developing military relations outside the Western bloc with Iran, Libya and even the Soviet Union for meeting armament requirements; emphasizing regional relations for security, i.e. “regionally-centered policy;” and identifying Greece as the principal source of security threat in lieu of the Soviet Union. İlhan Uzgel, “Türkiye’de Yeni Ulusal Savunma Doktrini (New national defense doctrine in Turkey),” in *Türk Dış Politikası*, vol. 1, p. 674.

¹⁸¹ As Fırat underlines Cyprus issue has become an issue of internal divergence especially after 1983 between the military-MFA on the one hand and the civil governments on the other. The latter were accused of “selling out national interests” by introducing openings on this “national cause.” Melek M. Fırat, *Kıbrıs Sorununun Türk Dış Politikasına Etkileri* (The effects of the Cyprus question on Turkish foreign policy) (1955-1997) in *Çağdaş Türk Diplomasisi: 200 Yıllık Süreç* (Contemporary Turkish diplomacy: 200 year process), papers presented to the Symposium on 15-17 October 1997, ed. İsmail Soysal (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1999), pp. 553-565.

¹⁸² Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 268.

While Turkey's quest for "multidimensionalism"¹⁸³ did not initially appear to be an alarming concern for the Western allies,¹⁸⁴ "one also ought to remember that its [Turkey's] geostrategic significance to the Western alliance reached a post-World War II peak due to two key developments that occurred during Turkey's debt crisis: the Iranian revolution, which, among other things, removed a key layer of the Western security structure against Soviet expansionism; and the Soviet move into Afghanistan in late 1979, which immediately revived old fears regarding Soviet designs on South Asia and the Middle East."¹⁸⁵ Thence, Turkey's affiliation mattered even more than before.

Against such a backdrop, the military coup once again restored "order." The military command reiterated Turkey's allegiance to the Western alliance.¹⁸⁶ The new order envisioned depoliticization of all possible aspects of the socio-political structure. In practice, this meant a strict implementation of the Kemalist principles in all aspects of life under military authority. Naturally this process also applied to the domain of foreign policy with restoration of traditionalism.

¹⁸³ "Multidimensionalism" denoted the quest to transcend the unidirectional Western orientation in Turkish foreign policy. Ecevit employed the term in the 1970s, followed by almost all Turkish leaders thereafter.

¹⁸⁴ Rustow for one depicts a sanguine view as regards the deteriorating climate in the Turco-American relations in late 1970s. On the contrary, his referral to balance of payments crisis in Turkey and the IMF assistance in 1978, as well as his criticism for the Turkish dependence on U.S. military and financial aid implies a possible welcoming of Turkey's extended relations with third countries. See Dankwart A. Rustow, "Turkey's Travails," *Foreign Affairs* 58, no. 1 (Fall, 1979), pp. 82-102.

¹⁸⁵ Ziya Öniş, "Turkey in the Post-Cold War Era: In Search of Identity," *Middle East Journal* 49, no. 1 (Winter, 1995), p. 52.

¹⁸⁶ The U.S. Ambassador to Turkey of the time recounts that the military command immediately gave assurances to that effect. See James W. Spain, *American Diplomacy in Turkey: Memoirs of an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary* (New York: Praeger, 1984).

The military command going even beyond their previous practice maintained a total control of the administration until the November 1983 elections.¹⁸⁷ Özcan delineated the ramifications of this development for foreign policy-making for the coming decade:¹⁸⁸ First, the perpetuation of the idea that foreign policy was a bipartisan issue was interpreted as the basis for the military bureaucracy's predominant role in policy decisions. Second, "national security" was defined in a way that not only assigned a peculiar role to the military, but also established an understanding that national security issues entailed exclusively military solutions. In addition, the empowered National Security Council (MGK) ensured that matters of national security were subject to consensual decision making, in practice meaning either military's policy initiation or a need for its implicit endorsement.

The National Security Council (NSC)¹⁸⁹ undertook two critical foreign policy decisions. First, it lifted the Turkish veto on Greece's readmission to the NATO military command. Then, the NSC decided to give green light to the foundation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) just before the civilian government's takeover. The former has been criticized as a strategic mistake, since it weakened Ankara's hand as Greece was bestowed with the NATO's military aegis in addition to the EEC's economic backing after 1981. The decision to declare the TRNC's independence, in particular,

¹⁸⁷ Gerassimos Karabelias, "The Evolution of Civil-Military Relations in Post-War Turkey, 1980-95," *Middle Eastern Studies* 35, no. 4, Seventy-Five Years of the Turkish Republic (Oct., 1999), pp. 133-136.

¹⁸⁸ 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*, pp. 294-306.

¹⁸⁹ The military command functioned under the name of Milli Güvenlik Konseyi (National Security Council) until the first parliamentary elections in November 1983. The 1982 constitution also ordained the establishment of Milli Güvenlik Kurulu (MGK), which has been commonly translated as the National Security Council. One way to overcome this confusion is to employ the Turkish acronym for the latter, i.e. MGK.

further complicated Turkey's vulnerabilities in the international arena. Even worse, the military started acting as if the Island was its own diocese.¹⁹⁰

When Özal won the November 1983 elections with a clear mandate, he faced a dual executive structure. Saybaşı described this structure as depending on “a division of labor, whereby the ‘secular’ military undertook internal and external security and the civilians, comprised of ‘Turkish-Islamic synthesizers,’ administrating over the bureaucracy and the economy.”¹⁹¹ The MFA's portfolio remained at the borderline in between, still giving the military certain privileges particularly on broadly defined issues of national security; at a time when the military administration formulated legislation reordering the MFA's structure and additionally ensured that certain Ambassadorial posts were filled by their brothers in arms.¹⁹²

The legacy of the 12 September coup was not only a prevalent role for both the military and affiliated legal institutions such as the MGK, which oversaw this role. It also led to the removal of foreign policy decisions, in particular those related to broadly defined national security matters from parliamentary oversight. This, in turn, opened doors for personal discretion, which often amounted to monopoly on foreign policy decision-making. Still, the military's predominance and the foreseen division of labor limited rooms of maneuver for the political leadership. This framework had an overarching effect on the inability to transcend the traditional paradigm in the Turkish

¹⁹⁰ Özcan, *inter alia*, cites that the military was surging troops and sending new M 48-A5 tanks to the Island without even counseling the civilian government. Özcan, “Türkiye’de Siyasal Rejim ve Dış Politika,” p. 299.

¹⁹¹ Kemali Saybaşı, *İktisat, Siyaset, Devlet ve Türkiye* (Economy, politics, state, and Turkey) (İstanbul: Bağlam, 1992), pp. 184-185. Cited in *ibid.*.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*.

foreign policy for another two decades.

Table-1. The Traditional Bureaucratic Foreign Policy Paradigm

<i>Policy principles (Principled beliefs)</i>	<i>Policy Norms (Causal beliefs)</i>
Western orientation	Turkey is an organic part of the West. (Relations as identity)
	Turkey is part of the Western security structure. (Relations as security)
	Turkey contributes to international order as a Western country. (Relations as status quoism)
Status quoism	Support the Treaty of Lausanne- hold on to current borders; rebuff territorial aggrandizement and irredentism. (National elements)
	Balancing against prevailing threats; balancing Western orientation with non-Western relations. (International elements)
	Non-intervention in other's affairs, which usually amounted to staying aloof from external issues.
Monoculturalism	Advocate modern Turkish nation-state in accordance with Westernization.
	Disregard historical and cultural ties with non-Western countries in accordance with the cultural hegemony of the center.

The Özal Imprint in Turkish Foreign Policy

Turgut Özal was the first elected Prime Minister after the 12 September coup. There is an overall perception that Özal symbolized the idea of change in Turkish politics, most notably in economic and foreign policy. He is seen as leading, in his words

a “transformation”¹⁹³ from a statist politico-economic structure to a neoliberal one. A former technocrat, he led Turkey’s move to neoliberalism through the 24 January 1980 economic program. He continued to oversee this program in different capacities until 1993, except for a brief period out of office.

In foreign policy, Özal publicly contested the traditional bureaucratic paradigm, which he viewed as epitomized by an “ineffective” status quoism. To make his point, he differentiated between Atatürk’s and his successor İnönü’s approaches:¹⁹⁴ For Özal, the former had a “pragmatic, active and daring foreign policy.” The latter, in contrast, pursued a “statist, status quoist, passive, and bureaucratic line that did not take changes in global and domestic dynamics into account.”¹⁹⁵ On this ground, Özal was blunt in criticizing status quoism:

Unfortunately we have been closed on this issue for years. In a way, a policy of ‘Let us not relate to anybody, and nobody relates to us.’ To put it in Anatolian

¹⁹³ For Özal “transformation means equipping the Turkish economy so as to make it able to cope with global developments.” Gülistan Gürbey, “Özal Dönemi Dış Politikası (Foreign policy of the Özal era),” *Dış Politika Dergisi* 6, no. 2 (Aralık 1995), p. 48. On the other hand, Özal’s Deputy and former Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz called Özal’s first term between 1983-1987 as a “transformation... whereby Turkey for the first time oriented itself from closed to open society, from closed to open economy, from an insular society dealing merely with its own problems to one interested in global issues, not thinking only about today but also the future.” Mehmet Ali Birand and Soner Yalçın, *The Özal, Bir Davanın Öyküsü* (The Özal, the story of a cause), 3rd ed. (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2001), p. 338.

¹⁹⁴ Gürbey, p. 50.

¹⁹⁵ Criticizing the Republican policies by targeting İsmet İnönü is a recurring theme among conservative circles in Turkish political thought. This might have been a result of either the inability or reluctance to question Atatürk’s legacy against the bureaucratic claim to pursue an Atatürkist foreign policy. The implication here also was İnönü and the Republican cadres that followed him represented a divergence from Atatürk’s path, thus creating a divergence between the state and the nation.

words, ‘Neither gives, nor takes’ neutral style. This essentially means ‘let us live in our way’ within our boundaries.¹⁹⁶

In essence, Özal’s foreign policy was also rooted in his economic outlook. “The expansion of Turkey's exports and the integration of Turkey into the world economy was a major foreign policy objective of Ozal.”¹⁹⁷ He believed in what might be called “commercial peace theory.”¹⁹⁸ In accord, he anticipated that “to resolve foreign policy problems, countries should trade with each other.”¹⁹⁹ The reasoning was once trading states began benefiting from commercial links, the foreign policy problems would wither away over time. Özal also denounced the idea that trust will only follow resolution of bilateral problems. Instead he called for seeking cooperation possibilities.²⁰⁰ Expecting or

¹⁹⁶ President Özal’s speech on “*Dünyadaki Yeni Dengeler ve Türkiye* (New balances in the world and Turkey),” 17 November 1991, President Otel, İstanbul, pp. 13-14. Cited in *ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

¹⁹⁷ Sabri Sayarı, “Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis,” *Middle East Journal* 46, no. 1 (Winter, 1992), p. 18.

¹⁹⁸ Özal was influenced by liberalism. However, what he had in my mind was not “democratic peace” given Turkey’s internal political situation as well as the undemocratic regimes surrounding it. His views carried traces of liberal internationalism, which “believed that contact between the peoples of the world, through commerce or travel, will facilitate a more pacific form of international relations.” Tim Dunne, “Liberalism,” in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, eds. John Baylis and Steve Smith, 2nd ed., (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 170.

¹⁹⁹ Baskın Oran, “1980-1990: Batı Bloku Ekseninde Türkiye (Turkey in the axis of the Western bloc)-2,” in *Türk Dış Politikası*, vol. 2 (1980-2001) (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), p. 28.

²⁰⁰ “First of all, trust and patience shall replace mutual suspicions. The idea that ‘let us resolve the issues, and trust will follow’ is a good excuse, but an illusion. Our objective is not to resolve issues between us to win mutual trust. We need, on the one hand to seek cooperation possibilities in every field; and, on the other, to discuss our behavior, get to know each other as well as our mutual rights, and try to reconcile as much as possible in order to create the appropriate conditions to resolve our problems.” Prime Minister Özal’s speech at Athens at a dinner hosted in his honor by the Prime Minister of Greece, Andreas Papandreou, 13 June 1988. *Başbakan Özal’ın Yurtdışı Seyahatlerinde Yaptığı Konuşmaları* (Prime Minister Özal’s speeches in foreign visits) (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1988), p. 33. Cited in Muhittin Demiray, “Turgut Özal Dönemi Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin Dış Politikası (Republic of Turkey’s foreign policy during the Turgut Özal era) (1983-1993), in *Türk Dış Politikası Cumhuriyet Dönemi* (Turkish foreign policy the Republican era), ed. Mustafa Bıyıklı, vol. 1, pp. 256-257.

acting upon reciprocity was, for him, a “reactive” approach. In contrast, he called for activism and tackling issues expeditiously, not extending them over time. One way for this was to build economic interdependence and cooperation. Another was benefiting from personal ties.²⁰¹ These, Özal believed, would free problematic political issues from unbending biases.

Özal’s understanding of Turkey’s historical and cultural heritage stood in stark contrast to monoculturalism of the traditional paradigm. In Özal’s view, multiethnicity was the reality of Turkey that was yet to be acknowledged. Monoculturalism’s reflection in foreign policy, on the other hand, hindered Turkey’s ability to project power in its natural sphere of influence. Therefore, he embraced the Ottoman heritage and its claim to ensure peaceful coexistence of multiethnic communities.²⁰² For him this was the key for both domestic integration and external clout.

Özal questioned the premise of restricting foreign policy objectives to contemporary national borders.²⁰³ His perspective of transnationalism, however, clashed with the realities of the Cold War as well as Turkey’s economic-political limitations,

²⁰¹ Birand and Yalçın, p. 326.

²⁰² Özal’s justification for the imperial order was apparent in his comparison with the United States. “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.” Sedat Laçiner, “Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism,” First published by *USAK Yearbook of International Politics and Law* 2, (2009), pp. 153-205. <http://www.turkishweekly.net/article/333/turgut-ozal-period-in-turkish-foreign-policy-ozalism.html> [15 December 2011]. Aral linked this pursuit to a quest for “tolerance and pluralism.” Berdal Aral, “Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Özal Decade, 1983-93,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 1 (Jan., 2001), p. 74.

²⁰³ Gökmen expresses Özal’s divergent views on national borders. In accord Özal seemed to have anticipated that “Misak-ı Milli borders were not unalterable.” Yavuz Gökmen, *Özal Yaşasaydı* (If Özal lived) (Ankara: V Yayınları, 1994), p. 93. Gökmen also alludes to Özal’s both enlarged vision beyond national borders and second thoughts amounting to revisionism especially after the Bosnian War. See *Ibid.*, p. 277.

which together narrowed rooms for maneuver. Except for a brief attempt at countering the assimilation campaign against the Bulgarian Turks, largely in response to the public outcry, Özal's eagerness for outreach remained a mere aspiration. Only after the end of the Cold War, he came out with a more assertive agenda. On that note, "neo-Ottomanism"²⁰⁴ emerged as a current advocating Turkey's acceptance of an "imperial vision"²⁰⁵ so as to benefit from the historical opportunities, which had arisen due to sea changes in global politics. Özal targeted availing Turkey of these changes through foreign policy activism. The scope of his vision appeared to have predicated more on the former Ottoman territories than geographically or ethnically defined.²⁰⁶

After the 1980 coup, the military made a strategic decision to support the Turkish-Islamic synthesis (TIS) as an antidote to the extremist ideological tendencies, in particular the radical-leftist movements.²⁰⁷ In that sense, Özal's views proved compatible with "the military's strategy for legitimizing the Turkish state and securing popular support."²⁰⁸ The goal of the TIS was to bring together Sunni Islam and secular-Turkish

²⁰⁴ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sinde 'Osmanlılık' ('Ottomanism' in the Republican Turkey)," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, Cilt 5, Muhafazakarlık* (Political thought in modern Turkey, volume 5, Conservatism), ed. Ahmet Çiğdem, 2nd ed. (İstanbul: İletişim, 2004) pp. 378-380.

²⁰⁵ This vision foresaw creating a zone of Pax Ottomanica under Turkey's regional leadership. It would be based, following the successful Ottoman example, on a multiethnic and multireligious administrative structure that would enable peaceful coexistence. *Ibid.*, p. 379.

²⁰⁶ "According to Özal 'neither the Kurds in Iran, nor the Turks in the new Republics are as close to us as [former] Ottoman Turks and Kurds.'" *Ibid.*.

²⁰⁷ "Because of the ongoing global threat of communism, the military's foremost concern was the rise of radical leftism and the anarchy it created in the country." Banu Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 91. On the other hand, Yavuz asserts that Islam was also instrumental in the fight against Kurdish nationalism, which largely developed among leftist groups. See Hakan Yavuz, "Political Islam and the Welfare (Refah) Party in Turkey," *Comparative Politics* 30, no. 1 (Oct., 1997), p. 69.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

nationalism.²⁰⁹ The kernel of its argument was that Islam has ensured the existence and preservation of Turkishness.²¹⁰ Therefore, the TIS followed, void of Islam Turks were destined to assimilation as was proven by history. In essence, the military bureaucracy's decision represented a fundamental shift from the Republican practice of keeping religion away from the public sphere and under control through secularism. Kemalism was thus stretched from a strictly secular and nationalist to a still secular, but also nationalist-Islamic ideology.²¹¹ Yet, the TIS should still be read as an evolutionary conservative project to consolidate the Republican state,²¹² rather than an attempt at transformation or "revolution"²¹³ as proponents of Özal argued.

Özal, an opponent of status quoism and monoculturalism, firmly believed in Western orientation. In April 1987, his government applied for EC membership. He pictured Turkey's membership as mutually beneficial and drew his argument on the reasoning that Turkey had assets to contribute to the EC.²¹⁴ He hinted at joining to a

²⁰⁹ See Bozkurt Güvenç, Gencay Şaylan, İlhan Tekeli, and Şeraffettin Turan, *Dosya: Türk-İslam Sentezi* (The file: the Turkish-Islamic sythesis) (İstanbul: Sarmal Yayınevi, 1991); İbrahim Kafesoğlu, *Türk İslam Sentezi* (The Turkish Islamic sythesis) (İstanbul: Aydınlar Ocağı, 1985).

²¹⁰ Compare this view with early Republican textbooks where it was argued that: "The Turks were a great nation even before they adopted Islam... On the contrary, this religion weakened the national bonds of the Turkish nation, and benumbed their national sentiments and drive." *Atatürk'ün Yazdığı Yurttaşlık Bilgileri* (Handbook of Civics Written by Atatürk) (İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1994), p.18. Cited in Andrew Mango, "Turkey in Winter," *Middle Eastern Studies* 31, no. 3 (Jul., 1995), p. 631.

²¹¹ Aral interpreted the TIS as an extension of nationalism to fit the agenda of Turkish conservatism. "Not surprisingly, therefore, the conservative political forces in Turkey have successfully deployed Islam as part of the language of nationalism. This is the context in which to understand Özalism and its similarities with, and differences from, the right-wing governments that preceded it." Aral, "Dispensing with Tradition?" p. 73.

²¹² Yüksel Taşkın, "Muhafazakar Bir Proje Olarak Türk-İslam Sentezi (The TIS as a conservative project)," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*, Cilt 5, pp. 381-401.

²¹³ Laçiner, pp. 153-205.

²¹⁴ Özal published a book supporting Turkey's EEC membership. Turgut Özal, *Turkey in Europe, Europe in Turkey* (Nicosia: K. Rustem & Brother, 1991).

larger Western economic grouping that comprised the EC, the NAFTA, Japan and possibly the BSEC countries.²¹⁵ Moreover, Özal seemed rather content with the leadership role the U.S. played especially in the early post-Cold war era. His objective was tuning the Turkish foreign policy to the American position to make the most of unipolarity.²¹⁶ Overall, his support for the Western model went even beyond the posture of the traditionalist elites.²¹⁷ On that note, he advocated the adoption of liberal, read American, political values on top of westward foreign policy alignment:

According to his definition of liberalism, Turkey should have three freedoms: freedom of thought and speech, freedom of religious belief, and freedom of enterprise. What Özal believed a 'transformation' in Turkey from an 'inward-looking country' to a 'free-market economy' had been achieved through liberal policies.²¹⁸

Yet, Özal also had a different understanding of Westernism. In a Hamidian sense, he disassociated Westernization from modernization.²¹⁹ For Özal, Turkey needed

²¹⁵ Gürbey, pp. 48-49.

²¹⁶ For a contemporary perception about the United States' global status See Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1, America and the World 1990/91 (1990/1991), pp. 23-33.

²¹⁷ Ramazan Gözen, "Turgut Özal and Foreign Policy: Style and Vision," *Dış Politika/Foreign Policy* (Ankara) 20, no. 3-4 (1996), pp. 69-101.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Mansfield called Abdulhamid II a "modernizer" as opposed to the Tanzimat cadres whom he termed as "Westernizers." Peter Mansfield, *A History of the Middle East* (New York: Viking, 1991), p. 77.

Western science and technology, not necessarily its culture and lifestyle.²²⁰ The Turkish culture imbued with Islam was capable of benefiting from Western science and technology. Özal's approach carried primarily developmental tones in comparison to the Republican practice that embraced Westernism broadly as a worldview.²²¹ This political distancing from all-embracing Western orientation seemed to justify Turkey's quest for new markets and new friends at a time of economic bottlenecks and political isolation.

Last but not least, Özal undermined the institutional framework of foreign policy making. He evaded the MFA by either isolating it from the decision making processes or ignoring its general policy guidelines.²²² Working within the political parameters set by the military, Özal saw it as parsimonious to attack the MFA; criticizing the Ministry's overall code of conduct. He wanted to see foreign relations focus on opportunities for cooperation, not on conflictual matters.²²³ Though he did not in practice work to that effect, he would have liked to see a Ministry that functioned as a private firm or a think-tank developing practical initiatives rather than an institutional body that followed day-to-day affairs with a perspective of the background of relations and the Republican

²²⁰ In essence, the TIS was partly born out of a perceived threat of cultural domination. Ahmet Kabaklı, inter alia, warned against possible "degeneration" of the nation stemming from excessive Westernist practices of the Republican cadres. Hasan Sami Vural, "Ahmet Kabaklı," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*, Cilt 5, p. 395.

²²¹ "With Özal, the will to catch up with the elusive 'contemporary civilization', as had hitherto been sanctified by the official ideology, was replaced by the will to catch up with the more concrete notions of the 'modern and (economically) developed world'. Hence rather than prioritizing political, ideological and cultural dispositions, Özal laid particular emphasis on economics as such." Aral, "Dispensing with Tradition?," p. 74.

²²² Oran, "1980-1990," pp. 28-29.

²²³ Even back in 1973, he criticized the Turkish foreign policy's disproportionate focus on Cyprus. He suggested "doing away with this issue and liberating MFA (Hariciye) from this entanglement. Our focus should turn to the rapidly changing world and we shall find out how we can utilize this changes for the benefit of Turkey." Turgut Özal, "Sayın Süleyman Demirel'e Mektup (Turgut Özal: letter to Mr. Süleyman Demirel)," 15 Haziran 1973 in Mehmet Barlas, *Özal'ın Anıları* (Özal's memories), Annex 1, 3rd ed. (İstanbul: Birey Yayıncılık, 2000), pp. 184-185.

values.²²⁴ Özal also disapproved the bureaucratic way of doing things.²²⁵ His foreign policy activism accepted certain level of risk taking.²²⁶ This entailed prompt decision-making. The model he had in mind to that end, though, was not a renewal of the bureaucratic way of doing things. He instead grew more and more self-dependent, driven by an “overriding personal approach.”²²⁷ On that ground, he opted for “doing business” with a group of advisors and selected diplomats from the MFA.²²⁸

Özal’s Foreign Policy in Practice

In explicating Özal’s foreign policy in practice, two points must be underlined. First is periodization. With different explanations, some authors opted for analyzing Özal’s foreign policy with a perspective of holism.²²⁹ Others chose to determine a milestone for differentiating between Özal’s initial “careful” policies and those carrying his personal hallmark later on.²³⁰

²²⁴ For a review of MFA’s institutional and ideological dispositions See Oran, “Giriş,” pp. 54-73.

²²⁵ Özal preferred the functional “rational-productive,” as opposed to the Weberian “rational-legal” bureaucratic structure. Aytekin Yılmaz, “Türk Bürokrasi Geleneği ve Özal (The Turkish bureaucratic tradition and Özal)” in *Kim Bu Özal? Siyaset, İktisat, Zihniyet* (Who is this Özal? Politics, economics, mentality), eds. İhsan Sezal and İhsan Dağı (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2001), pp. 91-101.

²²⁶ “When you move actively, there is naturally a risky part to it. It was thought that let there be no risk, even if there is not any profit. In commerce there is a simple rule: Profit is proportional to risk. Of course, you may go bankrupt. You have to calculate that very carefully as well... Politics is the same.” President Özal’s speech on “*Dünyadaki Yeni Dengeler ve Türkiye*,” p. 14. Cited in Gülistan Gürbey, p. 51.

²²⁷ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, pp. 53-61.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²²⁹ For example, see Demiray, pp. 256-257.

²³⁰ Robins discerned 1986 as a milestone for Özal’s move to an “overriding personal approach” in foreign policy up until 1991. Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 53-61. Gürbey, Gözen and Laçiner, on the other hand,

Secondly, Özal led a shift from bureaucratically supervised import substitution to deregulated and export-oriented economic policy.²³¹ The bases and results of this neoliberal shift are beyond the scope of this dissertation. But its reflection as a commensurate foreign policy change is a moot point. As depicted above, Özal believed in the power of economic interdependence in changing the course and nature of foreign relations. Yet, his underlying logic and methods proved inconclusive as regards his foreign policy objective of increased cooperation.

Above all, Özal underestimated the tenacity of security dilemmas especially in the immediate neighborhood. He believed the more powerful Turkey becomes, the more willing the neighboring countries would be to embrace her influence.²³² Özal tried to introduce economic leverages to resolve political problems with Greece, Syria, and Iraq in particular, which proved insufficient to change the course of relations.²³³ Özal also failed to develop a new discourse. A discourse tailored to demonstrate Turkey's willingness to become a part of regional dynamics and to alleviate the complications of the imperial past could have better worked in congruence with his objective of regional cooperation. On the contrary, in his later term he revived an imperial rhetoric that was set to sound threatening in regional capitals. Moreover, the military command's predominance in the beginning, and later on the rising security threat from the PKK

underlined Özal's Presidency after 1989, referring to his increased focus on foreign policy. See Gülistan Gürbey, pp. 49-62; Gözen, pp. 69-101; Laçiner, pp. 153-205.

²³¹ Ziya Öniş, "Turgut Özal and his Economic Legacy: Turkish NeoLiberalism in Critical Perspective," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 4 (July 2004), pp. 1-35.

²³² Özal, inter alia, attempted at mediation first between Iran and Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War and then between Croatia and Bosnia. The first was rejected right away by the parties, while the second only proved useful complementarily once international community got involved.

²³³ Oran, "1980-1990," p. 28.

neutralized his declared goal to subjugate the security outlook. Powerful rhetoric and its role in breaking certain taboos aside; unsurprisingly, his attempts for cooperation either failed, as was the case in bilateral relations with Greece and Syria; or proved ineffective, in particular as regards his regional multilateral initiatives.²³⁴

Özal acted in accord with the division of labor outlined by the military, hence concentrated mainly on economic development up until his Presidency. This was reflected as a move towards diversification of economic relations with the Middle Eastern countries²³⁵ and the Soviet Union,²³⁶ which symbolized a continuation of the former governments' policies of adaptation to the changing dynamics of international politics.²³⁷ Nevertheless, declining economic links with the EC in the initial years notwithstanding, Özal's attempts for commercial diversification bore limited results and the EC's predominant share in foreign trade was once again restored after mid-1980s.²³⁸

On the eve of the Cold War's end, Özal detected urgency in constituting a mutually beneficial relationship with the West. The helter-skelter membership application to the EC in 1987 represented a last minute effort to reserve a seat in the West as the

²³⁴ Özal's two regional cooperation initiatives, namely Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO-formerly RCD) and Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) remained far behind the initial objectives of further regional cooperation.

²³⁵ Melek Firat, Çağrı Erhan, Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, and Atay Akdevelioğlu, "Ortadoğu'yla İlişkiler (Relations with the Middle East)," in *Türk Dış Politikası*, vol. 2 (1980-2001), pp. 124-157.

²³⁶ Erel Tellal, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler (Relations with the USSR)," in *ibid.*, pp. 158-166.

²³⁷ For one, former Prime Minister Ecevit speaking at "Chatham House on 24 January 1989 called Özal's Middle East policy 'balanced, realistic and successful.'" Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 57.

²³⁸ "The commercial and economic relations with the Middle East that were growing until 1984, started to decline afterwards in spite of the Özal government's approach to take economic [relations] as the basis of foreign policy. The most important cause of this was Iran and Iraq's falling into economic crises and the growing problems in trade with these countries. In addition, the normalization of relations with the EEC in the wake of the end of military rule after 1983 as well as Turkey's membership application to the EEC in 1987 resulted in Europe's reappearance as Turkey's biggest commercial and economic partner." Firat and Kürkçüoğlu, p. 148.

world around Turkey was unraveling. Rebuffed by Brussels, Özal became more committed to earn Washington's favor. To that end, he tried to develop personal relations with the U.S. administration. The first Gulf War was a much-awaited opportunity in that sense. Özal proved zealous in assisting the Coalition Forces, also proud of his role in mentoring President Bush to retaliate against Saddam Hussein. For him, this broad role underscored his Western orientation; at a time when his Islamic leanings raised eyebrows among the bureaucracy.²³⁹ Özal even underwrote this engagement as a shortcut to his imperial aspirations. In general, Özal was calculating to what extent he could perpetuate national interests with American backing.²⁴⁰ Yet, his "non-bureaucratic"²⁴¹ approach in this particular case engendered unprecedented political reactions.²⁴²

Özal gradually espoused a personal approach. He developed a penchant for sidelining institutional and political checks on his foreign policy initiatives. This partly stemmed from his dislike for sharing authority in decision-making. In practice, he was more preoccupied with drawing the broad strategy than commanding the whole conduct of foreign policy. As Robins underlined, "it was in the areas of strategic thinking and the

²³⁹ Gözen underlined that his pro-Western approach during the Gulf War "surprised those who had criticised the Özal governments for following an Islamic foreign policy." Gözen, n.p..

²⁴⁰ Gürbey, p. 54.

²⁴¹ "Özal emphasized that Mosul and Kirkuk were within the boundaries of the National Pact, and this issue should be resolved not in an academic and bureaucratic way, but must be handled practically and with dynamism." İlhan Uzgel, "Körfez Savaşında Özal'ın Musul-Kerkük'e ilişkin Projesi (Özal's project regarding Mosul-Kirkuk during the Gulf War)," in *Türk Dış Politikası*, vol. 2 (1980-2001), p. 256.

²⁴² In reaction to Özal's decision-making style, the Minister of Foreign Affairs (11 October), the Minister of Defense (18 October), and the Chief of the General Staff (3 December) resigned unprecedentedly in 1990 to protest the President's activism in support of the U.S. cause. İlhan Uzgel, "Körfez Savaşının Türk Dış Politikası Açısından Önemi (The importance of the Gulf War for Turkish foreign policy)," in *ibid.*, p. 257. Özal's reaction was to highlight his differences with the bureaucracy: "...some Generals are not keeping in step and are acting to preserve the status quo. While we are taking brave steps forward, they are trying to put the brakes on." *Milliyet*, 7 December 1990. Cited in Hale, "Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis," p. 686.

broad contours of policy, rather than in detail or execution of that policy, that Özal's influence was most felt."²⁴³ Inter alia, the unilateral openings to Greece, commercial relations with the Soviet Union and the Middle East, the EC membership application, apparently the execution of policy during the Gulf War carried his personal imprint. Yet, beyond his great strategizing how far he was willing or able to bend the main principles of the Turkish foreign policy remained a big question mark.

Politically, Özal advocated a role for adjoining the West and the East (read Islamic countries, together with former Ottoman territories plus Central Asia after the Cold War). He employed the bridge metaphor, which would become a recurring theme in the Turkish foreign policy. Moreover, he underlined "the geopolitical, geocultural, economic, and political" roles Turkey could play to that end. But, his advocacy for relations with the broader region, that came to comprise the Balkans, Central Asia and the Middle East, primarily aimed at highlighting Turkey's importance for the West.

In order to function as a geopolitical, geocultural, economic, and political bridge, Turkey needs to have a capability to develop relations with the West and the East in a similar fashion. Turkey's value for the West will rise as much as she develops relations with the Islamic countries and becomes a country that these countries prefer [to depend on].²⁴⁴

²⁴³ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 56.

²⁴⁴ Prime Minister Turgut Özal's speech in the Parliament during the budgetary debates, 12 September 1987 (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1987), p. 16. Cited in Demiray, p. 260.

Militarily, Özal never questioned Turkey's role in NATO. On the contrary, Özal was committed to back that role through military modernization and foreign policy activism, especially in the neighborhood. For the former, Özal tried to develop special relations with the U.S. in order to acquire high-tech military equipment. Activism, in this case, was interpreted as alluding to a stability-security provider role for Turkey. "Özal wanted to picture himself as a peace-seeker and more importantly a creative leader before the West...as a leader, and a country that does not react to problems, but acts on and takes the initiative to entangle them."²⁴⁵ While Özal had an unwavering belief in possible economic spillover effects, once confrontation became inevitable he made it known that he would not refrain from taking on the military challenge. He appeared ready to employ military power to realize his foreign policy objectives. On that note, the annexation of Mosul and Kirkuk seems to have been evaluated as a serious option by Özal.²⁴⁶ In another instance Özal threatened use of force against Armenia after reports of incursions in Nakhchivan.²⁴⁷

After 1992, Özal openly revolted against the traditional paradigm.²⁴⁸ His defiance more pronouncedly targeted monoculturalism, besides the constitutional framework drawn by the 12 September regime. By reflection, it enabled Özal to carry the banner of an "imperial vision" of multiethnic, multidimensional and transnational foreign policy. It led to the culmination of Özal's foreign policy activism. Özal envisioned the establishment of a greater zone of cooperation between the East and the West, whereby

²⁴⁵ Gürbey, p. 52.

²⁴⁶ Uzgel, "Körfez Savaşında," pp. 256-257.

²⁴⁷ Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy," p. 37.

²⁴⁸ Gökmen, p. 23.

“Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania,” if not the broader Balkans, dovetailed Central Asia and the Middle East under Turkish leadership.²⁴⁹ He developed multilateral initiatives to that end, such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and the Turkish Speaking Countries Summit. In addition, his bilateral visits to the neighborhood, as well as his self-assumed spokesman role for the Bosnian Muslims throughout the civil war complemented his efforts.

His clash with monoculturalism, however, had more to do with his non-traditional acceptance of the Islamic and Kurdish identities. Domestically, Özal advocated the extension of the Turkish identity to comprise religious and better multiethnic connotations. He justified his posture with praise for the Ottoman experience. In foreign policy, this was reflected in a quest to develop closer relations with the Islamic countries. Özal saw this not only beneficial but also logical as it was based on cultural and religious ties.²⁵⁰ He introduced a number of Turkish initiatives to deepen Turkey’s ties both at the multilateral and bilateral levels. Though he could not even get close to his objective to establish an economically integrated union, he turned Turkey into an actor in the region.

Özal played a pioneering role in acknowledging the Kurdish identity in Turkey. He personally declared his Kurdish roots and as suggested above supported extension of the definition of Turkish identity. He understood the transnational nature of the Kurdish question as opposed to a traditionalist outlook that at best saw it as a domestic problem. Özal thus sought dialogue with Kurdish groups in Iraq. Establishing links was seen as a way to neutralize not only the terrorist threat stemming from northern Iraq, but also to

²⁴⁹ Gökmen refers to Özal’s foreign policy objective as “Türk Birliği (The Union of the Turks).” Ibid., p. 253.

²⁵⁰ For Özal’s efforts towards rapprochement with the Islamic countries See Gözen, n.p..

remove the issue from becoming a trump card in the hands of neighboring countries.²⁵¹
He thus actively took part in efforts for comprehensive solution of the issue.²⁵²

Yet, one should not overlook Özal's domestic limitations. After June 1991 Özal lost control on the governing party and before long of the government.²⁵³ Demirel's return to power ended Özal's prevalence in domestic politics.²⁵⁴ More and more, Özal's influence diminished. Later on, Özal became an opposition figure at *Çankaya*, whose initiatives were hindered or rebuffed by the government.²⁵⁵ Therefore, his later attempts stand more as elements of his personal political agenda than an institutionalized national policy. This did not necessarily mean abandoning of his foreign policy ideas. The idea of turning Turkey into a regional powerhouse did not die away and was roughly followed by successor governments.²⁵⁶

Overall, Özal's foreign policy symbolized an attempt to transcend the traditional bureaucratic paradigm. Özal tried to introduce novelties in almost every aspect of the Turkish foreign policy with a larger aim at fundamentally breaking with status quoism. In

²⁵¹ Gülistan Gürbey, p. 54.

²⁵² Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, "Turkey's Kurdish Question: Critical Turning Points and Missed Opportunities," *Middle East Journal* 51, no. 1 (Winter, 1997), p. 70.

²⁵³ Barchard accentuates Özal's political isolation: "In practice... Mr. Özal is a President of the Republic unrecognized by the opposition parties who have pledged to depose him if they win the next election. Opinion polls suggest that about 60 per cent of the population do not regard him as an impartial head of state." David Barchard, "Turkey's Troubled Prospect," *The World Today* 46, no. 6 (Jun., 1990), p. 108.

²⁵⁴ Abramowitz underlines the political standoff between Özal and Demirel after 1991. Morton I. Abramowitz, "Dateline Ankara: Turkey after Ozal," *Foreign Policy*, no. 91 (Summer, 1993), p. 171.

²⁵⁵ The Demirel-İnönü government's not letting Özal to sign the founding treaty of BSEC, deemed his personal initiative, due to political disagreement is a remarkable sign of this faceoff. Özal even refused to attend the meeting in İstanbul and went on holiday. Yavuz Gökmen, pp. 65-66.

²⁵⁶ For one, Ruseckas underlines that in relations with former Soviet Republics in Central Asia, Özal provided "the foundation for gaining both economic and political benefits... [and] establish Turkey as an important player." Laurent Ruseckas, "Turkey and Eurasia: Opportunities and Risks in the Caspian Pipeline Derby," *Journal of International Affairs* 54, no.1 (Fall 2000), p. 234.

view of the upheavals in the international system, his quest for redefining Turkey's position both in the West and the East was in tune with the course of events. Non-involvement in other countries' affairs, limiting national interests to national borders, or writing off Turks living abroad appeared more and more difficult given the flux in the international system. Following the steps of alternative foreign policy agendas voiced in late 1970s, he also encouraged openings in relations with the neighborhood. However, did Turkey really move beyond the traditional paradigm under his watch?

Özal did not initially press for his cause to transcend the traditional paradigm when he stood more authoritative politically. On the contrary, he appeared compromising to work within the parameters of the traditional paradigm while he had a comparatively prevalent political position. As such, he seemed satisfied with his assigned role to lead Turkey's economic development. Later on, he aspired to a broader mandate during his Presidency. His initial attempts to break with traditionalism clashed the bureaucracy's staunch defense. His standing became even more fragile when Demirel recaptured executive power in 1991. While he expected to garner popular support for his cause, Özal failed to comprehend that it was too late to revert to the apolitical atmosphere of early 1980s. Yet, against all odds, Özal moved on to demonstrate his political invincibility through spearheading efforts to extend Turkish clout from "the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China."²⁵⁷ These efforts remained at best incomplete and inconclusive when he

²⁵⁷ This was essentially a term employed by the Young Turks with Pan-Turkist connotations. See Abdullah B. Kuran, *İnkılap Tarihimiz ve İttihat ve Terakki* (Our revolutionary history and the CUP) (İstanbul: Tan Matbaası, 1946), pp. 106-207. Oran informed that this term was contemporarily first employed by *The Economist* in September 1991. It especially became a part of official discourse after Prime Minister Demirel's association with the term. See Baskın Oran, "1990-2001: Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye (1990-2001: Turkey in the axis of globalization)," in *Türk Dış Politikası*, Vol. 2, p. 230. On the other hand, Gün Kut referred to Henry Kissinger as the originator of the term. See Gün Kut, "Yeni Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Uluslararası Ortam (New Turkish republics and international atmosphere)," in B. Eranlı Behar et al., eds., *Bağımsızlığın İlk Yılları: Azerbaycan, Kazakistan, Kırgızistan, Özbekistan, Türkmenistan*

passed away in April 1993. His willingness for activism notwithstanding, at the end of the day, Turkey did hardly move from its traditional position.²⁵⁸

Western orientation stood at the core of Özal's foreign policy. It was central to his economic and political worldview. His regional moves aimed at economic diversification both bilaterally and multilaterally. Yet, except for a brief period during the Iran-Iraq War, regional ties did not make up for Western economic ties. Politically, Özal prioritized anchoring Turkey's place in the West in view of changing security environment. He attached special importance to relations with the U.S..²⁵⁹ Outreach to the neighborhood, in Özal's mindset, was deemed supplementary to support Turkey's integration with the West. In other words, Turkey's strong presence in the East was envisioned as the backdoor to an entrenched status in the West.

Just as importantly, Turkey under Özal's leadership failed to catch up with the normative changes in the West. During the Cold War, Turkey's place in the Western institutions entailed primarily security cooperation and a procedural democracy. Actually, Turkey's transition to multi-party regime back in 1946 partly symbolized a willingness to join the Western bloc. However, especially after 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the Paris

(First years of independence: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Krygzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1994), p. 13, footnote 6. Cited in Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dış Politikasının Anahatları (The contours of Turkey's post-cold war foreign policy)," in *En Uzun Onyıl: Türkiye'nin Ulusal Güvenlik ve Dış Politika Gündeminde Doksanlı Yıllar* (The longest decade: 1990s in Turkey's national security and foreign policy agenda), eds., Gencer Özcan and Şule Kut (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1998), p. 56, footnote 15.

²⁵⁸ Rouleau exemplifies this by "...Ankara's fidelity to the Kemalist credo of nonintervention in conflicts beyond its borders formulated in the National Pact of 1920. This same principle contributed to Turkey's decision not to participate directly in the Persian Gulf War and, more recently, not to support the Bosnian Muslims militarily against their Serbian and Croatian enemies." Eric Rouleau, "The Challenges to Turkey," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 5 (Nov.- Dec., 1993), p. 113.

²⁵⁹ "Özal had a pro-American view of global politics: 'If a country has good relations with the United States, it will be more likely to realize its foreign policy objectives. Otherwise, it barely has any chance of moving towards its foreign policy goals.'" Non-attributable interview with a senior Turkish Ambassador.

Charter and intensified attempts at “an ever closer union” in Europe,²⁶⁰ the West became more vocal on human rights and democratization in foreign relations. As Robins put, “on big concept issues, such as the diminution of the state, the emergence of civil society and the centrality of human rights Turkey has not only failed to change, but has even failed to understand the dynamics of the new milieu.”²⁶¹ In addition to that, the Turkish leadership felt that “EC membership is a natural continuation of a process begun by Turkish entry into NATO and the Council of Europe.”²⁶² This expectation turned out to be illusionary, as proved by the shelved membership application to the EC. The end result was an accentuated geopolitical and strategic discourse to integrate Turkey to the West, while concurrent domestic movements kept the polity more or less intact.

Özal’s Western orientation also acquired certain roles that conflicted with both the objective of outreach in the neighborhood as well the broader aim at breaking away with the traditional paradigm. His eagerness in assisting the Coalition efforts in the Gulf War hindered Turkey’s regional policy. This was because Turkey came to pursue a role that perpetuated her image as “the stooge of the West.”²⁶³ In addition, Özal seems to have accepted counterbalancing the possible Iranian influence in the Newly Independent States (NIS). As Berdal stated:

²⁶⁰ From the very beginning the EEC aimed at “an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe.” After late 1980s concrete steps were taken toward furthering this objective stated in the Treaty of Rome (1957). See “Europe’s Mid-Life Crisis: The End of Federalism,” *The Economist*, 29 May 1997.

²⁶¹ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 12.

²⁶² David Barchard, p. 107.

²⁶³ İlhan Uzgel, “ABD ve NATO’yla İlişkiler (Relations with the U.S. and NATO),” in *Türk Dış Politikası*, vol. 2 (1980-2001), p. 273.

Özal uncritically accepted ... roles envisaged for Turkey by the USA and its Western allies in the post- Cold War era: first, Turkey was to act as a bulwark against Iranian (Islamic) influence in the Middle East, Caucasus, and Central Asia. Under this scheme, Turkey was to 'export' its secular and (liberal) democratic model into these newly independent states as an alternative to the radical Islamic model promoted by Iran.²⁶⁴

Moreover, Özal presented his policies as an antidote to anti-Western formations. Before the end of the Cold War, he thought that economic integration would isolate the extremist front in the Middle East. During the Bosnian War, he advocated a US-led operation against Serbia hoping to curb rising fundamentalism in the Islamic world.²⁶⁵ To that end, Turkey was to “play a vital role in Western, particularly US, efforts to constrain and contain radical states and/or political movements in the Middle East, such as Iran, Iraq and Hamas, as part of a pro-Western bloc of status-quo oriented states.”²⁶⁶ However, this rhetoric proved deconstructive in establishing genuine ties with regional countries.

More importantly, Özal’s war of words with status quoism turned into irredentist rhetoric against the very neighborhood he was willing to reconcile. Özal worked for conciliation with Greece on sovereignty issues mainly about maritime and aerial rights. He abolished visas for the Greek citizens unilaterally. He put last minute efforts to prevent

²⁶⁴ Aral, “Dispensing with Tradition?,” p. 77.

²⁶⁵ Gökmen, p. 77.

²⁶⁶ Aral, “Dispensing with Tradition?,” p. 77.

possible military confrontation.²⁶⁷ On the other hand, he marred the very positive moves he had initiated. To exemplify, in May 1991 criticizing İnönü's status quo oriented policy he told a Greek newspaper that "The Dodecanese Islands were never Greek... if I had been Ismet Inonu [sic] I would have gone in and taken them in 1944."²⁶⁸ Similar undiplomatic statements eventually hindered his fragile cooperative agenda.²⁶⁹

His foreign policy's ideational bases were a neoliberal worldview permeated with the TIS and neo-Ottomanism. The first was destined for economic development and the TIS for national solidarity. Thus, when applied to foreign policy they failed to yield the expected results. Increased economic relations did not neutralize political problems, as it became evident with Iran, Iraq and Greece. Turkishness or pronounced Islamic connotations did not open the doors wide open for Turkish presence in the broader neighborhood.²⁷⁰ Moreover, the TIS revitalized a statist discourse²⁷¹ that not only conflicted neoliberalism, but also failed to convince both domestic and external interlocutors of essential change. Özal's penchant for "learning by trial as a

²⁶⁷ Birand and Yalçın wrote about Özal's last minute telephone diplomacy with his Greek counterpart in March 1987 to that effect. Birand and Yalçın, p. 280-286.

²⁶⁸ Selim Deringil, "Introduction: Turkish Foreign Policy Since Atatürk," in *Turkish Foreign Policy: New Prospects*, ed. Clement Dodd (Huntingdon: Eothen Press, 1992), p. 6. Cited in Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 59.

²⁶⁹ Oran, "1980-1990," pp. 28-29.

²⁷⁰ Oran cites Özal's comment on Azerbaijan: "Azeris are Shiite. Therefore, they look to Iran, not Turkey." He later corrected his statement, which "this time led to different interpretations in Moscow." *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²⁷¹ "The TIS represents not a break, but continuity with Kemalism's cultural nationalism." Taşkın, p. 398.

practitioner”²⁷² aggravated the overall picture. The bureaucracy, if not foreign interlocutors failed to comprehend what was going on.

Özal’s personal style carried two main drawbacks.²⁷³ His self-dependence led him to draw a game plan in view of his personal perspective. This was free from the bureaucratic approach he detested. But, it also neutralized all possible checks in the decision making process. The end result was “when he was wrong the consequences were often more serious than if Turkey had been pursuing a more traditionally cautious foreign policy.”²⁷⁴ Secondly, the personalization of the decision making process also led to confusion and disconnection among the organs of Turkish diplomacy. The Ministers and high-level bureaucrats learned critical foreign policy decisions from the media. The diplomatic corps mostly remained uninformed about policy guidelines. This proved unsustainable once Özal was not at the helm. In Robins’s words, “his attempt to build in his own indispensability simply disadvantaged Turkey as an actor once his influence waned.”²⁷⁵

Özal’s unconventional approach was discontinued by his immediate successors. Though his vision on the possibilities of Turkish activism has had a determining effect, his style and approach were instantly replaced after 1991 with Demirel’s return to power. “After October 1991 elections with Özal’s great rival Süleyman Demirel back as prime minister, Özal was to suffer the frustration of a political marginalization from which he

²⁷² According to Cengiz Çandar, one of his close advisors, “Özal was not a [foreign policy] theoretician. He was a practical man. He learned by trial and as a practitioner applied what he learned.” Birand and Yalçın, p. 539.

²⁷³ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, pp. 59-60.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

would not recover.”²⁷⁶ With him neo-Ottomanism faded away and no group publicly emerged to perpetuate its cause.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 61.

²⁷⁷ Çetinsaya underlines that discussions about neo-Ottomanism ended with Özal’s death. Çetinsaya, p. 380.

There has been a strong element of continuity in the Turkish foreign policy throughout the Republican era, with roots in the Young Turk era. A general trend is noticeable whereby an unrealized foreign policy objective of predecessors that became pronounced especially in later terms is prioritized or implemented by the immediate successor government. Table 2 points to this inclination in the Turkish foreign policy.

Table-2. Elements of Continuity in Turkish foreign policy

Government	Policy Objective (in the latter period)
The Committee of Union and Progress	Participate in the Europe-dominated world system, expect to be treated as an equal partner; emphasize autonomy and independence
Early Republican era (1920-1939)	Enhance ties with the West
Post-World War II- era (1946-1950)	Secure Western alliance against the rising Soviet threat
DP era (1950-1960)	Develop relations with the Eastern bloc, especially with the Soviet Union
JP era (1964-1971)	Develop multidimensional policy, lessen Western dependence
RPP minority government (1974, 1977, 1978-1979)	Develop relations with the Third World, in particular with the Middle East and neighboring countries
Özal's Presidency (1989-1993)	Work towards forming a greater area of cooperation with the Balkans, Central Asia and the Middle East

CHAPTER 4

ANALYZING THE ANOMALIES AND ADJUSTMENTS: THE TRADITIONAL BUREAUCRATIC POLICY PARADIGM IN THE 1990s

The Opening of the Decade: Facing the Anomalies

Turkey entered the post-Cold War era with Özal's vision that questioned the very scope, style and instruments of the traditional paradigm. However, as was described above, his latter term political marginalization disabled a possible doing away with the traditional paradigm. Successor governments did not flinch from the new geopolitics of Turkish foreign policy that was actually predicated on post-Cold War structural changes. In that sense, "Özal's policy and the effects it generated did set the tone."²⁷⁸ Yet they still had to face the rising anomalies that challenged each and every premise of the traditional paradigm. Overall, the decade witnessed the prevalence of the extant paradigm after going through an arduous process of adjustment.

Initially, the Turkish leadership, Özal in particular, espoused a euphoric belief in the prospects of a post-Cold War order.²⁷⁹ With absence of a defined status quo, Turkey's geopolitical map was broadened from "the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China."²⁸⁰ A

²⁷⁸ Ruseckas, p. 222.

²⁷⁹ Özal sounded euphoric about the prospects of the post-Cold War era: "I tell you that the main objective of Turkey in the next decade is to become one of the world's ten or fifteen most advanced countries. I tell you that Turkey must enter and can enter the league of first-class countries... Together with the new states from the Balkans to Central Asia- states that are Muslim, and mostly Turkish- we can make our power more effective... If we do not make serious mistakes, the twenty-first century will be the century of the Turks and of Turkey." Andrew Mango, *Turks Today* (London: John Murray, 2004), p. 93.

²⁸⁰ See footnote 257 in Chapter 3.

Turkish sphere of influence based on kinship and neo-Ottomanist affinities, and building upon the power vacuum in the larger neighborhood made its way into the strategic calculations. In accord, Turkey sought clout, if not leadership in Central Asia, the Balkans, and the Middle East. This was envisioned to function as a springboard for regional, if not global influence. It went hand in hand with revisionist rhetoric that at large indicated deviation from the premises of the traditional paradigm.

Moreover, Turkey's traditional Western orientation also encountered unprecedented abnormalities. Not only certainties as regards the country's security identity became questionable, but also "strategic neglect"²⁸¹ emerged as an alarming possibility. In addition, Turkey felt alienated by intense criticism from the West, when it curiously expected support in its fight against burgeoning threats. Hence, a resultant identity crisis mainly centered around Turkey's Western orientation. Status quoism turned ever harder to maintain given the flux in post-Cold War global politics. The monocultural trait was also put into an ever-challenging test by the rising power of political Islam and the internationalized Kurdish problem.

The 1990s was identified as "the longest (lost) decade"²⁸² for Turkey. The end of the Cold War order with immediate effects on Turkey's neighborhood ushered in an era of uncertainty and instability. Subsequent to initial euphoria, the Turkish foreign policy first took a sober turn and then espoused a security-based approach. In the meanwhile,

²⁸¹ Lesser used the term to signify a possible withering away of Turkey's strategic importance for the West: "Many observers in Turkey and the West anticipated that Turkey would be a leading casualty of strategic neglect after the Cold War." Ian O. Lesser, "Bridge or Barrier? Turkey and the West after the Cold War," in Graham E. Fuller et al., *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p. 99.

²⁸² In order to explicate the numerous challenges of the post-Cold War era. Özcan and Kut identified the 1990s as "The Longest Decade." See Özcan and Kut, *En Uzun Onyıl*.

the hitherto overlooked multiethnic character of Turkey evidently surfaced due to contagious ethnic conflicts from the Balkans to Caucasias.

Yet it was in the southern borders that instability directly challenged national security. Turkey responded to Saddam's aggression in line with the international community.²⁸³ President Özal assumed an overriding personal role though with inadvertent results, as was described above. However, the real menace emerged as political vacuum in northern Iraq exacerbated the already burgeoning Kurdish problem in Turkey. Throughout the decade, Turkey's regional policy was predicated on this two-pronged issue.

Turkey thought of the European Union (EU) membership as an eventual and "rightful" corollary of the country's Western orientation.²⁸⁴ As the EU shifted its priorities from security issues to internal consolidation, however, Turkey felt left out not only politically but also strategically. Worse still, the EU's increasingly vocal human rights criticism against Turkish noncompliance further alienated Ankara. As Kramer put, "from the very beginning Turkey viewed the relationship with the EU as politically determined and expected reciprocal treatment from its European partners, disappointment has been inevitable."²⁸⁵ Nevertheless, despite ups and downs, "the relationship with the

²⁸³ Kut underlines that "it is misleading to see Turkey's Gulf War activism as a transition to a genuinely active foreign policy. Given the regional and international situation of the day, any Turkish government would have sided with the international community." Şule Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s," in *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multiregional Power*, eds. Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), p. 6.

²⁸⁴ Kramer comprehensively dwells on the Turkish "obsession" with becoming part of the EU, taken as an identity issue by the Republican elites. Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: Challenges to Europe and the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000).

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

European Union remained Turkey's most important foreign policy concern in the 1990s."²⁸⁶

The enlarged scope of strategic cooperation notwithstanding, relations with the U.S. were not free from divergences.²⁸⁷ The rift with the EU essentially increased dependence on American strategic initiatives. This was reflected mainly in joint multilateral initiatives from Iraq to Bosnia, Kosovo, and Somalia. The common agenda also widened to comprise security and energy cooperation, arms limitation, and non-proliferation. Yet, human rights issues especially regarding the Kurdish problem, different perspectives on Iraq, Iran, and Syria, and unfavorable moves by the Congress against Turkey pointed to political differences.

From a security point of view, while his critics believed that Özal's adventurist style proved detrimental, a return of the traditional approach following his political disempowerment did not automatically restore the certainties of the Cold War. With the end of bipolarity, Turkey felt more insecure, even if the Western bloc as a whole entered an epoch of security. Thus, "Ironically, the importance attached to NATO by the Turks became even more pronounced."²⁸⁸ On the other hand, exclusion from the Western European Union (WEU) amid a possible reorganization of the European military structure heightened Turkey's anxieties.

The traditional paradigm was upheld primarily due to the pressing internal challenges. In that sense, Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s was first and foremost

²⁸⁶ Kramer, *A Changing Turkey*, p. 181.

²⁸⁷ See Kemal Kirişci, "U.S.-Turkish Relations: New Uncertainties in a Renewed Partnership," in *Turkey in World Politics*, pp. 129-149.

²⁸⁸ Sayarı, "Turkey," p. 11.

domestically driven. Feeling excluded and undermined abroad, this essentially symbolized a move to restore order by sticking to old and known ways. In the meantime, the twin threats of political Islam and the Kurdish problem came to depress the very foundations of secular and nationalist Republic.²⁸⁹ The former ironically highlighted the importance of Turkey's "European vocation." The latter reinforced a security-based approach that aimed at restoring the status quo in the southern borders.

The foreign policy response was essentially a domestic political choice. While embracing the new geopolitics of Turkey, Demirel-İnönü government shied away from Özal's style and approach. Prime Minister Demirel, long known for his traditionalism in foreign policy, espoused a similar approach by delegating routine conduct to the MFA. "His contribution was, however, important in laying down some general guidelines for foreign policy, notably that Turkey should not act alone but jointly with other countries, and preferably its allies under proper international auspices."²⁹⁰ Robins describes this as "the collegiate bureaucratic approach" after 1991, when "Turkey managed to harness the caution of the Kemalist era, but without succumbing to the blinkers of Kemalism, for example, in its contempt for engagement in regions such as the Middle East. Increasingly, continuity and coordination came to typify government, as the system rowed back from the highly personalised approach of the Özal era through the partial re-institutionalization of the conduct of foreign affairs."²⁹¹

²⁸⁹ "[...] the revised National Security Policy Paper (NSPP) identified fight against sectarian PKK terrorism as the primary threat. Thereby, the "defensive concept" that was based on Greece and Russia was changed; [...] the source of threat was specified as Syria-Iraq-Iran [...] In February 1997[...] the NSPP was revised to prioritize [Islamic] fundamentalism." Gencer Özcan, "Doksanlı Yıllarda Türkiye'nin Değişen Güvenlik Ortamı (Turkey's changing security environment in the nineties)," in *En Uzun Onyıl*, pp. 18-19.

²⁹⁰ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 62.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

This political disposition also reinstated the MFA's role in policy-making, which was partly attributable to Minister of Foreign Affairs Çetin's ability to rise above coalitional politics. In addition, the pace of events was calling for bureaucratic expertise. To exemplify, before the demise of the Soviet Union, in fall 1991 a group of diplomats from the Ministry visited the Soviet Republics to set the contours of new foreign policy towards the region: "Subsequently, the Foreign Ministry revamped its organizational lines to include a new section on Central Asian affairs."²⁹² Moreover, relative stability in the Ministry's administration ensured harmony and continuity.²⁹³

With Demirel's elevation to the Presidency, the domestic political scenery was further fragmented with a natural corollary of weak coalition governments. Coupled with the rising tide of twin threats, this gave leeway to military's renewed ascendancy.²⁹⁴ Once again the enlarged scope of national security matters that comprised domestic and foreign "national security" matters legitimized what might this time be called an *overarching military approach*. In essence, the military's role in Turkish politics was never restored to the liberal standards given the constitutional practice after 12 September 1980. Besides its assigned and broadly interpreted role, the military ensured the adoption of its agenda

²⁹² Graham E. Fuller, "Turkey's New Eastern Orientation," in *Turkey's New Geopolitics*, p. 68.

²⁹³ Robins praised Minister Çetin and Undersecretary Sanberk's harmonious work until 1994 that "was to serve Turkey so well in managing the destabilising events that were to unfurl all around over the next three years." Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 62.

²⁹⁴ For a concise account of military's peculiar role in Turkish politics before their hegemonic rule after 28 February 1997, see Ümit Cizre (Sakallıoğlu), "The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy," *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 2 (Jan., 1997), pp. 151-166.

through the empowered MGK. Thereby the military regained a decisive role in policy-making.²⁹⁵ This role was further reinforced in the wake of the 28 February “soft coup.”

²⁹⁵ Makovsky underlined military’s role in foreign policy-making: “Civilians do retain importance. President Demirel, who chairs the NSC [MGK], is often a key broker. The strongly nationalist policies advocated by Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, and seemingly backed by Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, regarding the Cyprus problem and relations with the EU, have been very influential in policymaking. The Foreign Ministry retains significant influence as well. Still, a policy strongly advocated by the military will almost certainly be implemented; a policy strongly opposed by the military almost certainly will not.” Alan Makovsky, “The New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *SAIS Review* 19, no. 1 (1999), p. 106.

Table-3. Anomalies and Adjustments of the Traditional Bureaucratic Policy Paradigm in the 1990s

<i>Policy principles of the paradigm</i>	<i>Anomalies of the paradigm</i>	<i>Adjustments in the paradigm</i>
Western orientation	Endangered security	Foreign policy activism
	Strategic neglect	Accentuate strategic value for the West
	Identity crisis	Unwavering commitment to the EU membership objective
Status quoism	Absence of defined status quo/ Euphoria about broadened sphere of influence	Acknowledge own limits and power dynamics
	Revisionist rhetoric	Not reflected in, isolated from official discourse and policy
	Neo-Ottomanism	Sidelined and never grew to a mainstream current after Özal
Monoculturalism	Islamic revival	Equated with the WP, rolled back domestically
	Kurdish problem	Confined to terrorism problem; political, military and diplomatic fight against the PKK; employed available instruments of foreign policy to isolate the PKK
	Multiethnic demands for activism in favor of relative communities	Balanced in accordance with the traditional premises of the paradigm

A New Foreign Policy?

Building on this background, the foreign policy activism in the post-Cold War era led to dichotomous views on the general structure of Turkish foreign policy in this period. The assumption was that change and hence a “new foreign policy” arrived. The

arguments can generally be grouped in four categories:

Caution vs. Daring

Malik Mufti adopted Kowert and Hermann's²⁹⁶ concepts of "daring and caution" into the analysis of Turkish foreign policy.²⁹⁷ Mufti underlined the increasing tension in the post-Cold War era between the competing values of "caution" and "daring" in foreign policy. The bureaucratic posture for maintaining the status quo sanctified the former, while an increasing public demand reflected in political discourse for bolder action to capitalize on the international power vacuum advocated the latter. This dichotomy has been employed to differentiate traditional foreign policy from innovative attempts by certain political leaders to overcome the cautious role conceptions.²⁹⁸ Depending on political leanings, Menderes, Ecevit, Özal, and up to a point Erbakan's foreign policy

²⁹⁶ Kowert and Hermann questioned the prospect theory, which posited "decision makers accept risks to avoid losses but refuse to take risks to make comparable gains." Their findings suggested that this behavioral foresight failed to be sustainable especially as policymakers came out to take risks for possible gains. Therefore, they posited that "if students of international conflict want to understand risk taking, then they must consider not only how leaders frame conflicts but also the character of the leaders themselves." Paul A. Kowert and Margaret G. Hermann, "Who Takes Risks? Daring and Caution in Foreign Policy Making," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 5 (Oct., 1997), pp. 611-637. This idea of "daring" for reaping gains and the role of leaders form the backbone of Mufti's analysis. Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy."

²⁹⁷ Ibid. His later piece takes a more moderate view about the intermingling of both strategies in Turkish foreign policy. See Mufti, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture*. The dissertation dwells on his earlier views to analyze how these strategic concepts were utilized as analytical tools.

²⁹⁸ Mufti argues that "It is almost a truism among Turkish and non-Turkish analysts that Ankara's foreign policy has been dominated until now by caution, passivity, and adherence to the status quo." Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy," p. 45.

dispositions were identified as “daring,” alluding to a motive to transcend traditionalism with an outlook that sought activism beyond Turkey’s national borders. However, such analyses consistently equalized variations in foreign policy style with foreign policy change. Moreover, they took rhetoric for policy without dwelling on to what extent corresponding policies were implemented and thereby challenged the basic premises of the traditional paradigm.

In singling out a strategic concept, there was a fallacy in construing foreign policy activism as “new foreign policy,” which appeared ready to reap benefits rather than prioritize preventing losses. Yet activism in Turkish foreign policy especially after 1993 was more in line with the prospect theory²⁹⁹ as “decision makers accepted risks to avoid losses,” especially concerning northern Iraq, Greece, Syria, and Cyprus rather than a general orientation toward maximizing gains as Mufti implied. Again throughout the 1990s, independent of the character of leaders, Turkish foreign policy “refused to take risks to make comparable gains,” in particular against Russia and Iran. As will be shown in the next pages, either in its cautious or daring mode, the status quoist character of Turkish foreign policy prevailed.

Insular vs. Cosmopolitan Approach

The unraveling of multiethnic Soviet Union and Yugoslavia ushered in Turkey’s

²⁹⁹ Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," *Econometrica* 47, no.2 (1979), pp. 263-291. The basis if this theory was “losses hurt more than gains feel good.” Paper available at http://www.princeton.edu/~kahneman/docs/Publications/prospect_theory.pdf [23 April 2013].

“new geopolitics.”³⁰⁰ This primarily turned out to be a debate on a possible cosmopolitan approach that would transcend “the long-standing Kemalist principle of noninvolvement in areas outside Anatolia.”³⁰¹ The extension of the scope of Turkish foreign policy to a larger setting from the Balkans to Central Asia was simply interpreted as “new foreign policy.” Yet, the relevant discussions disregarded whether enlarged scope amounted to a renewal of Turkish foreign policy’s main objectives of Western orientation and status quoism.

West vs. East

This dichotomy is not peculiar to post-Cold War studies. Nonetheless, it was revamped by the assumption that Turkey’s developing relations with the non-Western world signified an identity shift. The argument was the Kemalist secular and nationalist (Western) corporate identity³⁰² was being challenged and penetrated by the Islamist and multiethnic (Eastern) identities. This was deemed to be a possible consequence of growing disaffection with monoculturalism, if not a sense of exclusion from the West.

³⁰⁰ Fuller and Lesser, with Henze and Brown, *Turkey's New Geopolitics*. In his foreword to the book Former US Ambassador to Turkey Abrahamowitz underlined that “the book highlights a growing struggle between those who share Ataturk’s devotion to keeping Turkey’s interests focused on Anatolia and those who envision a more cosmopolitan role for their nation.” Morton [I.] Abrahamowitz, “Foreword,” in *ibid.*, p. viii.

³⁰¹ Abrahamowitz, “Dateline Ankara,” p. 170.

³⁰² “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.’” Alexander Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State,” *The American Political Science Review* 88, no. 2 (Jun., 1994), p. 385.

The Welfare Party (WP)'s electoral successes were interpreted as further vindication of this argument. Yet again, Turkey's internal "identity crisis"³⁰³ was erroneously construed as a disassociation of the Turkish foreign policy from its Western orientation.

Status Quoism vs. Expansionism

Turkey was largely content with the Treaty of Lausanne and did not officially question its stipulations except for a selective number of cases.³⁰⁴ Beginning with Özal, however, the Turkish leaders occasionally voiced aspirations for revisionism. Neo-Ottomanism, albeit short lived, impinged on Turkey's image as an "expansionist power," especially in the former imperial territories. As regards the newly independent Turkic states, the ultranationalist circles advocated a sort of Pan-Turkist integration.³⁰⁵ The Islamists propagated a union with the Muslim countries, albeit vague on its transnational and ideological foundations. In general, ideas advocating the quest for influence were construed as expansionism. However, these interpretations did not take into account to what extent such ideas were entrenched in official policy. In reality, even if Turkey initially yearned for regional leadership in the Caucasus and Central Asia, it did not take

³⁰³ Doğu Ergil, "Identity Crises and Political Instability in Turkey," *International Affairs* 54, no. 1 (Fall 2000), pp. 43-62.

³⁰⁴ Uzer studies different levels of Turkey's involvement in Hatay, Cyprus and Karabagh. Umut Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus* (London; New York: I. B. Tauris; New York: Distributed in the United States by Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

³⁰⁵ Abramowitz clarified the discursive aspect of such arguments: "The notion of a potent Turkish sphere of influence from Turkey to China abounds in public discourse, particularly within the far Right; but it amounts to little more than rhetoric, and public fascination with the region may be starting to fade." Abrahamowitz, "Dateline Ankara," p. 168.

long before the Turkish leadership acknowledged both its limits and the existing power relations in the region. A similar process was experienced in the Middle East and the Balkans. Moreover, the establishment denounced or repudiated the arguments for advancing Turkish influence as “adventurism.”³⁰⁶ On a balance sheet, Turkey of the 1990s remained a status quoist power albeit in active search for a new status quo.

Adjustments in the Traditional Bureaucratic Policy Paradigm

The post-Cold War upheaval in international relations together with rising domestic vulnerability put the traditional paradigm in challenging tests. The dissertation posits that upon detailed survey of the era, the policy paradigm proved modifiable against anomalies, even if it had entailed a complex process of adjustment. Thus, both the anomalies and non-traditional ideas to overcome them did not amount to “a more disjunctive process associated with periodic discontinuities in policy.”³⁰⁷

Western Orientation

As opposed to the above-mentioned arguments positing an ideational shift

³⁰⁶ Mufti exemplifies the differences in outlook between status quoist and revisionist approaches. During the Gulf crisis in 1991, President Özal advocated leaving former hesitant and passive policies in favor of an active foreign policy. In contrast, General Torumtay as the Chief of General Staff later recounted the President stance as “a gamble, an adventure.” Mufti, “Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy,” pp. 48-49.

³⁰⁷ See footnote 95 in Chapter 2.

reflected in foreign policy, the Turkish foreign policy's Western-orientation turned out to be modifiable. As Müftüler-Bac observed:

Traditional Turkish foreign policy has aimed at gaining acceptance from the West for Turkey's Europeanness. Turkey's place in Europe is unique because it carries elements of both cultures, and to clarify Turkey's position in any subsystem of states is, therefore, problematic. The end of the Cold War has made such a clarification more urgent because now Turkey is trying to formulate a new foreign policy in an attempt to adjust to its turbulent external environment.³⁰⁸

In congruity with this analysis, there seems to be general concurrence with the unchanging character of the Turkish foreign policy's Western orientation despite changes in scope, style, and instruments.³⁰⁹ In effect, what seemed indeterminate in the beginning of the decade was how to adjust Turkish foreign policy to a world of changing definitions. Throughout the Cold War, Turkey's place in the Western bloc was assured first and foremost via NATO membership. This nourished a security outlook that later resulted in an inability to adapt to the redefined dynamics of being part of the West. Prioritizing the cases of human rights and democracy, the West in general and the EC and Council of Europe (CoE) in particular became more vocal on Turkey's deficiencies.

Turkey principally had to adjust to the idea that there was no longer a uniform

³⁰⁸ Meltem Müftüler-Bac, "Turkey's Predicament in the Post-Cold War Era," *Futures* 28, no.3 (April 1996), p. 258.

³⁰⁹ See Abramowitz, "Dateline Ankara," p. 167; Philip Robins, "Between Sentiment and Self-Interest: Turkey's Policy toward Azerbaijan and the Central Asian States," *Middle East Journal* 47, no. 4 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 595-596. Heinz Kramer, p. 181 (especially Chapter 11).

Western bloc. The EU directed its efforts first to internal consolidation and then to absorption of ex-Communist Eastern European countries. Therefore, its agenda was predicated more on economic and political issues. The U.S., on the other hand, was experiencing its “unipolar moment,”³¹⁰ now almost as the sole global security provider. This drift proved painful for Turkey, for whom the Cold War partnership with the West came to be seen as a futile investment, especially regarding the EU membership.

In essence, relations with the EU stood larger than foreign policy considerations. As Kramer³¹¹ highlighted, they symbolized three fundamental motives for Turkey:

Relations as identity: It is perceived that “these relations directly affect the identity of the modern Turkish nation.”³¹² Turkey’s irrevocable republican, secular, and national traits were derived from the West so as to elevate itself to an equal partner of the West. The EU membership, in that sense, was regarded as a hallmark of the country’s great leap forward. Therefore, synchronization with Europe turned into a measurement of “success for the Kemalist revolution.”³¹³ Moreover, Turkey regarded itself as having organic links with Europe,³¹⁴ given the continental influence on the country’s modernization.

Political motivations: Relations were deemed a balancing factor in rivalry with Greece.

³¹⁰ Krauthammer, pp. 23-33.

³¹¹ Kramer, pp. 183-186.

³¹² Ibid., p. 184.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Kramer exemplifies former MFA Undersecretary Ambassador Sanberk’s tempting argument in favor of Turkish membership: “A Europe without Turkey is inconceivable... So, when we look at the problems of Turkey and the European Union, whatever some European leaders may think, we are looking at an intra-European problem, not an external one.” Ibid.

Economic motivations: Europe was Turkey's biggest trade partner and number one investor.

One shall add the importance of Western orientation for Turkey's security. The Western alliance had been the defining element of security structure. Membership in NATO was not only a security umbrella, but also played a determinant role in foreign policy given the Cold War environment. In addition to material capabilities, Western orientation carried a non-material component in securing Turkey against ideational insecurities.³¹⁵ In such a setting, Turkey's place in the Western world had a direct link with status quoism. Thus, exclusion from the EU and its molding security structure meant more than membership for Turkey. Turkey felt even more isolated given an uncertain geostrategic role in the new era.³¹⁶ This feeling was further exacerbated by a possible eradication of NATO's role.

Relations with the West were also debilitated due to the burgeoning "normative gap."³¹⁷ While Europe moved towards an "ideological, organizational and systemic"³¹⁸ transformation, the Turkish polity simply failed to catch up. Thus, "the hegemony of

³¹⁵ Bilgin posits that Western orientation had an ideational objective to ward off Turkey's non-material insecurities. See Bilgin, "Securing Turkey," pp. 105-125.

³¹⁶ "A major theme of the lively public discussions that took place in Turkey during 1989-1990 was that the end of the Cold War threatened to undermine Turkey's geostrategic role and its principal institutional link with the West." Sayarı, "Turkey," p. 11.

³¹⁷ These were essentially liberal norms that gained prevalence especially after the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. Robins underlined that "...It [Turkey] has coped much less well with the rapid normative changes which have accompanied the end of the Cold War. On big concept issues, such as the diminution of the state, the emergence of civil society and the centrality of human rights Turkey has not only failed to change but has even failed to understand the dynamics of the new milieu." Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 12.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

liberal values” and their reflections in “the political domain on democracy, pluralism, human rights and civil society”³¹⁹ in the West did not resonate in Turkey. The growing level of international civil society activity complemented by transnational institutions’ closer watch on policy making further disclosed Ankara’s alienation from international norms. The end result was Ankara stood with an unchecked state authority that left scant room for both individual liberties and independent civil society. This, in turn, engendered a barrage of criticism from the West.

Beyond normative deficiencies, the Turkish establishment had difficulties in understanding how its Western oriented polity was made subject to continuous harassment from the West itself, even as Turkey’s internal challenges were on the rise. This occasionally stimulated the “solitude complex”³²⁰ in Turkey’s international outlook. Worse still, the country was experiencing an internal identity crisis, whereby “many Turks felt alienated from the Western-oriented, secular regime that, ironically, ignored Western values of legality and freedom and was unable to deliver the material wealth promised by modernization and economic development.”³²¹ For modern segments of society, Turkey faced a paradox of being unable to westernize despite an official discourse of Westernism. Traditional segments, on the other hand, felt even more alienated as their identity claims were simply repudiated. As a whole, the rising voices for liberalization and democratization remained ignored and largely unaddressed.³²²

³¹⁹ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 28.

³²⁰ It represents an almost nationwide feeling of loneliness in international relations, expressed in a common saying that “Turks have no friends, but Turks.”

³²¹ Ergil, p. 43.

³²² Sunar distinguished between “the nationalist culture of bureaucrats and westernized layers' centered in Ankara and the traditional Islamic-centered culture still prevailing in the villages and small towns of

This overall picture emerged as an anomaly for the traditional paradigm. In a worst-case scenario, Turkey found itself with weakened geostrategic role and imperiled multilateral links abroad, whilst encountering a two-headed identity crisis at home. Yet Turkish foreign policy was able to adjust to the new environment. This entailed a revision of relations with the West and reformulating the scope and instruments of the Turkish foreign policy in the broader neighborhood.

Given the problematic relations with Europe at large, Ankara reinvigorated relations with Washington. Turkey was deemed “a strategic asset” for the U.S. “in dealing with the Middle East, Balkans, and Caucasus/Central Asia areas.”³²³ For Turkey, the enlarged scope of relations restored a sense of security as well as geostrategic importance. The U.S., on its part, handled certain divergences (See footnote 287) bearing in mind the strategic importance of bilateral relations. Moreover, America’s tenacious support for EU membership partly relieved Turkey’s concerns of exclusion. In short, throughout the 1990s Washington performed a rehabilitative role in support of Turkey’s Western orientation.

This did not, however, mean that relations with the EU lost prominence. On the contrary, Turkey’s principal foreign policy goal of full membership to the EU was upheld. As explained above, this had ideational-psychological, economic, political, and security dimensions.³²⁴ Against all odds, the Europeanization process sailed through:

eastern Anatolia.” İlkay Sunar, *State and Society in the Politics of Turkey's Development* (Ankara: Ankara University Faculty of Political Science, 1974), cited in Jeremy Salt, “Nationalism and the Rise of Muslim Sentiment in Turkey,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 31, no. 1 (Jan., 1995), p. 14. While the first group was able to win the allegiance of the majority until the 1990s, discontent had grown in the post-Cold War era.

³²³ Kirişci, “U.S.-Turkish Relations,” p. 129.

³²⁴ Kramer, p. 186.

First the Customs Union (CU) came into effect by the end 1995 and then Turkey was given the status of a candidate country four years later. Although Turkey's aspiration for full membership remained unrealized, relations with the EU carried on except for a brief interlude throughout the decade.

Against this background, what appeared to be “new foreign policy” at first glance essentially turned out to be sustained Western reorientation. Starting with the Gulf War, Ankara put strenuous efforts to accentuate its geostrategic value for the West. Again as Müftüler-Bac emphasized “The post-Cold-War era [...] is leading to a search for new policy initiatives for Turkey, but again the ultimate aim is to secure its position in the newly emerging Western order and to be accepted as part of Europe.”³²⁵

The Turkish foreign policy in this era, which can generally be categorized as follows, pointed to this ultimate aim of Western orientation:

Euphoric activism (1991-1993): Turkish foreign policy was characterized by an opportunistic mood. The idea was to establish a Turkish sphere of influence, before a new balance of power could be restored. This was assumed to empower the Turkish cause for reintegration into the Western club, in this case the EU. The rather inconclusive attempts to acquire a leadership role in the post-Gulf War Middle East,³²⁶ to unite and lead the

³²⁵ Müftüler-Bac, “Turkey’s Predicament,” p. 259.

³²⁶ Hale, “Turkey, Middle East and the Gulf Crisis,” pp. 679-692. For the aftermath of the Gulf War Hale underlined that “[...] Turkey had clearly demonstrated its strategic importance, and had rendered important services to the coalition cause, without having itself fired a shot in anger. In Ankara, brave hopes were expressed that Turkey could play an important part in helping to build a more stable, prosperous and democratic order in the Middle East [...] During the following months these hopes were dashed by a wave of problems.” Ibid., pp. 687.

Turkic World,³²⁷ to support the multinational coalition in the Balkans³²⁸ with an aim at sitting at the table afterwards and to initiate multilateral openings including BSEC and The South East European Co-operation Process (SEECP) as a whole pointed to this mindset. Though each attempt had its own merit for broadening clout, none amounted to a move to break away with the Western orientation, let alone replacing its priority for Turkish foreign policy.

Informed activism (1993-1995): Turkey came to recognize both its own limits to solidify a sphere of influence in the broader region and other ascending regional dynamics that averted any moves to that end. In Central Asia and the Caucasus, Ankara soon came to acknowledge that the new states were reluctant to embrace both the Turkish model and the Turkish vision for closer integration. Moreover, the region appeared not to be a comparable substitute for economic relations with Russia, and “an aggressive foreign policy [...] was no more advisable in the 1990s than it had been for Atatürk in the 1920s, given the risk of escalation into direct confrontation with Russia.”³²⁹ Thus, although Turkey reinvented itself as a significant player, it started to adopt a more realistic tone for presence in the region. In the Middle East, “Özal’s successors preferred a return to traditional policy, one that kept its distance from regional affairs and tried to establish

³²⁷ Robins points out that this “dreamy voice” largely stemmed from a complete lack of interaction until 1991. Robins, “Between Sentiment and Self-Interest,” pp. 593-610.

³²⁸ Though the Turkish activism in the Balkans gained momentum after 1994, it still falls in the same category of “euphoric activism.” For Turkey’s Balkans policy in the 1990s, see İlhan Uzgel, “The Balkans: Turkey’s Stabilizing Role,” in *Turkey in World Politics*, pp. 49-69.

³²⁹ Ruseckas, p. 222.

equal relations with all important states in the region.”³³⁰ In the Balkans, Ankara seemed content with a role to support international efforts for stabilization. Such pragmatism in a way neutralized hues and cries from certain circles against an “adventurist” approach.

Unbalanced security outlook (1995-1999): With a sober turn to its “new geopolitics,” Ankara refocused on Brussels to consolidate ties with the EU. The CU was a milestone in that regard. During the negotiations, the government overtly instrumentalized Turkey’s geopolitical position and regional ties.³³¹ Yet, the CU’s implications for further economic liberalization did not sweep away the intractable repercussions of internal instability.³³² Political surge of the Islamist WP and the rising threat of PKK terrorism were taken as an excuse for a more pronounced role of the top brass.³³³ During this era, Turkey came to the brink of war with Greece, Syria, and Cyprus.³³⁴ The military’s envisioned agenda, though, was to invigorate Turkey’s Western orientation. Domestic political engineering

³³⁰ Kramer, p. 118.

³³¹ “Tansu Ciller, prime minister since 1993, has claimed that, ‘If Turkey is transformed into a “super” economic power in the region’, it would contribute to political and economic stability in Europe. She tried to mobilize support for her policies from the European governments and the USA by claiming that, ‘If Turkey fails, peace will fail in Europe.’ The assumption in the Turkish foreign ministry, for example, is that a stable Turkey will have the capacity to become an influential player in Middle Eastern politics and affect the futures of European relations with the Middle East.” Müftüler-Bac, “Turkey’s Predicament,” p. 256.

³³² For a comprehensive account of political instability leading to intervention, see Birand and Yıldız, *Son Darbe: 28 Şubat* (The latest coup: 28 February) (İstanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2012).

³³³ Cizre highlighted the broadening of the military’s policy portfolio in the post-Cold War era: “Whereas security during the Cold War was exclusively defined in “hard” military terms, now security includes “soft” concerns such as economic and social issues, regime type, civil disorder, terrorism, communal conflict a long ethnic and religious lines, proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, wars of secession, and environmental disasters.” Ümit Cizre, “Demythologizing the National Security Concept: The Case of Turkey,” *Middle East Journal* 57, no. 2 (Spring, 2003), p. 217.

³³⁴ Önis recalls Turkey as a “coercive region power ... much more willing to use force to impose its presence in the surrounding region, its approach often being dictated by the principles of hard-line realism. Coercive regional powers can become a source of instability and insecurity in their surrounding regions.” Ziya Önis, “Turkey and the Middle East after September 11: The Importance of the EU Dimension,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 2, no. 4 (2003), p. 2.

and a new alliance with Israel were deemed to support this cause. Meanwhile, as will be detailed below, the Erbakan government's overtures to Islamic countries, despite perceptions to the contrary, did not amount to a diversion from Turkey's traditional orientation.

Balanced security outlook (1999-2002): The year 1999 was considered a turning point as recognition of candidature for EU membership, the PKK leader's capture, and Turco-Greek rapprochement hinted at possible desecuritization of Turkish foreign policy. Despite initial optimism though, the "national security syndrome" did not wither away.³³⁵ While the military believed that it followed a course of modernization, i.e. Westernization, their agenda did not necessarily overlap with the process of Europeanization. In contrast to the former period, a reversed picture appeared; whereby the government carried the banner of EU membership, besides a quest for normalization of foreign relations, whilst the military stood more distanced so as to prevent an erosion of "sovereignty," i.e. institutional autonomy.

Status quoism

Alternative views about Turkish foreign policy, ranging from Pan-Turkism to Pan-Islamism could have been construed as signifying "radical changes in the overarching terms of policy discourse."³³⁶ However, such a conclusion would have

³³⁵ See footnote 4, Chapter 1.

³³⁶ See footnote 95 in Chapter 2.

missed two fundamental points: First, Turkish foreign policy during the Cold War largely turned a blind eye to its neighborhood. Therefore, to talk about radical changes in policy discourse is irrelevant; because the Turkish foreign policy was identified by non-involvement and non-intervention in regional affairs, hence lacked a specific policy discourse. The post-Cold War era witnessed an attempt at above all filling in this gap. Second, as categorized above, Turkish foreign policy passed through a process of adjustment. The initial euphoria disappeared with acknowledgment of Turkey's limits and the extant power relations in the region. When power relations challenged the status quo, as was the case in the southern borders, Turkish foreign policy espoused an active status quoist approach to restore order. The pursuant security outlook did not actually contradict the nature of the traditional paradigm, as "security concerns [lay] at the heart of how Turkey views its place in the world and hence its foreign policy."³³⁷ In total, as Kut underlined:

It is important to remember that the changes in Turkey's foreign policy after the Cold War did not come from any revision of the basic principles, objectives, or even priorities of Turkey's foreign policy. Any new features were a result of the change in the political geography and relationships outside Turkey. In other words, there has been no change in Turkey's foreign policy line of status quo, but a change in the status quo surrounding Turkey. Similarly, the existing conflicts and instability in the surrounding regions are not something that Turkey

³³⁷ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 205.

created.³³⁸

In fact, with the gradual return of moderation after the Demirel-İnönü government, one would have assumed a softer transition to the new status quo with conciliatory moves towards the neighborhood. On the contrary, both misperceptions and security dilemmas grew. This was partly attributable to the military's overarching role in Turkish politics as well as Turkey's burgeoning military capabilities.³³⁹ Imprudent rhetoric further strained relations with the neighbors.³⁴⁰ Inadvertently, Turkey found itself confronted with Syria, Armenia, Russia, Iraq, Iran, Greece and the Greek Cypriots at the same time.³⁴¹ The end result was a prolonged atmosphere of tension and confrontation.

While Ankara was on the defensive not to “allow the ethnic disputes in the region to spill over into Turkey,”³⁴² it could not stop the Kurdish issue from turning into a trump card in the hands of the confronting neighbors.³⁴³ Turkey's reaction was to protest the overt or tacit support granted to the terrorist organization. Overall, Turkey's relations with “a whole collection of other countries were partly blighted by the issues of security

³³⁸ Kut, “The Contours,” pp. 10-11.

³³⁹ TSK reaped the benefits of cascading practices after the Conventional Forces Agreement in Europe (CFE). Also, the fight against terrorism led to strengthening of its capabilities. *Ibid.*, 189-205.

³⁴⁰ Özal's irredentist rhetoric was reiterated by successor leaders, in particular Demirel and Çiller against Iraq, Greece, Armenia, and Syria. Russia was also uncomfortable with Pan-Turkist ideas, as well as interaction between Turkey and the Caucasus. Iran's discomfort stemmed from regional rivalry as well as ideological confrontation.

³⁴¹ Robins gives a concise account of this confrontation. Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, pp. 167-172.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 163.

³⁴³ Robins adds Lebanon to the list, as PKK found refuge in the Bekaa Valley after moving partly from Syria. *Ibid.*, p. 173 (in footnote 33).

and PKK.”³⁴⁴

More and more, Ankara “indexed its relations with key states on their stance against the PKK.”³⁴⁵ In addition, Ankara employed all available tools of diplomacy to isolate the terrorist organization. These tools- such as “water for peace” with Syria and Iraq; trade boycotts, tender and procurement limitations against European countries; the threat of use of force against Syria; and visa bans for certain human rights activists- differed from the tools of the traditional paradigm. Yet, they could still be construed as moves to restore the status quo.

First, Turkish foreign policy did not adopt irredentist policies. To that effect, Turkey did not pursue a policy of territorial aggrandizement. Notwithstanding specific statements from the leadership, rhetoric never turned into official policy line. Second, Turkey respected existing power relations in its neighborhood once they were established. However, it took a while to acknowledge the parameters of the balance of power. This was mainly due to the post-Cold War (dis)order³⁴⁶ that emerged as *de facto* reality without a negotiated agreement on spheres of influence. In that sense, Ankara was no different than other capitals in its search for furthering influence against the power vacuum. At the end of the day, initial activism functioned as an exercise to inform Turkey about its own limits. Third, although the concept of *dış Türkler* became an important part of Turkey’s regional foreign policy especially in the Balkans in the early

³⁴⁴ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 177.

³⁴⁵ Mehmet Ali Birand, *Sabah*, 22 February 1996. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 175.

³⁴⁶ “Former US Secretary of State James A. Baker III observed in his 1995 memoir, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, “In three and a half years [from the late 1980s to the early 1990s] . . . the very nature of the international system as we know it was transformed.” Cited in G. John Ikenberry, “The Myth of Post-Cold War Chaos,” *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 3 (May-June, 1996), p. 80.

1990s, its glamor passed away later on.³⁴⁷ Last but not least, the traditional objectives of Western orientation and maintaining the status quo were retained. The difference was, unlike the Cold War era, Turkey felt the insurmountable need for activism to realize these policy objectives. The motivation rather stemmed from the belief that in the post-Cold-War period “it is not enough for Turkey to enjoy stability within its own borders. Turkey will not be able to ensure, or safely enjoy, its own stability unless international order also extends to its neighbours.”³⁴⁸

Therefore, non-involvement in the regional affairs was rendered null as a policy instrument. Turkey accordingly turned to what might be called *active status quoism* in the broader neighborhood.

In Central Asia and the Caucasus, once regional dynamics and own limits were recognized, Turkey acknowledged the political status quo and ended up with an economic approach. Ruseckas pointed out that in the second half of the decade Turkish foreign policy was shaped principally by “pipeline determinism.”³⁴⁹ In accord, the direction of the oil pipelines from Central Asia was prioritized as “a determinant of geostrategic orientation of the region.” The Turkish support for the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline turned out to be “a critical element in its strategy.”³⁵⁰ At the end of the decade, Turkey settled for a less ambitious role so as to maximize economic returns.

³⁴⁷ Kramer, p. 147.

³⁴⁸ Müftüleri-Bac, “Turkey’s Predicament,” p. 266.

³⁴⁹ Ruseckas, p. 223.

³⁵⁰ F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand, 2003), p. xiii.

In the Middle East, Turkey's "indexed" foreign policy had two principal goals: First, to ward off the threat of PKK terrorism and second, to retain status quo in order to prevent the foundation of a Kurdish political entity. While the first goal entailed a forthcoming approach to pressurize the neighboring countries from supporting and harboring the PKK;³⁵¹ the second necessitated a measured approach to find a balance between Iraq's territorial integrity and regional crisis management.³⁵² Thus, as Baykan underlined in the particular case of northern Iraq, overall Turkish foreign policy was shaped by a status quoist approach for "contributing to stability in the region and promoting Turkey's political unity."³⁵³ From Ankara's point of view, the other focal points in its agenda, such as special relations with Israel,³⁵⁴ water problems with Syria and Iraq, and ideological clash with Iran either directly or indirectly were related to this status quoist outlook.

The rising security threats from the Balkans seemed rather "abstract"³⁵⁵ as they did not pose a direct security threat for Turkey. In accord, Ankara rebuffed the unilateralist option and was content with joining multinational efforts to reinstate stability

³⁵¹ Altunışık stressed "Turkey reemerged as an actor in the Middle East" as threat perceptions in the post-Cold War era moved from the north and partly the west to the Middle Eastern south. Meliha Altunışık, "Güvenlik Kıskacında Türkiye-Ortadoğu İlişkileri (Turkey-Middle East relations in the grip of security)," in *En Uzun Onyıl*, pp. 333-334.

³⁵² Though Turkish foreign policy supported the international efforts to set up safe haven in northern Iraq so as to fend off a possible refugee crisis within its borders, it still had to ensure that political vacuum in northern Iraq did not transform into a Kurdish political entity. For a detailed analysis of the issue See Mahmut Ali Baykan, "Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991-95," *Middle Eastern Studies* 32, no. 4 (Oct., 1996), pp. 343-366.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

³⁵⁴ Altunışık highlights that "the security aspect of this co-operation became dominant for Ankara" after mid-1990s. Meliha Altunışık, "The Turkish-Israeli Rapprochement in the Post-Cold War Era," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 2 (Apr., 2000), p. 173.

³⁵⁵ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 344.

in the region.³⁵⁶ Its response to crises in Bosnia and Kosovo were exemplary in that sense. On the other hand, Turkey's economic penetration into the region remained weak.³⁵⁷ In general, "Turkey's main role in the Balkans was to preserve its own security by enhancing the area's stability."³⁵⁸

A further element of this active status quoism was to "eschew unilateralism in favor of multilateralism."³⁵⁹ The decision to back the Minsk Group's efforts on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue represented a turn from an earlier unilateralist stance. Turkey's contribution to the international efforts during and after the Gulf War also followed a multilateralist course. Moreover, Turkey participated in international peacekeeping operations from Somalia to Bosnia, Albania, Georgia, and Kosovo.

With a penchant for established status quo Turkey did not question the restored order in the former Soviet or Yugoslav Republics.³⁶⁰ Thus, Ankara adopted an official line of advocating the status quo, participation in defusing the crisis, and defending the territorial integrity of post-conflict successor states.³⁶¹ Against this backdrop, one should not also disregard the Turkish stance "to avoid any entanglements in the highly localized,

³⁵⁶ Turkey initially declared support for the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Yet, despite growing domestic public pressure, it did not venture into unilateralist initiatives to stem ethnic confrontation. See Baskın Oran, "Türkiye'nin Balkan ve Kafkas Politikası (Turkey's Balkan and Caucasian policies)," *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi* 50, no.1 (1995?), p. 272.

³⁵⁷ Uzgel, "The Balkans," p. 65.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

³⁵⁹ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 380.

³⁶⁰ One notable exception was Armenia. After its invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh and other Azerbaijani territory; Ankara did not recognize the de facto situation as status quo and has advocated its legal resolution.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 383-384.

passionate, and irreconcilable micro-ethnic conflicts in the Caucasian region,”³⁶² as well as in the broader neighborhood.

Monoculturalism

The challenge to the secular and nationalist monocultural identity of the Turkish foreign policy arose, above all, from political Islam and Kurdish ethno-nationalism.³⁶³ While the first flourished primarily within the dynamics of domestic political process, the second acquired an international dimension partly owing to its transnational characteristics. As a result, the monocultural trait was questioned to the core and could only survive the decade with an arguably successful reimposition by the military. Both anomalies will be dealt with in the following section, in view of their overall effects on the traditional paradigm.

In the meanwhile, the monocultural trait was also disputed by the rising public demands from different ethnic communities. The kinsman communities’ ties with “outside Anatolia,” from Nagorno-Karabakh to Bosnia, Abkhazia, and Chechnya, were rediscovered in the aftermath of the unraveling of the multiethnic states. This also gave rise to a reverberant attention regarding the Turks abroad, for instance the fate of Uighur Turks in Xinjiang province of China. It became inconceivable to restrict “national interests” to territorial borders by overlooking the fate of not only Turkic but also other

³⁶² Fuller, “Turkey’s New Eastern Orientation,” p. 81.

³⁶³ “The growing maturity of Turkish society as exemplified by the continuous growth of civil society and the freeing of Islam and of the Kurdish identity from the Kemalist Pandora’s box created a new challenge for Turkey’s political and state elite, including the military.” Kramer, p. 10.

ethnic communities abroad.

Despite an initial fervor by the public, however, such demands were in general balanced in light of the extant paradigm. Acquired distaste for unilateralism after getting to recognize its own limits played a certain corrective role. Thereafter, Turkey joined in multilateral endeavors to overcome ethnic tensions in the region. Nevertheless, as was witnessed in the hijacking of Avrasya ferry by Chechen activists, Turkey had to face the imbalances between domestically linked demands and exigencies of foreign policy.

Challenges to the Ideational Foundations of the Traditional Policy Paradigm

Political Islam

With retrospect, the idea of secularism was inherent in Turkish modernization dating back to the late eighteenth century.³⁶⁴ Thereafter, modern-secular vs. Islam dichotomy had become a key component of political competition. This was seen as an alignment toward Westernization on the part of the former, and a purported “reactionarism” for the latter. This outlook, apprehensive of diversion from the objective of modernization, led the Republic to espouse *laïcité* along the French lines. It gave birth to a more complicated relationship with Islam, whereby state control over religion was even expanded.³⁶⁵ This definition, which also envisioned politics void of Islam, worked well until multipartism. Afterwards, politicians approached religious groups for electoral

³⁶⁴ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964).

³⁶⁵ Nicole Pope and Hüge Pope, *Turkey Unveiled: Atatürk and After* (London: John Murray, 1997), p. 317.

support. Obligated to share political power with pro-Islamic parties- in fact political parties advocating ardent secularism remained mostly in opposition- it fell on the bureaucracy to guard the secular pillar of the regime.³⁶⁶

After 12 September 1980, as explained in preceding pages, the military coopted Islam. However, this marriage of convenience brought about an unintended consequence, i.e. the rise of political Islam. Though officially banned from politics until 1987, Erbakan increased the WP's electoral support in consecutive elections to finally assume power in June 1996. This was deemed a nightmarish scenario for the military. To put pressure on dysfunctional governance of mainstream parties, Erbakan intensified his populist rhetoric particularly targeting economic and foreign policy. Regarding the former he decried Turkey's dependence on the West and promised a "just [economic] order."

In terms of the latter, Erbakan went on to defend severing ties with the West, carving out an Islamic front in cooperation with the Islamic countries, and establishing alternative international institutions in lieu of the contemporary Western-designed ones, such as "Islamic UN and NATO." The WP worked on an anti-EU platform and advocated the foundation of Islamic common market and currency. Erbakan criticized "the Turkish state as an 'imitator regime,' which is more eager to serve the interests of the Europeans and the United States than that of Turkey or any of the other Muslim countries."³⁶⁷ Thus, overall Erbakan rhetorically proposed a civilizational alternative with Third Worldist³⁶⁸ tones to Turkey's Western orientation.

³⁶⁶ For a recent account analyzing the issue, See Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

³⁶⁷ Mehran Kamrava, "Pseudo-Democratic Politics and Populist Possibilities: The Rise and Demise of Turkey's Refah Party," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25, no. 2 (Nov., 1998), p. 289.

³⁶⁸ Kamrava underlined that his foreign policy platform predicated on dependency theory arguments,

While this propaganda resonated with delirious effects for the secular establishment, “the guardians of Kemalism” seemed to overlook the following traits:³⁶⁹ First, they took rhetoric for practice, which in Turkish politics, not unseen in other countries, differed tremendously before and after the assumption of power. Second, they overstated the WP’s relative weight in coalitional politics. With %21 electoral support, the Party’s room for maneuver toward radical change was limited. Third, Erbakan and his colleagues were Islamist-nationalists, though expressed it in somewhat religious, if not anti-systemic connotations; and claimed to better maximize national interests by pursuing a more independent foreign policy line. Erbakan defended his cause for nationalism, frequently accentuating his role in the 1974 intervention in Cyprus. In general, this “nationalist outlook”³⁷⁰ might be said to have distanced Erbakan’s political movement away from Pan-Islamism, another irritant for Kemalism. Last but not least, Erbakan was a pragmatist politician unwilling to follow an ideologue’s route to theoretical and systematic argumentation. Rather, he espoused a populist approach that was amenable to change against the flow of events.

As a whole, these traits enabled Erbakan to follow a foreign policy line more in conformity with the traditional premises of Turkish foreign policy during his brief tenure than his former rhetoric prescribed. This appears to be the case, despite strident opposition by the secular establishment of the time, including bureaucracy, business and media, against his foreign policy. In accord, Robins dwelled on such elements of

whereby “the West has developed by underdeveloping the Islamic world in general and Turkey in particular.” Ibid., p. 289.

³⁶⁹ Yavuz claims that the military did not want to let the WP transform itself while holding on to power. Yavuz, *Secularism*, p. 70.

³⁷⁰ See footnote 175 in Chapter 3.

continuity, while downgrading his overtures to the Islamic countries as “complementary” and not adding up to a reorientation of foreign policy.³⁷¹

During its first six months in office, the Erbakan-led coalition government had to address a number of controversial foreign policy issues. These subjects included its relationship with Israel; Operation Provide Comfort II towards northern Iraq; the customs union with the European Union (EU); and Cyprus. These issues obliged Erbakan to show his hand. Would he endorse existing policy, or would he embark upon an ideologically inspired strategy of foreign policy revisionism? In each case, Erbakan and his supporters showed that they were willing to remain within the foreign-policy consensus that has characterized successive Kemalist governments prior to 1996.³⁷²

Nevertheless, the WP was at pains to balance its dissident rhetoric with the exigencies of assuming executive power. Though Erbakan appeared willing to work within the parameters of the traditional paradigm, he still felt the urgency to appease his electorate. Hence, two separate tours that first took him to Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia; the second to Egypt, Libya, and Nigeria.³⁷³ This show of solidarity was crowned by establishing a group called the Developing-8 (D-8) composed

³⁷¹ Philip Robins, “Turkish Foreign Policy under Erbakan,” *Survival* 39, no. 2 (Summer 1997), pp. 82-100.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

³⁷³ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, pp. 156-159.

of these countries plus Bangladesh, except Singapore.³⁷⁴ The first leg of the tour was a relative success, even if the gas deal with Iran raised eyebrows in Western capitals. Moreover, both his self-restraint to voice anti-Western rhetoric and focus on business links won him certain points. He also seemed in congruity with *raison d'état*, when he reminded the Iranians about their links to the PKK. However, his exchange with the Libyan leader proved a total foreign policy fiasco, which marked the beginning of the end both for Erbakan and his party. There emerged sufficient material for a follow-up campaign to depict a picture of Islamic countries in collaboration with the PKK and their hostility to Turkish nationalism and secularism, which were exalted as the embodiment of Turkey's integrity and unity.

In the background, neither Erbakan's excessive rhetoric, nor his foreign policy blunders were at the core of the secular establishment's distaste for the WP. It had to do chiefly with the psychological dimension of Turkey's Western orientation. For the establishment, the WP as a whole represented the alter ego, supposed to have been subsumed as a result of Kemalist reforms. Moreover, the WP on the one hand represented a peripheral identity that stood against Turkey's Western and secular collective identity.³⁷⁵ On the other hand, the movement voiced a call for change larger than itself, associated with *inter alios* "the Anatolian bourgeoisie, Sunni groups including the Kurds,

³⁷⁴ Kirişçi underlines that D-8 was seen as "an idea mostly for domestic political consumption." Its institutional record proved this point. See Kemal Kirişçi, "Post-Cold War Turkish Security and the Middle East," *Middle East Review of International Relations* 1, no. 2 (July 1997). Available at: <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1997/issue2/jv1n2a6.html> [12 May 2012].

³⁷⁵ Yavuz discerned that "Today, Islamic identity has been reduced to party identity with the WP in opposition to Europeanized secular identity." Yavuz, "Political Islam," p. 64.

women, and even liberal and social democratic aspirations.”³⁷⁶

Therefore, the possible cooptation of the WP into the mainstream would have insinuated broadening of Turkey’s collective identity. To what extent the WP would be ready to accept such political reconciliation is debatable with their fierce rhetoric especially after their electoral successes. However, for the military it sounded more than it could accept at face value. “Thus began what became known in Turkey as ‘the process of 28 February’ - a campaign, concerted by the military, to eradicate political Islam from education, business and other activities. [...] In order to readjust the balance delicately,”³⁷⁷ the military once again enforced the monocultural identity, tying Turkey to the traditional pillars of Kemalism. By the same token, the NSC reaffirmed its authority to set foreign policy objectives with special reference to national interests and reiterating support for the EU membership.³⁷⁸

The Kurdish Problem

The Kurdish question has been both an internal and a foreign policy issue for Turkey.³⁷⁹ Internally, it has haunted the Turkish polity that was supposedly predicated on

³⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 64 and 78-79.

³⁷⁷ Mango, *Turks Today*, p. 97.

³⁷⁸ Mustafa Erdoğan, *28 Şubat Süreci* (28 February process) (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999), p. 25.

³⁷⁹ For accounts dwelling on both aspects of the issue See Jülide Karakoç, “The Impact of the Kurdish Identity on Turkey’s Foreign Policy from the 1980s to 2008,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 6 (November 2010), pp. 919-942; Kemal Kirişçi, “The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy,” in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, pp. 273-309; Michael M. Gunter, “The Continuing Kurdish Problem in Turkey after Öcalan’s Capture,” *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 5 (Oct., 2000), pp. 849-869; Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey’s Kurdish Question* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998); Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict* (London; Portland, Or.: Frank Cass, 1997); Philip Robins, “The Overlord State: Turkish

the homogeneity of the people of Turkey. Until the end of the Cold War, the security based atmosphere in international relations relieved external pressures against the Turkish disregard for politico-cultural aspects of the issue. In essence, “the Kurdish question in Turkey had been a function of the state’s failure to reconsider the definition of its national identity in a manner that would allow Kurds to express and live their ethnic and cultural identity in public.”³⁸⁰ The PKK’s separatist armed struggle after 1984, further complicated the issue and solidified the security outlook of the military. In the wake of the Cold War, Ankara had to face the internationalization of the problem, in particular due to the plight of the Iraqi Kurds, which transformed the Kurdish question into Turkey’s primary foreign and security issue.

Despite abortive attempts, especially by President Özal, pondering a political solution, “the Kurdish problem has instead been relegated to the category of a ‘national security problem,’ thereby rendering most open discussion largely taboo.”³⁸¹ Against this backdrop and a prevalent hardline approach,³⁸² Ankara rebuffed taking any further steps until terrorist activities were brought to an end. This was largely because “Turkish policy is driven by the fear that any major concession to Kurdish demands, whether political, economic, or cultural will ultimately lead to greater demands at a future date that could

Policy and the Kurdish Issue,” *International Affairs* 69, no. 4 (1993), pp. 657-676.

³⁸⁰ Kirişci, “The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 275.

³⁸¹ Barkey and Fuller, *Turkey’s Kurdish Question*, p. 3.

³⁸² Kirişci described the hardline approach, which basically argued “there is no Kurdish problem, but a problem of terror, aggravated by the economic and social problems of southeastern Turkey and the support given to the PKK by the international community.” Kirişci, “The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 278. With few exceptions, this line prevailed until 1999 as the mainstream view among Turkish policymakers.

culminate in the break-up of Turkey.”³⁸³ Thenceforth, Turkey’s dilemmas increased with human rights violations accusations from the West and support for PKK from regional countries including Syria, Iran, Greece, and Russia. This picture even exacerbated as the issue revealed its transnational facet ensuing Saddam’s attacks on Kurds in northern Iraq and the resultant refugee crises.

The apprehensive domestic mood actually was in line with the Turkish foreign policy’s monocultural and status quoist traits. By the same token, on the one hand Turkey opposed any foreign act that suggested the recognition of the Kurdish identity, even at the expense of aggravating relations with the West. On the other hand, Ankara followed a twofold strategy first to cut off foreign support for PKK; second, to stem the establishment of an independent political entity in northern Iraq that would not only alter the status quo but also carried further implications for Turkey’s “internal problem.” As a consequence, Turkish governments came to evaluate support for its fight against terrorism “as a test of friendship”³⁸⁴ in foreign relations.

In essence, the Kurdish question has become an insurmountable test for the ideational foundations of the traditional paradigm (See Table on Anomalies):

Monoculturalism: The monocultural outlook that envisioned cultural and political homogeneity based on “Turkishness” came to be questioned both domestically and internationally. Thus, the resistance to acknowledge the multiethnic and multicultural

³⁸³ Barkey and Fuller, “Turkey’s Kurdish Question,” p. 61.

³⁸⁴ Andrew Mango, “Atatürkist Origins of Turkish Foreign Policy,” in *Turkey’s New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy*, eds. Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayarı (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), p. 13.

character of Turkey stood more than ever as an anomaly whereby not only monoculturalism, but also the whole foundation of Turkey's foreign policy paradigm came under duress. From an ideational point of view, the Kurdish identity has been affecting the Turkish foreign policy's *collective identity*, whereby it acquired a determinant role in prescribing and proscribing foreign relations.³⁸⁵ However, the insistence on a predominantly security approach to preserve monoculturalism not only weakened Turkey's fight against terrorism, but also "transformed the Kurdish issue into Turkey's greatest vulnerability."³⁸⁶

Western orientation: Ankara was heavily criticized on its human rights record especially by the European and American institutions after 1991. This had largely to do with the Kurdish issue.³⁸⁷ While relations with the U.S. were less affected due to their mainly geostrategic nature; Turkey's standing in Europe as a whole abated. During the finalization process of the CU, "the Kurdish issue has made itself felt most acutely."³⁸⁸ The "normative gap" became even more apparent.³⁸⁹ The PKK actively organized the Kurds in Europe that had an impact on the EU's vocal stance asking for further reforms. Meanwhile, Turkey spoke with furor against certain European countries' laxness to host the PKK, its front organizations, and above all the Kurdish parliament in-exile. Political

³⁸⁵ Karakoç underlined that "This [Turkish] collective identity based on Kurdish identity sometimes unifies Turkey and its neighbours around common interests and sometimes may be an issue of dispute amid the same agents." Jülide Karakoç, p. 921.

³⁸⁶ Barkey and Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question*, p. 157.

³⁸⁷ For broader discussion of the issue See Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, pp. 29-42.

³⁸⁸ Barkey and Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question*, p. 164.

³⁸⁹ See footnote 317.

constraints on military procurement, in particular by Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Norway on the grounds that they would be used against the Kurdish population added insult to injury.³⁹⁰ Consequently, political and military relations were the main casualties. This was in effect a blow to Turkey's identity, which predicated on smooth and ideally organic relations with the West for both material and ideational reasons. Thus, Turkey felt not only alienated by lacking support in its fight against separatism, but also even more insecure due to a sense of detachment from its Western orientation.

Status quoism: For the Turkish leadership, the double-edged Kurdish problem necessitated vigorous attempts to retain domestic and foreign status quo. At home, as an extension the country was threatened by separatism, the most serious since its foundation. Abroad, it highlighted the possibility of a transnational Kurdish entity. In addition, as "Turkey's greatest vulnerability," it enabled a group of antagonist countries to confront Turkey via supporting the PKK.

During the Gulf War in 1991, Turkey faced a dilemma to either let more than half a million Kurdish refugees from the border that carried the risk of "setting up refugee camps [...] that would become like the Palestinian camps in Lebanon that never went away,"³⁹¹ or opt for an international initiative to create a safe haven in northern Iraq. Remindful of the crisis three years ago, Ankara opted for the latter. However, this ran the

³⁹⁰ For a discussion of procurement problems linked to the Kurdish problem See Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, pp. 189-206.

³⁹¹ Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), p. 8.

risk of the formation of a separate Kurdish entity, “which could, in turn, act as both a model and a source of inspiration for Turkey’s own Kurds.”³⁹² Uncertainties increased when the Kurds lost no time to convene a regional parliament in May 1992 and established an autonomous administration. Worse still, the political vacuum unleashed a strategic competition among regional countries, namely Syria, Iran, and Turkey to patronize the amenable Kurdish groups. Later on, Baghdad made a comeback via coalescing with the Kurdish groups, though never able to reclaim anything like sovereign authority.

With nested problems tied to one another, the Kurdish problem became like a Matryoshka doll for Turkey, incessantly open to new complications. Warding off a possible refugee crisis, the OPC became another nuisance for Ankara. Due to eternal suspicions about “external hands,” this time carving out a divisive Kurdish entity in the region that would at the end of the day disorder the unity of Turkey; the OPC turned into a controversial issue in Turkish politics.³⁹³ The biannual parliamentary debates to prolong the OPC’s term each time evolved into a discussion about preserving the unity of the country. This was again a double-edged sword with the bureaucracy supportive of renewal in order to maintain strong ties with the U.S., while the opposition accused the governments of “selling out” the country. Throughout the period, the OPC and its successors became a catchword for external, and mostly American conspiracy to allegedly divide Turkey and establish an independent Kurdish state.

³⁹² Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 313.

³⁹³ Oran describes across the board opposition to OPC (erroneously referred as “Çekiç Güç (Poised Hammer)” in Turkey) in Turkish politics. See Baskın Oran, *Kalkık Horoz: Çekiç Güç ve Kürt Devleti* (Poised hammer: OPC and Kurdish state) (Yenişehir, Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1996). For a reevaluation of the priorities of the period see Taha Akyol, “Çekiç Güç ve Kuzey Irak,” *Milliyet*, 31 March 2007.

This heightened confusion due to flux in the dynamics of the Kurdish problem, sustained the military's overarching role in steering domestic and foreign policy. It also reincarnated the security outlook that Özal strenuously attempted to sideline. For Turkish foreign policy, it had two main outcomes: First, was "a conspicuous assertiveness"³⁹⁴ that replaced the traditional foreign policy style of non-involvement particularly in the Middle Eastern affairs. Turkey became involved not only in the "Iraqi" affairs, but acquired an almost embedded status through its military, diplomatic and intelligence presence in northern Iraq. Moreover, Turkey undertook periodic cross-border operations against the PKK targets inside the region. Robins underlined that "Turkey's involvement in northern Iraq, where at the end of the 1990s it had between 1,000 and 10,000 men at any one time, together with its close cooperation with the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), amounts to the creation of a de facto security zone in the north."³⁹⁵

Second, it revived security dilemmas with regional countries. Though still unsettled about their own Kurdish problems, Syria and Iran moved on to reinvigorate ties with the Kurdish groups in Iraq including the PKK.³⁹⁶ In the particular case of Syria, the PKK had been used as a bargaining chip toward the attainment of two foreign policy objectives, i.e. territorial claims against Hatay and share of the Euphrates' water. Damascus also sustained its links with both the KDP and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), as an expansion of "unabashed support for those in political opposition to the

³⁹⁴ Kirişçi, "The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy," p. 283.

³⁹⁵ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, pp. 317-318.

³⁹⁶ Syria and Iran had forged ties with the Kurdish groups against Saddam Hussein's Iraq since 1970s. For Syria's policy regarding the Kurdish groups including the PKK See Jordi Tejel, *Syria's Kurds: History, Politics and Society*, translated from the French by Emily Welle and Jane Welle (London and New York: Routledge, 2009); in particular Chapter 4 on "The Kurdish Issue and Its Transnational Dimension."

Baghdad regime.”³⁹⁷ In Iran’s case, ties with the PKK were less intense though still maintained “to allow Ankara to perceive this as a possible threat, in order to use it as a bargaining tool.”³⁹⁸ Iran was also traditionally a key player among Kurdish groups in Iraq. Both Syria’s and Iran’s support for the PKK and to a lesser degree the rivalry to reign among the Kurdish groups created continuous friction with Ankara.

Security dilemmas, however, were not restricted to Turkey’s southern borders. For different reasons Russia, Greece, and Armenia established links with the PKK. As such, “Turkey has discovered that its Kurdish problem has rendered it vulnerable to those neighbors with which it has had long-standing disputes by providing them with an opportunity to embarrass or even harass Ankara.”³⁹⁹ This complex picture, in turn, nourished both the “Sevres syndrome” and the “solitude complex”⁴⁰⁰ in Turkish foreign policy. It also led Ankara to engage Israel in order to turn the tide in the region partly with hope for further U.S. support.

Overall, the end result of these twin threats was that the Turkish foreign policy, which entered the decade in great uncertainty, stood in no better condition until 1999. Politically weak coalition governments especially after Demirel’s election to the Presidency got squeezed in between the rising demands of political Islam in tandem with

³⁹⁷ Tejel, *Syria’s Kurds*, p. 72.

³⁹⁸ Kerim Yildiz and Tanyel B. Taysi. *Kurds in Iran: The Past, Present and Future* (London; Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press in association with Kurdish Human Rights Project, 2007), p. 74.

³⁹⁹ Barkey and Fuller, *Turkey’s Kurdish Question*, p. 166.

⁴⁰⁰ One clear example of this complex was Ambassador (R) Şükrü Elekdağ’s thesis that Turkey should be ready to fight two-and-a-half wars concurrently, against Syria, Greece and the PKK. Yet, the proponents of this assertive mood seemed to have written off a wider regional standoff as it would possibly have called on Iran, Russia, and the EU against Turkey. Elekdağ authored this thesis in daily articles in *Milliyet* between 2-4 December 1994, which were later compiled into a journal article. Cited in Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, pp. 171-172. Also See Şükrü Elekdağ, “2 ½ War Strategy,” *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs* (Ankara) 1, no. 1 (March–May 1996). Available at: <http://sam.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/SukruElekdag.pdf> [10 May 2012].

the Kurdish question on the one hand and a mainstream demand for more stability and security on the other. This picture reinvigorated the security outlook of the military that gained even a bigger say in foreign and security policymaking. The military, in return, advocated an assertive approach to restore the objectives of traditional policy paradigm. As a result, Turkey looked as if it was fighting both itself and the whole world around it. The country came to the brink of war against Greece, Syria, and Cyprus. Relations with Russia, Iran, Armenia, and the Arab countries for different reasons turned problematic. With the EU, the Luxembourg Summit on December 1997 resembled a breaking point, when Ankara was omitted from the list of candidate countries and reciprocally turned down an invitation for the European Conference. In total, Turkey's foreign relations narrowed down to ties with the U.S., and a group of U.S. allies namely Israel and Georgia; as well as the natural Turkish allies in Central Asia and the Balkans. It appeared Turkish foreign policy urgently needed a break from this quandary.

1999: Rupture with the Traditional Policy Paradigm?

Against this murky backdrop, a series of auspicious developments transpired in the year 1999 carried the potential to transform the dynamics of Turkish foreign policy: In February PKK's leader after a foreign policy "saga"⁴⁰¹ was captured and brought to Turkey, opening doors for peaceful coexistence. The general elections in April rendered a coalition government possible, nationalist and mainstream enough to appease both the military and the pressing reform agenda. In August, the devastating Marmara tremor gave

⁴⁰¹ Kirişçi, "The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy," pp. 273-274.

leeway to “earthquake diplomacy,”⁴⁰² at a time when relations with Greece needed a magic formula to come out of abyss. Last but not least, the EU recognized Turkey as a candidate for full membership in December, with long-awaited official endorsement for accession.

These were *in toto* evaluated as a “turning point” in Turkish foreign policy.⁴⁰³ It was assumed that having overcome the security and identity crises, Turkey would immediately transform its foreign policy. Such projections were disproved in the short term. A complex *mélange* of nationalist-Kemalist, ultra nationalist and conservative-liberal parties, the coalition government had to face pressing challenges of economic, domestic and foreign policy reconstruction. Sticking to the stand-by agreement with the IMF, the government implemented a series of structural neoliberal reforms, which failed to prevent the November 2000 and February 2001 financial crises.⁴⁰⁴ Domestic reforms were in line with the general objective of harmonization with the EU *acquis*, though with occasional rebuffs from among the coalition partners as well as the military bureaucracy.

The foreign policy agenda of the government prioritized Europeanization, yet also indicated support for “Eurasianism (Avrasyacılık).” As Kramer referred, the government program read in the Turkish parliament in April 1999 made special emphasis to ties with the neighborhood:

⁴⁰² “The term ‘earthquake diplomacy’ was born to designate the attempt to use the new atmosphere of goodwill in order to solve long-standing problems between the two countries.” Mango, *Turks Today*, p. 99.

⁴⁰³ For instance See Öniş, “Domestic Politics,” pp. 9-34; Kirişçi, “Between Europe and the Middle East,” pp. 40-41; Mesut Özcan, *Harmonizing Foreign Policy: Turkey, the EU and the Middle East* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008).

⁴⁰⁴ For a critique of the standby agreement with disastrous conclusions during the Ecevit government See *Bağımsız Sosyal Bilimciler Raporu (The report of the Independent Social Scientists)*, “IMF Gözetiminde On Uzun Yıl, 1998-2008: Farklı Hükümetler, Tek Siyaset (Long decade under IMF supervision, 1998-2008: Different governments, one policy),” Ankara, June 2006. Available at: http://www.bagimsizsosyalbilimciler.org/Yazilar_BSB/BSB2006_Final.pdf [14 May 2012].

Turkey's traditional strategic importance and weight has become all the more pronounced as a result of recent developments in the Balkans, Caucasia, Central Asia, Black Sea, Mediterranean region and Middle East. Turkey is now the key player in this axis which might be called the process of "Eurasianization." Our government is resolved to make use of the opportunities and responsibilities of this position of our country to the benefit of our nation.⁴⁰⁵

In the late 1990s three main foreign policy trends emerged. The Europhiles supporting Turkey's Europeanization process and closer ties with the West, the Islamists advocating closer ties with the Muslim world, and the nationalists in search of a new direction in foreign policy to reassure Turkey's independence vis-à-vis the West.⁴⁰⁶ The Islamists reversed course with a threat of exclusion from the political arena and embraced Europeanization as a safety valve. The third group,⁴⁰⁷ however, symbolized frustration with "the never-ending story"⁴⁰⁸ of Europeanization, which advocated "liberalization" on "national security issues." As such, the group detested the EU's "infringements on

⁴⁰⁵ Kramer, p. 222.

⁴⁰⁶ Zeyno Baran, *Torn Country: Turkey between Secularism and Kemalism* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 2010), pp. 113-115.

⁴⁰⁷ MGK Secretary-General General Tuncer Kılınç epitomized this group, as he defended empowered ties with Russia, China, Iran and Syria against the EU's "negative approach to Turkey's national security issues." See "Orgeneral Kılınç: Avrupa Bize Uymaz," *Radikal*, 8 Temmuz 2003.

⁴⁰⁸ Meltem Müftüler-Bac, "The Never-Ending Story: Turkey and the European Union," *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no.4 (October 1998), pp. 240-258. Written right after the Luxembourg Summit, the article and the title delineated Turkey's EU membership expectations as "a distant possibility."

Turkish sovereignty,” which amounted to “compromising of national independence.”⁴⁰⁹ In its extremist form, its proponents carried nationalist, statist, anti-globalization, and anti-EU/U.S. tones that aimed at bringing together the statist groups from all wings of the political spectrum.⁴¹⁰

Minister of Foreign Affairs Cem represented a moderate and mainstream voice in harmonizing all three groups’ aspirations. As a prolific writer Cem had a sophisticated grasp of history and culture. In his early writings, he dwelled on the causes of underdevelopment in Turkey; praised the Ottoman socio-economic model based on “justice and equality,” detested later efforts for Westernization amounting to servitude, and criticized the Republican model for not eroding the inherited underdevelopment owing to its ignorance of class conflicts.⁴¹¹ The dialectic method was central to his analyses, whereby he targeted reaching a proper synthesis in the particular case of Turkey. In his first press briefing as the Minister, he accentuated “Turkey’s strategic position based on historical, cultural and geographic features”⁴¹² and instructed the MFA to “develop syntheses for both national, regional and global good.”⁴¹³ As such Cem

⁴⁰⁹ Another key personality among the “Eurasianists” was Erol Manisalı: “For him, the Europeans never will accept Turkey as belonging to their own group but view it as one of the Islamic nations like ‘Egypt, Iran, Pakistan and Jordan,’ and their intention is to subjugate Turkey.” Cited in Hasan Kösebalaban, “Turkey’s EU Membership: A Clash of Security Cultures,” *Middle East Policy* 9, no. 2 (June 2002), p. 136. Manisalı wrote extensively in opposition to the EU process, identifying it as a divisive force against Turkey’s territorial, if not ideational integrity. See for example, Erol Manisalı, *AB Süreci mi? Sevr Süreci mi?* (The EU process, or the Sevres process?) (İstanbul: Derin, 2006).

⁴¹⁰ For instance, *Kızıl Elma Koalisyonu* brought different ideological currents together, sanctifying nationalism and anti-imperialism. See Onur Atalay, *Kızıl Elma Koalisyonu: Ulusalcılar, Milliyetçiler, Kemalistler* (Kızıl Elma coalition: Leftist-nationalists, Kemalists, nationalists) (İstanbul, Paradigma, 2006).

⁴¹¹ İsmail Cem, *Türkiye’de Geri Kalmışlığın Tarihi* (History of underdevelopment in Turkey), 17th ed., (İstanbul: Can Yayınları, 2007).

⁴¹² İsmail Cem, *Avrupa’nın ‘Birliği’ ve Türkiye* (Europe’s ‘union’ and Turkey) (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2005), p. 331.

⁴¹³ Cem, *Avrupa’nın ‘Birliği,’* pp. 331-332.

advocated a proactive, rather than a reactive approach against the volatile dynamics of international relations.

In theory, Cem contested certain elements of the traditional foreign policy paradigm, most notably monoculturalism. For him “Turkish foreign policy, principally because of the Cold War as well as other external factors, underutilized Ottoman historical and cultural heritages. However, the end of the Cold War, globalization and technological advances open new venues for Turkey to avail these inherited soft power instruments.”⁴¹⁴ He opposed the Manichean approach of the bipolar order, and in its stead proposed a realist and flexible assessment of issues.⁴¹⁵

He was not against Western orientation, but advocated multidimensionalism. Thus, Cem rebuffed making a choice between Turkey’s European or Asian identities; as he evaluated having them both as a privilege, and essentially the power of Turkey.⁴¹⁶ In accord, he saw the EU membership as “a goal, not an obsession.”⁴¹⁷ Moreover, he envisioned an empowered Turkey in the East as a “model country,” upon internalizing European values such “democracy, pluralism, secularism, human rights, and gender equality.”⁴¹⁸ In this manner, he reversed Özal’s thinking, which underlined Eastern ties for empowerment in the West. Building on that Cem advocated “Eurasianism,” from

⁴¹⁴ İsmail Cem, *Turkey in the New Century* (Mersin: Rustem Bookshop, 2001), p. 3 and p. 5. Cited in Ozan Örmeci, *Bir Türk Sosyal Demokratı: İsmail Cem* (A Turkish social democrat: İsmail Cem) (Uşak: AKY Basım Yayın, 2011), p. 218.

⁴¹⁵ Can Dündar, *Ben Böyle Veda Etmeliyim: İsmail Cem Kitabı* (I shall say good-bye like this: A İsmail Cem book) (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2008), p. 218.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204.

⁴¹⁷ Cem, *Avrupa'nın 'Birliği' ve Türkiye*, pp. 9-20.

⁴¹⁸ Dündar, *Ben Böyle Veda Etmeliyim*, p. 203.

“historical geography”⁴¹⁹ point of view. He espoused a historical and cultural approach to construct affinities with a larger geography from North Africa to Sudan, the Middle East, Central Asia and the Balkans.⁴²⁰ This was essentially Özal’s vision absent neo-Ottomanist rhetoric.

Cem had a dynamic understanding of international relations, one continuously in search of new balances. Thus, he was against holding a status quoist line. Rather, he called on the Turkish diplomacy to daringly and actively seek peace.⁴²¹ On that note, he criticized the MFA’s general propensity for “problem-free” approach; and instead, advocated laborious defense of national interests.⁴²²

Cem discerned five elements that could support his foreign policy objective to utilize historical and cultural affinities: “1) A redefined identity: Turkey as meeting point between East and West; 2) Cultural identity: the privilege of being both an Asian and a European nation; 3) A rapidly developing economy; 4) Peace and stability: being a factor of peace and stability in a region of great challenges and opportunities; 5) Turkish model: the best example that reconciled Islamic traditions with democratic institutions, human rights, secular law and gender equality.”⁴²³

In practice, Cem is regarded as a successful Minister; above all politically, having

⁴¹⁹ Dündar, *Ben Böyle Veda Etmeliyim*, p. 206. Cem’s “tarihi coğrafya (historical geography)” remains a vague catchword, implicitly pointing to shared heritages in Turkey’s historical geography. It should not be confused with Braudel’s “geohistory,” presented as “human geography in historical rather than descriptive order.” See Melvin M. Knight, “The Geohistory of Fernand Braudel,” *The Journal of Economic History* 10, no. 2 (Nov., 1950), p. 212.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁴²¹ Örmeci, p. 218.

⁴²² Dündar, *Ben Böyle Veda Etmeliyim*, p. 235.

⁴²³ İsmail Cem, *Türkiye, Avrupa, Avrasya* (Turkey, Europe, and Eurasia) (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2004), p. 64.

served longer than any since Çağlayangil.⁴²⁴ He left his imprint especially on the thawing of relations with Greece in partnership with Yorgo Papandreou. He played a certain role in the EU process, though it was under Deputy Prime Minister Yılmaz's portfolio. After the auspicious developments in 1999, he spearheaded efforts for rapprochement with the neighbors. He espoused a softer tone against Syria, Iran and Iraq, and prioritized the construction of Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. Following 9/11, he underlined Turkey's possible role in averting a clash of civilizations. Employing the bridge metaphor, this time between the Western and Islamic worlds; Turkey, "for the first time [officially] emphasized both its Islamic and European identities" with him at the forefront.⁴²⁵ Building on this, Cem initiated the OIC-EU Joint Forum in İstanbul.⁴²⁶

Nevertheless, Cem's vision proved insufficient to lead a transformation in the Turkish foreign policy. This was largely due to domestic political fragmentation even within his party, his ideational background, and, more consequentially, the overarching role of the military. Cem's political position within his party was questionable from the very beginning. He was not Ecevit's first choice as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, though was appointed upon President Demirel's recommendation.⁴²⁷ Moreover, Cem had to share the foreign policy portfolio on the Greece/Cyprus dossier with Şükrü Sina Gürel,

⁴²⁴ İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs for three terms: 1965-1971, 1975-1977, and 1977-1978. Cem was the longest serving Minister after him (30 June 1997-11 July 2002).

⁴²⁵ Hasan Kösebalaban, *Turkish Foreign Policy: Islam, Nationalism, and Globalization* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 143.

⁴²⁶ For a brief summary of the proceedings of the Forum held on 12-13 February 2002, See MFA's website, "Brief summary of the Proceedings of the OIC-EU Joint Forum." Available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/brief-summary-of-the-proceedings-of-the-oic-eu-joint-forum.en.mfa> [14 May 2012].

⁴²⁷ According to Ecevit's draft list, he was to be appointed as the Minister of Culture. Dündar, *Ben Böyle Veda Etmeliyim*, p. 198.

and on the EU affairs with Mesut Yılmaz. As Robins put, “while Cem began to emerge as an effective spokesman on foreign affairs, especially towards the West, he was ineffective as a policy initiator.”⁴²⁸ On the other hand, Cem’s ideational background did not necessarily contradict the traditional bureaucratic paradigm: First, he reproduced the bureaucratic discourse by assigning it a vanguard role as the embodiment of Turkish modernization. Congruently, he appreciated the “*mission civilisatrice*” of the MFA, as one of the two pillars of bureaucracy besides the military.⁴²⁹ Second, not to divert from Ecevit’s foreign policy line, Cem did not help but adopt a hardline approach occasionally to defend the cause of status quo, especially on the Cyprus issue.⁴³⁰ Thirdly, he did not shy away from confronting neighbors, with culturally-biased reprimands,⁴³¹ above all neutralizing his self-declared objective for toning down.

Beyond these, however, it was the military’s role that again hindered possible doing away with the traditional paradigm.⁴³² This had to do with the overarching role of

⁴²⁸ Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 67.

⁴²⁹ Dündar, *Ben Böyle Veda Etmeliyim*, pp. 232-233.

⁴³⁰ Cem threatened taking further action, “in the event of a Greek Cypriot accession prior to an agreement on the Cyprus question.” Prime Minister Ecevit followed suit by threatening Brussels with union between Turkey and TRNC. Semin Suvarierol, “The Cyprus Obstacle on Turkey’s Road to Membership in the European Union,” in *Turkey and the European Union: Domestic Politics, Economic Integration, and International Dynamics*, eds. Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin (London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003), p. 62.

⁴³¹ Cem in a joint press conference with Iranian Foreign Minister Kharrazi accused Greece of “recruiting Muslim soldiers to take part in the new Crusades [against Turkey].” He was lambasting the trilateral meeting of his counterparts from Iran, Greece, and Armenia, who met in Tehran one week earlier, implicitly against Turkey. See “Cem in Iran, Accuses Athens of Resuming Crusades,” *Turkish Daily News (TDN)*, 14 September 1998.

⁴³² “It may well be that the military establishment does not believe it has moved away from the modernizing rationale of the republic even though its penchant for narrowing the political sphere has produced an ever-growing void between Europe and Turkey. That drift may not even be a matter of conscious consideration, but rather the perpetuation of the existing paradigm.” Cizre, “Demythologizing,” p. 225.

the military in public policy and its conservative preference for Republican traditionalism. Cizre identified two factors that empowered its role in late 1990s: First was “the threshold shift in the political autonomy of the Turkish military, particularly since its last explicit intervention in to politics on February 28, 1997.”⁴³³ It vindicated the enlargement of the military’s prerogatives through extension of the national security concept to include not only hard military issues, but also internal threats such as social, economic and ethnic-communal matters.⁴³⁴ Second was a lack of debate on the autonomous role of the military in Turkish politics. Therefore, both factors nurtured the military’s peculiar role in protecting the territorial and ideational integrity of the country.

To that end, the military establishment advocated a two-phased approach in foreign policy. This was dictated on civilian governments through a predominant role in the MGK: Prior to 1999, the top brass espoused a pro-EU approach to ward off against perceived de-Westernization of foreign policy identity, a hardline approach to corner PKK and neutralize support from the neighboring countries, and “diplomacy of the military”⁴³⁵ to balance Turkey’s regional encirclement. Moreover, the military also engaged in public diplomacy, asking for support in Western capitals against looming “Islamization and division of Turkey.”

However, this did not last for long. Shortly, the military bureaucracy felt threatened by the pace of liberal reforms in compliance with the EU harmonization

⁴³³ Ibid., p. 214.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., p. 217.

⁴³⁵ Robins underlined that Chief of General Staff General İsmail Hakkı Karadayı and his deputy General Çevik Bir engaged in active diplomacy to develop ties with Egypt, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Greece, and most conspicuously with Israel. Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, p. 68.

process. In that, the military rebuffed envisioned liberalization on the Kurdish issue,⁴³⁶ and detested undermining of national interests especially in Cyprus. However, it was still possible to argue that despite inherent status quoism and monoculturalism, the military in principle supported the EU process as a proponent of Western orientation.⁴³⁷ Against this backdrop, the TSK insisted on its entrenched autonomy on “national security issues.” The predominant security outlook in global politics in the aftermath of 9/11 conjuncturally reinforced this mindset.⁴³⁸

In August 2001, the Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz criticized the “national security syndrome” disorienting the EU harmonization process.⁴³⁹ It received a public backlash from the military. The polemic in itself was testimonial to first, the prevalence of the military’s overarching role in Turkish politics. Second, it highlighted the schism between the agendas of the civilian leadership and military bureaucracy. As Cizre underlined, “the importance of the speech quite clearly lay in its being the first of its kind. In that sense, the clamor that followed represents the high start-up costs of a fundamental attitudinal shift by the political class on a sacrosanct topic.”⁴⁴⁰

Combined by the economic collapse following the two financial crises and

⁴³⁶ “Faced with the demand in the Accession Partnership Document to consider allowing broadcasting and education in Kurdish, Brigadaire [sic] General Halil Simsek, Commander of the Armed Forces Academy, expressed the top brass's view when he said that this document aims at ‘breaking up our country in the name of 'cultural rights,' 'broadcasting in mother tongue,' and 'educational rights.'” Cizre, “Demythologizing,” p. 224

⁴³⁷ For the military’s alignment with the EU, see Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu, “The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey,” *International Affairs* 54, no. 1 (Fall 2000), pp. 199-216; Ersel Aydınli, Nihat Ali Özcan, and Doğan Akyaz, “The Turkish Military's March toward Europe,” *Foreign Affairs* 85, No. 1 (Jan. - Feb., 2006), pp. 77-90.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., p. 224.

⁴³⁹ See footnote 4, Chapter 1.

⁴⁴⁰ Cizre, “Demythologizing,” p. 214

political instability exacerbated by ailing Ecevit's refusal to step down; the call for change intensified before the coming elections in November 2002. The new term also proved to be the beginning of the end in the traditional paradigm's final test, paradoxically against the challenge of Europeanization.

CHAPTER 5

LITERATURE REVIEW

The third and fourth chapters delineated the Turkish foreign policy's first developing into a policy paradigm followed by an inability to transcend it. In the literature, when and how change occurred, more precisely whether a "new foreign policy [paradigm]" arrived appears to be the question. In this chapter, the dissertation will broadly review the literature that focused on elements of change in the Turkish foreign policy particularly following the late 1990s.

The review identified roughly five categories explaining change. The following categories are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive, i.e. some authors chose to combine one or more to explicate change. Moreover, there is also variation within the categories on timing, critical events and more importantly on principal actors carrying out the change.

Europeanization: Turkey's EU membership objective and the ensuing harmonization process are cited among the main causes of change in the Turkish foreign policy. In that, the December 1999 Helsinki Summit decision that officially declared Turkey's candidacy is highlighted as a milestone. Here two general assumptions are made: First, it was posited that the historical EU decision paved the way for a new cooperative agenda in the Turkish foreign policy. The Helsinki Summit decision coincided with a conducive

domestic and external environment. The capture of the PKK leader, “earthquake diplomacy” with Greece, the organization of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Summit in Istanbul all in 1999, and Turkey’s “presentation as a pivotal state”⁴⁴¹ in the broader neighborhood eventually lowered the threat perceptions in Ankara.⁴⁴² Moreover, the EU harmonization process in itself led to democratic reforms. It created the necessary grounds for domestic change, which was also reflected in foreign policy.⁴⁴³

Second, it was assumed that the Turkish foreign policy building on that background appeared “Europeanized” and moved from a “Hobbesian” to a “Kantian” framework after Helsinki.⁴⁴⁴ There was clear contrast with the foreign policy behavior in the 1990s both in terms of methods, approach and instruments employed. In short, Turkey not only aligned more with the European, i.e. Franco-German position, prioritizing diplomacy over military tools, pronouncing the role of civilian leadership in decision-making and respecting the public opinion and the parliamentary processes. It also adopted the posture of a “benign regional power,”⁴⁴⁵ particularly in relations with the

⁴⁴¹ Kirişçi, “Between Europe and the Middle East,” p. 47.

⁴⁴² Mesut Özcan, *Harmonizing Foreign Policy*.

⁴⁴³ Öniş, “Domestic Politics,” pp. 9-34.

⁴⁴⁴ Kirişçi, “Between Europe and the Middle East,” pp. 40-41.

⁴⁴⁵ Öniş argued that Turkey shifted from being a coercive to benign regional power. He discerned three elements of this shift. “First, a benign regional power interacts with its surrounding region by developing a network of economic and political relations involving both state and non-state actors. Second, it tries to set itself as a model of economic development and democracy promotion. Furthermore, it adopts a balanced approach to bilateral conflicts in the region and seeks to contribute to the resolution of such conflicts through diplomatic pressures on both sides involved.” Öniş, “Turkey and the Middle East,” p. 2. Also See Mustafa Aydın and Sinem A. Açıkmeşe, “Europeanization through EU Conditionality: Understanding the New Era in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans* 9, no. 3, (December 2007), pp. 263-274.

neighborhood.⁴⁴⁶

As Müftüler-Baç and Gürsoy aptly put, “Europeanization” is difficult to measure in particular among the candidate countries.⁴⁴⁷ This is partly because there does not exist any common set of rules that regulate foreign policy among the EU member countries, which in any case does not apply to the candidate countries. Moreover, foreign policy is still largely a national prerogative that EU member states are reluctant to concede. Overall, what seems to be suggested by Europeanization is “a straightforward process [that] could either be interpreted as an adaptation to EU norms or as shared foreign policy behavior, i.e., actual change in foreign policy behavior.”⁴⁴⁸ Thus, a normative or emulative effect is envisioned for the candidate countries. One element of practical change discerned here was “the institutional changes in the decision-making procedures.”⁴⁴⁹ This mainly referred democratization and predominant civilian role. Second element was emphasis on economic and diplomatic instruments for both competition and cooperation in international relations. This was generally read as the prevalence of “soft power”⁴⁵⁰ as opposed to the traditional “hard power” approach.

“Soft power” of Turkey emerged not merely as a theoretical concept, but also a

⁴⁴⁶ Çiğdem Üstün, “Europeanization of Foreign Policy: The Case of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards the Black Sea Region,” *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 10, no. 2 (June 2010), pp. 225–242.

⁴⁴⁷ 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, no. 3, (September 2010), p. 408.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 409.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁰ Soft power is a term developed by Joseph S. Nye to refer to the ability to attract and co-opt rather than coerce or use force as a means of persuasion. Nye coined the term in an earlier book, Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990). It later developed into a book with the same title. Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

political catchword to accentuate Turkey's European turn. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Gül was among the most active proponent's of Turkey's soft power as a foreign policy principle.⁴⁵¹ In fact, soft power was employed to demonstrate the Turkish foreign policy's "Europeanized" foreign policy, in particular towards Turkey's neighborhood. There was an overall acceptance that the rise of Turkey's soft power mainly stemmed from the domestic EU reform process and its appeal for the neighborhood, as it represented the conciliation of the EU standards with political Islam.⁴⁵² Aras also detected a discursive turn whereby "Turkey's transformation has already put an end to the Cold War-style security-state apparatus that ruled the country for half a century and has changed the framework of the country's domestic and foreign policy. Of prime importance is the fact that Turkey's transformation changed the regional rhetoric of its policymakers."⁴⁵³ Oğuzlu, on the other hand, noted the domestic and international fragility of Turkey's soft power agenda. Thus, he pointed to the need to reach enduring political solutions to national security problems, plus the continuation of the favorable regional dynamics and the EU process in order not to revert back to hard power politics.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵¹ "Turkish foreign policy is rapidly developing its 'soft power' based not coercion but on persuasion, encouragement, leadership and acting as an exemplar. As a matter of fact, our objective is to develop our soft power further." Abdullah Gül, *Horizons of Turkish Foreign Policy in the New Century* (Ankara: T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2007), p. 84.

⁴⁵² Meliha Benli Altunışık. "The Possibilities and Limits of Turkey's Soft Power in the Middle East," *Insight Turkey* 10, no. 2 (2008), pp. 44-45.

⁴⁵³ Bülent Aras, "Turkey between Syria and Israel: Turkey's Rising Soft Power," *SETA Policy Brief*, 15 (May 2008), p. 4.

⁴⁵⁴ Tarık Oğuzlu, "Soft Power in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 61, no. 1 (March 2007), p. 95.

Structural factors: A second group of authors accentuated the role of structural factors in determining change in the Turkish foreign policy. They posited that in the wake of the Cold War, Turkey had to redefine its interests as the dynamics of international politics changed. Once the bloc system dissolved, the Turkish foreign policy had to adopt with new tools such as involvement in regional conflicts. As such they underlined the continuity between the 1990s and 2000s that were both characterized mainly by activism⁴⁵⁵ and predicated on regionalism.⁴⁵⁶ Aydın saw this yet another corollary of the interplay of two variables: structural variables like geographical position, historical experiences, cultural background; and conjunctural variables like changes in the international system, domestic political change, and the personalities of specific decision makers.⁴⁵⁷ Kardaş, made a structural-realist assessment of Turkey's redefinition of security and foreign policy interests, which engendered a "cooperative security" approach.⁴⁵⁸ Oğuzlu, even read the Europeanization process as a matter of "*realpolitik* security considerations," which appeared more effective in explaining change in the Turkish foreign policy than the harmonization process *per se*.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁵ Alan O. Makovsky, pp. 92–113.

⁴⁵⁶ Alper Kaliber, "Reorganization of Geopolitics: Understanding the New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy," Paper submitted to Sakıp Sabancı International Research Award 2011.

⁴⁵⁷ Mustafa Aydın, *Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis* (Ankara: SAM, 2004).

⁴⁵⁸ Şaban Kardaş, "Turkey: Redrawing The Middle East Map or Building Sandcastles?," *Middle East Policy* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2010), pp. 115-136.

⁴⁵⁹ Oğuzlu differentiated between *true Europeanization* and *apparent Europeanization* in foreign policy, the first as a cause of the harmonization process and the second as a by-product. In Turkey's case, according to him, the latter was more applicable in explaining change. Tarık Oğuzlu, "Turkey and Europeanization of Foreign Policy," *Political Science Quarterly* 125, no. 4 (2010-11), pp. 657-683.

Ideational factors: Another group argued that besides the material changes affecting the Turkish foreign policy, ideational factors were also effective in causing foreign policy shifts. In that they mainly dwelled on the changes in state identity. They posited that especially after the Cold War, Turkey faced a number of challenges that invalidated her “self-ascribed European identity.”⁴⁶⁰ This was partly due to an inability to perpetuate the age-old claim to defend Turkey through its Western identity.⁴⁶¹

As such Turkey felt the need to reconsider its Western-secular identity,⁴⁶² which actually suffered an identity crisis due to the lack of “a clearly defined role after the Cold War and its deteriorating relations with Europe coupled with the increasing strength of Islamic and nationalist sentiments in the country.”⁴⁶³ The end-result was an attempt for making the case for Turkey’s multiculturalism.⁴⁶⁴ What emerged was a product of the ideational competition between the secular vs. Islamist and nationalist vs. liberal cleavages in Turkish politics.⁴⁶⁵ Thus, the Turkish foreign policy came to carry different tones of these identities that eventually enabled the JDP’s secular, Islamist, nationalist, and liberal foreign policy.

⁴⁶⁰ Hakan M. Yavuz, “Turkish-Israeli Relations through the Lens of the Turkish Identity Debate,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 27, no. 1 (Autumn 1997), p. 23.

⁴⁶¹ Bilgin, “Securing Turkey,” pp. 105-125.

⁴⁶² Tarık Oğuzlu and Mustafa Kibaroglu, “Is the Westernization Process Losing Pace in Turkey: Who’s to Blame?” *Turkish Studies* 10, no. 4, (December 2009), pp. 577–593; Tarık Oğuzlu, “Middle Easternization of Turkey’s Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Dissociate from the West?,” *Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1 (March 2008), pp. 3-20.

⁴⁶³ Bozdağlıoğlu, p. 10.

⁴⁶⁴ Lerla K. Yanık, “Constructing Turkish ‘Exceptionalism’: Discourses of Liminality and Hybridity in Post-Cold War Turkish Foreign Policy,” *Political Geography* 30, (2011), pp. 80-89.

⁴⁶⁵ Kösebalaban, *Turkish Foreign Policy*.

Domestic factors: Domestic political developments were also seen as one of the main drivers of change in the Turkish foreign policy. There seemed a general concurrence on the critical turn after November 2002 elections, as it “transformed the country’s political landscape.”⁴⁶⁶ Not only the JDP garnered ample electoral support to act free from coalitional politics, but also the military’s decision to support the EU process⁴⁶⁷ proved conducive to realize its reformist and pro-European agenda. In fact, the military’s role in foreign and security policy has arguably diminished in the post-Cold War era.⁴⁶⁸ Robins additionally pointed to a cooperative cohabitation between the “Islamist” JDP and the “Kemalist” state apparatus after 2002 elections.⁴⁶⁹ This, in turn, enabled the JDP to undertake a leading role in steering foreign policy with a perspective that internalized “an understanding of globalization and post-Cold War international conjuncture.”⁴⁷⁰

The authors emphasizing the importance of domestic politics also made their case for a resultant “transformation of foreign policy with a multi-dimensional and active involvement in regional policy and international politics.”⁴⁷¹ The argument that followed was to portray “Turkey contribut[ing] to peace and stability in the neighboring regions with the self-confidence gained through democratization and de-securitization at

⁴⁶⁶ Gareth Jenkins, “Muslim Democrats in Turkey?,” *Survival* 45, no.1 (Spring 2003), p. 45.

⁴⁶⁷ Aydın, Özcan and Akyüz, pp. 77-90.

⁴⁶⁸ Karaosmanoğlu, pp. 199-216.

⁴⁶⁹ Robins, “Turkish Foreign Policy Since 2002,” p. 289.

⁴⁷⁰ Hasret Dikici Bilgin, “Foreign Policy Orientation of Turkey’s Pro-Islamist Parties: A Comparative Study of the AKP and Refah,” *Turkish Studies* 9, no. 3 (2008), p. 412.

⁴⁷¹ Bülent Aras and Şule Toktaş, “Editorial: Turkey’s New Dynamics in Domestic and Foreign Policy,” *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 12, no 1, (March 2010), p. 2.

home.”⁴⁷²

The question that emerged at this point was to specify the actors who were instrumental in realizing this foreign policy change. New actors were detected that played considerable roles in foreign policy-making, most notably the Parliament⁴⁷³ and civil society.⁴⁷⁴ Yet still the government’s role in steering change predominated the discussion. In that the JDP elite’s role conceptions⁴⁷⁵ were analyzed to explain the basis of change. Ahmet Davutoğlu’s foreign policy views as the prime minister’s chief foreign policy advisor were registered as the backbone of the JDP’s foreign policy.⁴⁷⁶

Domestic factors: A final group focused on the role of economic factors on bringing about foreign policy change. Yavuz underlined the importance of the “new [Anatolian] bourgeoisie” in the JDP’s critical turn to embrace globalization and neoliberal policies.⁴⁷⁷ Yet, he did not extend his analysis into the effects of this turn for foreign policy. Uzgel *et al.* argued that the JDP represented a neoliberal economic orientation, which was also

⁴⁷² Bülent Aras and Şule Toktaş, “Editorial,” p. 2.

⁴⁷³ Barış Kesgin and Juliet Kaarbo, “When and How Parliaments Influence Foreign Policy: The Case of Turkey’s Iraq Decision,” *International Studies Perspectives* 11, no.1 (2010), pp. 19–36.

⁴⁷⁴ Semra Cerit-Mazlum and Erhan Doğan, eds., *Sivil Toplum ve Dış Politika* [Civil society and foreign policy] (İstanbul: Bağlam, 2006).

⁴⁷⁵ Bülent Aras and Aylin Görener, “National Role Conceptions And Foreign Policy Orientation: The Ideational Bases of the Justice and Development Party’s Foreign Policy Activism in the Middle East,” *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 12, no 1, (March 2010), pp. 73-92.

⁴⁷⁶ Alexander Murrinson, “The Strategic Depth Doctrine of Turkish Foreign Policy” *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 6 (November 2006) pp. 945-964; Ahmet Sözen, pp. 103–123; Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, “Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era,” *Turkish Studies* 10, no. 1 (March 2009), pp. 7-24.

⁴⁷⁷ M. Hakan Yavuz, “Introduction: The Role of the New Bourgeoisie in the Transformation of the Turkish Islamic Movement,” in *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*, ed. Hakan Yavuz (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006), pp. 1-19.

reflected in its foreign policy decisions.⁴⁷⁸ This entailed an embrace of globalization and the EU process as well as renunciation of “nationalist policies.” Kirişçi emphasized the prevalence of “trading state,” which not only altered the definition of national interests, but also broadened the actors that participate in foreign policy making.⁴⁷⁹

Some authors preferred to utilize more than one of these factors to explain change. Muftuler-Bac, to exemplify, while studying the role of domestic changes due to the EU reforms on foreign policy change, i.e. Europeanization of the Turkish foreign policy, underlined the need to keep an eye on all other factors:

This paper analyses Turkish foreign policy by focusing on the role of domestic preferences and the impact of the EU accession process on the shaping of these domestic preferences. This does not mean that the shifts in the international distribution of power, or United States (US) policy in the Middle East, or the internal dynamics in Turkey between different political actors are unimportant, but they are beyond the purposes of this paper.⁴⁸⁰

The main motivation of the dissertation to analyze the role of ideas in providing the framework for foreign policy change fits into this broad picture. Despite comprehensive accounts of foreign policy change, none dwelled on the role of ideas in

⁴⁷⁸ İlhan Uzgel and Bülent Duru, eds., *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu* (The JDP book: the balance sheet of a transformation) (Ankara, Phoenix Yayınevi, 2009).

⁴⁷⁹ Kemal Kirişçi, “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 40 (Spring 2009), pp. 29-57.

⁴⁸⁰ Meltem Müftüler-Baç, “Turkish Foreign Policy, its Domestic Determinants and the Role of the European Union,” *South European Society and Politics* 16, no. 2 (2011), p. 281.

making paradigmatic foreign policy change possible. Even recent ideational studies on Turkish foreign policy did not specifically analyze this role.⁴⁸¹ The dissertation theoretically and empirically aims to fill in this gap.

⁴⁸¹ See inter alia, Binnur Özkeçeci-Taner, *The Role of Ideas in Coalition Government Foreign Policymaking: The Case of Turkey between 1991 and 2002* (Dordrecht; Leiden; Boston: Republic of Letters Pub.: Brill, 2009); Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy*.

CHAPTER 6

THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY'S FIRST TERM

After the February 2001 financial meltdown, Turkish politics entered into what Mufti called a “paradigm crisis.”⁴⁸² The coalition government faced tremendous political and financial challenges. Reluctantly, but without a feasible alternative, the government abided by Kemal Derviş’s, the appointed Minister of State for Economic Affairs, takeover of the financial administration.⁴⁸³ The government thus implemented the IMF’s austerity program, virtually surrendering economic policymaking. In domestic and foreign policy, the EU “anchor” appeared as a more immediate route out of the crisis. The long unheeded calls for reform acquired urgency, given intensified pressures from both internal and external actors.⁴⁸⁴ However, it was only in its latter term that the coalition government managed to introduce the comprehensive reform package, which ironically brought about its collapse.⁴⁸⁵ In other foreign policy issues, such as Cyprus,

⁴⁸² Mufti, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture*, p. 149.

⁴⁸³ Derviş’s program was not free from opposition, especially from the coalition partners. Despite initial opposition the government bowed into his demands. See Murat Yetkin, “Değişime Direniş,” *Radikal*, 2 May 2001; “Yasalar Tamam,” *Radikal*, 7 May 2001.

⁴⁸⁴ The US President Bush’s letter to Prime Minister Ecevit epitomized the call for EU reforms. For the letter’s text, see Murat Yetkin, “Kıymetini Bilin,” *Radikal*, 10 May 2001. The EU also made any economic assistance conditional on reforms, see “AB’den İstisnai Borç,” *Radikal*, 11 May 2001.

⁴⁸⁵ Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times,” *Chaillot Paper*, no. 92 (Paris: EU-ISS, September 2006), p. 23.

Iraq, the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and relations with neighboring countries, the coalition government was unable to take tangible steps.

Prior to the November 2001 elections, the political arena was identified by pro-reform groupings calling for liberalizing the whole aspects of the polity versus skeptics opposed to both Europeanization and liberalization.⁴⁸⁶ Remarkably, the former rose mainly from the ranks of the Islamists and liberals, while the latter had statist and nationalist proclivities. In its reflection on foreign policy, three ideas competed for holding sway, namely Westernism, Eurasianism, and Islamism.⁴⁸⁷

The JDP's peculiarity was in its attempt at reconciling Westernization with its Islamic roots and reformulating Eurasianism in the form of strengthened ties with the neighborhood and multiple power axes.⁴⁸⁸ In fact, the founders of the Party broke with the Islamist WP (more precisely with its successor the Felicity Party (FP)) after a failed attempt at taking over the Party leadership. What followed was a process of self-transformation, which would have commensurate effects on the Turkish polity.⁴⁸⁹ In the beginning, even after the November 2002 elections, the JDP was in search of a peculiar

⁴⁸⁶ "Sağda Solda Arayış," *Radikal*, 28 May 2001.

⁴⁸⁷ Mufti identified three strategic options for Turkey in early 2000s, namely European, American, and Eurasian options. He depicted the JDP government as democratic Islamism in power, implicitly compounding these three options. See Mufti, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture*.

⁴⁸⁸ Gül believed that this hybrid formula was a product of his and the JDP's cadres' experiences with political Islam and the European ties of Turkey. He alluded to his ten-year membership in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, whereby he came to associate the future of Turkish democracy with "rule of law, human rights, transparency, accountability, good governance, and freedom of worship." He also underlined that his term in the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) enabled him to understand the specifics of the Arab World. For him, this holistic, as opposed to Islamic particularist, approach was in general what defined the JDP and eventually led to its split from the Erbakan movement as a reformist and pro-European yet pious political wing. Interview with Abdullah Gül, former President, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey (November 2002-August 2014), 27 November 2014, London.

⁴⁸⁹ Nilüfer Göle, "AKP Hem Kendisi Dönüşüyor, Hem de Türkiye'yi Dönüştürüyor," [Interview with Ruşen Çakır], *Vatan*, 30 September 2003.

identity. The JDP as a party founded only three months ago, won 65% of parliamentary seats in November 2002 elections. This gave the party significant political clout.

However, electoral success was admittedly due to popular discontent rather than an effective party program.⁴⁹⁰

The JDP's self-assumed identity of "conservative democracy"⁴⁹¹ stood rather vague, partly as an attempt to appease the Kemalist elites.⁴⁹² In its essence, conservative democracy symbolized a political formulation that would reconcile the popular aspirations for change within the confines of the secular establishment.⁴⁹³ In a way, it came to denote "Islamism without Islamists,"⁴⁹⁴ "post-Islamism,"⁴⁹⁵ or alternatively, secularization and modernization of Islamic demands.⁴⁹⁶ From a political point of view, on the other hand, the JDP claimed to represent both the "progress and development" ideals of the conservative secular parties such as the Democrat Party (DP) and Özal's

⁴⁹⁰ Akdoğan was candid in setting this straight: "The political success of the JDP was thus not based on its ability to articulate and project an identity that resonated with a large portion of the population, but rather on the electorate's dissatisfaction with the general state of politics in Turkey." Yalçın Akdoğan, "The Meaning of Conservative Democratic Political Identity," in *The Emergence of a New Turkey*, p. 52.

⁴⁹¹ Yalçın Akdoğan, *AK Parti ve Muhafazakar Demokrasi* (The JDP and conservative democracy) (Cağaloğlu, İstanbul: Alfa, 2004).

⁴⁹² Akdoğan alluded to the JDP's objective to "reconcile the sensitivities of the state with the values of the people. Dönüştürüyor," Yalçın Akdoğan, "Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi [The Justice and Development Party]" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, İslamcılık* [Political thought in modern Turkey, Islamism], ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, vol. 6 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), p. 631.

⁴⁹³ Şerif Mardin, "AKP İktidarı Kemalizmin Başarısı Sayılmalıdır" [Interview with Ruşen Çakır], *Vatan*, 30 September 2003.

⁴⁹⁴ Menderes Çınar and Burhanettin Duran, "Evolution of Contemporary Political Islam," in *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey: The Making of the Justice and Development Party*, ed. Ümit Cizre (London; New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 33.

⁴⁹⁵ İhsan D. Dağı, "Rethinking Human Rights, Democracy and the West: Post-Islamist Intellectuals in Turkey," *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies* 13, no.2 (2004), pp. 135-151.

⁴⁹⁶ Yavuz identified the JDP as supporting the cause of "modernity with Islam." Yavuz, *Secularism*, p. xi.

True Path Party (TPP) as well as the civilizational and “justice” demands of the National Outlook Movement (NOM).⁴⁹⁷

Nevertheless, this whole attempt at political identity formation did not suffice for the JDP’s quest to secure political legitimacy vis-à-vis the state elites, i.e. the bureaucracy. The JDP’s Islamist roots and past claims to discard the secular regime perpetuated the latter’s deep suspicions. Therefore, the JDP embraced the foreign policy goal of Europeanization as a secure way to first justify its compatibility with the Republican objective of Westernization; and second, albeit implicitly, to circumvent the military’s watchful role against liberalization of the regime that would also broaden the necessary “opportunity spaces”⁴⁹⁸ to realize its political agenda for reform.⁴⁹⁹ In that sense, foreign policy became “an agent of [domestic] transformation.”⁵⁰⁰

Evaluating the JDP’s balance sheet in its earlier term, it appeared not fully equipped and ready to assume the government. A coalition of inherently conflicting groups, the party oscillated between the exigencies of government and the call for change it claimed to represent. As Özel rightly put, the result was that:

The AKP’s rise may have been too rapid for its own good. It did not have enough time to consolidate its organization or formulate a detailed program. To this day, the AKP remains a coalition of forces rather than a coherent political apparatus.

⁴⁹⁷ Burhanettin Duran, “JDP and Foreign Policy as an Agent of Transformation,” in *The Emergence of a New Turkey*, p. 285.

⁴⁹⁸ Yavuz, *Secularism*.

⁴⁹⁹ In fact, the JDP’s primary motive for reform is an issue still being debated after a decade in government. See Etyen Mahçupyan, “Çamurlu Yollarda,” *Zaman*, 11 November 2012.

⁵⁰⁰ Duran, “JDP and Foreign Policy as an Agent of Transformation,” pp. 281-305.

Its first few months in power also revealed its deficits of expertise and experience.⁵⁰¹

The JDP also lacked a foreign policy definition. As Hale and Özbudun underlined “Before November 2002, the AKP leaders had devoted relatively little attention to defining their foreign policy, but for their determination to press ahead with their bid for EU membership [...] Behind the scenes, however, Professor Ahmet Davutoğlu, who was to become an important foreign policy advisor to both Abdullah Gül and Tayyip Erdoğan, was producing the nearest the AKP had to a foreign policy doctrine.”⁵⁰² In effect, the JDP’s foreign policy followed a course of incremental change, thus initially opting for “cohabitation”⁵⁰³ with the traditional paradigm.

Against such a background, the JDP leadership espoused a dual approach in foreign policy. As highlighted by the JDP leader Erdoğan’s post-election speech, “the acceleration of EU accession and integration with the globe”⁵⁰⁴ stood as the immediate foreign policy objectives of the government. The second pillar of the JDP foreign policy, namely outreach to the broader neighborhood was to be conducted, in view of the bitter experience of the WP, more cautiously and less vocally. This approach essentially reflected the JDP’s preference for consolidating its power base through compounding the elements of status quo (Western orientation) with elements of change (new discourse,

⁵⁰¹ Soli Özel, “After the Tsunami,” *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 2 (April 2003), p. 91.

⁵⁰² William Hale and Ergun Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey: The Case of the AKP* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 120.

⁵⁰³ Philip Robins, “Turkish Foreign Policy Since 2002: Between a ‘Post-Islamist’ Government and a Kemalist State,” *International Affairs* 83, no.1 (2007), pp. 289–304.

⁵⁰⁴ “Erdoğan İlk Mesajında Sağduyu Çağrısı Yaptı,” *Zaman*, 4 November 2002.

proactive foreign policy and multiculturalism).⁵⁰⁵ Yet, the EU harmonization process functioned as a transformative tool that was to open up the required “opportunity spaces” for the JDP to put its preferred foreign policy ideas into play-

This two-headed trait of the JDP’s foreign policy engendered dichotomous assessments. As described in the former chapter, one group stressing the elements of change identified the “transformation” in the Turkish foreign policy from conflictual to cooperative attitude that left behind the security oriented and cautious inclinations of the traditional bureaucratic paradigm. Others were less willing to concede large-scale change. As such, they underscored the elements of continuity in view of the similarities with the daring approaches of predecessor governments. Maybe the right question to ask was “Is the confusing and fragmented foreign policy of the AKP a reflection of its syncretic identity?”⁵⁰⁶ At this point, it will be apposite to elaborate the complex nature of the JDP’s foreign policy agenda.

The Basis of the JDP’s Foreign Policy

In a crisis-ridden country, “change” became the catchword for capturing the society’s attention in almost all sectors. As a newborn political party the JDP also claimed a flag-bearer role in leading change. The November 2002 election results were indicative of the reception of this message electorally. “The JDP’s rise to power [was

⁵⁰⁵ Bulaç interpreted the JDP’s grasp of political power as a compromise between status quo and change. See Ali Bulaç, *Göçün ve Kentin İktidarı (Millî Görüş’ten Muhafazakar Demokrasi’ye AK Parti)* (The government of migration and the city (the JDP from the NOM to conservative democracy)) (İstanbul: Çıra Yayınları, 2010), p. 22.

⁵⁰⁶ Yavuz, *Secularism*, Preface, p. xiii.

also] a product of the structural disintegration of dominant power relations and paradigms in Turkey.”⁵⁰⁷ However, the leadership of the Party opted for a pragmatic course that adopted Westernization as the key element of change. In contrast to the NOM’s Islamist, anti-Westernist and Third Worldist discourse, the JDP came to espouse EU integration and globalization as key elements of its foreign policy agenda.⁵⁰⁸ This, in Belge’s words, “propelled Turkey into an open-ended path of European style normalization.”⁵⁰⁹ Previous confrontation with the military was determinant in such a realignment, which also imbued the essentialist group in the WP.⁵¹⁰ Therefore, the move stemmed from the JDP’s aim at “reducing the power of traditional centers of power, spearheaded by the military.”⁵¹¹ This was coupled by “a realistic acknowledgement of the historical roadmap of Turkey,”⁵¹² i.e. “time-tested Westernization process.”⁵¹³ The Islamic businessmen’s call for EU reforms, the transnational role of the “Young Muslims,” the failure of the WP’s attempt to form an Islamic bloc of countries and the JDP’s political objective of

⁵⁰⁷ Ümit Cizre, “Introduction- The Justice and Development Party: Making Choices, Revisions and Reversals Interactively,” in *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey*, p. 3.

⁵⁰⁸ For a contrast of the NOM (WP) and JDP foreign policy discourse, party programs and practice, see Hasret Dikici Bilgin, “Foreign Policy Orientation,” pp. 407-421.

⁵⁰⁹ Murat Belge, “Between Turkey and Europe: Why Friendship is Welcome,” *Open Democracy* (15 December 2004). Available at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-turkey/article_2268.jsp [27 June 2012].

⁵¹⁰ The pro-EU turn was not a differentiating element between the JDP’s followers (yenilikçiler-reformists) and the old guard in the WP. Both groups came to regard the EU as a defensive shield against the encroachments of the military in civilian politics. See Yavuz, *Secularism*, p. 76.

⁵¹¹ Cizre, “Introduction,” p. 1.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*

broadening electoral and public support were all effective in this Europeanist turn.⁵¹⁴ Yet one should not disregard the absence of a clear foreign policy formulation by the JDP. The party was in dire need of a foreign policy program that would securely steer the course towards change and ensure the party's entrenchment in the system. In view of the absence of a viable alternative, the "EU anchor"⁵¹⁵ duly filled this gap.

Ideationally, the JDP opted for a pragmatic course without limiting itself to a clearly defined "identity or ideology."⁵¹⁶ As such, the JDP's inclinations were determined by practice rather than by theory. In that, the party leadership's, in particular Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's role proved prominent.⁵¹⁷ Yavuz identified "[Erdoğan] not a leader who espouses ideas but ... relies rather on feelings and mass emotion in order to project and magnify his power."⁵¹⁸ Görener and Ucal found out that Erdoğan "has an agenda in mind, exerts leverage on all stages of policy, closed to contradictory information with a belief in preconceived principal beliefs, sees the world in black and white terms, surrounded by like-minded advisors nurturing his worldview, and disregards the nuances

⁵¹⁴ Sencer Ayata, "AK Party Foreign Policy Orientation," in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, pp. 243-275.

⁵¹⁵ This was a term frequently employed by various authors to describe the JDP's earlier term alignment with the EU reforms. It was used synonymously with "foreign policy on autopilot" to refer to the government's subservient role in setting the foreign policy and reform agenda. Also See Mehmet Uğur, *The European Union and Turkey: An Anchor/Credibility Dilemma* (Aldershot, Hants, England; Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1999).

⁵¹⁶ Yavuz refers to Hüseyin Besli, a close associate of Erdoğan and an MP, who argued that the JDP "has no identity or ideology. This is necessary in order to allow it to become a leader-centered party and, as such, the leader can shape it as he likes. If the party has an established identity and ideology, it cannot survive due to the presence of too many diverse groups within the party. Moreover, party ideology could limit its actions." Yavuz, *Secularism*, p. 85.

⁵¹⁷ For Erdoğan's social and political background See Metin Heper and Şule Toktaş, "Islam, Modernity, and Democracy in Contemporary Turkey: The Case of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan," *The Muslim World* 93, no.2 (April 2003), pp. 157-185.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

of diplomacy.”⁵¹⁹ Another crucial element was Erdoğan’s inexperience in foreign policy. Matured in local politics, and having served as the Mayor of İstanbul between 1994-1998, he believed in practical solutions for public policy issues. Thereby, he prioritized problem solving through astute and better with benevolent interlocutors, who were supposed to positively respond to his cooperative and mutually beneficial agenda. Thus, “win-win” became a catchword in the JDP government’s foreign policy argumentation.⁵²⁰

Erdoğan literally despised the bureaucratic model of government. Therefore, he preferred working with a core group of advisors. This, in turn, occasionally engendered reaction from the bureaucracy and reminded “the Özal-type bypassing of the MFA through advisors.”⁵²¹ Moreover, Erdoğan aspired to assign political responsibility to the bureaucracy, whom he regarded as “the perpetuators of the status quo.”⁵²² He occasionally targeted the diplomats, calling them sarcastically “*mon chers*”⁵²³ and accusing them of being soft on their international interlocutors.⁵²⁴

Erdoğan’s practical moves, especially during his earlier term, were shaped by his

⁵¹⁹ Aylin Ş . Görener and Meltem Ş . Ucal, “The Personality and Leadership Style of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy,” *Turkish Studies* 12, no. 3 (September 2011), pp. 357–381.

⁵²⁰ Kirişçi, “Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times,” p. 51.

⁵²¹ Can Dündar, “Dışişleri’nde Zapsu Tepkisi,” *Milliyet*, 24 July 2006; Also See Hakkı Devrim, “Danışmanı Kime Danışsınız,” *Radikal*, 25 July 2006.

⁵²² Erdoğan made his case against the bureaucracy with a call for political responsibility: “Our people eliminated the politicians having responsibility on 3 November. What about the bureaucrats who have had responsibility? They would both take part in wrong [decisions], they would not be held accountable, and still continue to prevail. They would still continue to work to perpetuate the status quo, and yet again diffuse corruption and pessimism. If we will not say ‘Stop’ to them, why are we holding elections?” Murat Yetkin, “Bürokrasiyle Savaş Kapıda,” *Radikal*, 30 April 2003.

⁵²³ This practice led to a later public protest by the retired Ambassadors. Damla Aras, “Turkey’s Ambassadors vs. Erdoğan,” *Middle East Quarterly* 18, no.1 (Winter 2011), pp. 47-57.

⁵²⁴ See, for example, Erdoğan’s reaction to criticisms about his “undiplomatic” attitude. “Başbakan Davos’ta Diplomatik Davranmış,” *Radikal*, 3 February 2009.

entourage whom introduced and informed him about the domestic and international power centers. Prominent among them was Cüneyt Zapsu. A businessmen with external linkages, he was seen as key in arranging Erdoğan's international contacts, most notably with the U.S. President.⁵²⁵ He espoused a globalist and pro-EU approach that confirmed his personal belief as well as roots in multiculturalism. Working through Zapsu,⁵²⁶ rather than the bureaucratic apparatus offered a fast-track approach for Erdoğan to reach out especially to his Western interlocutors. Ömer Çelik, an academic who was one of the editors of the Islamist journal *Bilgi ve Hikmet* (Knowledge and Wisdom), provided political and theoretical advice. Egemen Bağış, a U.S.-educated businessman, acted as Erdoğan's translator especially in his early meetings with the Western leaders.⁵²⁷ Yavuz discerned this first group as "pragmatist and opportunist [... who] favor policies based on realpolitik and their own interests more than that of the nation."⁵²⁸ This group did not produce anything near a foreign policy program or formulation. They rather advocated closer relations and realignment with both the EU and U.S. in order to entrench the JDP domestically and internationally.

Abdullah Gül, the second man who served first as the Prime Minister (PM) due to the political ban on Erdoğan and subsequently as the Deputy PM and Minister of Foreign

⁵²⁵ Zapsu confirmed his role in arranging a meeting with President Bush, bypassing the MFA in an interview with Nuriye Akman. Nuriye Akman, "Cüneyd Zapsu: Kürt ve Rumeli Kimliğimle Övünüyorum," *Zaman*, 25 May 2006.

⁵²⁶ Yet this also reportedly created friction within the government. See "Gül Erdoğan'a Kırgın Mı?" *Hürriyet*, 1 August 2006.

⁵²⁷ Yavuz underlined that adding Mücahit Arslan, who was responsible for financial matters, "the core group around Erdoğan are all integrated Kurds." Yavuz, *Secularism*, p. 192, footnote 32.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

Affairs, also had a practical understanding of foreign policy.⁵²⁹ Though Gül brought in certain ideational discourse to foreign policy emphasizing Turkey's place in the Islamic civilization, he "easily moved to a pragmatic and practical position."⁵³⁰ As such, he believed that "Turkey needed to resolve four key foreign policy issues, namely the EU, Cyprus, the Kurdish question and Armenian issue to make better use of its potential in other issues."⁵³¹ Gül also advocated good governance, transparency and accountability, and fundamental rights and freedoms as well as gender equality for the Islamic countries, which he evaluated as essentially Islamic values, yet had gained universal traction after their embrace by the West.⁵³² He also projected himself as an insider in the Muslim world speaking from a point of "We."⁵³³ Remarkably, when he addressed the European audiences, he tried to demonstrate Turkey's adoption of the *acquis* and adoption of the European values, implicitly as a passive but voluntary imitator. Gül tried to make his case by highlighting the strategic advantages of Turkey's future membership with stronger diffusion of Western values in the neighboring countries and its mitigating role in defusing tensions between the civilizations.⁵³⁴ Overall, as Yavuz observed, "Gül never

⁵²⁹ In general, he believed a positive foreign policy agenda would enable Turkey to fulfill its untapped potential both in the Western and regional platforms. Interview with Abdullah Gül.

⁵³⁰ Non-attributable interview with a senior Turkish ambassador, 12 March 2012.

⁵³¹ Ibid..

⁵³² Interview with Abdullah Gül.

⁵³³ Gül warned the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) countries against "strategic risks" and advised "to first put our house in order." See Abdullah Gül, "The Speech at the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the OIC," Tehran, 28 May 2003. Available at: http://www.tccb.gov.tr/sayfa/konusma_aciklama_mesajlar/kitap/79.pdf [28 June 2012].

⁵³⁴ "Once Turkey becomes a full a member of the EU, it will have an even stronger voice in projecting the basic principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law to neighbouring regions. The strategic and economic advantages Turkey's membership will bring to the EU will help the EU become a more prominent global actor. As the first country in the Union with a predominantly Muslim population, Turkey's membership will raise the profile of the EU in the prevention and settlement of conflicts between

became the creator of ideas or the producer of new policies but rather remained a consumer of ideas and policies.”⁵³⁵

In this environment with almost an escape from ideas for the sake of political accommodation, or rather “politics of patience,”⁵³⁶ an international relations professor, Ahmet Davutoğlu undertook a behind the scenes role in formulating a peculiar foreign policy discourse for the JDP government. His role initially remained limited as a newcomer to party politics. Moreover, the government’s preoccupation with locating itself against domestic and external power centers necessitated a pragmatic, if not a vague approach. Davutoğlu himself confirmed this gradualism in the government’s foreign policy, outlining a timetable whereby he would eventually implement his projections by 2007.⁵³⁷ In the beginning, Davutoğlu essentially played a complementary role in the government’s crisis management efforts on the one hand, and bricklaying especially in the Middle East for an aimed pivotal role on the other. Therefore, his all-presence in the decision-making process did “not [yet] amount to an architect role.”⁵³⁸

the western community of nations and the Islamic world. This will further help mitigate tensions between civilizations.” Abdullah Gül, “The Speech Addressing EU Member States Ambassadors’ Residing in Ankara,” Ankara, 10 September 2003. Available at: http://www.tccb.gov.tr/sayfa/konusma_aciklama_mesajlar/kitap/31.pdf [28 June 2012].

⁵³⁵ Yavuz, *Secularism*, p. 139.

⁵³⁶ This envisioned “waiting for the right time” when the JDP would feel free from the military’s supervision to implement its own agenda in Turkish politics. Burhanettin Duran, “The Justice and Development Party’s ‘New Politics’,” in *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey*, p. 95.

⁵³⁷ Davutoğlu viewed 2003 as a year of “recovery of the past problems and crisis management,” 2004 as accentuation of “Turkey’s image as a global player,” 2005 as “furthering Turkey’s activism in the neighborhood in harmony with the EU process,” 2006 as “broadening focus of the Turkish foreign policy to hitherto ignored regions such as Latin America and Africa,” and finally 2007 as the year of completion and “deepening of Turkey’s strategic orientation to meet the challenges of globalization.” Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Türkiye Merkez Ülke Olmalı,” *Radikal*, 26 February 2004 [excerpt from an earlier interview with the CNN Turk TV].

⁵³⁸ Non-attributable interview with a senior Turkish ambassador.

Against such a backdrop, the JDP's program⁵³⁹ pointed to an effort at introducing possible changes, while preserving certain elements⁵⁴⁰ of the traditional paradigm:⁵⁴¹

-The party program alluded to the dynamism of the post-Cold War international conjuncture that opened doors for multiple alternatives in foreign policy. It underlined the eroding relevance of the bloc system and hence, the need to initiate alternative and flexible relations with multiple power centers. This quest predicated on a self-declared "realist and national interest based" assessment of Turkey's geopolitical position;

-The program underlined the necessity of redefining Turkey's foreign policy priorities against changing regional and global realities; and tuning a balance between these realities and national interests with a long-term perspective;

-The Party believed in the inadequacy of an exclusively bureaucratic decision-making process. In accord, involvement of the parliament and different sectors of the society in this process was thought to eventually augment Turkey's power and influence in external

⁵³⁹ The foreign policy section of the party program was authored by Yaşar Yakış, the first Minister of Foreign Affairs of the JDP governments (November 2002-March 2003). Habibe Özdal, Osman B. Dinçer and Mehmet Yeğın eds., *Mülakatlarla Türk Dış Politikası* (Turkish foreign policy in interviews), vol. 2 (Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2009), p. 314. On the other hand, the selection of the author, a retired senior diplomat who was to be appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs for a brief period, represents yet another JDP effort at accommodation.

⁵⁴⁰ Yakış personally believed in there were constant variables and conjuncture-based variables in Turkish foreign policy, the latter being more susceptible to change. Interview with Yaşar Yakış, 20 June 2013, Washington DC.

⁵⁴¹ *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Parti Programı* (The JDP, party program), 14 August 2001, Available at: <http://www.akparti.org.tr/akim/program.pdf> [27 June 2012].

relations. The party program also called for cooperation with the academia and think tanks in that respect;

-Turkey would assume an active role in conflict resolution in the neighboring regions, double its efforts for ensuring security and stability, develop good relations with the neighboring countries on the basis of dialogue, and thus, contribute more to regional cooperation;

-The program underlined the JDP's commitment to work towards the EU membership objective, intensification of relations with friends and [Western] allies, and broadening the scope of cooperation with the U.S.; emphasized the continuation of Turkey's contribution to NATO to be coupled with participation in the emerging EU defense mechanisms; called for cooperative and friendly relations with the Russian Federation;

-The program underscored [the ideal] of economic interdependence and resolution of political problems with Greece; a conciliatory solution for the Cyprus question; broader cooperation with the Central Asian Republics; [the goal of] permanent peace in the Middle East; cooperation with the Caucasus and the Balkans; more intense relations with China and other Asian countries;

-The program also highlighted the importance of multilateral fora, such as the OIC, BSEC, and ECO; most notably, it underlined the special importance the JDP pays to relations with the Islamic countries and to restructuring of the OIC to bestow it with

dynamism and international credibility;

-The party declared willingness to continue its efforts in developing a Eurasian axis in foreign policy, in addition to the traditional Atlantic and European dimensions;

-Finally, the program called for protection of the rights of Turks living abroad.

This initial attempt at setting the stage for foreign policy gave certain clues as to where the ship was headed. First, the party program promised not to derail the Turkish foreign policy from its traditional Western orientation. Yet this was not deemed adequate for adapting to changing international dynamics. Turkey needed multiple alternatives to cope with regional and global realities. As such, it made an attempt at reconciling Europeanism, combined with intensified relations with the U.S., with reaching out to the broader neighborhood. Second, the program tried to calm especially the military bureaucracy by distancing itself from identity politics. Therefore, it emphasized the underlying motive as “the realist assessment of national interests.” However, it also highlighted the need to redefine “the national interests,” which would inevitably apply to the broad-based “national security issues.” Third, the program hinted at transcending the bureaucratic decision-making process by underlining its inadequacy. Fourth, it symbolized an eagerness for regional ownership so as to assign Turkey an insider status in the broader neighborhood through either initiation or revitalization of bilateral and

multilateral instruments. Finally, the program alluded to the Turks living abroad, who were largely disregarded in the traditional practice.

The JDP government's, whether intentional or unavoidable, ability to shoulder responsibility for foreign policy-making particularly in regards to controversial issues should also be noted. The decision to prioritize the EU membership objective, which contradicted the traditional line in Cyprus and necessitated "reconceptualization of 'national security'"⁵⁴² was exemplary. Assuming a leading role in negotiations about the American call to assist the war efforts in Iraq was another instance, which was traditionally kept as the prerogative of civilian authorities in Turkey. Yet, public support aside, the military's embrace of Europeanization as a "state policy" and support for the process as contributing to Turkey's overall security played a crucial role in making this civilian leadership possible.⁵⁴³

Overall, the JDP's early term foreign policy agenda appears to, rather purposefully, lack a clear definition. Nevertheless, with a reading between the lines of the leadership cadres' discourse, the JDP tried to first introduce nuances to extant policy principles of the traditional paradigm (See Table 3). As such, gradualism was seen as a secure way that aimed at "preserving the outer form, while changing all remaining aspects."⁵⁴⁴

Thereby, Turkey's Western orientation continued, but lost its unidirectional trait. The JDP built on a "relations as mutual commitment and benefit" point of view that

⁵⁴² Kirişçi, "Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," p. 36.

⁵⁴³ Aydınlı, Özcan and Akyaz, pp. 77-90.

⁵⁴⁴ Bulaç, pp. 22-23.

strived for breaking the Cold-War type alliance mentality, which had assigned Turkey a subordinate wing country function. In that vein, the JDP government came to emphasize the collective security features, with occasional references to “Turkey’s commitment to Western security.” Moreover, Turkey aspired to set a mutually beneficial relationship with the West that went beyond traditional security ties in order to ward off questions of sustainability. As such, Ankara highlighted the political, economic, and cultural “value added” it could bring in for the Western world. Thence, it was no longer to participate in the international arena exclusively as a Western country. This did not mean refusal of its Western identity, but rather an acknowledgement of the multiple identities Turkey inherited that could also underpin Turkey’s role and importance for the West.

The JDP foreign policy disowned status quoism and monoculturalism as policy principles. As underlined in the party program, the JDP believed in the necessity of a continuous reevaluation of the regional and global realities. This stemmed from a dynamic understanding of the changing balances in international relations. Therefore, holding onto the status quo was deemed invalid. Actually, as will be described in the following pages, the hyperactivity in the early term of the JDP reinforced this belief in dynamism and what Davutoğlu called “rhythmic diplomacy.”⁵⁴⁵ The national perimeter of status quoism was rebuffed and substituted with a broadened emphasis on the regional and civilizational⁵⁴⁶ aspects of the Turkish foreign policy. In other words, the JDP’s foreign policy espoused a transnational discourse that did not restrict its focus to national

⁵⁴⁵ Davutoğlu, “Türkiye Merkez Ülke Olmalı.”

⁵⁴⁶ Duran specified two aspects of this civilizational discourse. First, it adopted the “Kemalist will to reach the contemporary civilization.” Second, it advocated “a new Islamist ideal of the coexistence of civilizations, notably the Islamic civilization and the Western one.” Duran, “The Justice and Development Party’s ‘New Politics’,” p. 83.

territorial borders. Thenceforth, Turkey was to assume an active position in conflict resolution, ensuring security and stability, and advancing regional cooperation.

The JDP also favored a multiculturalist worldview built on a Westernist-universalist discourse. From a foreign policy point of view, this led to the promotion and even exaltation of such “universal” concepts as democratization, liberal economy, transparency, and gender equality particularly in the Middle East. In that vein, Turkey advocated “universal values” as a way out of “the crisis of Islam.”⁵⁴⁷ In essence, the JDP leadership internalized multiculturalism as one of the defining premises of its foreign policy. Thereby, the JDP government emphasized historical and cultural ties as the basis of further cooperation. From the Islamic countries to the Balkans, Central Asia, Caucasia, and even Africa, the new discourse underscored historical and cultural commonalities.

There also emerged a new division of labor in foreign policy making. While the JDP government felt politically comfortable in depending on the bureaucracy’s expertise in relations with the EU and U.S., rather uncompromisingly it opted to chart its preferred course in relations with neighboring countries.⁵⁴⁸ Under the watchful eyes of the military bureaucracy, “Erdogan's enthusiasm for EU membership and cautious agnosticism on the Iraq crisis harmonized well with prevailing views in Turkey's foreign policy establishment.”⁵⁴⁹ Yet the government appealed to Davutoğlu to address its commitment to formulate an own regional policy.

⁵⁴⁷ Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: Modern Library, 2003).

⁵⁴⁸ Yaşar Yakış confirmed this assessment. Interview with Yaşar Yakış, 20 June 2013, Washington DC.

⁵⁴⁹ Philip Robins, “Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad: Turkey between Copenhagen and Iraq,” *International Affairs* 79, no. 3 (May, 2003), p. 557.

Table-4. The JDP's Emerging Policy Norms in the Light of the Traditional Policy

Paradigm

<i>Traditional paradigm policy principles</i>	<i>Policy Norms</i>	<i>The JDP's emerging policy norms</i>
Western orientation	Turkey is an organic part of the West (Relations as identity)	Commitment to work towards EU membership, intensification of relations with friends and [Western] allies, broadening of relations with the United States beyond security cooperation (Relations as mutual commitment-benefit)
	Turkey is part of the Western security structure (Relations as security)	Contribution to NATO coupled with participation in the emerging EU defense mechanisms (ESDP) (Relations as collective security)
	Turkey participates in the international order as a Western country (Relations as status quoism)	While keeping the Western links, seek multiple alternatives against erosion in the bloc system
Status quoism	Defend and anchor the Turkish foreign policy on the Treaty of Lausanne-hold on to current borders; rebuff territorial aggrandizement and irredentism (National elements)	Transcend status quoism by special emphasis on the regional and civilizational aspects of the Turkish foreign policy
	Balancing against prevailing threats; balancing Western orientation with non-Western relations (International elements)	Continuous re-reading of international dynamics
	Non-intervention in other countries' affairs, which practically amounted to staying aloof from external issues	Assume an active position in conflict resolution in the neighboring regions, focus efforts on establishing security and stability, contribute to regional cooperation

Monoculturalism	Advocate modern Turkish nation-state in accordance with Westernization	Multiculturalist worldview based on Westernist-universalist discourse; promote the idea of democratization in a non-Western setting, compatibility of Islam and democracy, advocate universal values adopted by Turkey
	Disregard historical and cultural ties with non-Western countries	Emphasize historical and cultural ties as basis of cooperation; emphasize the Turkish experience as a possible way out of “the clash of civilizations” (Multiculturalism as foreign policy)

CHAPTER 7

THE JDP AND DAVUTOĞLU'S IDEAS

Why and How Did the JDP Adopt Davutoğlu's Ideas?

Regarding the foundations of the JDP's foreign policy, there has been an ongoing debate on the novelty of Davutoğlu's ideas. A first group emphasized the peculiarity of Davutoğlu's strategic thinking and its output. For them, "Davutoğlu is known as the intellectual architect of Turkish foreign policy under the AK Party. He articulated a novel foreign policy vision and succeeded, to a considerable extent, in changing the rhetoric and practice of Turkish foreign policy."⁵⁵⁰ Sözen, accordingly, suggested a methodology to study the conceptual framework that Davutoğlu proposed to understand foreign policy change during the JDP era.⁵⁵¹

A second group was more nuanced in conceding novelty. They saw more continuity in Davutoğlu's ideas and strategy than the first group. Kut convincingly demonstrated that the fundamental concepts of Davutoğlu's approach had already been utilized, though due to different reasons were not effectively applied in Turkish foreign

⁵⁵⁰ Bülent Aras, "Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy," *SETA Policy Brief 32*, (Ankara: SETA, 2009), p. 2. Also See Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, *The Davutoğlu Doctrine and Turkish Foreign Policy, Working Paper* (Athens: Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy-ELIAMEP, April 2010).

⁵⁵¹ "If the theorist is also the decision-maker (as in the case of Ahmet Davutoğlu as foreign minister), it is imperative that the theorist's conceptual setting should be closely scrutinized in order to comprehend the conceptual background against which the policy choices are made." Sözen, p. 106.

policy.⁵⁵² Studying the past statements of Foreign Ministers Çetin, Karayalçın, Çiller and Cem, Kut detected that a number of concepts, which have been associated with Davutoğlu such as “security for all, conflict resolution, regional integration, solving problems with all neighbors, historical-geographic and cultural heritages, multidimensional-multiregional policy, being both a European and an Asian country, being both in the West and the East, global actor” were actually present in his predecessors’ discourse. Bilgin also underlined that even a core concept generally accepted to be novel in Davutoğlu’s vision, i.e. “central state [power]”, has been long present in Turkish geopolitical thinking.⁵⁵³ Altunışık⁵⁵⁴ and Kardaş,⁵⁵⁵ in addition, underlined the nexus with Özal and Cem’s visions, especially in terms of the multidimensionality of foreign policy. Nevertheless, this second group still acknowledged that, similarities with the past rhetoric aside, there has been palpable changes in practice. On that note, they concurred that the JDP foreign policy introduced certain novelties in Turkish foreign policy such as the institutionalization of regional policy, third party

⁵⁵² Gün Kut, *Türk Dış Politikasında Çok Yönlülüğün Yakın Tarihi* [The recent history of multi-dimensionalism in Turkish foreign policy], Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Dış Politika Forumu-TÜSİAD Araştırma Raporu, İstanbul, 1 June 2011.

⁵⁵³ Pınar Bilgin, “‘Only Strong States Can Survive in Turkey’s Geography’: The Uses of ‘Geopolitical Truths’ in Turkey,” *Political Geography* 26, no. 7 (September 2007), pp. 748-49. In another piece with Bilgiç, she was more adamant in confronting the first group, calling them “JDP-admirers.” See Pınar Bilgin and Ali Bilgiç, “Turkey’s ‘New’ Foreign Policy toward Eurasia,” *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 52, no. 2 (Winter 2011) pp. 173–195.

⁵⁵⁴ Meliha Benli Altunışık, “Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 40 (Spring 2009), pp. 182-185.

⁵⁵⁵ Kardaş also argued that “The changes in the Turkish domestic scene did not introduce a radically new strategic thinking. The elements of Turkey’s recent foreign-policy doctrine such as pursuing economic integration, spearheading regional organizations, and asserting Turkey’s regional-power position were present even before the rise of the new foreign-policy elite.” Kardaş, “Turkey,” pp. 115-136.

conciliation attempts, doing away with taboos, emphasis on action autonomous of the West and successful management of security dilemmas through soft power.

Overall, there are common elements in both approaches. First, there is a general concurrence on “the collapse of the strategic model advocated by the political elites that preceded the JDP.”⁵⁵⁶ Second, despite the erosion of the relevance of the traditional foreign policy paradigm recently, the appearance of a formulated and calculated foreign policy vision is generally accepted. Third, Davutoğlu’s key role in the formulation of the JDP’s foreign policy appears indisputable.⁵⁵⁷

On the other hand, the discussion about the novelty of ideas,⁵⁵⁸ theoretically misses two crucial points: First, ideational change is more likely to occur at critical moments, what Goldstein and Keohane called “exogenous shocks.”⁵⁵⁹ This assumption does not necessarily erode the evolutionary process of ideas’ adoption in the political arena. This is because ideas do not emerge and find followers abruptly. However, for them to be adopted it usually takes critical ruptures in political, economic and social fabric that opens new venues for already existing ideas. In short, ideas need to wait for their time to reign. This might occur even if they were partly or complementarily applied before. In accord, Goldstein and Keohane’s doing away with the sources of ideas makes sense given the significance of their role after adoption.

⁵⁵⁶ Kardaş, “Turkey,” p. 132.

⁵⁵⁷ See also Öniş and Yılmaz, “Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism.”

⁵⁵⁸ A similar novelty issue was raised on Gorbachev’s “new thinking” in foreign policy. The ideas he employed were traced back to the Soviet academia. Checkel underlined that “To trace the intellectual antecedents of Gorbachev's new thinking on foreign policy, one need only peruse back issues (in some cases dating to the 1960s) of any one of several Soviet academic journals dealing with international affairs.” See Jeff[rey T.] Checkel, “Ideas, Institutions, and Gorbachev Foreign Policy Revolution,” *World Politics* 45, no. 1 (January 1993), p. 271.

⁵⁵⁹ Goldstein and Keohane, p. 17.

Second, as Hall posited paradigmatic policy change occurs as a result of the accumulation of anomalies.⁵⁶⁰ This results in a shift in policy discourse. In that sense, ideational change may add up to disconnection with former periods. Hall also underlined that adjustments can be made to paradigms, but they do not amount to paradigmatic change.

Thus, ideas might not be novel, yet ideational change may transform their role. Altunışık, for that matter, implied that following Özal's steps, İsmail Cem's vision was a precursor to the JDP's and Davutoğlu's foreign policy orientation.⁵⁶¹ Her main assumption was that all three shared the same worldview.⁵⁶² Yet her analysis lacked a theoretical foundation. This led her to compare and even equalize the policies of two different paradigms, which were in effect incommensurable.⁵⁶³ In that sense, though foreign policy activism appears similar at face value, paradigmatic change entails a different assessment of policies.

As described in the preceding section, the JDP government initially hesitated to make a final choice between either sticking to the traditional paradigm or heading for a new route in foreign policy. The former had the risk of losing electoral support, which indicated the urge for change. The latter, on the other hand, had the risk of being

⁵⁶⁰ Hall, p. 279.

⁵⁶¹ Altunışık employs the concept of worldview without referring to its theoretical implications. This misleads her to categorize Özal, Cem, and Erdoğan-Davutoğlu as sharing the same ideational bases. Altunışık, "Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy."

⁵⁶² *Worldviews*, defined as "conceptions of possibility," were both the broadest and most effective of ideas. Great religions, scientific rationality, sovereignty, human rights, and Stalinism were among general examples. Worldviews "are embedded in the symbolism of a culture and deeply affect modes of thought and discourse." Goldstein and Keohane, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁶³ Incommensurability is a concept employed by Kuhn, which posits that one cannot compare two different paradigms in order to determine which is more accurate. This stems from the assumption that once an element of a paradigm changes, it becomes incommensurable with another paradigm. Kuhn, p. 102.

delegitimized by the elites. Therefore, the JDP initially opted for a rather complex practice that brought together the old and the new.

In essence, the JDP needed ideas that could clarify goals or ends-means relationships in foreign policy that could be associated with its self-declared transformative agenda. In the absence of partisan alternatives, Davutoğlu's ideas supplied this demand, complementing but not opposing the Europeanization project. Depending on his ideas was a political choice.⁵⁶⁴ Davutoğlu's ideas functioned as road map that prescribed the causal links for achieving goals in the particular area of foreign policy. In effect, JDP's foreign policy was interpreted as an instrument of "transformation (that tried) to eliminate the identity crisis of Turkish domestic and foreign policies."⁵⁶⁵ His wider embrace of the neighborhood assigning Turkey a "central" role appealed to the Party cadres for outward cooperation,⁵⁶⁶ to the Anatolian bourgeoisie for new and integrated markets,⁵⁶⁷ to the electorate for grandeur and self-esteem.⁵⁶⁸ It was in

⁵⁶⁴ Zengin elaborates Davutoğlu's role in decision-making and his relationship with the JDP leadership in detail. See Gürkan Zengin, *Hoca: Türk Dış Politikasında Davutoğlu Etkisi* (The professor: the Davutoğlu effect in Turkish foreign policy) (İstanbul: İnkilap Kitapevi, 2010).

⁵⁶⁵ Duran, "JDP and Foreign Policy as an Agent of Transformation," p. 282. Duran actually saw JDP's foreign policy as a tool for legitimacy and transformation. In the former sense, it was used for winning international support for legitimacy in the domestic political arena. In the latter sense, it functioned as "a secure way to further democratize Turkish political system." Ibid., p.282.

⁵⁶⁶ Duran aptly emphasized the JDP's need for international support. "It is certain that the JDP, more than any other Turkish political party, regards international support as a fundamental factor in attaining political legitimacy." Duran, "JDP and Foreign Policy as an Agent of Transformation," p. 282.

⁵⁶⁷ Yavuz underlined the role of new emerging bourgeoisie rooted in Anatolia as the main cause for the liberal transformation of the JDP. His emphasis on the "JDP being the outcome rather than the cause of the silent revolution in Turkey" was also telling as regards the JDP's quest for a new role. Yavuz, "Introduction," pp. 1-19.

⁵⁶⁸ Among the public opinion "there is also a strong conviction that Turkey can be a model for the countries of the Middle East. 82% consider Turkey a cultural model, 80% an economic model and 72% a political model." Mensur Akgün, Sabiha Senyücel Gündoğar, Aybars Görgülü, and Erdem Aydın, *TESEV Foreign Policy Programme: Foreign Policy Perceptions in Turkey* (TESEV: Istanbul, 2010).

confirmation with the conservative circles understanding of possibly an ideal nation (state). In that Davutoğlu's emphasis on strategy and turning Turkey into a global power was pretty much in congruence with an influential Islamist Sezai Karakoç's praise for "great powers with an objective, making 100 year-long plans [against] status quoist powers aiming only at maintaining their [static] position."⁵⁶⁹

Davutoğlu's Ideational World

Davutoğlu appears as the mastermind of the JDP foreign policy. Yet, what was his worldview based on? How did he construct his foreign policy ideas and principles? What led him to differ from the traditional bureaucratic paradigm? How were his ideas shaped and evolved once he stepped into the political decision-making processes? In other words, did he necessarily continue to hold on to his academic views or did theory yield to the exigencies of politics?

Davutoğlu was born in Taşkent, Konya, in the conservative heartland of Turkey. His family moved to İstanbul in his early childhood. He graduated from one of the city's public German high schools, and then from the liberal Boğaziçi University. During his doctoral studies, he lived in Egypt and Jordan to improve his Arabic language skills as well as his understanding of the Islamic World. He worked first in the International Islamic University in Malaysia and then in Marmara University (Istanbul), a stronghold of Turkish conservatism in academia. Davutoğlu was also a columnist in the late 1990s

⁵⁶⁹ Turan Karataş, "Sezai Karakoç: Bir Medeniyet Tasarımcısı (A civilization designer)," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, İslamcılık*, p. 983.

for the Yeni Şafak newspaper, which espoused a pro-Welfare Party political stance, but appealed to the liberal wing of the Party.

In order to decipher his foreign policy views, the dissertation will go through his written works and try to explicate his worldview. Therefore, it will elaborate on the four books Davutoğlu has written and various articles he published mainly in the conservative Turkish journals.

Alternative Paradigms⁵⁷⁰

This was his first book, which was published as a revised version of his PhD thesis.⁵⁷¹ The book basically aimed at demonstrating the distinctiveness of two paradigms based on Western and Islamic worldviews. “The fundamental argument of the book [was] that the conflicts and contrasts between Islamic and Western political thought originate mainly from their philosophical, methodological, and theoretical background rather than from mere institutional and historical differences.”⁵⁷² The book compared the all-embracing concept of *tawhid* (unity) in Islam against the propensity for particularization and fragmentation in the Western paradigm. While the latter paved the way for a gradual secularization of ontology, epistemology, axiology, eschatology, and ultimately political theory, the tenacity of *tawhid* disabled a similar particularization in Islam.

⁵⁷⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Alternative Paradigms: The Impact of Islamic and Western Weltanschauungs on Political Theory* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994).

⁵⁷¹ He later published an article in Turkish summarizing his views on the distinctiveness of the Western and Islamic worldviews by employing Edmund Husserl’s term “self-perception (Selbstverständnis).” Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Medeniyetlerin Ben-idraki [The self-perception of the civilizations] *Divan*, no.1 (1997), pp. 1-53.

⁵⁷² Davutoğlu, *Alternative Paradigms*, p. 2.

Davutoğlu moved on to explicate how this separation led to different conceptions of political system, jurisprudence-legitimacy, authority, and international order. His focus on Islamic political theory was actually restricted to the classical period before the advent of colonialism and modernization efforts. Thus, he almost took the Islamic paradigm for granted, which arguably proved immune from substantial change after Ghazali in the twelfth century.⁵⁷³ He argued that the Islamic political theorists at modern times such as al-Afghani, Abduh, Iqbal et al. all followed the classical thinkers steps in preserving the unitarian cosmology.⁵⁷⁴ In general, he discerned a divergence between “state-centered and nation-oriented life as a modern phenomenon in Western civilization” and “Islamic idea of belief-oriented socio-political unity assuming a unitary aspect of life.”⁵⁷⁵ Though he did not elaborate in detail, he hinted at a crisis of Islamic political thought in contemporary times at the end of the book:

Perhaps the most radical changes in the institutionalization of state in Islamic history came with the end of caliphate. This turning-point and the following stage of the imposition of the nation-state system in Muslim lands created an imaginative and structural confusion among the masses. The demarcation and internal consistency between *ummah*, *Dar al-Islam*, and *dawlah* was lost while new political structures as nation-states populated by Muslims faced a

⁵⁷³ In that sense, the author disregarded the perennial question in political philosophy on whether one dwells on how the world ought to be or how it really is. For a discussion along these lines in Western political thought, see Mary Ann Glendon, *The Forum and the Tower: How Scholars and Politicians Have Imagined the World, From Plato to Eleanor Roosevelt* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁵⁷⁴ Davutoğlu, *Alternative Paradigms*, p. 77.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

comprehensive problem of political legitimacy. The challenge of the pioneers of the new structures of the nation-state system to the traditional political cultures and structures aimed to create a new understanding of state. State began to be visualized as a sovereign element within the international system instead of a political instrument for the ethico-legal ideals of the Islamic belief system. Thus, the imagination of Dar al-Islam as an alternative world order was replaced by the imagination of being an element of the international system which was established by and based on the interests of the colonial powers.⁵⁷⁶

Against this “alienation” of the Islamic paradigm, he referred to the demands for a possible reproduction of Islamic political thought within the purview of its particular *Weltanschauung*.⁵⁷⁷

Overall, the book represented an effort to make the case for the distinctiveness and, by inference, incompatibility of Western political models for the Islamic world. Although, he conceded Islam’s ability to “benefit from the institutional experiences of other civilizations,”⁵⁷⁸ he still aspired to a contemporary Islamic political model that was predicated on the unyielding principle of unitarianism.

⁵⁷⁶ Davutoğlu, *Alternative Paradigms*, pp. 193-194.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid..

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 124.

The Civilizational Transformation and the Muslim World⁵⁷⁹

Davutoğlu's second book was a follow-up of the *Alternative Paradigms*, in the sense that he sought to overcome the alleged "alienation" of the Islamic paradigm and to render it with global appeal as an outlet from the ongoing "civilizational crisis." The book starts with a defensive posture to refute the idea of endism after the Cold War. Making his case against Fukuyama's triumphalist "The End of History,"⁵⁸⁰ which declared an ultimate victory for Western liberal order, he rather saw the Western paradigm in crisis and far from a self-declared universalist stature.

The book, likewise the *Alternative Paradigms*, essentially built on the idea of incompatibility of the Western and Islamic paradigms. Davutoğlu this time argued that the West was in crisis due to the failure of modernism and its inability to essentially respond to ontological needs of security and freedom of the mankind. Despite its institutional and economic success, the Homo Occidentalis "lost his Selbstverstandis [self-perception] and this phenomenon signals a civilizational crisis and transformation, rather than an end of history in the sense postulated by Fukoyama [sic]."⁵⁸¹ Referring to the negative repercussions of the implicitly Western-steered currents of globalization and

⁵⁷⁹ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Civilizational Transformation and the Muslim World* (Kuala Lumpur: Mahir Publication, 1994).

⁵⁸⁰ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992). The book was an extension of an earlier article, Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest* (Summer 1989).

⁵⁸¹ Davutoğlu, *Civilizational Transformation*, p. 8. Davutoğlu employed Husserl's concept "in the sense of a specific imagination of a prototype of a civilization in relation to One's Place in the relationship between One's Ego and *Lebenswelt* [Lifeworld, the world we live in], [which] might be descriptive for this internal stability, consistency and balance of a civilization."

consumerism, Davutoğlu alluded to a broader dislocation and worldwide civilizational crisis.

He referred to the post-modern as well as theological search for a new individual consciousness as evidential for the crisis of the Western paradigm, which arguably eroded security and stability in global order. Thus, he sensed a transition from the hegemonic post-Cold War order to a new balance of power in Europe and Asia and an eventual shift of civilizational axis.

At this point, he argued that Islam emerges as “a theoretical alternative and counter-proposal to the global system.”⁵⁸² To that end, the Islamic paradigm had to overcome the intellectual and structural crisis, which disrupted the unitarian character of the community (ummah) particularly after the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924. With retrospect, Davutoğlu saw both Westernization attempts and the foundation of Muslim nation states as divisive for the Islamic community. The end result was an inevitable misfit between the colonial and/or bureaucratic regimes and the Islamic worldview of the population.

Facing these disruptions and the global civilizational crisis, the Muslim countries would have to rethink to develop a cooperative understanding among themselves. “This will encourage Muslims to revitalize traditional concepts such as the Ummah[’s] universal brotherhood, Dar-al Islam as a world order and the Caliphate as the political institutionalization of this world order.”⁵⁸³ Muslim communities’ still strong and largely

⁵⁸² Davutoğlu, *Civilizational Transformation*, pp. 63-83.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

intact self-perception, for Davutoğlu, stood as an alternative and lively form of human consciousness against the Western ontological crisis.

Davutoğlu detested the nation-state and the territorial identity thereof. Yet he was also cognizant of the fact that the nation-state order was there to stay, at least until a heralded civilizational transformation arrived. He believed this could soon be possible by Islamic revivalism, which would restore Islamic self-perception and replace “the inferiority complex of the colonial era.”⁵⁸⁴ At this point, he underlined the need for a transformation in Turkey, among other Muslim countries, who “accepted a local and status quo oriented foreign policy tradition after the end of Caliphate, [and] is under pressure from the historical and real forces. The real and dynamic forces of history refute this declaration of isolation from the Muslim World, [...which also meant a change in] its unidirectional and isolationist foreign policy preferences of the 1930s.”⁵⁸⁵

As a columnist for the conservative daily, *Yeni Şafak*, Davutoğlu elaborated on the contemporary domestic and foreign policy issues. His views built on earlier civilizational studies and reflected the nationalist-Islamist worldview espoused by the Welfare Party. His writings mainly focused on the need for a strategic change in Turkish foreign policy based on historical and geographic consciousness and an ideational turn, which would implicitly be based on re-embracing the Ottoman and Islamic heritage of Turkey.⁵⁸⁶ His geostrategic reading of international relations detected a possibility for

⁵⁸⁴ Davutoğlu, *Civilizational Transformation*, p. 111.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁵⁸⁶ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Yakın Tarihimizin Ana Akımları ve Seçim Sonuçları,” *Yeni Şafak*, 23 April 1999.

Turkish foreign policy to re-situate itself against new balances in the post-Cold War era, given the structural shift from a bipolar to multipolar world order.

Strategic Depth⁵⁸⁷

Following his writings on the uniqueness and indivisibility of the Islamic civilization, Davutoğlu paradoxically attempted to carve out a “new foreign policy” for Turkey, which seems to have internalized the very particular and fragmented nation-state order that he has formerly identified as a misfit for the Islamic world. In this “seminal” book that has been deemed the basis of the JDP foreign policy at large, Davutoğlu, despite a general perception to the contrary,⁵⁸⁸ drew a realist geopolitical foreign policy framework to reformulate Turkish foreign policy. He predicated his analysis on a geopolitical power equation, which entailed an alternative interpretation of the Republican objectives. In his opinion, the Republic had a promising start when Atatürk made a realist use of Turkey’s foreign policy assets for domestic consolidation.⁵⁸⁹ Although he was not comprehensive in his analysis of the early Republican experience, Davutoğlu praised early attempts at forging relations with independent “Eurasian” countries namely Russia, Iran, and Afghanistan against the West’s global domination. In

⁵⁸⁷ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*.

⁵⁸⁸ Kemal İnat and Burhanettin Duran, “AKP Dış Politikası: Teori ve Uygulama [The JDP’s foreign policy: Theory and practice]” in *Doğu’dan Batı’ya Dış Politika: AK Partili Yıllar* [Foreign policy from the East to the West: the JDP years], ed. Zeynep Dağı (Ankara: Orion Yayınevi, 2006), pp. 15-70. The authors assessed that the JDP’s foreign policy was predicated more on constructivist assumptions, than realist foreign policy.

⁵⁸⁹ He praised the Atatürkist foreign policy of “Peace at Home, Peace in the World,” which amounted to a realist account of the conjunctural developments that entailed “defense of itself by consolidation within national boundaries.” Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, pp. 196-197.

any case, he clearly detested the later unidirectional Western orientation not in terms of its direction, but per its exclusiveness and unidirection that engendered “disinterest” in other regions. As such, links with the very neighborhood Turkey had been tied with politically, historically, economically, and culturally were severed throughout the Cold War. Turning a blind eye to its vicinity, Turkey became insular and a passive member of the Western bloc. This ended up in nothing but isolation and a later desperation to establish links with the Third World, which happened to be Turkey’s natural zone of influence.

Davutoğlu’s fundamental criticism about the Turkish foreign policy centered on the Cold War heritage in Turkish foreign policy. He thought that the Cold War’s structural certainty, while making a stable and static foreign policy course possible, restricted the scope of Turkish foreign policy to in-bloc relations with the Western countries and cultivated a sense of distance and detachment from non-Western countries. He hinted at an ideational dimension of this aloofness, which predicated on a claim to be exclusively Western. As such, the foreign policy bureaucracy shied away from the country’s ordained historical and geographical responsibilities and opted for a “peripheral role under the Western security umbrella instead of standing as a weak center of a peculiar civilizational basin.”⁵⁹⁰ The end result was “risk-free foreign policy”⁵⁹¹ posture based largely on a defensive and reactionary approach that denied Turkey the role of a foreign policy actor taking its own initiatives.

The background of this bureaucratic cautionism was implicitly the status quoist and monocultural, fundamentally ahistorical worldview of the Republican elites. The

⁵⁹⁰ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 70.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

Cold War experience had been instrumental in institutionalizing a static interpretation of Turkey's strategic assets, namely historical, geographical, demographic, and cultural heritages, which Davutoğlu proposed to overcome through a dynamic reevaluation. His definition of national power was a sum of these *constant inputs* added to acquired variables, i.e. economic capacity, technological capacity, and military capacity, and multiplied by strategic mentality, strategic planning, and political will. He evaluated "the inability to coordinate strategic and tactical steps within a coherent theoretical framework as one of the most important defects of Turkish foreign policy."⁵⁹²

Against this backdrop, he moved on to reevaluate Turkey's constant assets.⁵⁹³ Historically Turkey was a successor (and for him, the political inheritor) state of the Ottoman Empire. Davutoğlu conceptualized "the Ottoman State as the polity [political center] of a unique civilizational basin."⁵⁹⁴ This distinctive political past assigned Turkey a peculiar geopolitical, geoeconomic, and geocultural stake at its adjacent basin. Though it is rather hard to discern a clear definition of Turkey's inherited assets from the book, Davutoğlu seems to have built that on an Islamic civilizational base while imbuing it, in a Nasrian sense, with secular-cultural rather than religious colorings.⁵⁹⁵ This cultural base necessitated an ownership perspective with multicultural appeal to comprise all regional peoples. This, in return, entailed relating to their political problems.

⁵⁹² Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 47.

⁵⁹³ Interestingly, he called for a "reevaluation of historical background by the political authority as a significant component of the strategic mentality." *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁵⁹⁵ Nasr identified Islam as "both a religion and a civilization." Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization* ([San Francisco]: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003).

Davutoğlu criticized status quoism at its very foundation. He argued that the founding Lausanne Treaty envisioned a division between domestic and external identities of Turkey. Accordingly, Turkey abandoned its Islamic identity in foreign policy, but embraced it domestically as a basis for the definition of the majority and the constituent element of the new state. This new policy opted for a unidirectional foreign policy agenda in exchange for security protection, in particular during the Cold War. The byproduct of this relationship was ignorance of Turkey's natural sphere of influence and bias against alternative power centers, which in turn spun a psychological barrier with the rest of the world. As such Turkey was condemned to status quoism, whereby she was "set to shoulder the risks, but was concurrently deprived from the benefits of being a regional country."⁵⁹⁶ This had also to do with the discord between "the political and geocultural assets of a society that had been a political center of a unique civilization and a political system based on the elite's political will to join another civilization."⁵⁹⁷

The end of the Cold War demonstrated the unsustainability of this unidirectional, Western oriented and rather discordant foreign policy. In fact, there appeared a new opening for regional powers to participate in the great power diplomacy provided they employed "a dynamic and flexible diplomacy and cultivated a strong and rich hinterland."⁵⁹⁸ Therefore, for Davutoğlu, the new objective of Turkish foreign policy should be to reinforce its international position and regain its own sphere of influence,

⁵⁹⁶ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 73.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

which entailed domestic reform and tapping into its rich historical assets as well as geopolitical and geoeconomic opportunities.

Davutoğlu underlined that the early years of the post-Cold War era witnessed a quest for a new ideational orientation in Turkish foreign policy. However, neither neo-Ottomanism nor anti-Western Islamism, radical Westernism or neo-Turkism, which emerged as possible alternatives, met Turkey's need for a new foreign policy strategy. On that note, Davutoğlu's proposal was to establish a dynamic civilizational basin based on "adjacent basin policies."⁵⁹⁹

To identify Turkish foreign policy's new alternative axis Davutoğlu outlined the geopolitical basin of Turkey. He made references to early twentieth century geopolitical theories by Mackinder, Spykman, Mahan, and Seversky. There he derived the geopolitical importance of the Eurasian *heartland*, the *Rimland*- the strip of coastal land that encircles Eurasia- and "sea power."

Davutoğlu derived his motivation partly from the strategic calculation that detected geopolitical and geoeconomic vacuum in the post-Cold War setting of the *Rimland* belt. This possibility of the expansion of Turkish sphere of influence further triggered the need to reinterpret Turkey's geopolitical position. However, Davutoğlu warned against the traditional reflex to utilize Turkey's geopolitical position "as a static shield in defense of status quoism, [...which should rather serve to] transform its regional influence into global clout."⁶⁰⁰ Otherwise, in pursuit of the Cold War mentality Turkey

⁵⁹⁹ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, pp. 97-218.

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 117. This was effectively to guide the fundamental objective of the JDP's foreign policy practice.

could not even be in a position to defend the territorial borders, an objective that quelled any other strategic calculation under the traditional paradigm.

Davutoğlu set Turkey's new foreign policy strategy as "reorganization of relations with global power centers in an alternated way and constitution of an hinterland with reinforced long-term cultural, economic, and political ties."⁶⁰¹ Turkey's adjacent land basin, i.e. the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caucasus; adjacent sea basin, i.e. the Black Sea, Adriatic, Eastern Mediterranean, Red Sea, [Persian] Gulf, and the Caspian Sea; and adjacent continental basin, i.e. Europe, North Africa, South Asia, Central and East Asia drew the setting for this hinterland. He promoted an incremental approach in expanding Turkey's clout to the above-mentioned regional spheres with an ultimate objective of elevating to a global power status. Turkey could tear down its peripheral role in international relations provided she makes the most of interaction and interdependence between these basins and renews itself in a way that integrates this process with [also renewed or even harmonized] domestic political culture.

Davutoğlu saw an organic and indispensable nexus between these adjacent basins. With the end of the artificial political order of the Cold War, this link openly resurfaced and became susceptible to reconnection. Thus, in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War what transpired in the Caucasus showed every sign of reverberantly affecting the balances in Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Balkans or vice versa.

In casting Turkey's potential role in this hinterland, Davutoğlu founded his thesis on a tripod. Firstly, Turkey was to internalize its civilizational link with its broader neighborhood. Davutoğlu underlined the need to redefine Turkey's geocultural identity.

⁶⁰¹ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 118.

He hinted at reconciliation between the state's corporate identity and the public's civilizational dispositions. This Özal-type modernist (see p. 65) approach claimed not only an embrace of Islam and multiculturalism, but also aimed at connecting with Turkey's hinterland via an emphasis on cultural affinities. This also alluded to a common past and a common fate due to the determinant roles of history and geography. As such, this link not only created path dependence in foreign policy, but also had certain repercussions for Turkey's ability to preserve its national security and integrity. Thus, Davutoğlu warned against the risk of being unable to rise to the task to assume the responsibility and imperatives ordained by history and geography due to an inherent misfit with the contemporary [Republican] political culture and institutions. But still he was discreet in detailing the implicit Islamic civilizational nexus, which this potential new role was to be implicitly founded upon.

Secondly, Davutoğlu envisioned a *security community*⁶⁰² type regional cooperation. Again he did not specify what type of institutionalized procedures would best serve this ideal of an area of peace and prosperity. Yet one easily senses the nexus between security and cooperation that would have spillover effects in other areas.⁶⁰³

Building on these, he lastly specified economic and cultural cooperation as an instrument of instituting interdependence between regional countries. In this ultimate phase of his projection, he called for breaking down the material or psychological walls erected due mainly to security concerns. In its stead, he proposed taking constructive

⁶⁰² Karl W. Deutsch et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

⁶⁰³ In fact, he alluded to the Helsinki Accords and German Chancellor Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* as possible examples for regional cooperation. Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 145.

steps such as expansion of trade and transportation, cultural exchanges, and facilitation of the movement of labor and capital. He advocated economic integration with the neighborhood, which would transform Turkey into an economic transit center and would ameliorate current foreign policy tensions. Overall, this three-legged projection aimed at transforming Turkey into a “rising power” in the twenty-first century.

Davutoğlu espoused a deterministic tone to make his case about the adjacent basin policy. Thus, he cited historical and geopolitical imperatives for the Balkans and characterized the Middle East as “an inescapable hinterland.”⁶⁰⁴ He put forward didactic formulas in setting the foreign policy course, such as “Turkey can never ignore Cyprus,”⁶⁰⁵ “Azerbaijan is the most important strategic ally,”⁶⁰⁶ or “It is necessary to develop a West Asia policy.”⁶⁰⁷ At some point, he sounded revisionist and rebuffed the ceding of the Dodecanese Islands as “ignorance.”⁶⁰⁸ He was supportive of coalition-making against Russian dominance in the Caspian region, while he was for recruiting Iran to balance Moscow’s influence in Central Asia and Caucasia.

For Davutoğlu, the post-Cold War systemic changes necessitated a reassessment of continental ties, while the rising tide of globalization increased foreign policy alternatives and instruments in an incomparable way. As international power centers turned out to be more diffused and diversified, it led to a multidimensional and multipolar balance of power dynamics among nations. The bloc system melted away, while short-

⁶⁰⁴ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 129.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

term foreign policy shifts became even more viable. Against this slippery ground, Turkey had to continuously reevaluate the conjuncture and flow of international relations. Here again the adjacent basin policy was portrayed as “the fundamental alternative to the foreign policy structure [i.e. the traditional paradigm] that was set to assume a peripheral role within the European system.”⁶⁰⁹

In the latter part of his book, he employed different conceptual tools for analyzing relations with different regions. While he evaluated relations with the Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Balkan countries from a common civilizational vantage point, he preferred to analyze relations with Europe from a “great-power diplomacy” point of view analyzed against the balance of power dynamics. Thus, he made his case for establishing an insider’s role with the former, which would also have certain implications for Turkey’s domestic identity. He called for overcoming psychological barriers, namely the “anti-Eastern prejudices.”⁶¹⁰ This entailed transcending the unidirectional foreign policy focus of Western orientation. He singled out connecting with the Muslim communities, particularly in the Balkans, as an important asset in Turkish foreign policy. In fact, this civilizational link was inherent in his adjacent basin policy and his emphasis on cultural affinities. Yet he still had certain caveats. First, he refrained from drawing an “ideological” link with these regions. Second, he pointed to a role change, as Turkey, unlike in the past, was no longer in a position to confront the great powers in defense of the Islamic communities. This, by inference, signified a call for realist and rational relationship with the region. Third, he recognized the intraregional balances and Turkey’s

⁶⁰⁹ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 217.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

possible role within the power equations. He thus set a triangular equation in the Middle East between Turkey, Iran, and Egypt with an inner triangle of Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Fourth, he thought of Turkey's role in the Middle East apart from its transatlantic ties, while he underlined the same ties in the Balkans for an entrenched relationship with Europe. Last but not least, he favored a holistic strategy to embrace the whole region regardless of the ongoing conflicts, which he implicitly thought would wither away within the dynamics of his cooperative formula.

Overall Davutoğlu made an attempt to sketch a foreign policy course for Turkey that overcame the limited scope of traditional Western orientation. This did not necessarily mean a change in priority. Rather, he conceded the need to keep the Western and European dimension as one of the main pillars in Turkey's strategic calculations.⁶¹¹ Thus, his quest symbolized an attempt at transcending unidirectionality as well as the Sevres syndrome arising from fears that Europe still "conspires for dividing Turkey."⁶¹² He made his case mainly for paving the way for an opening in Turkey's neighborhood and concurrent connecting with other global power centers. Davutoğlu rebuffed status quoism in toto, as he predicated his whole thesis on the dynamism of the post-Cold War order, which left little room for defining a sustainable status quo. He also eschewed monoculturalism in favor of an embrace of Turkey's historical, geographical, cultural, and implicitly religious heritages.

⁶¹¹ Noticably, he did not elaborate on the Turco-US relations in depth beyond situating the United States as one of the global power centers.

⁶¹² Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 547.

To that end, besides a reevaluation of the constant assets he emphasized the importance of strategic mentality, strategic planning and political will. Only through a mentality, i.e. worldview, change could Turkish foreign policy realize its true potential to become “a central power.”⁶¹³ Drawing on its power equation, *Stratejik Derinlik* implied that this objective could only be pursued under a dedicated political authority, which should be supported ideally by Davutoğlu’s strategic thinking.

Davutoğlu published an article on “Ottoman-Turkish Diplomatic Tradition,”⁶¹⁴ which actually stands as a complementary study to *Stratejik Derinlik*. Overall he built on and more or less reiterated the general hypothesis put forward in the book. Distinctively, he categorized the Ottoman-Turkish diplomatic tradition in three periods, read in a Zürcherian sense of continuum. Thus, for him, the Republican diplomacy represented a continuation of the late Ottoman objectives that prioritized adaptation to the international balance of power⁶¹⁵ so as to preserve the truncated territories. This defensive mood assigned centrality to defensive and by implication status quoist diplomacy. With a similar vulnerability, the Republic also stuck to the premises of the Western alliance particularly throughout the Cold War. In that he detected a parallel with the post-

⁶¹³ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 83. Davutoğlu did not elaborate much on this concept. He first conceded that Turkey is not yet a central power. Then he made clear that it is a category above pivotal power. Hence, the concluding sentence of the book: “Provided Turkey succeeds in this as a pivotal state it will gain the status of a central power realizing geopolitical, geocultural, and geoeconomic integration.” Ibid., p. 563.

⁶¹⁴ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Osmanlı’dan Günümüze Türk Diplomasinin Süreklilik Unsurları [The elements of continuity in Turkish diplomacy from the Ottomans to today],” *NPQ Türkiye* 4, no.1 (September 2002), pp. 20-28. Available at: <http://www.npq.com.tr/icindekiler/arsiv/cilt/4/sayi/1/osmanlidan-gunumuze-turk-diplomasinin-sureklilik-unsurlari-ve>. [22 June 2013].

⁶¹⁵ The author defines this as “the problematic [...] of attempted harmony with the international environment” in Turkish foreign policy TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY, which is cited as an element of continuity. Though, he does not literally employ the term “balance of power,” he describes the defining motivation as repositioning and adaptation to changes in power axes in international relations. Ibid..

Karlowitz Ottoman diplomacy, whereby the Russian threat warded off possible ties with the natural Turkish sphere of influence and instead consumed all energy with the defense of current borders.

He compared the “active order-instituting (*etkin kurucu unsur*)”⁶¹⁶ role the Ottomans assumed during the classical period with their later attempts at harmonization with the contemporary international order. The Republic also perpetuated the latter objective, which had wisdom early on, but malfunctioned especially throughout the Cold War. Therefore, Davutoğlu detected a considerable tension between Turkey’s potential active/central/pivotal power status and perpetuated passive/peripheral role.

Davutoğlu envisioned elevation of Turkey’s status from regional to central power in compliance with the “adjacent basin policy” described above. The end of Cold War, the times of crisis so to say, and the ensuing geopolitical, geoeconomic, and geocultural vacuum provided ample ground for Turkey’s rise.

Subsequent Works

Right after *Stratejik Derinlik*, Davutoğlu published *Küresel Bunalım: 11 Eylül Konuşmaları*.⁶¹⁷ The book was a compilation of his media interviews mostly on post-9/11 global (dis)order. Davutoğlu’s main argument was predicated on the failure to establish a legitimate and consensual international order in the post-Cold War era. For him, this was basically due to the lack of a treaty or convention that set down the

⁶¹⁶ Davutoğlu, “Osmanlı’dan Günümüze.”

⁶¹⁷ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Küresel Bunalım: 11 Eylül Konuşmaları* (Global crisis: Talks on September 11) (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2004).

fundamental parameters of a new order. The 9/11 attacks demonstrated the dysfunction of the present order, which basically built on a ceasefire and protracted the frozen conflicts. Davutoğlu thought that it was inevitable that the U.S., who had been tempted to utilize its hegemonic position particularly through academics like Fukuyama⁶¹⁸ and Huntington,⁶¹⁹ would face such challenges without “establishing the infrastructure of a lasting international economic and political order.”⁶²⁰ Therefore, a possible way out of this crisis necessitated a consensual settlement based on an inclusive approach and wider representation of the emerging powers.

Davutoğlu inferred “[a] crisis [in] the Western civilization.”⁶²¹ This was quintessentially an “ontological security and freedom problem” that the Western paradigm was no longer in a position to respond. He believed that the widespread criticism of the modernist theory, upon which the Western claims for universalism depended, was a significant indicator in that sense. He contended that the modernist correlation between rationality, science, and progress proved defunct as the ultimate formula for mankind’s fulfillment. Therefore, the West was in dire need of a civilizational transformation that necessitated ontological, epistemological, axiological, ecological, and cultural change. Davutoğlu personally was not necessarily uncomfortable with the Western claim for universalism. However, in order to maintain a sustainable global political order, he underlined the necessity to integrate other civilizational

⁶¹⁸ Fukuyama, *The End of History*.

⁶¹⁹ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilization?,” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer, 1993), pp. 22-49. Also see his book on the subject, Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, 1993)

⁶²⁰ Davutoğlu, *Küresel Bunalım*, p. 21.

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

demands into the basis of a prospective order.⁶²²

Against this systemic urge for transformation, Davutoğlu emphasized that Turkey was in a position to play a unique role. Having experienced both cooperation and confrontation with the West as well as being a country of “depth,”⁶²³ Turkey had an untapped potential. The inability to utilize this potential had mainly to do with the unpreparedness of the bureaucratic, political, academic, and intellectual cadres for a dynamic post-Cold War order. That was because, what he called “Turkish diplomatic tradition” proved fully-equipped for preserving the status quo, but turned apprehensive when “a dynamic conjuncture and the possibility of new openings”⁶²⁴ arose. To that end, the Turkish policymakers were called upon to rid themselves of the Cold War mentality. He also rebuffed the two post-Cold War strategies of daring or caution based respectively on either “animosity, discomfoting all relevant actors, irrationality, sloganeering, and emotional attitude or intimidated by [the perceived threat of] Turkey’s [territorial] division.”⁶²⁵ Therefore, he reiterated Turkey’s potential to assume a flag-carrier role within the Islamic civilization, again construed in a Nasrist secular and cultural form. Turkey’s unique ability was thus discerned as reconciling the Western and Islamic civilizations and contributing to both.

Overall Davutoğlu assigned Turkey a central role in political and cultural redesign of the broader neighborhood with a unique advantage in harmonizing Western and

⁶²² At this point, Davutoğlu, among others, also pointed to Falk’s term of “civilizational rights.” Richard Falk, *Religion and Humane Global Governance* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave, 2001).

⁶²³ Here again he referred to Turkey’s strategic depth. Davutoğlu, *Küresel Bunalım*, p. 136.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

Islamic civilizations.

The JDP Government and Davutoğlu

Davutoğlu had prior acquaintance with the JDP leadership before the November 2002 elections.⁶²⁶ However, this intellectual relationship turned into a political one right afterwards. Davutoğlu was appointed as the Foreign Policy Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister during Abdullah Gül's brief tenure, a position he held until his appointment as the Minister of Foreign Affairs in May 1, 2009. He received the title of Ambassador (without Portfolio) that elevated his role within the state protocol.

Davutoğlu seems to have put his imprint on JDP's foreign policy from early on. The Party program, described in detail in the preceding chapter, shared his foreign policy outlook although he did not take part in its authorship.⁶²⁷ Therefore it can be said that he found a ready audience, supportive of his ideational orientation. The JDP leadership literally copied Davutoğlu's "adjacent basin" policy, quintessentially the novelty that the JDP foreign policy introduced in order to counterbalance the traditional Western orientation. In accordance with the foreign policy strategy he sketched out in *Stratejik Derinlik*, Davutoğlu focused on the need to develop multidimensional relations with multiple power centers and a neighborhood policy. Yet Davutoğlu's outlook did not

⁶²⁶ Faruk Bildirici, "Annesini 4 Yaşında Kaybetmiş bir Çocuk, İstanbul Erkek Lisesi'nin Sessiz Öğrencisi," *Hürriyet*, 3 May 2009.

⁶²⁷ The Party program was authored by Ambassador (R) Yaşar Yakış, who became the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Nov. 2002-March 2003). In our interview, he confirmed this and told that he wrote the foreign policy part of the Party program overnight as nobody in the Party had the expertise on foreign policy issues. Interview with Yaşar Yakış, 20 June 2013, Washington DC.

undermine Europeanization. Thus, while the government prioritized the EU process, which had turned out to be an existential dossier for the JDP per se; Davutoğlu concentrated on the need to broaden the focus of Turkish foreign policy.

Immediately after his debut in Ankara, Davutoğlu found three critical dossiers on his table, namely the EU membership process, Cyprus, and the looming crisis in Iraq. He saw an inseparable nexus between these: The EU membership perspective entailed harmony with European capitals about Cyprus and Iraq; the Cyprus issue became an organic part of the EU process; and Turkey's Iraq policy had the potential to derail the prospects for EU membership, if not the JDP's projections about a Turkish role in the Middle East.

Davutoğlu initially assumed an advisory role focusing on the JDP's regional foreign policy.⁶²⁸ He initially contributed with his intellectual capital, above all regarding the Middle East and relations with the Islamic world. The Iraqi crisis highlighted his active role and ability to influence the decision-making.⁶²⁹ From early on, he was occasionally authorized as a special representative of the government to conduct private domestic and foreign exchanges.⁶³⁰ He pointed to the possible disruptions the U.S. unilateralism might cause in the Middle East and underscored the need for international

⁶²⁸ It appears from the interviews and secondary sources that the JDP leadership, as newcomers to Ankara, co-opted the expertise of particularly the MFA bureaucracy regarding the EU process and Cyprus. This did not mean that the JDP cadres were isolated from the decision-making process. On the contrary, as suggested in the preceding chapter people like Zapsu and Bağis were actively involved. Davutoğlu, however, initially remained in the back stage as regards these two critical dossiers. He focused on Iraq and relations with the neighborhood. This rough division of labor was also confirmed by Yaşar Yakış. Interview with Yaşar Yakış,

⁶²⁹ For Davutoğlu's activism about Iraq See Murat Yetkin, "Zirvenin Özü Savaşı da Aşar," *Radikal*, 23 January 2003.

⁶³⁰ He met regional Ambassadors in Ankara and visited Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Murat Yetkin, "Kulislerde Sıkıntılı Anlar," *Radikal*, 7 February 2003; "Gül, Barışçı Çözüm için Putin'i Aradı," *Radikal*, 11 February 2003.

legitimacy against such a conjuncture.⁶³¹ He also suggested that being a “strategic partner”⁶³² entailed warning Washington against “overstretch.”⁶³³ His implicit motive was to strike the right balance between Turkey’s Western orientation and the JDP’s emerging regional policy.

As a result of Davutoğlu’s increasing role throughout the Iraqi crisis, the spotlights turned onto him. Directly and indirectly, his role, title (Ambassadorship), special missions, and exchanges came under public scrutiny. His overt opposition to the 1 March motion put him in a precarious position.⁶³⁴ However, rather than losing ground he expanded his influence due to both Erdoğan and Gül’s unwavering support. As Murrinson suggested “Prime Minister Erdogan elevated the office of Ahmet Davutoglu, the prime minister’s chief advisor on foreign policy, from the traditional status of a small bureau, which provides day-to-day counsel to the prime minister, to the source of strategic thinking and ideological support for the new foreign policy based on the Islamist roots of the current government.”⁶³⁵ Therefore, his portfolio expanded to include Cyprus⁶³⁶ and EU dossiers.⁶³⁷ He became the Prime Minister’s point man to coordinate policy particularly with the MFA. Thus, he moved on to put his weight in policy-making not just

⁶³¹ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Yabancı Asker Kabulü Radikal Bir Değişimdir” [Interview with Derya Sazak], *Milliyet*, 13 January 2003.

⁶³² Ibid..

⁶³³ A point he made in reply to the interviewer’s reference to Paul Kennedy’s book in *ibid.*. See, Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989, c1987 [1st Vintage Books ed.]).

⁶³⁴ “AKP'nin Dünü, Bugünü, Yarını...(01),” *Radikal*, 9 October 2004.

⁶³⁵ Murrinson, p. 947.

⁶³⁶ “Weston Başbakanlık'ta,” *Radikal*, 3 March 2004.

⁶³⁷ “AB Travma Yaşar,” *Radikal*, 20 September 2004.

ideationally, but also politically.

Davutoğlu's excerpt titled "Turkey must be a central country" was testament to his increasing command of the JDP foreign policy.⁶³⁸ Assuming an increasing public role, he came out to articulate the contours of the JDP's foreign policy against global and regional dynamics in flux. He foresaw a three-staged post-9/11 international order to be identified by psychological, strategic and order-institution phases. He believed that, as of 2004, the unilateral American attempt to institute an international order entered a strategic phase that would probably last another 10-15 years and would witness the formation of various international coalitions until a new international order was instituted. Thereof, he sketched a similar sequence for Turkish foreign policy after 2003, starting with the psychological "recovery" and strategy-building phases based on multi-track and multidimensional foreign policy. Finally, he designed a roadmap for Turkey to assume a "central country" role at the third phase, thereby overstepping his earlier posture in *Stratejik Derinlik*. In a way, Davutoğlu hastened to assign Turkey a central role three years after he conceded that despite ample potential Turkey was not there yet.

He hinted at three key developments to vindicate his posture, namely political stability, economic development and internal consolidation. The ability to defuse three critical issues, i.e. EU, Iraq and Cyprus, via crisis management paved the way for the subsequent strategic outreach. Thus, Turkish foreign policy was set for activism in international organizations in 2004 and adjacent basins in harmony with EU in 2005, followed by activism in Africa and Latin America in 2006; and readiness to face the challenges of globalization in 2007 with the ultimate objective to evolve from a regional

⁶³⁸ Davutoğlu, "Türkiye Merkez Ülke Olmalı."

to a global actor.

Davutoğlu also articulated five *policy principles* for the emerging JDP foreign policy.⁶³⁹ First, he underlined the need to strike a *balance between freedom and security*. His initial motivation was to defy the Cold War mentality and the reverberant security outlook that has affected Turkish foreign policy. In this vein, while the post 9/11 international order revitalized and even perpetuated a similar outlook and discourse, Davutoğlu underlined the JDP government's commitment to fend off a similar securitization.⁶⁴⁰ He accentuated that despite this change in international conjuncture, Turkey was able to expand domestic liberties without risking national security. For him, possible success in building on this approach would turn Turkey into a model with enhanced liberty and security. Hereby, Davutoğlu constructed a direct link between domestic politics and foreign policy.

Second, *the zero-problems with neighbors* policy in conjunction with the first principle aimed at neutralizing the defensive and insular mood in Turkish foreign policy that haunted relations with the neighbors. It essentially served Davutoğlu's objective to overcome the psychological barriers both inside Turkey and in the neighborhood against the establishment of constructive relations. This policy principle in itself aimed at creating a more favorable environment to develop relations with Turkey's neighborhood that was characterized particularly in the 1990s by "confrontation, mistrust, and the use of threats and force."⁶⁴¹ Therefore, it built on a priori acceptance of neighbors as potential

⁶³⁹ Ibid..

⁶⁴⁰ Aras and Karakaya-Polat analyzed the effects of this desecuritization in relations with Syria and Iran. See Bülent Aras and Rabia Karakaya-Polat, "From Conflict to Cooperation: Desecuritization of Turkey's Relations with Syria and Iran," *Security Dialogue* 39, no. 5 (October 2008), pp. 495-516.

⁶⁴¹ Joshua W. Walker, "Introduction: The Sources of Turkish Grand Strategy- 'Strategic Depth' and 'Zero-

allies and providers of security. The latter claim was basically a fix for the inability of Turkey's Western security identity to ensure domestic and regional security. The new regional policy would be based on security for all, high-level political dialogue, economic integration and interdependence, and multicultural coexistence that internalized holism, integration and multiculturalism as foreign policy tools.

Third, *multidimensional and multi-track policy* was again designed to transcend Turkey's predominant Western orientation and status quoism. Davutoğlu underscored that "given the current dynamism in international relations, Turkey cannot pursue a static and single parameter foreign policy."⁶⁴² He alluded to the divisions within the West, in particular about the Iraq War that invalidated the perception of a monolithic Western bloc. He underlined Turkey's need to assume a problem-solving stance, to take initiatives supportive of global and regional peace, and create a zone of attraction against growing polarizations between East-West, Islam-West, and South-North axes. His idea was to rise above these cleavages and to define common interests to overcome them as a regional and global actor. Therefore, Turkey had to concurrently develop relations both with Russia and the EU, with the neighbors and the U.S.; which for him was not a contradiction, but rather the defining principle of the emerging foreign policy. In that sense, none was an alternative to another, but served as parts of a larger strategic vision. Multi-track diplomacy was in fact a natural offshoot of this extended focus. As such, diplomatic activity was no more confined to state-to-state relations, but increasingly involved non-state actors such as NGOs, business associations, and cultural exchanges.

Problems' in Context," in *Turkey's Global Strategy*, LSE Ideas Report SR007 (May 2011), p. 6.

⁶⁴² Davutoğlu, "Türkiye Merkez Ülke Olmalı."

Fourth, he offered a *new diplomatic approach* to overcome the negative effects of Turkey's monoculturalism. He contested the applicability of the bridge metaphor, which was employed by Özal and Cem in particular towards that end. He argued that this claim for linking two different entities impaired Turkey's insider status in both the West and the East. Rather Turkey, as a "central country," should act as an Easterner⁶⁴³ in the Eastern fora, and in accordance with its Western identity in Western platforms. His was a distinctive appeal in the sense that it also voiced readiness to contribute to the intra-civilizational dialogue. This, according to Davutoğlu, entailed an ideational shift both among the intellectuals and the society at large. It also hinted at a discursive turn in Turkish foreign policy, which came to advocate political and economic cooperation. This new diplomatic approach would also advocate "win-win" solutions in foreign policy.

Finally, Davutoğlu named this new orientation as *rhythmic diplomacy*. He employed the word rhythmic to denote the ability to respond to different policy needs in a view to balance mobility and harmony.⁶⁴⁴ Symbolizing dynamism rather than a static approach, he essentially aspired to manage irregularity and disequilibrium.⁶⁴⁵ This essentially called for proactive diplomacy that entailed readiness to respond to alternative challenges and opportunities inherent in the evolving nature of the new international

⁶⁴³ Eastern and Easterner generally alluded to non-Western roots, identity, and affiliation.

⁶⁴⁴ Davutoğlu argued that "What is meant by rhythm is the co-existence of mobility and harmony. If there is mobility but not harmony it might lead to chaos. Unnecessary leaps might bring along unnecessary risks. However, if you have rhythm but no mobility than you will not make any progress. There needs to be mobility as well. Yet, if you desire for the perfect harmony and wait for it there will be no mobility." Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy," Speech at the Mayflower Hotel organized by SETA D.C., Washington, D.C., 8 December 2009. Cited in Murat Yeşiltaş and Ali Balcı, "A Dictionary of Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Party Era: A Conceptual Map," *SAM Papers*, no. 7 (Ankara: Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 2011), p. 13.

⁶⁴⁵ In that sense this usage totally differed from its literal meaning, i.e. "occurring regularly" and had more to do with its secondary meaning as "increasing and decreasing tones in musical performances to denote periodic stress followed by a contrast."

order. The rhythmic diplomacy principle served to legitimize diversified relations with Western and non-Western countries, in spite of different orientations and occasionally conflicting agendas. In practice, Davutoğlu exemplified the JDP's dialogue and exchanges with the U.S. and regional countries, Russia and the EU as proof of this emerging principle. Overall he alluded to harmony⁶⁴⁶ between policies and values, and between institutions and foreign policy actors in Turkish foreign policy.⁶⁴⁷ Reiterating an earlier theme from his *Stratejik Derinlik*, he thus underlined the need to overcome monoculturalism. Turkey could only become a “central country” provided it eliminated the discord between its multicultural identities and monocultural foreign policy.

Davutoğlu's interview with *Anlayış* in February 2004 indicated his growing role as regards the JDP's foreign policy.⁶⁴⁸ On Cyprus, he espoused an integrationist and pro-reconciliation approach.⁶⁴⁹ He envisioned economic and cultural integration for the Eastern Mediterranean as well as for the other regions. He articulated “commercial peace theory” type arguments for the broader neighborhood, which envisioned developing economic and social interdependence and eventually regional integration. Yet these arguments did not go so far to dwell on possible spillover effects towards political integration.

⁶⁴⁶ This overall quest for harmony between policies, actors and even values and instruments is a reminder of his earlier argument that “Islam assumes a harmony between values and mechanisms.” See Davutoğlu, *Alternative Paradigms*.

⁶⁴⁷ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Türkiye’yi Markalaştıran ‘Ritmik Diplomasi’ (‘Rhythmic diplomacy’ earned branding for Turkey)” (Interview with Baki Günay), Netpano.com, 24 Ocak 2005. [10 August 2013].

⁶⁴⁸ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Türkiye Küresel Güçtür! (Turkey is a global power!),” (Interview with M. İbrahim Turhan), *Anlayış* 10 (March 2004). Available at: <http://www.anlayis.net/makaleGoster.aspx?makaleid=3331> [25 June 2013].

⁶⁴⁹ “We need to evaluate Cyprus, not as if 700 thousand Greek Cypriots would threaten Anatolia, but in a broader picture whereby they also intensify their relations with the Anatolia [n mainland] for integration.” Ibid.

Davutoğlu's emblematic "zero-problems with neighbors policy" was also elaborated in this article.⁶⁵⁰ He argued that a possible move towards reconciliation in Cyprus would contribute to this policy, extend Turkey's diplomatic flexibility in other fields, and enable involvement in resolution of other conflicts in the region such as Palestine and Nagorno-Karabakh. His overall articulation of zero-problems policy was again articulated in the same article:

Zero-problems [policy], to be reached with all neighboring countries, is one of the fundamental principles of Turkey's new foreign policy. This principle builds on [the need to] avoid the psychology [based on the assumption that] "Turkey's neighborhood is full of eternal enemies," and the defensive reflex thereof.

Although we are going through a war in the region [in Iraq], today the balanced and healthy relations [we have] developed with Syria, Iran, Georgia, Bulgaria, and Greece demonstrate that this [foreign policy] principle is in force. [Besides] there are two key subjects awaiting resolution: [relations with] Armenia and the Greek Cypriot Administration. At this point, the Caucasia and Cyprus policies, which would serve as forerunners of [regional] openings and whose parameters would be determined by our [discretion], would free these issues from problems and [in return] zero problems with neighbors will benefit us through providing a larger room for maneuver.⁶⁵¹

⁶⁵⁰ The JDP government espoused "zero-tolerance to torture" discourse from early on as a slogan to counter criticisms by the EU. Davutoğlu's "zero-problems with neighbors policy" followed this and swiftly became a catchword among government circles.

⁶⁵¹ Davutoğlu, "Türkiye Küresel Güçtür!"

Davutoğlu underlined that while the JDP government's EU membership objective initially got more public attention, relations with Asian countries were also on track. Turkish foreign policy's "Asian leg" was not being undermined as exchanges with the East and Central Asian countries continued. He alluded to the ongoing consultations and exchanges with Russia and underlined the need to draw an area of common interests with Russia in Eurasia and form a "security area" in Caucasia and Central Asia, which would free the whole region from conflict of interests between the two countries. He suggested that the necessary mechanisms should be put in force in order to fend off the possible negative effects of Turkey's EU integration on relations with Russia and Eurasia.

Overall his vision prescribed acting in accordance with own [local] projects, free from extra-regional intervention. This "regional project and paradigm" would pave the door for serious transformations in the region. In the Middle East, Turkey, rather than a reactive approach in pursuit of the U.S. agenda, was in need of a proactive approach and had to share the ideational bases of this approach with regional interlocutors. The reasoning behind this approach was related to an "ownership" perspective that would enable self-transformation within regional dynamics.

Davutoğlu also assigned a prominent role to economic and cultural interaction. This would support an intraregional mobilization, which would invalidate the "terribly drawn national borders" and turn them into extended zones of cooperation. His views on relations with northern Iraq were particularly outstanding, given the state bureaucracy's by-then inability to enunciate the "Kurdish" question even nominally. Davutoğlu suggested that the discussions about the region should not focus on border arrangements,

but rather on to what extent Turkish products, ideas and solutions could be made effective there. He was against redrawing of the current borders. Instead, he advocated accepting the present borders and extending them through economic and cultural exchanges.

On EU membership, he reiterated his earlier comments depicted in *Stratejik Derinlik*. Thus, he saw the decision on Turkey's membership status as a litmus test about the EU's decision to become alternatively a global or continental power. The former entailed drawing a strategic link with Asia and multiculturalism. The latter, on the other hand, meant a pursuit of self-sufficiency and inability to embrace globalization. For Davutoğlu, "Turkey was ambitious enough to put a claim for 'transforming Europe,' had sufficient historical and cultural background to have a say in discussions on [the future of] Europe, and would enhance Europe's international strategic clout."⁶⁵² This was a broader perspective in comparison to the technicality of the EU process, which entailed first and foremost harmonization with *acquis communautaire*. These geostrategic arguments would come to dominate the government's discourse over time.

Davutoğlu did not much elaborate on modern Turkish political history as his main focus was directed towards first civilizational studies and then Turkish foreign policy. Yet in a 2004 interview with the *Al-Ahram Weekly* magazine he expressed his views on the history of Turkish politics, which he thought was based on a center-periphery dichotomy.⁶⁵³ For him, the struggle between "a bureaucratic elite which was trying to

⁶⁵² Davutoğlu referred to the EU as "Europe." This carried first a historical and geographical meaning. It also reflected his strategic vision, described in *Stratejik Derinlik* and built on "great power diplomacy."

⁶⁵³ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Harmonising Immutable Values and Ever-changing Mechanisms," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, no. 716, 11 November 2004. It would be useful to remember that the most prominent defender of this dichotomy in Turkish studies was his Ph.D. dissertation advisor, Şerif Mardin. See a classical article by Şerif Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?" *Daedalus* 102, no. 1, Post-

modernise society, and the periphery, characterised by the grassroots in rural areas, which was composed of more conservative and traditional groups”⁶⁵⁴ defined the course of Turkish politics. “At the centre, the bureaucracy tried to transform society, and at the periphery, a society with traditional and more Islamic values tried to penetrate the political system.”⁶⁵⁵ He recognized the JDP’s role as a continuation of a process started thanks to multipartism. Thus in line with Menderes, Demirel and Özal’s agendas, the JDP served the ultimate cause of the representation of the periphery.

Davutoğlu’s interview again with *Anlayış* in December 2005 indicated the crystallization of his foreign policy vision and its increasing influence on the JDP’s foreign policy line.⁶⁵⁶ He now assumed a firm and clear position on Turkey’s “central country” status and its ability to shape the course of events in the broader neighborhood. To support his argument, he reiterated the centrality of Turkey’s historical and geographical position.⁶⁵⁷ Accepting the risks of this centrality, he underlined the JDP government’s responsibility to neutralize the possible risks. He also pointed to the need to benefit from the underlying potential. He refuted the conflict-oriented approach of the traditional paradigm, and instead proposed a “vision-oriented foreign policy.”⁶⁵⁸ He

Traditional Societies (Winter, 1973), pp. 169-190.

⁶⁵⁴ Davutoğlu, “Harmonising Immutable Values.”

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid..

⁶⁵⁶ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Kriz Odaklı Değil, Vizyon Odaklı Dış Politika” (Not a conflict-oriented, but a vision-oriented foreign policy)” (Interview with M. Mücahit Küçükylmaz), *Anlayış* 31 (December 2005). Available at: <http://www.anlayis.net/makaleGoster.aspx?makaleid=4209> [16 July 2013].

⁶⁵⁷ “The Balkans, Caucasia and Middle East cannot be understood without reference to the Ottomans. Now, from the Bosnia-Hercegovina’s structure to Kosovo’s status, Iraq’s and Palestine’s structure, all issues require a historical reference. And this is a history which centers around Turkey.” Ibid.

⁶⁵⁸ This theme was reiterated by Davutoğlu, to include his first speech as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. See “Davutoğlu: Dış Politika 'Kriz Odaklı' Değil 'Vizyon Odaklı',” *Dünya Bülteni*, 2 May 2009. Available

rejected the approach that advocated staying aloof from the crises and declared Turkey's readiness for conflict-resolution. For him, this has essentially been the cornerstone of the government's foreign policy regarding Cyprus, Iraq, and the EU. He envisioned a similar approach in 2005, whereby Turkey would broaden its conflict resolution efforts to untapped regions such as Africa and Asia.

Quintessentially, Davutoğlu's ultimate objective was first to extend Turkish foreign policy's scope to establish, in a sense, genuine relations with non-Western countries; second, benefiting from its historical, geographic and cultural affinities turning these relations into an overall asset in relocating Turkey as a central, as opposed to a peripheral, power. He also anticipated that Turkey's strategic depth vindicated a claim to emerge as a "model country" that could prove the possibility of playing an active and insider role both in Western and non-Western fora.⁶⁵⁹

Davutoğlu underscored economic integration as an instrument of this diffusion. He seemed to have in mind the German experience, which symbolized a shift from a military to economic expansion model utilizing peaceful means. To that end, he acknowledged the role of non-state actors in Turkish foreign policy's new orientation:

The most important tool for carving out Turkey's depth in its immediate neighborhood is economic interdependence. A country that has established a legitimate basis domestically and moves forward with self-esteem and a

at: <http://www.dunyabulteni.net/index.php?aType=haberArchive&ArticleID=75516> [16 July 2013]. Prime Minister Erdoğan also employed the same wording. See "Başbakan Erdoğan: 'Dış Politikada Kriz Odaklı Değil Vizyon Odaklı Yaklaşımı Temel Aldık (We based our foreign policy not on conflict-oriented but vision-oriented approach)'," Haberler.com, 31 August 2007. Available at: <http://www.haberler.com/basbakan-erdogan-dis-politikada-kriz-odakli-degil-haberi/> [16 July 2013].

⁶⁵⁹ Davutoğlu, "Yabancı Asker Kabulü Radikal Bir Değişimdir."

nationally accepted strategy will not be wary about neighboring states... Exports are such a significant parameter for Turkey's strategic vision that how much our exports increased and to which regions we export are completely an indicator for (your) strategic vision. These objectives need to be put in place by the politicians, but in order to accomplish them [the same political authority] should both motivate the private sector and remove all barriers on its way. Actually, the outstanding and leading companies of the private sector are vanguards of our foreign policy and strategic vision.⁶⁶⁰

In a January 2008 interview with CNN Turk TV, Davutoğlu explained three other [policy] principles, in addition to economic interdependence, of the emerging paradigm as regards regional policy in the Middle East.⁶⁶¹ First, he espoused a holistic security approach that aimed at security for all. This essentially was a rejection of regional cleavages and supported the goal of regional integration. Second, he prioritized “dialogue as a means of solving crises.”⁶⁶² This quest for dialogue with all groups inherently formed the backbone of “Turkey's role as a facilitator.”⁶⁶³ The last principle was “cultural coexistence and plurality.” Davutoğlu referred to this principle as a safety valve for maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity, the primary focus of Turkish foreign policy at that time. Yet this stance derived from *a priori* acceptance of Turkey's multiculturalism

⁶⁶⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “İş Dünyası Artık Dış Politikanın Öncülerinden,” (Interview with Ahmet Han), *Turkishtime*, April-May 2004.

⁶⁶¹ The interview was later published as an article. Davutoğlu, “Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision,” pp. 77-96.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*

and motivation to pursue a foreign policy agenda in line with this principle. In employing these policy principles, the ultimate objective in his mind was elevating Turkey to a “global actor” status. This entailed a central role in the neighborhood identified by a holistic approach that was to enter into dialogue with all parties and play an insider’s role based on entrenched relations with multiple power centers.

This holistic approach more and more defined Davutoğlu’s foreign policy outlook. In a late 2008 interview with *Le Monde*, he underscored the need for an inclusive process that would bring all actors on board towards regional conciliation.⁶⁶⁴ At a time when the neo-con Bush administration was leaving office, he argued that the Greater Middle East project has already collapsed. Thus, he proposed to form an “axis of stability” to replace implicitly destabilizing “the axis of evil.” In accord, he advised the Obama administration to enter into dialogue with all groups including Hamas and Taliban, whom he argued were “not the same as al-Qaeda.”⁶⁶⁵ He also offered Turkey’s good offices in reaching out to these groups taking into account Ankara’s rapport with them.

Davutoğlu compiled his foreign policy vision and set out its objectives and principles in *Foreign Policy* in May 2010, a year after his debut as the Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁶⁶⁶ He reiterated Turkish foreign policy’s objective to adjust to the post-Cold War era via transcending bipolarism. Thus, it became a necessity to establish healthy relations with multiple power centers. Cognizant of the tension between Turkey’s

⁶⁶⁴ “Başbakan’ın Danışmanı: Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi Çöktü,” *Radikal*, 18 December 2008.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid..

⁶⁶⁶ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Zero-Problems Policy,” *Foreign Policy*, 20 May 2010. Available at: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/20/turkeys_zero_problems_foreign_policy [16 July 2013].

traditional Western orientation and the necessity to diversify relations, he declared a commitment to ensure harmony between the two. For him, Turkey's regional policy was not merely a strategic choice, but also signified the democratization of foreign policy that took into account the public opinion's call for a more active and interactive role. In other words, underlining the multicultural structure of Turkey's demographics, he assessed Turkey's involvement in the greater neighborhood as responsive to domestic political demands.

Still, he considered the Transatlantic and European ties as constant variables in Turkish foreign policy. He believed Ankara was in full alignment with NATO and the EU even with a more pronounced role thanks to its rising regional clout. He alluded to "Turkey's orientation and strategic alliance with the West [which] remains perfectly compatible with Turkey's involvement in, among others, Iraq, Iran, the Caucasus, the Middle East peace process, and Afghanistan."⁶⁶⁷

Davutoğlu listed "three methodological and five operational principles [that] drive Turkey's foreign policy today."⁶⁶⁸ What he called methodological principles were basically an attempt to demonstrate, yet again, the paradigmatic change and the arrival of "new foreign policy." A "visionary" as opposed to "crisis-oriented," i.e. reactive approach, which systemically determined the foreign policy course, did not necessarily point to a paradigmatic shift that Davutoğlu had in mind. In this case, equalizing variations in foreign policy style with foreign policy change would be falling into the same trap that a group of analysts made regarding the 1990s.

⁶⁶⁷ Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Zero-Problems Policy."

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid..

Nevertheless, the third principle he mentioned, namely “adoption of a new discourse and diplomatic style” hinted at an ideational change. Davutoğlu suggested that Turkey did not anymore employ a language of threats, but rather adopted a new language, which “prioritizes Turkey's civil-economic power, [...which, for him, eventually] resulted in the spread of Turkish soft power in the region.”⁶⁶⁹ The following sections will elaborate on this projected change.

In the same article, Davutoğlu also specified five “operational principles,” i.e. policy principles that guided his foreign policy outlook. With minor changes to his earlier article,⁶⁷⁰ he replaced “a new diplomatic approach” principle with “proactive and preemptive peace diplomacy” that actually originated from the very diplomatic approach he was earlier talking about. Feeling assured about regional policy, he assigned Turkish foreign policy a new role in brokering peace. The ensuing mediation efforts implicitly served his two broader objectives to first render Turkish foreign policy a predominant regional role and second to carve out a global actor status thereof. To grasp these objectives, he underscored the need to tune the right accord between domestic politics and foreign relations. Turkey with global aspirations was thus required to further democratize, realize the EU membership goal, maintain high-level cooperation with the U.S., and continue the course of regional integration. With the centennial of the Republic in 2023 in mind, he drew benchmarks for foreign policy success, “EU membership, regional integration in the form of security and economic cooperation, influential role in regional conflict resolution, participation in all global arenas and playing a determining

⁶⁶⁹ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Zero-Problems Policy.”

⁶⁷⁰ Davutoğlu, “Türkiye Merkez Ülke Olmalı.”

role in international organizations and rising among top 10 economies in the world.”⁶⁷¹

Overall, the review of Davutoğlu’s written works draws a dual focus on the civilizational dynamics and nation-state characteristics of Turkish foreign policy. Davutoğlu began with a commitment to explicate the distinctiveness and viability of the Islamic civilization. In that, he discerned a misfit between the unitarianism in Islamic cosmology and the particularism of the nation-state order, which he actually found alien for the former’s civilizational traits. His civilizational research later focused on the assumed need for civilizational transformation in the Western civilization and even the need for a new order to accommodate civilizational coexistence with the Islamic one. Later on, he developed an alternative foreign policy strategy for the very particularistic nation-state order he had previously frowned upon given Turkey’s civilizational, i.e. Islamic roots. In this case, he put forward “the near-basin policy” as a strategic model, which was supposed to overcome the anomalies in the extant traditional paradigm. His later works compromised his theoretical vision and the political atmosphere he was now operating both as a theoretician and a statesman. This evolution and the blend it produced have proven causal in understanding the emerging paradigm in Turkish foreign policy (See Table 5).

⁶⁷¹ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Zero-Problems Policy.”

Table-5. The JDP-Davutoğlu Policy Paradigm

Policy principles	Policy norms
Balance freedom and security	Defy the Cold War mentality and the reverberant security outlook/ Refrain from post-9/11 securitization (Soft power)
	Turn Turkey into a model with enhanced liberty, prosperity, and security (Turkey as a model)
Zero-problems with neighbors	Turkey is not surrounded by enemies (Break psychological barriers)
	Recognize neighbors as potential allies and providers of security (Non-Western security identity)
	Regional policy based on security for all, high-level political dialogue, economic integration and interdependence, and multicultural coexistence (Holism, integration and multiculturalism)
Multidimensional and multi-track policy	Transcend predominant Western orientation and status quoism (Adopt to post-Cold War order)
	Broaden Turkish foreign policy's focus and scope (Active multidimensionalism)
	Rise above regional-global cleavages and define common interests (Regional-global actor)
	Enlist non-governmental actors (Democratization of foreign policy)
New diplomatic approach	Overcome the negative effects of monoculturalism/ Promote Turkey's insider status in both Western and non-Western fora (Multiculturalism)
	Contribute to the intra-civilizational dialogue (Transcend the bridge metaphor)

	Discursive turn (Advocate peaceful-economic cooperation)
Rhythmic diplomacy	Manage irregularity and disequilibrium (Proactive diplomacy)
	Diversified relations with Western and non-Western countries (Readiness for fluidity)
	Seek harmony between policies and values, and between institutions and foreign policy actors in Turkish foreign policy (Domestic-foreign policy harmony)

CHAPTER 8

THE JDP'S FIRST TERM FOREIGN POLICY PRACTICE

After the November 2002 elections, the JDP government seemed to embrace the EU membership objective in full force. The immediate goal appeared to be getting a “fixed date”⁶⁷² for start of the accession negotiations. To that end, Erdoğan as the JDP leader waiting for a constitutional change to take over the premiership made demarches in the EU capitals.⁶⁷³ The tour gave a symbolic message to the Western world, reassuring Turkey’s “European vocation.” It also represented a move by the JDP leadership to preempt against probable questioning of its credentials, i.e. non-Western orientation in foreign policy.⁶⁷⁴

Initially the atmosphere in Ankara was “cautiously optimistic.”⁶⁷⁵ The JDP with a clear mandate from the electorate prioritized furthering the EU cause. The military regarded this as a positive development. President Sezer publicly advocated the EU process, himself seeking German support by an official visit to Berlin. The opposition

⁶⁷² The alternative of “date for a date” was clearly rejected by Ankara prior to the Summit. “Başkentte AB ve Kıbrıs Mesaisi,” *Hürriyet*, 30 November 2002.

⁶⁷³ Symbolically, the Greek Prime Minister Simitis invited Erdoğan to start his tour from Athens. “Erdoğan’a İlk Davet Simitis’ten,” *Radikal*, 5 November 2002. Later on, Erdoğan had to change his schedule, to make his first visit to Rome. Meanwhile, Gül and Davutoğlu were engaged in regional diplomacy to ward off looming crisis in Iraq.

⁶⁷⁴ This expectation about a dealignment from the West was valid both for domestic and external interlocutors. Notably, French President Chirac told his Turkish counterparts that they had been warned about such a reversal in Turkish foreign after 2002 elections. Interview with Abdullah Gül.

⁶⁷⁵ Murat Yetkin, “Asker ‘menfi değil’,” *Radikal*, 8 November 2002.

party, the Republican People's Party (RPP) adopted a pro-EU line. The civil society groups also rendered active support.⁶⁷⁶

The JDP government employed strategic and civilizational arguments to make the case for EU membership. First, Turkey was presented as a strategic asset that would magnify the EU's global power. Second, Turkey's membership would exemplify the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Third, it would prevent "the clash of civilizations" by disseminating a symbolic message that the EU "is not a Christian club."⁶⁷⁷ The government also reminded the EU of mutual commitments given Ankara's assiduous efforts to adapt EU reforms.⁶⁷⁸

The government's plan to strike a balance between accommodation and change in foreign policy was put into test against the EU process with the insurmountable Cyprus question. Europeanization symbolized the government's willingness to uphold the official line, i.e. to act within the parameters of the traditional paradigm. Yet it also paradoxically formed the backbone of the JDP's transformative agenda. To paraphrase Duran, "Kemalism's attempt to control Islam directed the ex-Islamists to a point whereby they came to spearhead efforts to realize Kemalism's ideal to Westernize Turkey."⁶⁷⁹ With due democratic reforms, the EU process, in turn, was envisioned to "weaken the political power of the military, the guardians of Kemalism."⁶⁸⁰ This realignment added further

⁶⁷⁶ "AB için Sivil İşbirliği," "Ermeni Patriği AB Lobisi için Paris'te," *Hürriyet*, 26 November 2002.

⁶⁷⁷ All three arguments were present in Erdoğan's press briefing after meeting with Danish Prime Minister Rasmussen. "Erdoğan AB'ye Sert Çıktı: Çifte Standart Uyguluyorlar," *Hürriyet*, 9 December 2002.

⁶⁷⁸ "Gül: AB Üzerine Düşeni Yapmalı," *Hürriyet*, 6 December 2002.

⁶⁷⁹ Duran, "JDP and Foreign Policy as an Agent of Transformation," p. 281.

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid.*.

“confusion”⁶⁸¹ to the domestic political spectrum. The traditionalists while publicly endorsing the EU objective, backed “the national cause” of Cyprus as an entrenched line of defense against the government, which undoubtedly was to derail the EU process.

This inherent conflict between Western orientation and status quoism became more apparent, once the Copenhagen Summit sent the ball back to Turkey’s court with setting a conditional “date for a date.” In contrast to the government’s restraint against the decision, “calming Turkish public opinion ... was left to President Sezer, who had refused to attend the summit in Copenhagen in anticipation of such a conclusion, and to [RPP leader] Baykal, to reflect the deeper disappointment of Kemalist elite opinion.”⁶⁸² The government declared Cyprus as “the next in line” in terms of policy reform.⁶⁸³ The traditionalists on their part, put weight behind Denktaş’s hawkish status quoism.

The JDP’s call for change in Cyprus brought it into occasional public disputes with the traditionalists.⁶⁸⁴ In that vein, the government experienced its first public disagreement with the bureaucracy following Erdoğan’s support for the Belgian model in Cyprus.⁶⁸⁵ The Foreign Ministry spokesman reminded the need for “continuity in policies of the state,” while the JDP leader felt obliged to correct his statement after receiving a

⁶⁸¹ Robins, “Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad,” pp. 547-566.

⁶⁸² Ibid., p. 557.

⁶⁸³ “Erdoğan: Şimdi Önümüzde Kıbrıs Var,” *Hürriyet*, 15 December 2002.

⁶⁸⁴ Pro-JDP press was trying to appease the traditionalists on Cyprus. To that end, they picked up Davutoğlu’s views, which were selectively based on traditionalist arguments though with a broader strategic outlook. See Ahmet Taşgetiren, “Davutoğlu’nu Okumak,” *Yeni Şafak*, 28 January 2003.

⁶⁸⁵ In fact, the JDP’s electoral program referred to the Belgian model. Fırat considered this as an important step on the part of the JDP to do away with the traditional policy regarding the Cyprus question. See Melek Fırat, “AKP Hükümetinin Kıbrıs Politikası [Cyprus policy of the JDP government]” in *AKP Kitabı*, p. 444.

briefing from the MFA.⁶⁸⁶ The urgency of finding a solution increased after the UN Secretary General disclosed the Annan Plan as “a sound basis for agreement on a comprehensive settlement”⁶⁸⁷ on 11 November 2002. Thenceforth, it was Turkish Cypriot leader Denктаş’s turn to ignore, delay and confront the JDP’s support for the Plan. An informal Summit at Çankaya attended by the government and the military command declared support for Denктаş’s stance,⁶⁸⁸ despite his open disagreement with the JDP leadership. However, this did not prevent the TRNC leader from literally closing the door to the JDP’s demands.⁶⁸⁹ As the imminent war in Iraq dominated the agenda, the failure of this very first attempt by the JDP was sealed “when Denктаş visited Ankara on 6 March Prime Minister Gül found himself among the minority at a critical meeting hosted by President Sezer and including the chief of the general staff, Hilmi Ozkok. “Having rallied his supporters among the Kemalist establishment, Denктаş was made secure by the joint decision to reject the referendum.”⁶⁹⁰

The JDP’s Iraq policy, against tremendous pressure from reverse angles by Washington on the one hand and by the anti-war public opinion on the other, was

⁶⁸⁶ “Atina Boşuna Sevinmiş,” *Radikal*, 7 November 2002.

⁶⁸⁷ “Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus,” *UN Security Council*, S/2003/398, 1 April 2003. Available at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N03/305/59/PDF/N0330559.pdf?OpenElement> [3 July 2012].

⁶⁸⁸ “MGK’dan Denктаş’a Destek,” *Hürriyet*, 29 November 2002.

⁶⁸⁹ Denктаş reiterated that he could not accept the Annan Plan before comprehensive negotiations under the JDP’s pressure to reach a conclusion before the 28 February 2003 deadline. Thus, he asked the JDP government to “openly tell whether they are ready to sign the document as it is put before us, if they have given up the [traditional] principles on this ‘national cause.’ Then, someone who could agree with it would be found, it could be signed and it would be all over.” “Denктаş’tan Erdoğan’a Rest,” *Hürriyet*, 25 January 2003.

⁶⁹⁰ Robins, “Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad,” p. 559.

characterized more by oscillation and indecisiveness than by a predetermined course of action. The background narrative has been well-documented.⁶⁹¹ Yet, at its hour of calling the JDP government stumbled due to its syncretic and insecure identity that sought Western support against the traditionalists in domestic politics, while aiming at putting its own mark by pursuing a multi-axis course in foreign policy. The looming war imperiled both objectives and even worse exacerbated national security concerns that further heightened the military bureaucracy's concerns.

The negotiations about the transit of U.S. troops to Iraq began prior to the JDP's assumption of power. Against American pressure to finalize a decision the government accentuated Turkey's "red lines" regarding the future of Iraq. Though Ankara would have preferred the status quo to the uncertainty of war, it set basically three conditions namely the indivisibility and preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity; the unacceptability of a Kurdish political entity as well as the necessity to keep Mosul and Kirkuk under central government's control; and the protection of the Turcomans' rights.⁶⁹² These preconditions were actually articulated by the military-civilian bureaucracy,⁶⁹³ who was regarded as "the interlocutor" by Washington, as opposed to the coalition government.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁹¹ For a comprehensive account, see Murat Yetkin, *Tezkere: Irak Savaşı'nın Gerçek Öyküsü* [Parliamentary motion: The real story of the Iraq war] (İstanbul: Remzi Yayınevi, 2004). Excerpts from the book were printed as a seven-part series. Murat Yetkin, "Irak Krizinin Perde Arkası 1-7," *Radikal*, 18-24 January 2004; Fikret Bila, *Ankara'da Irak Savaşları: Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Gizli Belgelerle 1 Mart Tezkeresi* [The Iraq wars in Ankara: The civilian coup attempt and March 1 motion in secret documents], 6th ed. (Cağaloğlu, İstanbul: Güncel Yayıncılık, 2007). Also See Şaban Kardeş, "Turkey and the Iraqi Crisis," in *The Emergence of a New Turkey*, pp. 306-330.

⁶⁹² Mustafa Kibaroğlu, "Clash of Interests over Northern Iraq Drives Turkish-Israeli Alliance to a Crossroads" *Middle East Journal* 59, no. 2 (Spring 2005), pp. 246-264.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

⁶⁹⁴ Murat Yetkin, "Irak Krizinin Perde Arkası-1," *Radikal*, 18 January 2004.

After November 2002 elections, the new government followed the bureaucracy's line this time regarding the Iraq policy.⁶⁹⁵ As such, policy articulation and even sensitive negotiations with the U.S. depended largely on the expertise of the bureaucracy.⁶⁹⁶ This could be construed as a comforting act to demonstrate the JDP's unwillingness to overstep "national security" matters, given that the military deemed the Iraq dossier an integral part of the "terrorism problem." On the other hand, the military's line that tilted towards the anti-war camp, in this case was seen by the government as a preferable cushion against American pressures demanding support for the war effort.

In the meanwhile, the JDP's quest to strike a tune between two foreign policy objectives, i.e. Western orientation and multi-axis foreign policy, stimulated Turkey's regional initiative, which in effect symbolized the JDP's first overture to the Islamic countries. Turkey hosted the Neighboring Countries of Iraq meeting in Istanbul, bringing together the Foreign Ministers of Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt. To placate the traditionalists, it was portrayed as a purposive contact in "search of international legitimacy."⁶⁹⁷ Even the schedule was calibrated as it was synchronized with the bilateral visit of the German Foreign Minister that took place on the sidelines of the meeting.

In fact, the government's priority was to proceed with the EU process that promised "win-win" outcomes politically and economically. The government also took into consideration not falling apart from the general anti-war climate in the EU that "could have derailed the whole EU process."⁶⁹⁸ In that vein, the JDP leadership would

⁶⁹⁵ Robins, "Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad," p. 560.

⁶⁹⁶ Deniz Bölükbaşı, *1 Mart Vakası* [The March 1 event], 3rd ed. (İstanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2008).

⁶⁹⁷ Murat Yetkin, "Irak Krizinin Perde Arkası-5," *Radikal*, 22 January 2004.

⁶⁹⁸ Interview with Abdullah Gül.

have opted for concentrating on the reforms and the Cyprus dossier, rather than facing the double threats of war or isolation in Iraq. Inadvertently, it ended up experiencing both, when the Turkish Parliament refused to comply with the government's request to open up the Turkish territory for deployment of American forces on 1 March 2003.⁶⁹⁹ This was first of all, a reflection of the public opinion. Though the motion "was lost on a technicality,"⁷⁰⁰ short of three votes, and called a "democratic accident," the result itself eventually confirmed the public mood. Second, the JDP was obliged to assume all-responsibility for the motion, as neither the military nor the President were willing to "to do the AKP [JDP] any favours."⁷⁰¹ Third, the result has shown the limits of being everything to everyone, acting free from a principled foreign policy program. In this case, the government hoped for cooperating with the U.S. while not falling back on the EU process, prospective neighborhood policy and domestic electoral support. Yet there were trade-offs among these choices.

In analysis of the JDP's earlier term foreign policy, a much-referred theme focusing on differences within the JDP leadership. i.e. "the lack of unifying leadership and the underlying clash between pro-Gül and pro-Erdoğan groupings within the party,"⁷⁰² stands incomplete at best. Gül confirmed that his stance was different from that of Erdoğan vis-a-vis the motion.⁷⁰³ While Erdoğan was more willing to get it through

⁶⁹⁹ Erdoğan later regretted not being given an authority to control events in northern Iraq by the Parliament. See Soli Özel, "10 Yıl Sonra Tezkere (2)," *Habertürk*, 2 March 2013.

⁷⁰⁰ Robins, "Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad," p. 565.

⁷⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 564.

⁷⁰² Kardaş, "Turkey and the Iraqi Crisis," p. 322.

⁷⁰³ Interview with Abdullah Gül.

without any hurdles. Gül favored a fair parliamentary vote without pressing for a prior party decision. Although Gül's line prevailed in the end, it would be too far to assume their differences were factional and even ideological. While Gül spearheaded efforts to build a regional platform for "an alternative solution without war,"⁷⁰⁴ he did not espouse an anti-American or "Islamic" stance. When he came to a conclusion about the inevitability of the war, he declared that the government would support the U.S. efforts in conformity with the national interests. In vindication, he pointed to Baghdad's intransigence to secure a way out.⁷⁰⁵

Moreover, one should also note that it was Gül, in his capacity as the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who offered to open up the Turkish territory to the American forces later on, an offer this time rebuffed by Washington.⁷⁰⁶ Meanwhile, notwithstanding a general perception, prior to the war Erdoğan as the JDP leader did not unequivocally follow a pragmatic and pro-U.S. line. In that sense, he went as far as offering to meet Saddam Hussein in person provided it would help the anti-war efforts.⁷⁰⁷ Likewise Gül, he reiterated Turkey's reservations about the war and made support for the U.S. war effort conditional on acceptance of Turkey's preconditions.⁷⁰⁸

On that note, linking the failure of *tezkere* to Chief Advisor Davutoğlu's

⁷⁰⁴ "Başbakan Gül Suriye Lideri Esat ile Görüştü: Savaşsız Çözüm İstiyoruz," *Hürriyet*, 4 January 2003.

⁷⁰⁵ "Gül: Günah Bizden Gitti," *Hürriyet*, 5 February 2003.

⁷⁰⁶ Murat Yetkin, "Irak Krizinin Perde Arkası-7," *Radikal*, 24 January 2004.

⁷⁰⁷ "Barış İçin Saddam'la Görüşürüm," *Hürriyet*, 24 January 2003.

⁷⁰⁸ "Erdoğan: Önce Türkiye'nin Talepleri," *Hürriyet*, 19 February 2003.

theoretical-political position in Iraq policy contradicts the course of events.⁷⁰⁹ First, the weighted role of Davutoğlu, a newcomer to Ankara experiencing his first months, in the decision-making process was dubious at best. Second, though his opposition to the motion was well-known, Davutoğlu's political influence should have affected Gül and Erdoğan, not the Parliamentarians whose hesitations led to the failure in the end. On the other hand, Davutoğlu himself tried to draw a balance between his theoretical background and the political realities.⁷¹⁰

In early January 2003, he distanced Turkey's position from the unilateralist position of the U.S..⁷¹¹ That position, which was shared by many within the JDP had to do primarily with concerns about the prospect of war in Iraq and its possible domestic political reverberations. Davutoğlu himself specified the government's regional policy as "the prevention of a broader chaotic atmosphere in the Middle East because of the Iraqi conflict," and assigned Turkey a central role in conflict-prevention. However, he also acknowledged Turkey's "red lines," and was careful to underline continuity in Turkey's Iraq policy based on "national interests."⁷¹² Nevertheless, one should note both Davutoğlu's and the JDP government's activism during the pre-Iraq war period, which actually introduced their novel approach vis-à-vis the regional interlocutors.

If anything, the post-*tezkere* period made the government's lack of an articulated foreign policy more apparent, particularly on Iraq. Despite an earlier indecision about supporting the U.S. war efforts, the government later on grew concerned about

⁷⁰⁹ Ertuğrul Özkök, "Kılavuz Yine O Danışmanları mı?" *Hürriyet*, 8 April 2003.

⁷¹⁰ Davutoğlu, "Yabancı Asker Kabulü Radikal Bir Değişimdir."

⁷¹¹ Ruşen Çakır, "Davutoğlu: Amerika'da Çok Önemli Bir Koz Elde Edeceğiz," *Vatan*, 7 January 2004.

⁷¹² *Ibid.*

decoupling from Washington. Ankara's concerns concentrated on possible political-security threats emanating from Iraq as well as possible disruption of American support for its domestic reform agenda including economic reconstruction. Once the JDP leader Erdoğan assumed the premiership, Ankara appeared ready to put through the very same motion to let the American troops' transit. The expectation in return was to have a possible say and presence in northern Iraq in order to stem the emergence of a Kurdish political entity.⁷¹³ This time, however, the Kurds vocally reacted against Turkish presence even threatening Ankara with armed confrontation.⁷¹⁴ In the end, the US settled with asking merely for overflight permits from Turkey and appeased the Kurds by warning Ankara against any incursion into northern Iraq.⁷¹⁵

Though the parliamentary decision increased Turkey's soft power in the region and anti-war EU capitals, it was written off as a "foreign policy failure."⁷¹⁶ As such, Ankara not only endangered its security after forfeiting its say on the future of Iraq, but it also risked the sustainability of political and economic reform program given that "American endorsement" was deemed critical "as one of the unwritten rules of governing Turkey."⁷¹⁷ Thus, the JDP's room for maneuver narrowed. Absorbing the shock over time, the government moved on to concentrate on the EU dossier.

⁷¹³ "Gül: Türk Askeri K. Irak'a Girecek," *Hürriyet*, 21 March 2003.

⁷¹⁴ "Barzani: TSK Sınırı Geçerse Büyük Acılar Olur," *Hürriyet*, 20 March 2003; "İçişlerimize Karışmayın," *Hürriyet*, 13 April 2003; "Barzani: Türkiye'nin Girmemesi Zaferimizdir," *Hürriyet*, 16 April 2003. The Iraqi Kurds also raised their opposition to Turkish presence in international media. See "W. Post'a Türkleri Sokmayın İlanı," *Hürriyet*, 8 March 2003.

⁷¹⁵ "Bush'tan Sert Mektup," *Hürriyet*, 24 March 2003. In fact, the letter was dated 13 March 2003, though it was disclosed later on.

⁷¹⁶ Kardaş, "Turkey and the Iraqi Crisis," p. 306.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

The 1 March decision to rebuff the deployment of U.S. troops to Iraq via Turkish territory helped to remove certain stumbling blocks before the EU process. In Turkey, “The Euro-skeptics- a loose affiliation of right- and left-wing politicians, and an important part of the security establishment and military-that Turkey's strategic importance would always ensure U.S. support ... [and the] assumed American support had led this group to argue that Turkey could achieve EU membership without stringently implementing some of the more sensitive reforms needed to meet the Copenhagen criteria”⁷¹⁸ at a minimum lost moral ground domestically. Externally, Turkey demonstrated its democratic maturity as well as political independence from the U.S., which neutralized the argument depicting Turkey as a prospective “American Trojan-horse”⁷¹⁹ inside the EU.

The immediate issue concerning the EU process was again the Cyprus question. After a failed first attempt to change course, the JDP government was reminded of its urgency.⁷²⁰ Thus, Ankara renounced the so-called “no solution is the solution policy [in favor of] a win-win solution.”⁷²¹ This entailed breaking down Denktaş’s predominant authority both in the TRNC and Turkey. To that end, the JDP leadership followed a dual approach to pressurize the Turkish Cypriot leader by forcing him to participate in the peace negotiations and supporting the pro-EU opposition, a turnaround from the traditional Turkish stance that rebuked engagement with the dissident groups among the

⁷¹⁸ Kirişçi, “Between Europe and the Middle East,” p. 42.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid..

⁷²⁰ “Kıbrıs Çözülmezse Üyelik Zor,” *Hürriyet*, 4 March 2003.

⁷²¹ Fırat, “AKP Hükümetinin Kıbrıs Politikası,” p. 442.

Turkish Cypriots.⁷²²

As Kirişçi highlighted, the opponents of a settlement in the Island “invoked the Sevres phobia”⁷²³ in Turkey. As such, they defended that the Annan Plan was part of a EU/Western conspiracy for dividing Turkey and capturing the last bastion of Turkish presence in the Mediterranean. The military and even certain circles in the MFA were distressed to accept such a critical move that would have meant compromising the traditional line in Cyprus. In accord with the traditional paradigm, the idea was to hold on the status quo in the Island and to resist calls for change. Turkish Cypriot leader Denktaş flagged the traditionalist arguments for holding onto the status quo. An adept nationalist leader with ability to manipulate the public opinion in Turkey, he used every opportunity to stand firm against the government’s plans in support of the Plan. Though his stance found resonance among nationalist groups in Turkey, the government’s determination to move forward, which acquired critical support especially from the pro-EU diplomats,⁷²⁴ gradually limited Denktaş’s ability to dominate the discussion on the issue.

Denktaş’s line also emboldened the domestic opposition among the Turkish Cypriots. Increasingly, the public opinion became supportive of the prospective EU membership of “Cyprus,” which necessitated reconciliation with the Greek Cypriots. Moreover, the leftist opposition in the TRNC redefined their position in congruity with Turkey’s EU membership objective, from its earlier call to end the Turkish military

⁷²² Fırat, “AKP Hükümetinin Kıbrıs Politikası,” p. 442.

⁷²³ Kirişçi, “Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times,” p. 34.

⁷²⁴ Mehmet Ali Birand, “Gül: Kıbrıs için Büyükelçilerimizden Doping Aldık,” *Hürriyet*, 30 December 2003. Gül particularly underlined the determinant role of the Undersecretary of the MFA, Ambassador Uğur Ziyal in moving forward with a decision to force bureaucratic change on the Cyprus problem. Interview with Abdullah Gül.

presence.⁷²⁵ This realignment proved decisive in the December 2003 elections that brought the opposition leader Talat to power.⁷²⁶

After missing three deadlines, UN Secretary General Annan directly held Denktaş responsible for failure.⁷²⁷ This, however, did not deter him from carrying out a national campaign against the Annan Plan. Therefore, Ankara found itself squeezed between Brussels' decision to give green light to "the Republic of Cyprus"'s EU membership regardless of a political settlement in the Island⁷²⁸ and a reverberant, for different reasons, intransigence by the two political entities towards reconciliation.

Nevertheless, the referendum held on 24 April 2004 for the Annan Plan, which was accepted by 65% of the Turkish Cypriots amounted to a symbolic victory for the JDP government.⁷²⁹ As such, the JDP leadership demonstrated its ability to act beyond the traditional policy and lead the policy-making apparatus in Ankara. Yet again it was the EU process that enabled the government to countervail the traditionalist resistance in favor of a solution. This in turn "overnight changed Turkey's image in the international community."⁷³⁰

Although the referendum was unable to broker a settlement in Cyprus, it paved

⁷²⁵ Fırat, "AKP Hükümetinin Kıbrıs Politikası," p. 442.

⁷²⁶ For a comprehensive review of the political process leading to the referendum on the Annan Plan, see *ibid.*, pp. 439-451.

⁷²⁷ "Annan Denktaş'ı suçladı," *Hürriyet*, 6 April 2003.

⁷²⁸ Panayotis J. Tsakonas, "Turkey's Post-Helsinki Turbulence: Implications for Greece and the Cyprus Issue," *Turkish Studies* 2, no. 2 (Autumn 2001), p. 7.

⁷²⁹ The government's mood in Ankara sounded optimistic after the referenda. "Erdoğan: AB Artık Beklentilerimizi Karşılmalı," *Hürriyet*, 25 April 2004. After the referenda, Erdoğan thanked Minister Gül, the MFA bureaucrats, TRNC Prime Minister Talat and Foreign Minister Serdar Denktaş for their support, but did not name TRNC President Denktaş.

⁷³⁰ Kirişçi, "Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," p. 26.

the way for the EU decision to open accession negotiations with Turkey on 3 October 2005. However, the EU process gradually lost its primacy partly due to “the reform fatigue” and the incoming domestic political priorities, namely the Presidential elections to be held in April 2007. The other part of the story was the deconstructive discourse and the perception of unfair treatment in the initial phases of the accession negotiations.⁷³¹ Nevertheless, “the EU membership goal,” i.e. “official state policy,” turned out to be again determinant in the JDP government’s decision to deflect from the traditional policy in Cyprus as well as in *tezkere* “with a general commitment not to derail the EU process.”⁷³²

Beyond crisis management, the JDP leadership aimed at getting to “mutual commitment” in relations with the West, in particular on security cooperation. This was partly because Turkey emerged for the first time as a regional security provider.⁷³³ Therefore, Turkey espoused a more assertive and sometimes intransigent stance in NATO to maintain an independent say in matters of collective security.⁷³⁴ This differed from an earlier Cold-War posture that yielded to in-bloc decisions. Hereby, the JDP government emphasized Turkey’s security and geostrategic assets, and assumed it could convert these into a larger role within the transatlantic alliance. In that it adopted a policy of making

⁷³¹ The EU was perceived to espouse an escapist approach towards Turkey’s membership with newfound preconditions added to the Copenhagen criteria such as “absorption capacity.” See Senem Aydin Düzgit, *Seeking Kant in the EU’s Relations with Turkey* (İstanbul: TESEV, 2006).

⁷³² Non-attributable interview with a senior Turkish ambassador, 12 March 2012.

⁷³³ Ülgen argued that the relations between Turkey and the West, as the latter being a security supplier have changed with clear foreign policy implications. See Sinan Ülgen, “A Place in the Sun or Fifteen Minutes of Fame,” *Carnegie Paper 1*, Carnegie Europe, Brussels, December 2010.

⁷³⁴ Maria do Ceu Pinto, “Turkey’s Accession to the European Union in Terms of Impact on the EU’s Security and Defense Policies- Potential and Drawbacks,” *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 53, no.1 (Jan./July 2010), pp. 89-110.

further NATO-EU cooperation conditional on a commensurate Turkish role in the ESDP.⁷³⁵ This happened at a time when NATO failed to meet the U.S. demands for more activism in “the war on terror;”⁷³⁶ an issue which further complicated the Turkey-EU-U.S. triangular relationship.⁷³⁷

On that note, the Iraq War and its repercussions overtly exacerbated relations with Washington. Yet there was also a broader divergence as “the strategic quality of the relationship can no longer be taken for granted, as a result of divergent perceptions of the Iraq War and, more significantly, new international priorities on both sides.”⁷³⁸ This partly stemmed from Turkey’s domestic, security and regional perceptions that heavily contradicted the unilateralist and transformative agenda of the U.S. especially in Iraq and the broader Middle East. As Lesser aptly put, concerns about the American strategic motives in the region engendered anxiety among both the JDP government as well as “the traditional partners, such as the Turkish military and security establishment.”⁷³⁹ Moreover, the JDP’s march towards the EU as well as its propensity to develop an independent regional policy added to the rift. Despite political moves to bridge the gap, the Turco-American relations in the early 2000s appeared in need of a redefinition.

After initial anxiety about weathering the foreign policy crises, the JDP

⁷³⁵ For a discussion of Turkey’s possible role in the ESDP See Giovanni Gasparini, ed., *Turkey and European Security, IAI-TESEV Report*, IAI Quaderni English Series, no. 8, February 2007.

⁷³⁶ Renée De Nevers, “NATO’s International Security Role in the Terrorist Era,” *International Security* 31, no. 4 (Spring 2007), pp. 34-66.

⁷³⁷ Öniş and Yılmaz proposed a redefined trilateral cooperation to that end. See Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, “The Turkey-EU-US Triangle in Perspective: Transformation or Continuity?” *Middle East Journal* 59, no. 2, Changing Geopolitics (Spring, 2005), pp. 265-284.

⁷³⁸ Ian O. Lesser, “Turkey, the United States and the Delusion of Geopolitics,” *Survival* 48, no. 3 (Autumn 2006), p. 83.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

government grew more confident and assertive. This psychological recovery had two immediate results: First, a predominant penchant for independent foreign policy making. Second, a stylistic urge for speedy, visible and tangible results. Thus, following the December 2005 decision to start up accession negotiations, the EU objective gradually lost priority. This was partly due to the remoteness of getting to the next step as the political map in Europe changed, undermining the membership perspective. Keeping up with the accession process proved even harder against loss of motivation and even focus.⁷⁴⁰

In regards to relations with the neighborhood, the JDP adopted cautious activism to put its own mark in policy-making. In fact, the JDP's regional activism, even prior to the Iraq War, pointed to an emerging foreign policy change. A strictly Western orientation in foreign policy, in particular full alignment with either the EU and/or the U.S.-though they diverged paths due to American unilateralism- would have written off Turkish independence in decisions taken about Iraq, Iran and Syria, even more so regarding Hamas. Status quoism would have entailed adaptation with the status quo ante in the region, whereby Ankara would try to make the best out of its alliance with the predominant power in the region, i.e. the U.S.. However, the JDP sought to pursue a self-steered course on regional relations and accordingly undertook a more active role in managing regional issues. Hence, a growing Turkish role in the neighborhood.

The Middle East turned into one of the top priorities for the government due to the changing balances after the Iraq War and a reemerging security threat. In fact, Turkey's need to refocus on the Middle Eastern issues became evident after 9/11. Former

⁷⁴⁰ For a concise summary of the background of the slowdown in relations See Vincent Boland, "The Feeling is Mutual: Why Turks are Growing Disillusioned with Europe," *Financial Times*, 4 January 2007.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Cem discerned the growing possibility of a confrontation between the West and the Islamic countries. Therefore, he initiated the first EU-OIC ministerial meeting to contribute to mutual understanding. Yet the new government's involvement in the regional political equations meant more than a "third-party role." As such, the JDP government aspired to a "leadership role for Turkey in conflict and crisis resolution as well as regional initiatives."⁷⁴¹ Moreover, it considered regional relations as conducive to overcoming Turkey's security (read PKK) concerns and financial problems through increased trade and foreign investment. Overall, "Turkey's rejection of the 1 March motion and perceptions of the Justice and Development Party's Muslim and Arab orientation and criticism of Israel"⁷⁴² paved the way for a Turkish comeback in the region.

In general, the JDP's foreign policy towards the region sounded like a balancing act against the traditional practice of Western-orientation. Turkey aspired to a new role with a renewed vision towards the region. As such she did not shy away from relations with "Islamic" or anti-Western countries. On the contrary, Ankara wanted to get involved and play an insider's role. Nevertheless, these renewed ties were to complement Turkey's extant relations with pro-Western nations in the region, primarily with Israel and to a lesser extent with Jordan and Egypt. All in all, the JDP was consistently cautious not to get involved in identity politics. Thus, the propagated idea was to institutionalize a broader regional reconciliation, preferably under Turkish leadership. This envisioned first rapprochement with each country and then possibly bringing together the already

⁷⁴¹ Hasret Dikici Bilgin, "Foreign Policy Orientation," p. 412.

⁷⁴² Meliha Benli Altunışık and Özlem Tür, "From Distant Neighbors to Partners? Changing Syrian-Turkish Relations," *Security Dialogue* 37, no. 2 (June 2006), p. 244.

fragmented political structures in the region, namely the pro-Western and anti-Western countries and groups into a larger format of mutually acceptable regional cooperation.

This emerging regional policy carried Davutoğlu's theoretical imprint from the very beginning. The JDP's diplomatic efforts regarding the Iraq War, both on its eve and aftermath were stepping stones for the new policy. The call to bring together Iran, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan for the Neighboring Countries of Iraq meeting served breaking the psychological barriers. The JDP government in this way showed its commitment to regional solutions and came to recognize neighbors as potential allies. At a time when the U.S. was imposing its unilateralist decisions, the Turkish commitment to consult and find a way out of the Iraqi crisis through dialogue resonated well in all other regional capitals.

Therefore, zero-problems policy intrinsically paved the way for close multilateral and bilateral consultation and cooperation with regional countries, regardless of their foreign policy orientation. The JDP from the very beginning did not categorize regional countries and tried to overcome the extant schisms with an "all-embracing" approach. Its active diplomacy did not aim to form divisive coalitions. Rather Ankara principally worked for defining common interests that could prepare the ground for holistic regional cooperation. Turkey's unprecedented willingness to participate in the regional fora as well as the discursive turn, in this case the ability to speak with an ownership perspective that advocated peaceful and economic cooperation, literally opened doors.

In fact, the JDP government found a receptive audience in the region. When Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Gül publicly criticized the systemic defects of governance in the Islamic countries he received applause, not

condemnation as a recent outsider.⁷⁴³ In June 2004, Prime Minister Erdoğan reiterated the urgency of reform in Islamic countries at the OIC Foreign Ministers meeting held in İstanbul. At the same meeting, the Turkish candidate Prof. İhsanoğlu became the first-ever elected Secretary General of the OIC. In a relatively short period, the JDP government gained significant ground in this umbrella organization of Islamic countries.

Bilaterally, the turnaround in relations with Syria played a key role in Turkey's re-involvement in the region. Following the October 1998 crisis when the two countries came to the brink of war, there emerged an understanding to increase bilateral cooperation following the Adana Accords. In June 2000, President Sezer symbolically attended Hafez Assad's funeral. Yet it was only after the 2003 Iraq War and the subsequent developments that bilateral relations picked up steam.⁷⁴⁴ Nevertheless, as Altunışık and Tür underlined, developments in domestic scenes of both countries and the depressive international conjuncture were determinant in making this rapprochement possible. While the Syrian regime took a strategic decision to approach Turkey for political support against the intensified American threat as well as to open up a linkage with the Western powers, Ankara saw improved relations with Syria "as an important step for improving Turkey's relations with the Arab world and boosting Turkey's weight in the Middle East."⁷⁴⁵ Turkey's goal to produce regional solutions to offset the negative effects of Iraq War also coincided with Syrian President Assad's willingness to overcome

⁷⁴³ For his speech, see Gül, "The Speech at the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the OIC."

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 229-248.

⁷⁴⁵ Altunışık and Tür, p. 240.

the internal resistance against “reform.”⁷⁴⁶ In his historic 2004 visit to Ankara, Assad declared a joint position with Turkey on Iraq. The same year, when Erdoğan returned this visit, both countries were on a path “beyond normalization, toward amity, even alliance.”⁷⁴⁷ This led Assad to comment that “Turkey became one of the friendliest countries toward Syria in the region, one which pursues not only good relations at a bilateral level but also cooperates with Syria on a number of regional issues.”⁷⁴⁸ On Turkey’s part, an economic calculus was also at play,⁷⁴⁹ as ties with the neighboring countries were considered crucial for economic development of the border provinces and to satisfy the Anatolian bourgeoisie’s hunger for new markets.⁷⁵⁰ It should also be noted that the military-security bureaucracy as well as President Sezer⁷⁵¹ were also supportive of furthering cooperation with Syria,⁷⁵² which paved the way for transforming relations.⁷⁵³

What drove the JDP government towards cooperation with Syria carried both

⁷⁴⁶ Andrew Tabler, *In the Lion’s Den: An Eyewitness Account of Washington’s Battle with Syria* (Chicago, Ill.: Lawrence Hill Books, 2011).

⁷⁴⁷ Raymond Hinnebusch, “Introduction: The Study of Turkey-Syria Relation,” in *Turkey-Syria Relations: Between Enmity and Amity*, eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and Özlem Tür (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate Pub. Co., 2013), p. 22.

⁷⁴⁸ “Esad ile Özel Röportaj [Exclusive TV Interview with Bashar Assad],” *CNN Türk*, 06 April 2005. Cited in Aras, “Turkey between Syria and Israel,” p. 4.

⁷⁴⁹ Davutoğlu underscored the need to attract capital investment from non-EU and U.S. resources. See Funda Özkan, “Türkiye’yi Borçlu Görmeyelim,” *Radikal*, 3 December 2005.

⁷⁵⁰ On the role of the Anatolian bourgeoisie on the JDP, see Yavuz, “Introduction,” pp. 1-19.

⁷⁵¹ President Sezer’s decision to visit Damascus in April 2005 against growing international pressures against the Syrian regime was testament to the consensus in Ankara to develop relations with Syria. See “Onurlu Cumhurbaşkanı Hoşgeldiniz,” *Hürriyet*, 13 April 2005.

⁷⁵² Altunışık and Tür, p. 240.

⁷⁵³ Banu Eligür, “Are Former Enemies Becoming Allies? Turkey’s Changing Relations with Syria, Iran, and Israel Since the 2003 Iraqi War,” *Middle East Brief*, Brandeis University Crown Center for Middle Eastern Studies, no. 9 (August 2006).

rationalistic and ideational motivations. Damascus had diplomatic weight due to its significant role in almost all critical regional issues from the Palestinian question to Lebanon, Iraq, Iran and the broader Arab world. As such, Davutoğlu thought Syria as a gateway to the Middle East that could help turn Turkey into a more influential player in the region.⁷⁵⁴ It also fitted into the JDP's national role conceptions as "regional leader and protector, global actor,"⁷⁵⁵ which built on Davutoğlu's outlook.⁷⁵⁶ The JDP government also put significant political capital in developing relations with Damascus against occasional rebuffs from the Western capitals, which could not have been feasible under the dictates of the traditional paradigm. Davutoğlu, who as the Prime Minister's Chief Advisor and occasional Special Envoy played a conclusive role to build bridges between the two leaderships, and was given an almost free hand.⁷⁵⁷ His unconventional role, however, stirred public criticism for sidelining the bureaucratic apparatus.⁷⁵⁸

Relations with Iran followed a similar line of "desecuritization."⁷⁵⁹ As such, not only threat perceptions were lowered, but also areas of common interest were prioritized

⁷⁵⁴ Zengin, pp. 219-224.

⁷⁵⁵ Bülent Aras and Aylin Gorener, "National Role Conceptions and Foreign Policy Orientation: The Ideational Bases of the Justice And Development Party's Foreign Policy Activism in The Middle East," *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 12, no.1 (2010), pp. 73-92.

⁷⁵⁶ Erdoğan and Gül's foreign policy discourse more and more utilized Davutoğlu's foreign policy outlook. For example Erdoğan declared his government's "foreign policy objective as elevating Turkey into a global power." Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, *Ulusla Sesleniş* [Address to the nation] (National TV channels), 25 February 2005.

⁷⁵⁷ Interview with Yaşar Yakış, 20 June 2013, Washington DC.

⁷⁵⁸ "Türk Büyükelçisi Şam'da Devredışı," *Vatan*, 5 July 2006.

⁷⁵⁹ This term referred to changing elite perceptions in defining security threats. Aras and Polat argued that domestic factors, notably the EU process "desecuritized" the Turkish foreign policy towards Syria and Iran. Aras and Karakaya Polat, pp. 495-515.

to sideline issues of divergence. Economic relations⁷⁶⁰ and Tehran's recognition of the PKK as a terrorist organization in 2004 also contributed to the new atmosphere in relations. As Murrison underlined, "in a broad reference to the Strategic Depth doctrine"⁷⁶¹ Erdoğan emphasized developing good relations with all neighbors during his first official visit to Tehran. Yet the political transition in Iran prolonged the process of adaptation to the new policy.

One crucial element in the JDP's foreign policy practice towards Iraq, Syria and Iran was to strengthen the fight against PKK terrorism. This was assumed to empower the government both electorally and politically. In the latter sense, the JDP envisioned taking over the reins, as the military still played an overarching role in setting the tone.⁷⁶² Ankara was under intense political pressure because of the rising tensions in northern Iraq particularly after the "Çuval Olayı [The Hood Event]"⁷⁶³ and the Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) aggressive rhetoric against Turkey regarding the status of Kirkuk. Against this background, the regional vision of Davutoğlu gained an upper hand, although Ankara was also able to defuse the crisis with Washington through developing new tools for security cooperation.⁷⁶⁴

⁷⁶⁰ Mustafa Aydın and Damla Aras, "Political Conditionality of Economic Relations between Paternalist States: Turkey's Interaction with Iran, Iraq, and Syria," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 1 & 2 (Winter/Spring 2005), pp. 21-43.

⁷⁶¹ Murrinson, p. 957.

⁷⁶² M. Hakan Yavuz and Nihat Ali Özcan, "The Kurdish Question and the Justice and Development Party," *Middle East Policy* 13, no. 1 (Spring 2006), pp. 102-119.

⁷⁶³ This turned into a political crisis for both the government and the military, which was a major blow to security ties with the United States. It also nurtured anti-Americanism throughout the whole political spectrum in Turkey. See, for example, Turan Yavuz, *Çuvalayan İttifak* [The hooded alliance] (Ankara: Destek Yayınevi, 2006).

⁷⁶⁴ Hale and Özbudun, p. 135.

Another element in developing relations with neighbors was Turkey's emerging role as a "message-carrier." When the Syrian President visited Ankara in January 2004, he received messages from the U.S. and Israel through his Turkish interlocutors.⁷⁶⁵ Davutoğlu was personally at the center of these efforts, particularly regarding Syria, Iraq, Iran and the Gulf countries.⁷⁶⁶ In that vein, Turkey started playing a facilitator role in diplomatic efforts about Iran's nuclear program.⁷⁶⁷ In 2005, Turkey even brokered a meeting between the Pakistani and Israeli officials in İstanbul.⁷⁶⁸ Thus, Ankara also aimed at strengthening its Western ties through foreign policy activism in its neighborhood.⁷⁶⁹

Larrabee identified improved relations with the Arab world as "a significant shift"⁷⁷⁰ in Turkish foreign policy. First of all, Turkey became more vocal in publicly criticizing Israel's security-outlook. This stemmed, according to the Turkish government sources, from an understanding to stem the tide of growing polarization in the region. Others read this as a "more active pro-Palestinian policy."⁷⁷¹ When Ankara invited a

⁷⁶⁵ Hilal Köylü, "Suriye ile Mutlu Gün," *Radikal*, 7 January 2004.

⁷⁶⁶ Ruşen Çakır, "Bush İstedi, Davutoğlu Şam'a Gitti," *Vatan*, 6 July 2006; "Davutoğlu'ndan Şam'a: Krizi Tırmandırmayın," 5 *Radikal*, Temmuz 2006. Davutoğlu humorously hinted at renting a house in Saudi Arabia, which he thought would be more practical given the increasing frequency of visits. Murat Yetkin, "Davutoğlu Yemeğinin Daveti Eski," *Radikal*, 23 February 2006.

⁷⁶⁷ Aras and Polat, pp. 507-508.

⁷⁶⁸ Murat Yetkin, "İsrail-Pakistan Buluşmasının Perde Arkası Neydi?," *Radikal*, 14 September 2005.

⁷⁶⁹ This motivation was more pronounced in Foreign Minister Gül's discourse, probably linked with institutional ties to the MFA. Overall, he projected Turkey's Middle East policy as a tool for improving the relations between the West and the Middle East. He refrained from using civilizational references, and even the word "Islam." See Abdullah Gül, "Turkey's Role in a Changing Middle East Environment," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (Winter 2004), pp. 1-7.

⁷⁷⁰ F. Stephen Larrabee, "Turkey Rediscovered the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 4 (Jul. - Aug., 2007), p. 103.

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

Hamas delegation headed by Khaled Meshaal, the alarm bells rang among the Westernist elites in Turkey, even more in the Western capitals.⁷⁷² When Turkey joined the international coalition for peacekeeping in Lebanon, certain circles including President Sezer accused the government of risking Turkey's stability.⁷⁷³ Yet these outrages were due to an unnoticed, if not undeclared transition from an exclusively Western-oriented foreign policy to one seeking new roles in the region.

Ankara was also able to advance relations with two other significant regional countries, i.e. Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The Saudi King realized the first official visit to Turkey at the head of state level after four decades and Egypt responded positively to the Turkish moves for further cooperation. Moreover, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) approached Ankara for increased trade, investment, and security ties.⁷⁷⁴ Turkey also made an economic and cultural opening in the region, with an aim at deepened ties.⁷⁷⁵

Relations with Israel built on an earlier rapprochement in the mid-1990s and reflected the JDP's cautious approach not to entirely overrule the traditional setting. This was envisioned to stand as the element of continuity with an implication that the new leadership did not overturn "Western" links in favor of better ties with regional countries.

⁷⁷² For an alarmist opinion, see Soner Cagaptay, " Hamas Visits Ankara: The AKP Shifts Turkey's Role in the Middle East," *The Washington Institute Policy Watch* 1081, 16 February 2006. Available at: <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/hamas-visits-ankara-the-akp-shifts-turkeys-role-in-the-middle-east> [4 November 2012]. On the other hand, the former Deputy Prime Minister Şener later claimed that the visit was planned in coordination with the Israeli officials. *CNN Türk*, interview in *Aykırı Sorular* program, 30 August 2012.

⁷⁷³ "Sezer: Türkiye'nin Lübnan'a Asker Göndermesine Karşıyım," *Hürriyet*, 25 August 2006.

⁷⁷⁴ Lenore Martin, "Turkey and Gulf Cooperation Council Security," *Turkish Studies* 10, no. 1, (March 2009), pp. 75–93.

⁷⁷⁵ For a summary of Turkey's overtures to the region, see Nuri Yeşilyurt and Atay Akdevelioğlu, "AKP Döneminde Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu Politikası" (Turkey's Middle East policy during the JDP era) in *AKP Kitabı*, pp. 403-407.

Cooperation between the two countries advanced, despite occasional outbursts and disagreements especially on the pace and direction of the Peace Process.⁷⁷⁶ The JDP aspired to put its own mark in regional dynamics “by actively working to reduce counter-alliances by its neighbors -particularly those hostile to Israel and who might feel threatened by this new relationship- Turkey [was] rapidly realizing a new role for itself as a mediator between Israel and its neighbors.”⁷⁷⁷ In that sense, Ankara saw simultaneous relations with Israel and the anti-Israeli front as an ideal opportunity to realize the objective of “comprehensive and permanent peace”⁷⁷⁸ in the region.

The growing engagement in the Middle East put Davutoğlu on the spot.⁷⁷⁹ He was directly accused for shifting Turkey’s orientation to the East, stepping over the time-tested traditional foreign policy practice, Islamization and worse desecularization of foreign policy identity.⁷⁸⁰ The criticisms culminated during Hamas Political Bureau Chief Mashal’s visit to Ankara in 2006.⁷⁸¹ In fact, this could be seen as the public disclosure of the “unconventional” diplomatic track Davutoğlu has been conducting behind the scenes. In fact, Davutoğlu probably met with Mashal and Hamas delegations during his semi-official visits to Syria. However, this time Hamas delegation was visiting Ankara

⁷⁷⁶ Prime Minister Ecevit accused Israel of committing “genocide” in Palestine, while his successor Erdoğan accused Tel Aviv of “state terror.” See Nuri Yeşilyurt and Atay Akdevelioğlu, “AKP Döneminde Türkiye’nin Ortadoğu Politikası,” p. 392.

⁷⁷⁷ Joshua Walker, “Turkey and Israel’s Relationship in the Middle East,” *Mediterranean Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (Fall 2006), p. 85.

⁷⁷⁸ Prime Minister Erdoğan underlined this objective during his visit to Israel. “Erdoğan İsrail’de: Arabuluculuğa Hazırız,” *Hürriyet*, 1 May 2005.

⁷⁷⁹ There was even an argument about his book sales, which allegedly increased after his political role. See “Duvarların Dili Olsa,” *Radikal*, 6 March 2006.

⁷⁸⁰ Ruşen Çakır, “Stratejik Derinlik ve Stratejik Sıhlık,” *Vatan*, 5 April 2006.

⁷⁸¹ Ertuğrul Özkök, “Hangi Aklievvel,” *Hürriyet*, 17 February 2006.

publicly, even though Israel and the U.S. declared it as a “terrorist organization.” There was a clear confusion in Ankara as to how to handle the crisis. It became apparent that once Erdoğan gave the green light, Davutoğlu kept the preparations of the visit confidential and did not inform the MFA.⁷⁸² Despite later attempts for damage control, Davutoğlu was literally bombarded for drifting Turkey away from the West to “the Iranian-Syrian axis.”⁷⁸³ In return, he defended himself stating that this was “an official initiative...this exchange is a beginning. Turkey takes every initiative for dialogue and ending terror [in the region]. We will witness the results of this initiative in a short time.”⁷⁸⁴

Outreach to the neighborhood went hand in hand with an attempt to broaden Turkey’s ties with multiple power centers, most importantly Russia.⁷⁸⁵ Both countries developed a mutually respectful and beneficial relationship after the Cold War, yet this tended to divert to a confrontational route due to the increasing role of identity politics in the late 1990s. The JDP government reversed this course especially after March 2003 fallout with the U.S..⁷⁸⁶ In fact, Turkey’s ability to diverge from the American line in the Iraq War appeared to win over Moscow’s sympathy. Newfound proximity in their vision

⁷⁸² “ Hamas Bombası,” *Radikal*, 17 February 2006.

⁷⁸³ Cengiz Çandar, “Meşal Suriye istihbaratının parçası” [Interview with Neşe Düzel], *Radikal*, 27 February 2006.

⁷⁸⁴ “ Hamas Söz Dinlemiş: İran Ziyaretini Gül Engelledi,” *Radikal*, 19 February 2006. Yet the criticisms seemed to have exhausted Davutoğlu personally. Murat Yetkin, “Davutoğlu Kızgın: Benim de Sabrım Var,” *Radikal*, 19 February 2006.

⁷⁸⁵ For a comprehensive account of the advancement in relations, see Fiona Hill and Ömer Taşpınar, “Turkey and Russia: Axis of the Excluded?” *Survival* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2006), pp. 81-92.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

for the Black Sea,⁷⁸⁷ Middle East and “once-divisive issues such as Chechnya and the Kurds”⁷⁸⁸ paved the way for overlapping agendas. Moreover, Turkey’s openness to cooperation in various sectors from energy to construction, as well as its liberal visa regime⁷⁸⁹ for Russian citizens turned Russia into one of Turkey’s biggest trading partners. In essence, both sides came to sideline political differences in favor of further economic cooperation. Therefore, back in 2006 it became possible to project that “should current trends continue, the Turkish-Russian relationship is likely to become a structural factor in the region.”⁷⁹⁰

In Central Asia and the Caucasus, Turkey continued the pragmatic approach that succeeded the romantic vision of the 1990s. The JDP acknowledged the limits of Turkish role in the region and hence, drew a lesser role that prioritized economic and cultural cooperation over a larger political rapprochement. “Turkey’s greatest strengths in its general relationships with the Caucasus and Central Asia have been in building schools and universities, providing military staff college education and training, constructing new energy pipeline networks, and bringing a closer awareness of Turkey and a knowledge of Anatolian Turkish to the area.”⁷⁹¹ Yet this soft power approach was cautious not to meddle with the great power rivalry that acknowledged the predominant Russian

⁷⁸⁷ Interestingly this included “a new security initiative known as Black Sea Harmony that would entail joint naval maneuvers.” Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2008), p. 131.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 84.

⁷⁸⁹ Russian President Putin praised Turkey’s liberal visa regime for the Russian citizens. “Putin’den Atina’ya: Türk Vizesi İnsancıl,” *Hürriyet*, 24 December 2004.

⁷⁹⁰ Suat Kınıklıoğlu, *The Anatomy of Turkish-Russian Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, May 2006). Available at: http://www.brookings.edu/comm/events/20060523sabanci_3a.pdf [26 October 2012].

⁷⁹¹ Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic*, p. 135.

influence in the region.

“After Russia, the second key major power with which Turkey [was] building a significant and growing relationship [was] China.”⁷⁹² Despite the divergence on the Xinjiang issue, economic relations grew almost eight-fold from “\$900 million in 2001 to \$7.5 billion in 2005.”⁷⁹³ Turkey saw China as a counterweight to the “errant” American unilateralism that conflicted Ankara’s cooperative agenda especially in the Middle East. Nevertheless, in its earlier phases the JDP did not feel both politically and economically stable and empowered enough to seek a deeper relationship with China.

Turkey was also active in Afghanistan, in particular “playing a significant role in NATO’s mission.”⁷⁹⁴ Sending non-combatant troops to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan presented a public dissidence-free opportunity to participate in the U.S.-led “War on Terror.” Some analysts also alluded to “a unique status as a Muslim-majority NATO member state as well as its close diplomatic ties with Afghanistan.”⁷⁹⁵ Ankara, based on the traditional friendly ties, has also shown willingness to deepen cooperation with Pakistan in particular through further economic and cultural cooperation.⁷⁹⁶ Yet the security problems in the region sidetracked the envisioned cooperative agenda.

⁷⁹² Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic*, p. 141.

⁷⁹³ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁴ Petros Vamvakas, “NATO and Turkey in Afghanistan and Central Asia: Possibilities and Blind Spots,” *Turkish Studies* 10, no. 1 (March 2009), p. 65.

⁷⁹⁵ Salih Doğan, “Turkey’s Presence and Importance in Afghanistan,” *USAK*, 2 September 2010. Available at: <http://www.usak.org.tr/EN/makale.asp?id=1672> [26 October 2012].

⁷⁹⁶ Mahjoob Zweiri and Simon Staffell, “Talking with a Region: Lessons From Iran, Turkey and Pakistan,” *Middle East Policy* 16, no.1 (Spring 2009), pp. 63-74.

The Turkish foreign policy also broadened scope with “opening to Africa.” While this was an idea promoted by former Foreign Minister Cem in 1998, “Turkey’s opening to Africa came into existence only in 2005, when Turkey announced ‘the year of Africa’; in March 2005, ... Erdoğan visited Ethiopia and South Africa – the first official visit by a Turkish prime minister to a country south of the equator.”⁷⁹⁷ This first attempt paved the way for further strengthening of Turkey’s links with the continent. Moreover, Turkey’s presence was based on initiatives by civil-society organizations and reinvigorated governmental organizations, notably Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TİKA) and the Directorate for Religious Affairs of Turkey (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı).⁷⁹⁸

In addition to extending the focus to a larger geography, the JDP government also co-chaired the Alliance of Civilizations⁷⁹⁹ initiative together with Spain to demonstrate its support for intercivilizational coexistence. Turkey, as a more vocal proponent of universal values and an emerging defender of the Islamic civilization undressed for a global role to bridge the widening gap in particular between the Western and Islamic worlds. This was a role traditional paradigm would have rejected with fury as it assigned Turkey “a spokesman role of the Islamic civilization.”⁸⁰⁰ Yet it also underscored the strategic assets of Turkey, notably regarding its future role within the EU. Moreover, it

⁷⁹⁷ Mehmet Özkan and Birol Akgün, “Turkey’s Opening to Africa,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 48, no. 4 (2010), p. 533.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 525-546.

⁷⁹⁹ The initiative proposed at the 59th UN General Assembly in 2005, turned into a global forum for intercivilizational dialogue. See <http://www.unaoc.org/> for further details about the initiative.

⁸⁰⁰ Ali Balcı, “Medeniyetler İttifakı ve Türkiye,” *Radikal*, 12 November 2006.

symbolized an unprecedentedly global standard-bearer role for Turkey.⁸⁰¹

The JDP government in line with its program moved to deal with Turks living abroad, in particular in Europe. Before the JDP, the Turkish state refrained from having direct links with the Turkish communities living in Europe, as they were deemed a potential threat to Turkey's official ideology. As Manço underlined "this population has created in Europe all of the social, political, religious, and ethnic cleavages of Turkey,"⁸⁰² that conflicted the monoculturalist outlook of the Turkish state. Islamism and Kurdish nationalism in particular found a breeding ground in the liberal atmosphere of European democracies. This also enabled the extremist and terrorist groups to connect with the expatriate communities in search of an identity. Reversing course, the JDP government attempted to legitimize links with the Islamic communities who stood closer to the Turkish state. With a circular regulation, the MFA instructed its missions in Europe to contact with the *Milli Görüş* organizations and schools ran by the *Gülen* groups and attend their activities.⁸⁰³ Although this brought the government under legal and political pressure, the government defended its decision based on "the EU acquis"⁸⁰⁴ as well as the need to "strengthen ties between the expatriate communities and the state."⁸⁰⁵ On the other hand, "With the rising prestige and success of the JDP, the Milli Görüş movement appear[ed] to be losing ground to it, as traditional Turkish religious views even in Europe

⁸⁰¹ Balcı, "Medeniyetler İttifakı ve Türkiye."

⁸⁰² Ural Manço, *Turks in Europe: From a Garbled Image to the Complexity of Migrant Social Reality* (Brussels: Centre d'Etudes Sociologiques). Available at: <http://www.flw.ugent.be/cie/umanco/umanco5.htm> [29 October 2012].

⁸⁰³ "Milli Görüş Gerekçeden Çıkarıldı, Genelgeye Girdi," *Hürriyet*, 20 April 2003.

⁸⁰⁴ "AKP Savunma Hazırlıyor," *Hürriyet*, 26 April 2003.

⁸⁰⁵ "Gül: Genelge İlk Değil," *Hürriyet*, 19 April 2003.

evolve into the more modernist Islamist JDP views.”⁸⁰⁶ In that sense, the JDP government seemed moving to bridge the gap between parts of the expatriate communities and the Turkish state.

In sum, the JDP made a prudent but ambitious start in foreign policy. The political dynamics aside, this led to a policy of accommodation and incremental change. Though Western orientation as the main pillar of foreign policy was upheld, it did not prevent the JDP leadership from making inroads in embracing different approaches as regards the scope, method and objectives of foreign policy. Since, there was a general disposition to stay away from identity politics especially in the early term, the leadership was able to hide the ideational background to this emerging foreign policy. Many experts were puzzled or else intuited as to whom was behind this syncretic approach that combined Western orientation with a novel orientation in foreign policy. The more JDP felt entrenched in the system, the more public got to hear and learn about the mastermind behind the prevailing new paradigm.

⁸⁰⁶ Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic*, p. 147.

CHAPTER 9

THE PREVALENCE OF THE JDP-DAVUTOĞLU PARADIGM

The presidential elections calendared for May 2007 evolved into a “regime crisis.”⁸⁰⁷ The military that settled down for an accommodation after 2002, took it as an existential threat to let the JDP government choose and command the top position in state protocol, even worse to have a veiled first lady.⁸⁰⁸ The government also came under intense public pressure to launch cross-border operations against the PKK due to a series of terrorist attacks that aroused a public backlash. The ability to defuse the first crisis through electoral processes was largely made possible thanks to “the society’s growing opposition to the military’s involvement in politics.”⁸⁰⁹ This, in turn, brought about the end of “politics of patience.”

As Kumbaracıbaşı argued, the JDP’s domestic autonomy was directly correlated with its relative weight against the “veto players’, i.e. the presidency, the armed forces, the National Security Council, the Constitutional Court, the civil service, the mass media and various groups in the society” in the political system.⁸¹⁰ On that note, Hale and

⁸⁰⁷ “Sezer'den Rejim Uyarısı,” *Hürriyet*, 13 March 2007.

⁸⁰⁸ Yavuz comprehensively described the political clash between the military and the JDP due to the presidential elections. Yavuz, *Secularism*, pp. 239-266.

⁸⁰⁹ Ersel Aydınli, “Ergenekon, New Pacts, and the Decline of the Turkish ‘Inner State’,” *Turkish Studies* 12, no.2 (June 2011), p. 230. Aydınli provides a concise account of civil-military relations during the JDP era.

⁸¹⁰ Arda Can Kumbaracıbaşı, *Turkish Politics and the Rise of the AKP: Dilemmas of Institutionalization and Leadership Strategy* (London: Routledge, 2009).

Özbudun, identified 2002-2006 as “controlled conflict” phase, 2007 as “challenge and crisis” phase, and 2007-2008 “the backing down of the military,” and by implication, finally the prevalence of the JDP in the political arena. While “the JDP attach[ed] a higher premium to avoiding a possible threat of a coup from the military,”⁸¹¹ the changes in political landscape turned out to empower the civilian government. This ultimately prepared the ground for a concomitant prevalence of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm in foreign policy.

In explicating the foreign policy change between the JDP’s first and second terms, Öniş and Yılmaz argued that “the AKP [JDP] government in the post-2005 era deviated from an all-out Europeanization drive to a possible retreat to what could be described as a kind of ‘loose Europeanization’ or ‘soft Euro-Asianism’ strategy.”⁸¹² Their argument basically was the loosening connection with the EU anchor in Turkish foreign policy as opposed to the earlier term when the JDP government acted predominantly with a membership perspective. This explanation is half true in that it disregards the ideational element in the JDP’s foreign policy, which ultimately sought turning Turkey into a regional and better a global powerhouse. To that end, Europeanization was seen as an integral part of this ultimate objective. On the other hand, as Cizre aptly put, “the JDP leadership promoted Turkish inclusion into the EU not just as a strategy of reordering the party’s ideological priorities but also as a realistic acknowledgement of the historical map of Turkey.”⁸¹³ In comparing the first and second terms, one also needs to bear in mind the

⁸¹¹ Ümit Cizre, “The Justice and Development Party and the Military: Recreating the Past after Reforming It,” in *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey*, p. 154.

⁸¹² Öniş and Yılmaz, “Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism,” p. 13.

⁸¹³ Cizre, “Introduction,” p. 4.

domestic political balances, when the JDP early on espoused Europeanization as the cornerstone of its “politics of avoidance.”⁸¹⁴ In that sense, whether Europeanization was a defining or instrumental aspect for the JDP foreign policy during the first term depends more on one’s vintage point.

A second and widely shared argument in the same article suggests that the JDP espoused a “benign regional power”⁸¹⁵ or soft power approach in accordance with Europeanization or norm-adoption.⁸¹⁶ Here again, tying Turkey’s soft power stance to merely European norms is an argument a bit too far. First, Turkey’s soft power and influence in the Middle East and even the Balkans visibly boosted in this second term, while the EU’s presence and effectiveness regressed especially in the Middle East as a result of various factors. Therefore, Turkey’s rising soft power had to do more than a normative-EU shift. Second, the Europeanization arguments adopted a language as if the EU was the synonym of peaceful diplomacy, while other powers notably the U.S. and Russia were unilateralist belligerents. Here it should also be noted that in most of the “soft power” initiatives in the region pertaining to the Syria-Israel indirect talks, Iranian nuclear program, Russia-Georgia conflict and the Middle East Peace Process, Ankara’s foremost interlocutor was Washington, followed occasionally by Brussels and Moscow. Last but not least, the Europeanization argument in general disregards the ideational shift in Turkish foreign policy. Although, the EU accession process undeniably contributed to this paradigm shift, it has not originally defined or nourished it.

⁸¹⁴ William Hale and Ergun Ozbudun, p. 79.

⁸¹⁵ Öniş, “Turkey and the Middle East,” pp. 1-9.

⁸¹⁶ Öniş and Yılmaz, “Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism,” p. 17.

While the loss of the EU membership perspective proved critical,⁸¹⁷ the prevalence of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm also transpired against the global financial crisis that largely hit the “developed” Western world. The Turkish economy weathered the global crisis relatively with less damage having sound regulatory and financial mechanisms in order.⁸¹⁸ This surely strengthened the JDP government’s hand domestically and externally. As a result, “the West, especially the EU, turned out to be a less attractive destination in terms of purely economic benefits while the rising “East” or “South” appeared to be increasingly more attractive in terms of future trade and investment.”⁸¹⁹ This even led to a reinvention of the G-20 membership that now gained much traction in the articulation of Turkey’s growing role in the global economy.⁸²⁰

The changing global balances essentially vindicated the JDP government’s quest for diversification in foreign relations.⁸²¹ The idea of Turkey as an emerging and “rising power” vindicated this approach.⁸²² The shifting trends and figures in Turkey’s commercial and human-to-human relations are testament to the rationale behind “the neighborhood policy.”⁸²³ As such, it contributed to Turkey’s economic growth and went

⁸¹⁷ Yavuz, *Secularism*, pp. 227-228.

⁸¹⁸ Ziya Öniş, “The Triumph of Conservative Globalism: The Political Economy of the AKP Era,” *Turkish Studies* 13, no.2, (2012), pp. 135-152.

⁸¹⁹ Ziya Öniş, “Multiple Faces of the ‘New’ Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique,” *Insight Turkey* 13, no.1 (2011), p. 55.

⁸²⁰ Z. Vildan Serin and Beyza Oktay, “Debates on a New International Financial System and Turkey’s Position within the G20,” *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, no.54 (2012), pp. 15-30.

⁸²¹ The burgeoning arguments in favor of the “The Rise of the Rest” was taken as a vindicating hint by the JDP cadres. See Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2008).

⁸²² Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Turkey as an Emerging Power,” *Business Standard*, 29 December 2010.

hand in hand with an increasing role for the civil society in external relations. It also turned Turkey into a country of attraction through liberal visa policies that worked as “a strategic tool for greater economic integration in the region that benefits, inter alia, Turkish business.”⁸²⁴ In general, this focus on trade confirmed the growing importance of economic considerations in Turkish foreign policy.⁸²⁵

In addition to the economic factors, Turkey’s “newfound” multiculturalism proved determinant in the new foreign policy orientation. The JDP with its Islamic roots was eager to play a leading role in the Muslim world. From a geostrategic point of view, it enjoyed certain advantages in claiming a pivotal role in the Middle East given the power vacuum due to the U.S. embroilment in Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet this did not prevent the JDP from extending its clout into the Balkans, Central Asia and even to Africa, East Asia, and Latin America. Ankara reached a high-level understanding with Moscow, which had built on an earlier acknowledgment of Turkey’s limits and overriding political and economic dominance of Russia in its “near abroad.”

The JDP’s larger focus on the hinterland and loss of primacy of the Western orientation gave rise to a debate on “the shift of axis”⁸²⁶ or “who lost Turkey.”⁸²⁷ This argument came after a measurable loss of enthusiasm for the EU membership process especially after 2006 when “the European vocation” confronted formidable external and

⁸²³ Ahmet Evin, Kemal Kirişci, Ronald H. Linden, Thomas Straubhaar, Nathalie Tocci, Juliette Tolay, and Joshua W. Walker, *Getting to Zero: Turkey, Its Neighbors and the West* (Washington D.C.: Transatlantic Academy, 2010).

⁸²⁴ Ibid., p. 20.

⁸²⁵ Kirişci, “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy.”

⁸²⁶ For a general overview of such arguments, see Cengiz Çandar, “Turkey’s “Soft Power” Strategy: A New Vision for a Multi-Polar World,” *SETA Policy Brief* no. 38, December 2009.

⁸²⁷ Owen Matthews and Sami Kohen, “Who Lost Turkey?” *Newsweek*, 12 November 2006.

domestic challenges.⁸²⁸ Oğuzlu and Kibaroglu argued that the erosion of Turkey's Western identity has reinforced the willingness to define national interests independent of Western institutional links, this time with a perspective to make up for the inability to proceed to the next step in the Westernization project.⁸²⁹ Özel contextualized that "Turkey's unique experiment in Westernization was already under intense scrutiny in the post-9/11 world, and (these latest blows) have led many to question whether that experiment will continue."⁸³⁰ Thus, the divergences in relations with the U.S. and Israel,⁸³¹ against a growing convergence with Russia⁸³² and other neighboring countries⁸³³ came under greater scrutiny.

This debate culminated after the collision with Israel following an attack on the Mavi Marmara and Turkey's UN Security Council vote against Iran sanctions.⁸³⁴ Economic, political, and security divergences with both the EU and the U.S. were highlighted to argue in favor of a shift of axis in Turkish foreign policy within a larger

⁸²⁸ Oğuzlu, "Middle Easternization," pp. 3-20.

⁸²⁹ The key difference from the immediate post-Cold War era was: "Instead of trying to prove its value to the West by contributing to the materialization of Western security interests in its neighborhood, the prevailing view was that Turkey should adopt an instrumental approach towards the West. In other words, the Westernization/Europeanization process should continue so long as the links to the West enhance Turkey's capability for projecting its power." Tarık Oğuzlu and Mustafa Kibaroglu, "Is the Westernization Process Losing Pace," p. 585.

⁸³⁰ Soli Özel, "Turkey Faces West," *The Wilson Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Winter, 2007), p. 20.

⁸³¹ Rajan Menon and S. Enders Wimbush, "The US and Turkey: End of an Alliance?" *Survival* 49, no.2 (2007), pp. 129-144; Michel Grufinkiel, "Is Turkey Lost?" *Commentary* 123, no.3 (March 2007), pp. 30-37; Piotr Zalewski, "The Self-Appointed Superpower: Turkey Goes it Alone," *World Policy Journal* 27, no. 4 (Winter 2010-2011), pp. 97-102.

⁸³² Fiona Hill and Ömer Taşpınar; F. Stephen Larrabee, "Turkey's Eurasian Agenda," *The Washington Quarterly* 34, no.1 (Winter 2011), pp. 103-120.

⁸³³ Larrabee, "Turkey Rediscovered the Middle East," pp. 103-114;

⁸³⁴ Abdullah Yuvaci and Muhittin Kaplan, "Testing the Axis-Shift Claim: An Empirical Analysis of Turkey's Voting Alignment on Important Resolutions in the United Nations General Assembly during the Years 2000–10," *Turkish Studies* 14, no.2 (2013), pp. 212-228.

framework of ideational differentiation.⁸³⁵ Yet even such arguments concluded, “Whenever Turkey and the West will cooperate, it will be because their interests happen to align;”⁸³⁶ which for different reasons reached the same conclusion with those arguing against a shift of axis.⁸³⁷

Neo-Ottomanism became a coinage to describe the JDP’s foreign policy activism particularly in the Middle East. Short-lived in the early 1990s (see Chapter 4), it gained traction as historicism and multiculturalism were revived by the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm. Fisher Onar argued that neo-Ottomanist policies of the JDP rebuffed what she called “the national project ... [that] emphasized the unitary, secular character of the Turkish nation-state, and displayed a staunch commitment to a Western anchor for Turkish identity and foreign policy.”⁸³⁸ As such, it aspired to “rewrite national identity, and by extension, foreign policy.”⁸³⁹ This revisionism, the author added, enabled the JDP government to “confront the past” and act boldly in tackling post-imperial conflicts such as the Armenian question.⁸⁴⁰ For sure, it also pointed to an embrace of the past.

Taşpınar described the neo-Ottomanist foreign policy practice as “void of imperialist expansionism but determined to promote a high profile diplomatic, political, and economic role for Turkey in the larger Middle East and Europe. At peace with

⁸³⁵ Svante E. Cornell, “What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy?” *Middle East Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (Winter 2012), pp. 13-24.

⁸³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁸³⁷ Mansur Akgün, “Turkey: What Axis Shift?” *Le Monde Diplomatique* (English Edition), July 2010.

⁸³⁸ Nora Fisher Onar, “Neo Ottomanism, Historical Legacies and Turkish Foreign Policy,” *EDAM Discussion Paper Series*, October 2009, p. 3.

⁸³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.16.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Turkey's Muslim heritage and multiple identities, neo-Ottomanism is also much more ambitious and idealistic than Kemalism in projecting Turkey as a regional superpower."⁸⁴¹ He discerned three factors that defined the neo-Ottoman tendencies of the JDP: First, "is the willingness to come to terms with Turkey's Ottoman and Islamic heritage at home and abroad."⁸⁴² He associated the embrace of these heritages with coming to terms with multiculturalism and an objective to spread Turkish political, economic and cultural influence possibly through "soft power." Second, he identified "a sense of grandeur and self-confidence in foreign policy"⁸⁴³ that aimed at turning Turkey into a regional and global power. Davutoğlu's argument that Turkey is a "central country" epitomized this worldview. Thirdly, Taşpınar aptly pointed to the fact that Ottomans were as much a European power as an Islamic dominion. Hence neo-Ottomanism's double orientation towards the West and the East. Tanaskovic added "pragmatism" as an extension of this last trait, which favors the most suitable course among these two orientations for current interests and goals of Turkey.⁸⁴⁴ Yet, imbued in this double orientation was the idea of the Ottomans as "the only Muslim great power [and] the only European Muslim power"⁸⁴⁵ that cherished the great power status and grandeur of the Ottoman state.

⁸⁴¹ Ömer Taşpınar, "Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism," Carnegie Endowment, *Carnegie Papers* no.10, Carnegie Middle East Center, 2008.

⁸⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁸⁴⁴ Milos Dindic, "Book Review: Darko Tanasković (2010), Neo-Osmanizam - Doktrina i Spoljnopolitička Praksa (Neo-Ottomanism: Doctrine or a foreign-policy practice)," *Western Balkans Security Observer*, no.18, (July-September 2010), pp. 100-105.

⁸⁴⁵ Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998), p. 1.

The term has also had domestic sense by putting in perspective “the Ottoman background of [Turkey].”⁸⁴⁶ It symbolized a willingness to do away with the ahistorical and rejectionist Republican foreign policy discourse.⁸⁴⁷ The traditional practice pursued a line that even shied away from referring to historical commonalities, rebuffed “Eastern (read Islamic)” identities and denied Turkey’s multicultural character as a basis for cooperation. In that sense, the term inherently connoted ideational revisionism in favor of strengthened ties with regional countries.

In its general usage, the subtlety of whether the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm advocated neo-imperialism was lost and the term spread with a negative connotation to denote Turkish expansionism. On the other hand, its emphasis on shared historical and cultural legacy notwithstanding, its proponents overlooked the post-Ottoman era of regional nationalisms. Therefore, neo-Ottomanism inherently carried the risk of confronting the national identities and histories that have largely developed in opposition to the very heritage it envisioned to build on. Moreover, with a view to benefit from the historical and cultural commonalities of the Ottoman tapestry, it underrated the changes in political and cultural map of the region. In practice, neo-Ottomanism had to confront the unique challenges of interacting with different regions, which were still in search of national identities. On the one hand, it had to deal with ex-communist and even post-ideological Balkan states; on the other, it had to handle intracivilizational and sectarian divisions in the Middle East that sought post-(trans)national definitions.

⁸⁴⁶ Hourani warned against trying to analyze the Middle East without putting in perspective “the Ottoman background.” Albert Hourani, “How Should We Write the History of the Middle East?,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 2 (May, 1991), pp. 125-136. Cited in *ibid.*, “Introduction,” footnote 1.

⁸⁴⁷ Deringil called the followers of this line as “Kemalist denigrators” of the Ottomans. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Neo-Ottomanism fostered in opposition to the Westernizers' monocultural worldview and their perceived "aping of the West." In the Hamidian sense, it promoted modernization but distanced itself from certain implications of Westernization (See footnote 219 in Chapter 3). Yet by this very act it also implied a decoupling from the West in the sense that neo-Ottomanism stood on *a priori* acceptance of Turkey's dissimilarity with the West.⁸⁴⁸ Unlike "Kemalism," the neo-Ottoman motive was not to become an atomized part and parcel of the Western world. It accepted peaceful coexistence with the West in order to preserve, even fortify its unique model that stood tied, but distinct from the West.⁸⁴⁹

The JDP government, its embrace of pro-Ottoman discourse and an imperial vision⁸⁵⁰ notwithstanding, rebuffed any political association with neo-Ottomanism. Aware of neo-Ottomanism's expansionist and imperialist connotations, the JDP government in principle distanced itself from this very term. While Davutoğlu consistently denied a neo-Ottomanist, i.e. imperialist, agenda in Turkish foreign policy,⁸⁵¹

⁸⁴⁸ Davutoğlu's worldview also built on a similar understanding. See *Alternative Paradigms*.

⁸⁴⁹ This motive was much more apparent in Ottoman modernizers, i.e. neo-Ottomans (Yeni Osmanlılar), who thought of benefiting from the Western model to maintain and if possible strengthen the Ottoman Empire. For an article describing the evolution of neo-Ottomanism since the late nineteenth century, see Mustafa Şahin, "Islam, Ottoman Legacy and Politics in Turkey: An Axis Shift?," *The Washington Review of Turkish and Eurasian Studies*, January 2011. Available at: <http://www.thewashingtonreview.org/articles/islam-ottoman-legacy-and-politics-in-turkey-an-axis-shift.html> [23 August 2013]. Also see Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in The Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962).

⁸⁵⁰ Erdoğan, back in 1993, argued that "provided Turkey desires to become a respectable member of the international community in the 2000s (by the way it should), it is obliged to espouse an imperial vision. The reasons for this obligation lie in its history, geography and ethnic structure." Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Demokrasi Amaç değil, Araçtır (Democracy is not an end, but a means)," in 2. *Cumhuriyet Tartışmaları: Yeni Arayışlar, Yeni Yönelimler* (Debates on the Second Republic: New quests, new orientations), eds. Metin Sever and Cem Dizdar (İstanbul: Başak Yayınları, 1993), p. 430.

⁸⁵¹ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Yeni Osmanlılar Sözü İyi Niyetli Değil," [Interview with Nur Batur] *Sabah*, 4 December 2009.

he still seemed to be in search of a better word to describe the Turkish quest for regional clout.⁸⁵² Cagaptay, on the other hand, discredited the term as a “misnomer,” as he argued that “a closer look reveals that Turkey is asserting itself exclusively in the Muslim Middle East, while ignoring other areas of the Ottoman realm. What is more, under the AKP, Turkish foreign policy empathizes increasingly not with the West, but with Russia and Iran, and especially with Arab Islamist causes.”⁸⁵³

Despite all arguments to the contrary, the JDP leadership came to believe in the Western liberal model of state-society relationships. Feeling oppressed and undermined by the Republican elites, they arguably appeared to opt for the Western model of liberalization and empowerment of citizens.⁸⁵⁴ In that sense, the JDP supported a bottom-up social transformation against the Republican preference for top-down “bureaucratic” modernization. As such, they opted for the liberal model of Westernization over “Jacobenist” elitism. Their worldview thus inherently carried an anti-bureaucratic thinking.⁸⁵⁵

Davutoğlu employed ideational sources of power in his national power

⁸⁵² Diehl claimed that Davutoğlu made a case in favor of an “Ottoman Commonwealth of Nations” in similar vein with the British example. Jackson Diehl, “How WikiLeaks Cables Capture 21st-Century Turkey,” *Washington Post*, 5 December 2010. However, foreign minister Davutoğlu later denied the quote. *Hurriyet Daily News*, “US Needs to Adapt to New Turkish Posture, says FM Davutoğlu,” 26 December 2010.

⁸⁵³ Soner Cagaptay, “The AKP's Foreign Policy: The Misnomer of ‘Neo-Ottomanism’,” *The Turkey Analyst* (The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute) 2, no. 8 (24 April 2009).

⁸⁵⁴ Burbank and Cooper described the Western-Roman (imperial) political model based on empowerment of the citizens against the Eastern-Chinese (imperial) model that relied on a bureaucratic state apparatus to achieve political and social objectives. See Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010). One should also note that this had mainly to do with opposition to bureaucratic modernization, which was internalized by the Republican cadres as the basis of Westernization.

⁸⁵⁵ See Erdoğan, “Demokrasi Amaç değil, Araçtır,” p. 425.

equation,⁸⁵⁶ without referring to Nye's "soft power"⁸⁵⁷ concept. For him, Turkey's historical and geographic assets could play a significant role in extending Turkey's clout and power in international relations. Nye defined soft power as "the ability to affect others to obtain preferred outcomes by the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuasion, and positive attraction."⁸⁵⁸ On that note, what the JDP in general and Davutoğlu in particular had in mind about regional policy was to capture "the soft power of attraction and emulation of success."⁸⁵⁹

The soft power discourse quintessentially, became part and parcel of "the rising powers" discourse to gain ground in global politics, i.e. from peripheral to a central role. The main idea behind was to have a stake in the global order not by reordering (revisionism), but possibly defining a new status quo that would reckon with their long underrated interests. Chinese foreign policy discourse was exemplary in employing a soft power terminology with the catch-all "peaceful rise."⁸⁶⁰ Li and Worm analyzed six sources of Chinese soft power in "cultural attractiveness, political values, development model, international institutions, international image, and economic temptation."⁸⁶¹ India also developed a soft power discourse as an international donor country in addition to its conventional cultural assets such as Bollywood, literature and Indian religious-

⁸⁵⁶ See Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*.

⁸⁵⁷ See footnote 450, in Chapter 5.

⁸⁵⁸ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Power and Foreign Policy," *Journal of Political Power* 4, no. 1, (April 2011), p. 19.

⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁸⁶⁰ Xin Li and Verner Worm, "Building China's Soft Power for a Peaceful Rise," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 16, no.1 (2011), pp. 69–89.

⁸⁶¹ Li and Worm, pp. 69–89.

philosophical heritage.⁸⁶² Despite a later attempt, Russia seemed unable to overcome its traditional emphasis on hard power diplomacy and seemed to be “losing the information and image war.”⁸⁶³

Turkey’s model of emulation and attractiveness was projected as the mere example of a secular and democratic country with rule of law and globally competing market economy in a Muslim majority and European country. It also availed the growing enthusiasm for Turkish soap operas, culture, food and apparel.⁸⁶⁴ The EU accession process was in itself presented as a testament to Turkey’s success. In its second term, however, the JDP put more emphasis on its national success story apart from the larger EU setting. Moreover, the idea of being part of the Muslim world became more pronounced, as opposed to its traditional conceptualization, which isolated Turkish foreign policy from its civilizational, read Islamic and non-Western roots; while secularism was assigned a pragmatic connotation of good governance.

With the growing importance of soft power in global politics that built on effective contemporary forces like “globalization, security community, interdependence, democracy, and networks of cooperation,”⁸⁶⁵ the JDP’s pragmatic emphasis on its

⁸⁶² Rani D. Mullen and Sumit Ganguly, “The Rise of India’s Soft Power,” *Foreign Policy*, 8 May 2012. Available at: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/05/08/the_rise_of_indian_soft_power?page=full [8 September 2013].

⁸⁶³ Fyodor Lukyanov, “Why Russia’s Soft Power is Too Soft,” *Russia in Global Affairs*, 1 February 2013. Available at: <http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/redcol/Why-Russias-Soft-Power-Is-Too-Soft-15845> [8 September 2013].

⁸⁶⁴ See a relevant promotional article, “Turkey’s Soft Power,” *Economic Review* 44, no. 3 (March 2013), pp. 39-41.

⁸⁶⁵ Giulio M. Gallarotti, “Soft Power: What It is, Why It’s Important, and the Conditions for its Effective Use,” *Journal of Political Power* 4, no. 1 (April 2011), pp. 25–47.

“international sources (foreign policies and actions) and domestic sources (domestic policies and actions)”⁸⁶⁶ made much sense.⁸⁶⁷ Thus, softer principles of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm, i.e. zero-problems *et al.*, essentially targeted to realize its objective to gain regional clout through cooperation and conciliation. In that, unlike the traditional practice, a willingness to make the best of Turkey’s assets “particularly its potential for playing a third-party role in the management and resolution of regional conflicts”⁸⁶⁸ for wielding soft power played an important role. Yet, as Greenwald underscored in the specific case of the U.S., a soft power approach could only work if other nations reciprocated.⁸⁶⁹

Reynolds attributed these changes to “a more permissive international environment, Turkey’s increased wealth, and the rise of a new political elite with a distinctly different worldview, among other things. What is critical to note is that Turkey’s outlook, and the foreign policy that it inspires, represents an emerging response to the exhaustion of the founding ideology of the Turkish Republic-Kemalism.”⁸⁷⁰ In accord, Öniş argued that “there are certainly new and distinct elements in the post-2007 era that sharply contrast with the earlier wave of the [JDP]’s foreign policy activism.”⁸⁷¹ This perceived foreign policy shift pointed to the overriding role of Davutoğlu in both its

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

⁸⁶⁷ Oğuzlu described the foreign and domestic sources of Turkey’s soft power. See Oğuzlu, “Soft Power,” pp. 81-97.

⁸⁶⁸ Meliha Benli Altunışık, “The Possibilities and Limits of Turkey’s Soft Power in the Middle East,” *Insight Turkey* 10, no.2 (April-June 2008), pp. 41-54.

⁸⁶⁹ Abe Greenwald, “The Soft Power Fallacy,” *Commentary* 130, no. 1 (July-August 2010), pp. 75-80.

⁸⁷⁰ Michael A. Reynolds, “Echoes of Empire: Turkey’s Crisis of Kemalism and the Search for an Alternative Foreign Policy,” *Analysis Paper* no. 26, (Washington D.C.; The Saban Center for Middle East Policy, Brookings Institution, June 2012), p. 1.

⁸⁷¹ Öniş, “Multiple Faces,” p. 48.

formulation and execution:

Although there is no doubt that Ahmet Davutoğlu was a key figure in the formulation of the AKP's foreign policy during the party's early years in office, his influence has become much more prominent as he has become the person directly responsible for the formulation and implementation of foreign policy during the second phase. His "strategic depth" perspective, which highlighted the pivotal regional and global role of Turkey as a "central country," has become the guiding principal of major foreign policy initiatives during this period.⁸⁷²

As was suggested in the former sections, Davutoğlu's foreign policy principles were in force during the JDP's earlier term, yet in a more accommodationist fashion. This enabled the JDP to break the psychological barriers both at the domestic and external fronts. During the JDP's second term, the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm found much more ground to trump the traditional reflexes. That did not necessarily mean the categorical withering away of the latter, but still it will be safe to argue that the new paradigm's policy principles acquired a predominant base.

The new paradigm primarily aimed to defuse the Cold War logic and the inherent security outlook. Thus, it underlined the need for desecuritization of foreign policy both in discourse and practice. This mainly had two pillars: Domestic reforms was to enlarge the scope of civil liberties, democracy, and rule of law, pave the way for economic development and turn Turkey into a model with enhanced liberty, prosperity and security.

⁸⁷² Ibid., p. 53.

The Turkish model with a rising soft power would, in return, beef up the country's security and prosperity. In practice, zero problems policy (ZPP), which was based on "security for all, high-level political dialogue, economic integration and interdependence, and multicultural coexistence," in itself was the embodiment of Davutoğlu's worldview. Multidimensional and multitrack policy enabled transcending predominant Western orientation and status quoism. The new paradigm espoused a new diplomatic approach to embrace Turkey's multicultural assets. And through rhythmic diplomacy it sought harmony against regional and global irregularities with a proactive diplomacy.

Öniş identified "a pronounced weakening of the commitment to EU membership—if not in rhetoric, in reality—and an increasingly assertive and confident foreign policy which reflects a desire to act as an independent regional power"⁸⁷³ as elements of discontinuity in the JDP's second term. On that note, the new paradigm built on a redefined relationship with the West in general, and a corresponding autonomous regional foreign policy.

As such, in certain cases the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm served as trend-setter, opening new horizons for Turkish foreign policy. Davutoğlu refused to perpetuate the peripheral or even the secondary role Turkey assumed within the Western-European strategic framework. His strategic depth doctrine assigned Turkey a central role in its "near basin," which would consequently elevate its Western and global status. In 2001, when he authored the first edition of *Stratejik Derinlik*, he referred to Turkey's potential to become a central player, yet conceded that it was not there yet. Back in 2003, in the early years of the JDP government, he urged Turkey to assume a central [country] role,

⁸⁷³ Öniş, "Multiple Faces," p. 50.

implying its latent capabilities. There is not a clear timeline as to when he became convinced that Turkey got there, but the 2007 elections and Turkey's election for the UN Security Council a year after probably assured his conviction.

Against this backdrop, the JDP government came to espouse a strategic-cooperative rather than a technical-contractual approach vis-à-vis the EU. Though transpired under specific conditions, at the end of the day this was in essence an eventual embrace of Davutoğlu's projections. Having been "knocking on the doors of Europe," the JDP distanced itself from an understanding that regarded Europeanization as the ultimate way for the fulfillment of Turkey's potential. Rather, Ankara espoused a rhetoric, which underscored Turkey's possible contributions to the EU given its burgeoning clout in the neighborhood. After 2007-8 financial crises that largely shook the Western world, Ankara felt even more assured that "EU needs Turkey as much as we need them." This new thinking in return emboldened further attempts for regional consolidation, which gave leeway to innovative initiatives.

This move also symbolized a new role for Turkey from a security consumer to security provider. Ankara emerged as a force that advocated region-wide security (for all), stability and prosperity. That is not to say that the Turkish leadership declared a military pact to fend off regional or extra-regional threats. Rather the desecuritized foreign policy discourse drew a new course for the region, which supported diplomatic resolution of conflicts, promoted a surge in political, economic and cultural relations, and envisioned an integrated regional area of free trade⁸⁷⁴ and free movement of people.

⁸⁷⁴ Turkey signed Free Trade Agreements with regional countries including Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, and Israel. For the full list. See <http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/sta/> [15 October 2013].

Overall, this envisioned an interdependent area of cooperation. As such, Turkey wanted to reclaim its hinterland through trade and diplomacy.

The Middle East emerged as a special area of interest, though the JDP particularly cared for not losing traction with other neighboring regions. The JDP government developed tools to strengthen and institutionalize the bilateral and multilateral relations with regional countries. In accord, it held joint cabinet meetings with 14 countries including Brazil, Syria, Iraq, Greece, Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Egypt, Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan;⁸⁷⁵ established Turk-Arab Cooperation Forum with the members of the Arab League; committed to a “strategic dialogue” with the Gulf Cooperation Council;⁸⁷⁶ developed bilateral and trilateral mechanisms with Bosnia-Hercegovina, Serbia and Croatia; worked out the Istanbul Process between Afghanistan and Pakistan; and tried to revitalize regional organizations such as ECO, BSEC, CICA, and the Turkish Council.

Ankara also endeavored to bridge differences between regional countries. In the Middle East, Davutoğlu particularly tried to avert a burgeoning crisis between Sunni and Shiite groups. Therefore, supported by the JDP leadership, he played a behind-the-scenes role to either bring together or defuse conflicts between the so-called “resistance front,” i.e. Iran, Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas, and pro-Western countries including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel. He was directly involved in reconciliation attempts between

⁸⁷⁵ As of 2012, Turkey undertook High-Level (Strategic) Council, i.e. joint cabinet meetings with 14 countries and also a quadrilateral meeting with Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. For the whole list. Available online at: See <http://kdk.gov.tr/sayilarla/yukse-duceyly-isbirliyi-mekanizmalari/8> [24 September 2013].

⁸⁷⁶ Martin, pp. 75–93.

Syria and Israel, Syria and Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia, Iran and Saudi Arabia, and played an active role in the Lebanese and Palestinian conflicts.⁸⁷⁷

Yet such moves were not restricted to the Middle East. In the Balkans, Turkey initiated “Trilateral Consultative Mechanism” with Serbia and Bosnia as well as with Bosnia and Croatia. One of the foremost initiatives of Davutoğlu after his debut as the Minister of Foreign Affairs was his outreach to the region through “shuttle diplomacy,” confidence-building measures (CBMs) and action plans. Ankara pursued a three-pronged roadmap to bring together Belgrade and Sarajevo: First, Bosnia was to appoint an Ambassador to Belgrade. Second, the Serbian Parliament was to issue a resolution condemning the Srebrenica genocide ideally before the commemoration ceremony of the 15th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. Third, a summit level meeting was to be held to declare the successful conclusion of these steps. As of July 2010, all these three measures were realized with Turkish mediation and a trilateral summit meeting was held in Istanbul.

Turkey’s commitment to defuse crises was also in play in the Caucasus. When the Russian forces attacked Georgia in 2008, Ankara introduced the Caucasia Stability and Cooperation Platform (CSCP) to calm down the tension. To that end, Turkey espoused an implicit regional ownership perspective, which seemed to be appreciated by Moscow in particular, albeit without any significant returns. It also tended to exclude extra-regional powers from involvement in the conflict resolution, an act “not well-received” by the U.S. and the EU.⁸⁷⁸

⁸⁷⁷ For background details and personal involvement of Davutoğlu in various reconciliation attempts, See Gürkan Zengin, pp. 268-309.

One of the most prominent regional initiatives of Ankara was to broker an accord with Armenia. Publicly launched with President Gül's visit to Yerevan in 2008 and dubbed as "football diplomacy," it led to the signature of the Protocols for establishment of diplomatic relations and development of relations on October 2009.⁸⁷⁹ Although this diplomatic attempt to broaden the scope of "zero problems" faced domestic and external complications, which hindered the ratification of the Protocols, it still pointed to the ideational turn in Turkish foreign policy.

The idea of Turkey as a central country formed the ideational background of mediation efforts, which stood largely in contravention with the traditional practice of non-involvement. According to Davutoğlu, "mediation [was] an integral part of [Turkey's new foreign policy that utilized its geographic assets with...] unique access to both global north and south."⁸⁸⁰ Therefore, "Turkey's cultural-civilizational background⁸⁸¹ and long experience with Western political and security structures create[d] an advantage in the field."⁸⁸² Davutoğlu regarded these mediation attempts, from Syria-Israel indirect talks to Turkey-Brazil-Iran nuclear swap deal and talks with the Iraqi groups, in harmony with Turkey's ownership perspective and insider status in its

⁸⁷⁸ Emre İşeri and Oğuz Dilek, "The Limitations of Turkey's New Foreign Policy Activism in the Caucasian Regional Security Complexity," *Turkish Studies* 12, no. 1, (March 2011), pp. 41–54.

⁸⁷⁹ David L. Phillips, *Diplomatic History: The Turkey-Armenia Protocols* (New York: Columbia University Institute for the Study of Human Rights (in collaboration with the Future of Diplomacy Project, Harvard Kennedy School), March 2012).

⁸⁸⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Mediation: Critical Reflections from the Field," *Middle East Policy* 20, no.1 (Spring 2013), p. 90.

⁸⁸¹ This claim motivated Turkey to get involved in brokering a peace deal between Buddhists and Arakan Muslim in Myanmar. See Bülent Aras, "Turkey's Mediation and Friends of Mediation Initiative," *SAM Papers*, no.4, (Ankara: Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 2012), p. 3.

⁸⁸² Aras, "Turkey's Mediation," p. 3.

neighborhood. In other words, Turkey was up to the task as a component of and stakeholder in the regional order, not as a “disinterested” third party. Turkey has also launched the Friends of Mediation initiative with Finland at the UN, which aimed to underscore its claim as a regional and global actor.

The mediation efforts also alluded to Turkey’s new role as a security provider. Davutoğlu believed that “stability cannot be built on the basis of force alone. Only those governments that enjoy political legitimacy and respect freedoms can achieve peace and stability.”⁸⁸³ Therefore, this reasoning forecast the projection of security and stability from the domestic to the external. As Aras underlined, “Turkey’s domestic reform and growing economic capabilities have enabled the country to emerge as a peace-promoter in neighboring regions.”⁸⁸⁴ Turkey’s objective was to primarily excel at a political and economic model, which would in turn entice other countries to regional integration and interdependence based preferably on the Turkish experience.⁸⁸⁵ This envisioned integration was to transcend and overcome intractable regional conflicts bringing about a zone of stability and prosperity, in similar vein with the EU’s soft power:

Although inspired by a romanticized understanding of the Ottoman past, Davutoğlu’s and the AKP’s vision of a future Middle East resembles, in broad strokes, a modern-day model: the European Union’s ideal of a zone of free

⁸⁸³ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy and Regional Political Structuring,” forward *SAM Vision Papers*, no. 3, (Ankara: Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 2012), p. 3.

⁸⁸⁴ Aras, “The Davutoglu Era,” p. 4.

⁸⁸⁵ For Davutoğlu’s integrationist projections about the Balkans, see Ahmet Davutoğlu, “A Forward Looking Vision for the Balkans,” *SAM Vision Papers*, no. 1 (Ankara: Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 2011).

commerce and travel. This similarity is not coincidental, as both the AKP's project and the European Union are rooted in critiques of nationalism and the nation-state. A hallmark of Davutoğlu's regional pursuit of "zero problems"—a doctrine that stresses close diplomatic and economic ties with Turkey's neighbors—has been an almost giddy enthusiasm for visa-free travel and lowered tariffs and customs duties between Turkey and Syria, Iran, Lebanon, Jordan, Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Russia, among other countries. Whereas demarcating a distinctly Turkish territory and erecting borders to sever it from its neighbors was central to Kemalism, eliding national boundaries has been an aspiration of the AKP.⁸⁸⁶

This had mainly to do with a redefinition of interests, which were not anymore restricted to Turkey's national borders. For Davutoğlu, Turkey's security could only be assured through foreign policy activism outside its borders so as to fend off external threats.⁸⁸⁷ In practice, the JDP government tried to neutralize them either in their country of origin or through regional activism. Turkey's primary security concern continued to be the Kurdish problem, which this time would be countered through first cooperation with Iraq, Syria and Iran and then through reconciliation via setting a larger model of economic interdependence.

The new paradigm was also in order as Turkey pursued a multidimensional and multitrack foreign policy. In so-called "openings" toward hitherto uncharted regions,

⁸⁸⁶ Reynolds, p. 15.

⁸⁸⁷ Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, p. 41.

Turkish foreign policy was largely driven by private business and civil society activities, which usually went ahead of public initiatives. Particularly in Africa, the newly opened embassies followed up the prior works and initiatives of civil society organizations. Overall, Turkey opened 22 new embassies in Africa between 2009-2012.⁸⁸⁸ As a stark reflection of the change in worldview, Turkey purchased Embassy compounds from certain Western countries that closed down their missions especially after the 2008 financial crisis. In the particular case of Africa, “conceptualisation of Africa in Turkish society has changed dramatically in less than a decade, and the recent Turkey–Africa Cooperation Summit should be seen as part of this trend.”⁸⁸⁹ “The opening to Africa” was not a novel idea, but in its implementation, whereby new foreign policy actors such as the NGOs, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TİKA) and the Directorate for Religious Affairs of Turkey (Diyanet) played important roles, it exemplified the new dynamics of Turkish foreign policy.

The so-called “rhythmic diplomacy” was thus in play “pushing for a sustained pro-activism in the field of diplomacy, trying to achieve a more active role in international organizations, and opening up to new areas where Turkish contacts have been limited in the past.”⁸⁹⁰ Turkey broadened focus to develop relations with various regional and international organizations. It aimed at resuscitating already established multilateral organizations such as ECO, BSEC, SEECF, and CICA among others. Turkey

⁸⁸⁸ Ahmet Davutoğlu, MFA Davutoğlu's speech before the Turkish Parliament's Plan and Budgetary Commission, 6 November 2012, Ankara. Available at: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-davutoglu_nun-tbmm-plan-ve-butce-komisyonunda.tr.mfa [29 September 2013].

⁸⁸⁹ Mehmet Özkan and Birol Akgün, “Turkey's Opening to Africa,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 48, 4 (2010), pp. 525-546.

⁸⁹⁰ Öniş and Yılmaz, “Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism,” p. 12.

also became an observer in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and strategic ally of the African Union (AU). It signed a Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with the ASEAN bloc and increased its presence in Latin American organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS). Overall, the JDP government began to engage with to out of zone areas namely sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Caribbean, the Pacific islands and East Asia.

Turkey's UN Security Council (SC) membership candidature rationale built on these foreign policy principles, particularly on Turkey as a central power.⁸⁹¹ The priorities set for the Turkish membership were testimonial to that effect in accentuating Turkey's role as a mediator, donor country and active regional-multilateral actor.⁸⁹² Berdal underlined that the Turkish SC membership posture could be depicted as "critical alignment," i.e. "remaining by and large within the Western paradigm about international security, and hence seeking to act in tandem with the Western group of nations unless a particular issue concerns its vital national interests, but assuming a critical role within that paradigm, especially in respect of resolutions which are likely to produce- unjustly- Muslim victimhood."⁸⁹³ Turkish foreign policy was clearly in a different path compared to its traditional practice.

⁸⁹¹ Berdal Aral, "Turkey in the UN Security Council: Its Election and Performance," *Insight Turkey* 11, no.4 (2009), pp. 151-168.

⁸⁹² United Nations, "Turkey's Priorities for the 63rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly," September 2008. Available at: <http://www.un.int/turkey/63rdGA.pdf>.

⁸⁹³ Aral, "Turkey in the UN Security Council," p. 165.

Despite the JDP's pretense to downplay the civilizational dimension of its foreign policy, there was an overt linkage in both discourse and practice. Davutoğlu's thinking has had hard time in accommodating "the clash of civilizations" and "the end of history" assumptions. The JDP thus confronted the former thesis to prevent a possible clash and refuted the latter to delineate the distinctiveness and viability of an indelible part of Turkey's own identity. This had to do with an assumed responsibility to pay attention to the concerns of the Islamic civilization. Undeniably, the followers of the traditional worldview simply ignored, even repudiated these concerns.⁸⁹⁴

Early on, the JDP government employed the bridge metaphor to facilitate intercultural dialogue in view of the rising tide of Islamophobia in the West after 9/11.⁸⁹⁵ As such, it underscored Turkey's ties with both the Western and Islamic worlds.⁸⁹⁶ Prime Minister Erdoğan was especially keen on emphasizing the necessity of intercivilizational dialogue in order for the EU to turn into a global power.⁸⁹⁷

Such motives were nowhere more apparent than the Alliance of Civilizations initiative, which, for Erdoğan, had a crucial role in ending "the clash of civilizations."⁸⁹⁸ Turkey joined the initiative as a co-sponsoring "Muslim country" alongside "Western" Spain. As Öniş and Yılmaz underlined, "despite its limited concrete achievements, the value attached to Turkey's Eastern heritage and Islamic identity, as well as its ties with

⁸⁹⁴ The military openly detested any identification with Islam, either as a model or partner during the first term of the JDP. See Yavuz, *Secularism*, pp. 210-211.

⁸⁹⁵ Öniş and Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism," p. 11.

⁸⁹⁶ Balcı and Miş underlined the JDP's ability to claim an alliance with the West as opposed to the Welfare Party's repudiation of any ties. Ali Balcı and Nebi Miş, "Turkey's Role in the Alliance of Civilizations: A New Perspective in Turkish Foreign Policy?" *Turkish Studies* 9, no. 3 (September 2008), p. 388.

⁸⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 393.

⁸⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 394.

the West, also appealed to a domestic audience.”⁸⁹⁹ However, it also implied a divergent approach “cast[ing] Turkey as the leader of its own civilization, with the implication that Western civilization is not Turkey’s own.”⁹⁰⁰ This second aspect again gave rise to, *inter alia*, arguments about Turkish foreign policy’s “shift of axis.”

Lesser rightly pointed to a fundamental change of actors, which spurred the ideational shift in Turkish foreign policy. Turkish security thinking, which has traditionally been “shaped by a relatively small group of military leaders, foreign ministry officials and secular elites (including a handful of influential outside ‘analysts’), with a shared ideology of secularism, Westernisation and nationalism,”⁹⁰¹ became amenable to “competing influences, including a vigorous private sector, and ethnic ‘lobbies’, participating in the foreign and security policy debate.”⁹⁰² This was in effect the democratization of Turkish foreign policy, extended in terms of both the actors and fora. As Öniş and Yılmaz aptly put:

The democratization of foreign policy emerges as a key element under the AKP government. New actors are involved. Foreign policy issues are open to public debate. Previously fixed positions on a number of key issues have become the focal point of public debate, such as Cyprus, relations with Armenia, and relations with Kurds in northern Iraq. Hence, the Turkish context represents a direct

⁸⁹⁹ Öniş and Yılmaz, “Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism,” p. 12.

⁹⁰⁰ Bilgin and Bilgiç, “Turkey’s ‘New’ Foreign Policy,” p. 192.

⁹⁰¹ Ian Lesser, “The Evolution of Turkish National Security Strategy,” in *Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity*, p. 263.

⁹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 258.

example of how overall democratization of domestic politics can contribute towards a softening of foreign policy. In the new era, Turkey's proactive foreign policy based on soft power also becomes much more convincing when viewed from the perspective of the international community. In the 1990s Turkey often encountered the criticism of double standards, for example when it tried to promote the rights of the Bosnians against the Serbs at a time when the rights of its own Kurdish minorities were effectively repressed in the domestic sphere. In the new era, with the enlargement of cultural and civil rights in the domestic sphere, Turkey's proactive foreign policy moves appear to be more convincing and stand on firmer ground.⁹⁰³

In addition, as Aras underlined in the particular case of Turkey's mediation efforts, "the demands of various societal actors" were taken into consideration and the public institutions involved diversified to include "TIKA, the official development agency, Yunus Emre Foundation, (the Turkish version of Goethe Institute or Cervantes), the Public Diplomacy Agency and the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities."⁹⁰⁴ Davutoğlu alluded to an emerging interest in the Turks living abroad and appeared concerned about the rising tide of xenophobia targeting them especially in European countries.⁹⁰⁵

⁹⁰³ Öniş and Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism," p. 20.

⁹⁰⁴ Aras, "Turkey's Mediation," p. 5.

⁹⁰⁵ Davutoğlu, "Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy," p. 5.

Overall, the JDP government's foreign policy developed in apparent contrast to the traditional practice in terms of both theory and practice. With new foreign policy objectives and new principles born out of a peculiar worldview, the JDP- Davutoğlu paradigm aimed to transcend and replace the traditional paradigm. The dissertation now turns to a closer view of the new paradigm's implementation.

CHAPTER 10

THE JDP'S SECOND TERM FOREIGN POLICY PRACTICE

Before the 2007 Presidential elections, the Turkish foreign policy ran into a reignited battle of ideas between the proponents of the traditional paradigm and the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm. President Sezer and the military top brass publicly dominated the discussion on the Kurdish question with restrictive effects on Turkey-Iraq relations. The military upped the ante by reinforcing border divisions and openly declared its readiness to make incursions into northern Iraq.⁹⁰⁶ Sezer resisted the government's willingness to open up a diplomatic channel with the Baghdad government and refused to invite Iraq's Kurdish President Talabani to Ankara. The JDP government, in turn, tried to tone down the tension through diplomatic maneuvers so as to reach out to the Iraqi and the KRG officials,⁹⁰⁷ and win over the U.S. and neighboring countries in its fight against the PKK.

Another hot topic was the Armenian question, which resurfaced as a burning issue following the assassination of Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink. The traditionalist reflexes quickly came to the fore in Ankara, particularly when the U.S. Congress got involved and debated the possibility of recognizing "the Armenian genocide."⁹⁰⁸ The military command criticized the US and the EU for giving in to the Armenian

⁹⁰⁶ Mehmet Ali Birand, "Kürt Sorununda Dönüm Noktasındayız," *Hürriyet*, 1 March 2007.

⁹⁰⁷ Erdoğan met Iraqi President Talabani in Riyadh and gave conciliatory messages. "Talabani'den Çok Önemli Mesaj," *Hürriyet*, 28 March 2007.

⁹⁰⁸ "ABD Senatosu Komitesi'nde Türkiye Oylaması," *Hürriyet*, 3 March 2007; "Hrant Dink için Toplanan ABD Senatosu Onlarca Cinayet için Sustu, çünkü... Bir Lobi'ye Teslim Oldu," *Hürriyet*, 5 March 2007.

allegations,⁹⁰⁹ while the ultra-nationalists turned a trial in Switzerland into a show of chauvinism.⁹¹⁰ The government again took a conciliatory path. It sought a dialogue channel with Erivan,⁹¹¹ sent condolence messages to President Kocharyan after Prime Minister Magaryan's decease,⁹¹² and reopened the historical Akhtamar Armenian Church for annual religious services.⁹¹³ Together with the Kurdish issue, these developments not only ignited an internal strife, but also put Turkey's foreign relations under distress.⁹¹⁴

Following the parliamentary and Presidential elections, there was not an immediate backdown by the military. On the contrary, they increased the pressure on the government to take the "necessary," i.e. military steps against the PKK and yet again warned against the threat emanating from the autonomy and possible independence of the KRG.⁹¹⁵ The PKK's intensified terror campaign vindicated their position and limited the government's ability to find a political and diplomatic way out of the crisis. This in turn put the government on a collision course not merely with Erbil, but also with the Western

⁹⁰⁹ Deputy Chief of General Staff General Sargun's speech at the American Turkish Council meeting in Washington D.C. exemplified the military's continuing grasp of foreign policy issues from the Armenian allegations to Iraq and Cyprus. "Orgeneral Saygun AB ve ABD'ye Mesaj Verdi," *Hürriyet*, 27 March 2007.

⁹¹⁰ President of the ultranationalist Workers Party Doğu Perinçek was tried in Switzerland for violating the law against the denial of "the Armenian genocide." He got support mainly from the ultranationalists in his defense against the law and its foundation. "Lozan Fatihi' diye Karşılandı," *Hürriyet*, 10 March 2007.

⁹¹¹ "Gül: Ermenistan'dan Cevap Bekliyoruz," *Hürriyet*, 28 March 2007.

⁹¹² "Ankara'dan Ermenistan'a Başsağlığı Mesajı," *Hürriyet*, 27 March 2007.

⁹¹³ "Akdamar Kilisesi Açıldı," *Hürriyet*, 29 March 2007.

⁹¹⁴ "Turkey will not move away from the West by its choice,' says Ahmet Davutoglu, chief foreign-policy adviser to Turkey's prime minister [sic]. 'But if Western countries continue to make the same mistakes, Turkey has other alternatives.'" Owen Matthews, Sami Kohen and et al., "It's Not About the West," *Newsweek* (Pacific Edition), 11 May 2007, pp. 22-24.

⁹¹⁵ Mehmet Ali Birand, "Orgeneral Başbuğ için asıl sorun Kuzey Irak...", *Hürriyet*, 27 September 2007.

allies.⁹¹⁶ Relations with the U.S. got further strained as the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs voted in favor of an “Armenian genocide bill.”⁹¹⁷

The government despite all these odds resisted the urge to take unilateral action. Instead, it launched a diplomatic campaign to win support against the PKK. The JDP leadership visited both the Western and regional capitals to handle the case. Overall, the government’s efforts amounted to collective problem solving with regional and global interlocutors⁹¹⁸ in certain contrast to earlier unilateralist cross-order operations in northern Iraq.⁹¹⁹ These dialogue-seeking moves found a receptive audience in regional capitals,⁹²⁰ while the government was able to convince both Washington⁹²¹ and Erbil⁹²² to support its position against the PKK. On the Armenian issue, the government gave boost to reconciliation attempts with Erivan that had already been launched in 2005, regardless of the U.S. Congress’s disruptive decision.

Defusing these crises through diplomatic maneuvers was key to Turkey’s rising power in the region.⁹²³ First, these diplomatic demarches strengthened the JDP government’s hand both domestically and externally. Against traditional practice, the

⁹¹⁶ “Bush Administration Urges Iraqi Kurds to Help End Raids Into Turkey,” *New York Times*, 23 October 2007.

⁹¹⁷ “Washington Büyükelçimiz İstanbul’da,” *Hürriyet*, 13 October 2007.

⁹¹⁸ Turkey held another round of Neighboring Countries of Iraq Meeting on 2-3 November 2007, this time in an enlarged format to include the United States and other Western countries. The meeting turned into a forum for Turkey to convince other actors about its right to act against the PKK terrorism.

⁹¹⁹ Kirişçi, “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy,” pp. 30-31.

⁹²⁰ “Türkiye ile Krizi Çöz’ Çağrısı,” *Hürriyet*, 31 October 2007.

⁹²¹ “Bush Pledges to Help Turkey on Intelligence,” *New York Times*, 6 November 2007.

⁹²² “Barzani: PKK, Kayıtsız Şartsız Silah Bırakmalı,” *Zaman*, 8 November 2007.

⁹²³ “Türkiye, Önce Diplomaside Kazandı Sonra Askerî Operasyon Düzenledi,” *Zaman*, 1 January 2008.

civilian government began to take the helms in these so-called “national security” issues. Occasionally daring to differ with the military’s calls for military intervention, the government displayed its readiness to assume political responsibility. Second, it underscored the civilian government’s prerogative in decision-making and turned it into the main interlocutor vis-à-vis other international actors. Third, Ankara’s decision to prioritize diplomacy rather than taking a unilateralist course was effective in eliminating the predominant view about Turkey as an outsider in the region that did not take into account the concerns and interests of other regional actors. Fourth, the diplomatic campaign showed the power of Turkish diplomacy, now able to garner support from both Western and regional capitals. Overall, the process itself was testimonial to the growing prevalence of the new conceptual framework in Turkish foreign policy.

Against this backdrop, the government found more space to implement the vision set by Davutoğlu. His role became more visible. *The Economist* magnified his behind the scenes role even to the extent arguing that “dealing with Turkish foreign policy means dealing with Mr Davutoglu.”⁹²⁴ The article delineated the objective of his foreign policy vision that came definitely with a new diplomatic approach and was based on policy principles of multidimensionalism and “zero problems,” i.e. high-level political dialogue, economic integration and interdependence, and multicultural coexistence, standing at its core:

Mr Davutoglu's desire to transform Turkey into a pivotal country in the region lies at the heart of his vision. Turkey was long perceived, he told a conference, “as having strong muscles, a weak stomach, a troubled heart and a mediocre brain.”

⁹²⁴ “Turkey’s Foreign Policy: An Eminence Grise,” *The Economist*, 15 November 2007.

Getting away from this means creating strong economic ties across Turkey's borders. Even as the Turks threaten separatist PKK rebels inside northern Iraq, business ties with the Iraqi Kurds flourish. Hawks who called for the expulsion of Armenian migrants when an American congressional committee passed a bill calling the mass slaughter of Ottoman Armenians “genocide” were overruled. At the same time Mr Davutoglu is an avid proponent of Turkey's membership of the EU. “Turkey can be European in Europe and eastern in the East, because we are both,” he insists.⁹²⁵

Following these first overtures in the second term, the government’s diplomatic agenda focused more and more on realizing its foreign policy vision through mediation or in certain cases facilitation. These efforts essentially pursued a two way course: First, Turkey’s willingness to resolve its own foreign policy issues through making use of third party’s mediation efforts such as Switzerland in the case of Armenian reconciliation or the assistance of the U.S. and partly Iraq against the PKK. Second, Turkey itself found unprecedented levels of self-confidence in engaging as a third party mediator or facilitator in various conflicts from the Middle East peace process, in its both Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian legs to Afghanistan-Pakistan talks and reconciliation efforts among different Iraqi groups. Foreign Minister Babacan noted that even African countries started asking for Turkish mediation.⁹²⁶ In general, these efforts were in line with the policy principle of “zero problems with neighbors.”

⁹²⁵ “Turkey’s Foreign Policy: An Eminence Grise.”

⁹²⁶ “Türkiye’ye Arabuluculuk Çağrısı,” *Zaman*, 21 June 2008.

As resistance against Turkish membership became more visible, the JDP government's discourse on the EU process espoused a more strategic and civilizational direction along the lines put forth by Davutoğlu in his written works. To that effect, Turkey's prospective membership was presented as a strategic asset that could render the EU a more powerful global role. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Erdoğan occasionally referred to the Turkish membership as the realization of "Alliance of Civilizations," i.e. indicating the possibility of peaceful coexistence between the West and the Islamic world.⁹²⁷ But there were also bitter signs of frustration with the EU's indecision to move forward.⁹²⁸

The Turkish bid for UN Security Council non-permanent seat put flesh on the JDP's objective to follow a multidimensional course in order to balance the predominant Western orientation. It was also taken as a litmus test to find out whether Turkey could live up to the objective of becoming a global player. As such, the membership campaign opened new venues in Turkish foreign policy imagination establishing newfound enthusiasm in developing relations with south Pacific islands⁹²⁹ and deepening relations with Africa⁹³⁰ and to a lesser extent with Latin America.

Davutoğlu the statesman grew more competent in implementing his foreign policy objectives. He became a special envoy of sorts, responsible mainly for relations with the Middle East. Thus, he turned into the government's point man in matters pertaining to Syria, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, the Gulf, and the Middle East peace process. In the particular

⁹²⁷ "Erdoğan Meydan Okudu: Gerekirse Tarihimizle Hesaplaşırız," *Zaman*, 9 February 2008.

⁹²⁸ "Erdoğan AB'yi Uyardı: Kararınızı Verin, Bizi Oyalamayın," *Zaman*, 4 April 2008.

⁹²⁹ "Güvenlik Konseyi Üyeliği İçin Güney Pasifik Hamlesi," *Zaman*, 8 April 2008.

⁹³⁰ "Türkiye-Afrika İşbirliği Zirvesi Başladı," *Zaman*, 18 August 2008.

case of Iraq, he benefited from the growing civilian role in domestic decision-making, especially regarding relations with the KRG. He made the first official meeting since 2003 with President Talabani, whose official invitation as a Kurdish Iraqi politician proved controversial, and KRG Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani in Baghdad in May 2008.⁹³¹ Yet, his role grew as he participated in the majority of foreign policy processes and even to the point of an acting Foreign Minister.

The disclosure of the Syria-Israel indirect talks under Turkish supervision brought Davutoğlu's behind the scenes role under international spotlight.⁹³² His belief in the necessity of Turkish involvement in regional issues created conducive ground to project his vision towards the Middle East in this particular case. Davutoğlu espoused a comprehensive and holistic approach regarding regional conflicts. In that, he advocated dialogue with all groups and sought solutions to possibly all emerging conflicts in the region to prepare the ground for his integrationist model. His reasoning to that effect was "isolation creates economic stagnation. Isolation creates a barrier."⁹³³ Therefore, to the extent possible, Turkey rendered its good offices, acting as an across the board mediator.

This perspective was in total contrast to the traditional paradigm that ideally restricted Turkey's involvement to "national" issues and had no designs as to how the regional order was being shaped. This shift largely built on Davutoğlu's vision to assign Turkey a central role in its neighborhood. The JDP leadership's embrace of his

⁹³¹ "Kuzey Irak'la İlk Ciddi Temas Türk Heyeti Barzani ile Görüştü," *Zaman*, 1 May 2008.

⁹³² "Israel Holds Peace Talks With Syria," *New York Times*, 22 May 2008; "Görüşmeler Başladı, Türkiye Ortadoğu Barışına Ev Sahipliği Yapıyor," *Zaman*, 22 May 2008.

⁹³³ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Top Foreign Policy Aide Worries about False Optimism in Iraq," interview with *Council on Foreign Relations*, New York, 19 September 2008. Available at: <http://www.cfr.org/turkey/turkeys-top-foreign-policy-aide-worries-false-optimism-iraq/p17291> [20 November 2013].

worldview proved decisive in Turkish foreign policy's reorientation as a regional stakeholder.⁹³⁴

The subtlety in keeping up with the new paradigm was to maintain the balance between the Western orientation and regional activism. The Georgia-Russia war of 2008 was a clear example of how the new paradigm operated. Turkey gave a tri-pronged response to the crisis: First, it aimed to contribute to the cessation of conflict by offering its good offices for mediation. Second, it sought a balance between its Western orientation and regional ties. The strict implementation of the Montreux Convention indicated a commitment to the regional order, which in this case worked for Russian interests; while support for the Western efforts to assist Georgia highlighted Ankara's alignment with the West. Third, it formulated a regional platform to cool down the post-conflict tension, i.e. the CSCP, "bringing together Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, and Georgia to work on regional security, counter-terrorism, trade, and the environment."⁹³⁵

The proposal for a CSCP at such a critical juncture serves Turkey's foreign policy priorities for a more pro-active policy in the Caucasus in the context of its "zero-problems with the neighbours" and the "maximum cooperation" approach. It is in line with Professor (and now Foreign Minister) Ahmet Davutoğlu's "rhythmic

⁹³⁴ For one Minister of Foreign Affairs Babacan, in his overview of Turkish foreign policy Turkish foreign policy, reiterated commitment to this regional role. "Babacan: PKK Gündemimizden Düşmeli," *Zaman*, 16 July 2008; "Babacan: Türkiye Adı Konulmamış bir Arabulucu Konumunda," *Zaman*, 21 July 2008.

⁹³⁵ Phillips, p. 43.

diplomacy” and “Strategic Depth” as part of a transformation towards a more “independent and assertive” foreign policy formation. This is the result of the country’s rising self-confidence and the emphasis on its multidimensional and “multigeographical” role. The recognition of Turkey as an important player in the region, which could balance Russia’s role in the Caucasus, would eventually strengthen its international position. It would not only offer an alternative choice (to the West), but also - paradoxically - bring the country closer to the EU and the United States. With this move, the AKP demonstrates its intention to implement a regional strategy not only towards the Middle East and the Muslim world, as is often claimed by the secular opposition, but also towards the Caucasus. This would answer the demands of several lobbies and advocacy groups in Turkey, such as the Turkish Georgians, the Ahiska Turks and Caucasian Diaspora, as well as of a segment of Turkish nationalists - i.e., a foreign policy which enjoys wide consensus.⁹³⁶

The Turkish-Armenian reconciliation process was registered as yet another attempt in accordance with “zero-problems” policy principle. As President Gül reflected, there were psychological barriers between the two countries.⁹³⁷ Yet the JDP government and the President took a political decision to move towards reconciliation.⁹³⁸ Though

⁹³⁶ Eleni Fotiou, “Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at Stake for Regional Cooperation?,” *ICBSS Policy Brief*, no. 16 (June 2009), pp. 5-6.

⁹³⁷ “Gül: Psikolojik Duvarları Yıktık,” *Zaman*, 7 September 2008.

⁹³⁸ Davutoğlu reflected on a decade of track two activities in May 2009: “Just ten years ago the Armenian question was taboo in Turkey, but now our public freely discusses it. The events in the early twentieth

these moves predated the JDP era,⁹³⁹ it became politically possible only after the new foreign policy paradigm found ample ground.⁹⁴⁰ “Football diplomacy” gave boost to the ongoing efforts, which have been strengthened especially after the Swiss mediation was accepted by both sides in the fall of 2007. The end result was the historical signature of the Protocols in October 2009 on the establishment of diplomatic relations and the development of bilateral relations. However, the inability to address a directly related regional conflict, in this particular case the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, eventually stalled the reconciliation process.

These attempts led to growing confidence in the implementation of the new paradigm. After the election to the UN Security Council, Foreign Minister Babacan declared readiness to play “a global [mediator] role.”⁹⁴¹ Prime Minister Erdoğan voiced willingness to play a mediation role between the U.S. and Iran.⁹⁴² President Gül stepped up efforts particularly in Central Asia and Africa. Davutoğlu’s visibility in international diplomacy increased notably in the wake of Israel’s attack on Gaza in December 2008.⁹⁴³ Turkey felt confident and independent enough to oppose Danish Prime Minister

century were denied before, and now Turkey does not deny that Armenians suffered tragic events.” Cited in Phillips, p. 19.

⁹³⁹ For the background history of bilateral reconciliation attempts See *ibid.*, pp. 3-41.

⁹⁴⁰ It must be noted that the proponents of the traditional paradigm publicly detested the move. The main opposition leader Deniz Baykal protested Gül’s visit to Erivan, while the nationalist party leader Bahçeli went to the Armenian border to pray against “the division of the country.” “Başbakan Erdoğan ile Baykal arasında Ermenistan Atışması,” *Zaman*, 5 September 2008. “Bahçeli Ani Harabeleri’nde Namaz Kıldı,” *CNN Türk*, 1 October 2010. A group of retired Ambassadors opposed the “apology campaign” for 1915 events. “Emekli Büyükelçiler Ermenilerden Özür Dilenmesine Karşı Çıktı,” *Zaman*, 16 December 2008.

⁹⁴¹ “Babacan: Türkiye’nin Katkısı Sürecek,” *Zaman*, 18 October 2008

⁹⁴² “Turkish Leader Volunteers to Be U.S.-Iran Mediator,” *New York Times*, 11 November 2008.

⁹⁴³ “Davutoğlu’nun Ateşkes Diplomasisi,” *Zaman*, 17 January 2009; “Ankara Tries to Play Honest Broker,” *Financial Times*, 21 January 2009.

Rasmussen's candidacy for the post of NATO Secretary General.⁹⁴⁴ This episode epitomized Turkey's new ideational orientation that tried to compromise Western and Eastern identities, as opposed to the traditional practice whereby the former overshadowed and even underrated the latter.

The new paradigm got steam under the leadership of Gül and Erdoğan with Babacan at the helm and Davutoğlu behind the scenes. When the latter was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm has already been operative. His appointment was evaluated as the realization of an ongoing process,⁹⁴⁵ whereby Davutoğlu acted as the theoretical and practical driver of change in Turkish foreign policy.⁹⁴⁶

The debate upon his appointment centered on whether his overemphasis on the Middle Eastern affairs would derail Turkey's Western alignment. Çandar contested arguments to that effect as he referred to Davutoğlu's worldview, which assigned Turkey a "European (Western) identity in the Western world, Middle Eastern identity in the Middle East, Caucasian identity in the Caucasus."⁹⁴⁷ He also presented "zero problems"

⁹⁴⁴ "Karikatür Krizini Körükleyen Rasmussen'e Türkiye'den Rest," *Zaman*, 4 April 2009.

⁹⁴⁵ In the handover ceremony, former Minister Babacan underlined that Davutoğlu had made very important contributions to the JDP's foreign policy vision since 2002. Ali Babacan and Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Devlet Bakanı ve Başbakan Yardımcısı Sayın Ali Babacan ile Dışişleri Bakanı Sayın Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun Devir Teslim Vesilesiyle Yaptıkları Konuşmalar (Deputy PM H.E. Ali Babacan and FM H.E. Ahmet Davutoğlu's speeches in the handover ceremony)," 2 May 2009. Available at: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/devlet-bakani-ve-basbakan-yardimcisi-sayin-ali-babacan-ile-disisleri-bakani-sayin-ahmet-davutoglu_nun-devir-teslim-vesilesiyle.tr.mfa [26 November 2013].

⁹⁴⁶ Murat Yetkin, "Krizle Mücadele Kabinesi," *Radikal*, 2 May 2009; Akif Beki, "Hikmet-i Hükümet," *Radikal*, 3 May 2009.

⁹⁴⁷ Cengiz Çandar, "Ahmet Davutoğlu ile Yeni Dış Politika," *Radikal*, 6 May 2009.

policy and “soft power” approach as possible instruments in strengthening relations with the Western world.

Davutoğlu in his first speech as the Minister of Foreign Affairs underscored Turkish foreign policy’s transition from a conflict-oriented (traditional) to vision-oriented approach.⁹⁴⁸ In accord, Turkey had a vision for all issues pertinent to its foreign policy. Thus, “Turkey is not anymore a country that reacts to the crises, rather a country which is aware of the potential before their outbreak and actively intervenes, an order constituting country in its neighborhood. As such ... we were able to be elected to the UN Security Council with a very high vote.”⁹⁴⁹ He described the three pillars of this vision: First, the balance between security and freedom that would assign Turkey the reputable place it deserved among nations. The objective was to make Turkey one of the most powerful countries in the world. The EU and NATO were cornerstones of the said balance. Second, Turkey’s near basin policy and the order-constituting role in its wider region. Third, Turkey’s openings to Africa and Latin America as well as SC membership were testament to the emerging global role it started to assume. As Davutoğlu underlined, these principles were in power since 2007. Yet his debut signified a move towards their institutionalization.

Davutoğlu made his first official exchanges with the Turkish Cypriot and Azerbaijani counterparts, no different from the traditional practice. However, both Cyprus and Azerbaijan were referred to as of utmost strategic importance for Turkey in *Stratejik Derinlik*. Thus, his orientation had to do more with designing a new foreign

⁹⁴⁸ Babacan and Davutoğlu.

⁹⁴⁹ Ibid..

policy framework than reiterating the traditional commitment to Turkey's ageold policy positions. During his visit to the Island, he underscored a commitment to better ties with Greece and advocated peace and stability in the Eastern Mediterranean through a comprehensive solution in Cyprus.⁹⁵⁰ With Azerbaijan, the main agenda item was the Armenian reconciliation, despite Baku's growing unease about the changing Turkish position.

The debate about Turkey's EU membership intensified as German and French leaders publicly opposed the very idea. Ankara refused any option but full membership and detested the change in these countries' official position.⁹⁵¹ Despite reiterated commitment to the EU objective, both the EU's growing reluctance and Turkey's responsive skepticism gave leeway to Davutoğlu's strategic discourse, which built on the history of Turkish (Ottoman)-European relations and understood Turkey's EU membership prospect as a new chapter toward strategic cooperation. (See Chapter 6) To move towards that end, Turkish foreign policy's objective was set to be a regional and global power.⁹⁵²

In one of his earlier interviews with a group of columnists Davutoğlu described his policy norms, i.e. security for all, high level dialogue, economic interdependence and multicultural coexistence, that defined the ZPP principle. The important part here was his quest to balance the Western alignment with "near basin policy."⁹⁵³ Yet again Davutoğlu referred to the historical interaction between Turkey and Europe, going back to the earlier

⁹⁵⁰ "Ada'ya Barış, Doğu Akdeniz'e İstikrar" *Radikal*, 7 May 2009.

⁹⁵¹ "Ya AB'ye Üye Oluruz ya da Olmayız," *Radikal*, 15 May 2009.

⁹⁵² "Dünyada Türkiye'nin Onayıyla Adım Atılacak," *Radikal*, 21 May 2009.

⁹⁵³ Cengiz Çandar, "'Çözüm' Değil, 'Süreçler' Önemli," *Radikal*, 30 May 2009.

centuries and thus drew a strategic outline for future cooperation. His emphasis was on a contractual, i.e. mutually beneficial relationship, rather than a unidirectional Western orientation.⁹⁵⁴ With the U.S., he presented strategic cooperation as a necessity to realize mutual interests.⁹⁵⁵

Turkish foreign policy's newfound interest in Turks abroad reached a new height with the July 2009 riots in Urumchi, Xinjiang, dubbed as "Eastern Turkestan" among the nationalist circles.⁹⁵⁶ The killing of almost two hundred Uighur Turks and massive security crackdown led Prime Minister Erdoğan to describe the events as "a kind of genocide."⁹⁵⁷ Davutoğlu called the Chinese Ambassador and made clear that "[Turkey] cannot accept what has happened in Urumchi."⁹⁵⁸ The JDP government's reaction to the events apparently contrasted with the traditional practice, which viewed the status of Turks abroad as nationals of third countries, whose conditions were considered through the prism of "non-interference in other countries' domestic affairs."

Davutoğlu questioned the status quo in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, the Cyprus issue and the Kurdish problem.⁹⁵⁹ To that effect, the JDP government got involved in reconciliation attempts. To overcome the bilateral and historical problems with Armenia, Ankara continued negotiations with Erivan. Yet there were clearly

⁹⁵⁴ "Türkiye AB'ye Yalvarıyor Değil," *Radikal*, 6 June 2009.

⁹⁵⁵ "Davutoğlu Obama'yı Aurelius'a Benzetti," *Radikal*, 4 June 2009.

⁹⁵⁶ Hasan Celal Güzel, "Doğu Türkistan'da Katliam," *Radikal*, 9 July 2009.

⁹⁵⁷ "Turkey Attacks China 'Genocide'," *BBC News*, 10 July 2009.

⁹⁵⁸ "Davutoğlu: Sincan'da Yaşananları Kabul Edemeyiz," *Radikal*, 8 July 2009.

⁹⁵⁹ Murat Yetkin, "Davutoğlu, Statüko ve Değişim," *Radikal*, 19 July 2009.

formidable stumbling blocks before a settlement.⁹⁶⁰ In Cyprus, a new round of negotiations between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots were conducted. Davutoğlu declared his commitment to end the status quo in the Island, hinting at a final two-state solution.⁹⁶¹ On the Kurdish issue, the JDP government aimed at a comprehensive solution⁹⁶² and started to engage directly with the KRG,⁹⁶³ a bold step in acknowledging the transnational character of the issue. Relations with Baghdad also developed with a larger objective of “integration,”⁹⁶⁴ which was thought to bring a more conducive atmosphere for resolution of the Kurdish issue.

Turkey’s relations with Russia, the historical archenemy, also reached new heights. Russian Prime Minister Putin visited Ankara in July 2009 to sign a series of cooperation agreements, most notably in the field of energy. The relations were not restricted to government-to-government level, but paved the way for increasing commercial and socio-cultural interaction between the two peoples. This growing partnership was also deemed emblematic of Turkey’s new foreign policy.⁹⁶⁵

In the Middle East, Turkey increased bilateral cooperation and actively contributed to conflict resolution attempts. Ankara moved to organize joint cabinet meetings with Iraq and Syria and introduced a free trade and visa free zone with Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. During the ceremony of the abolition of visas with Syria,

⁹⁶⁰ “Turkish Foreign Policy: Dreams from their Fathers,” *The Economist*, 23 July 2009.

⁹⁶¹ “Davutoğlu: Kıbrıs’ta Statüko ya Değişecek ya Değişecek,” *Radikal*, 19 July 2009.

⁹⁶² Murat Yetkin, “Davutoğlu: Çözüm İmralı’da Değil, Ankara’da,” *Radikal*, 21 July 2009.

⁹⁶³ “Barzani: Asra Bedel Bir Yıl,” *Radikal*, 1 November 2009.

⁹⁶⁴ Cengiz Çandar, “İrak’la Entegrasyona Doğru Gidiyoruz,” *Radikal*, 16 October 2009.

⁹⁶⁵ “Turkey and Russia: Old Enemies, New Partners,” *The Economist*, 13 August 2009.

Davutoğlu referred to “common history, common fate and common future.”⁹⁶⁶ Turkey also mediated between Baghdad and Damascus to overcome the dispute over an alleged Syrian role in the Baghdad terror bombings. To that effect, it provided both political and intelligence support.⁹⁶⁷ Ankara also facilitated nuclear talks with the P5 plus Germany, which were held in İstanbul after more than a year hiatus.

Davutoğlu displayed personal interest in turning the Balkans into a zone of cooperation. He extended Turkey’s mediatory role to Serbia first via employing its influence on the Sanjak Muslims.⁹⁶⁸ The Foreign Minister then initiated the trilateral process between Serbia, Bosnia-Hercegovina and Turkey as a basis for political and economic cooperation. He gave direct support to domestic political dialogue in Bosnia⁹⁶⁹ and utilized Turkey’s transatlantic ties to facilitate Bosnia’s association with NATO.⁹⁷⁰ His efforts were also extended to other Southeast European states including Croatia, Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Montenegro.

In the meanwhile, the ZPP was not criticism or problem free. The leader of the main opposition party initially questioned the possibility of rapprochement with Erivan, arguing that there were clear barriers of mistrust between the two countries.⁹⁷¹ An opposition deputy went as far as calling the Foreign Minister with a racial epithet

⁹⁶⁶ “Şam ile Sınırlar Fora, Hedef AB Modeli,” *Radikal*, 14 October 2009. Davutoğlu alluded to this common past and common fate among regional countries in *Stratejik Derinlik*. See above in Chapter 6, p. 180.

⁹⁶⁷ Murat Yetkin, “Türkiye, Irak, Suriye İstihbaratı Ankara’da Toplandı,” *Radikal*, 16 September 2009.

⁹⁶⁸ “Davutoğlu Sancak’ta Küsleri Barıştırdı,” *Radikal*, 25 July 2009.

⁹⁶⁹ “Davutoğlu Bosna Krizine El Attı,” *Radikal*, 18 October 2009.

⁹⁷⁰ “Davutoğlu Bosna için Seferber Oldu,” *Radikal*, 5 December 2009.

⁹⁷¹ “Baykal: Kafkasya’da Haklı Olduğumuz Ortaya Çıktı,” *Radikal*, 15 September 2009.

“Davutyan,” as if he was serving the Armenian interests.⁹⁷² The nationalist party immediately rebuffed the move. Baku also reacted the Turkish-Armenian Protocols and made its opposition known publicly.⁹⁷³ On the other hand, relations with Israel continued to deteriorate following the attack on and reinforced blockade in Gaza. The cancellation of the joint aviation exercise with Israel and a number of controversial developments pointed to an increasing divergence between the two countries.⁹⁷⁴

While Turkey’s regional policy enlarged and expanded, the EU process got into a stalemate due mainly to unfavorable changes in both the domestic and external settings. The Economist came to call the process a “fading dream,”⁹⁷⁵ while Turkey seemed to have lost enthusiasm at a time when its star seemed to be shining at regional and global platforms. The idea that the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm was making Turkey “ever more valuable to the EU,”⁹⁷⁶ the geostrategic view along the lines of *Stratejik Derinlik*,⁹⁷⁷ came to undermine the intrinsically unilateral trait of the harmonization process.⁹⁷⁸ Against French opposition to Turkish membership, Davutoğlu again referred to the history of Turkish-French relations and strategic importance of Turkey for the EU as a whole.⁹⁷⁹

⁹⁷² “CHP’li Ensar Öğüt: Kardeşim Sen Davutoğlu musun Davutyan mısın?” *Radikal*, 22 December 2009.

⁹⁷³ “Bakü’yle Krize Karşı ‘Kardeşlik Diplomasisi’,” *Radikal*, 23 October 2009.

⁹⁷⁴ “Gazze Öfkesi Kartalı Yere Çaktırdı,” *Radikal*, 13 October 2009.

⁹⁷⁵ “A Fading European Dream: Will Turkey Ever Join the EU?” *The Economist*, Special Report: Turkey, 21 October 2010.

⁹⁷⁶ “A Fading European Dream.”

⁹⁷⁷ “Benim Vizyonumda 2050 Değil, 2015 Yılı Bile Üyelik İçin Çok Geç,” *Radikal*, 3 October 2009.

⁹⁷⁸ Deniz Zeyrek, “AB ile İlişkilere Dikkat,” *Radikal*, 6 October 2009.

⁹⁷⁹ “Davutoğlu’ndan Paris’e Uyarılar,” *Radikal*, 7 November 2009.

Nevertheless, these developments did not prevent Ankara from participating in various EU fora on an accession ticket.

This overall picture gave rise to debates on whether Turkey's foreign policy axis shifted away from a western orientation. The kernel of such arguments was based partly on the deterioration of Turkish-Israeli relations.⁹⁸⁰ Prime Minister Erdoğan rejected these and responded that Turkish foreign policy was an asset for the EU since it was “working towards global peace.”⁹⁸¹ Davutoğlu following a similar line underscored the centrality of regional peace in Turkish foreign policy including the mediation efforts.⁹⁸² Keyman acknowledged the multidimensional and multicultural foreign policy orientation with an objective to render Turkey a key regional and global actor.⁹⁸³ Fuller recognized the end of unidirectional Western orientation as a natural corollary of Turkey's trajectory with a new vision, yet still an asset for Western presence in the greater neighborhood.⁹⁸⁴ Güzel defended that what has been transpiring was not about a shift of axis, but Turkey's assumption of a central role.⁹⁸⁵

Despite the intensity of debates about the new and arguably fragile orientation of Turkish foreign policy, Ankara stepped up efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the

⁹⁸⁰ Daniel Pipes, “‘Stratejik Derinlik’ Batı’yı İkinci Plana Atıyor”; Stephen Kinzer, “İsrail’i Dışlamak Akıllıca Değil,” *Radikal*, 29 October 2009; Efraim Inbar, “Türk Dış Politikası İslamleşiyor,” *Radikal*, 5 November 2009.

⁹⁸¹ “Dış Politikada Eksen Kayması Yok,” *Radikal*, 20 October 2009.

⁹⁸² *Ibid.*.

⁹⁸³ E. Fuat Keyman, “Türkiye’nin Dış Politikası Değişiyor mu?” *Radikal*, 8 November 2009.

⁹⁸⁴ “Türkiye Artık Batı’nın Sadık Müttefiki Değil,” *Radikal*, 11 November 2009.

⁹⁸⁵ Hasan Celal Güzel, “Doğu mu Batı mı?” *Radikal*, 8 November 2009.

Iranian nuclear program.⁹⁸⁶ Approached by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Baradei, Davutoğlu voiced readiness to play an intermediary role in a possible nuclear swap agreement between Iran and the P5+1 group.⁹⁸⁷ Turkey seemed to have stepped up efforts in bringing Washington and Tehran's negotiation positions closer.⁹⁸⁸

Ankara also moved for closer ties with Greece. Davutoğlu underscored historical and geographical commonalities between the countries and the need to overcome the zero-sum logic that had been prevalent in the relations. He detected four areas of cooperation: holding joint cabinet meetings to handle perennial conflicts such as Cyprus, the Aegean issues and minority matters; joint approach towards the EU; bilateral regional cooperation towards the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, Caucasus and BSEC areas; and global cooperation on issues of mutual interest.⁹⁸⁹

Relations with the U.S. gained full steam especially after President Obama's historic visit to Turkey in April 2009. Davutoğlu vented the positive mood and suggested that there was an unprecedented overlap in mutual interests.⁹⁹⁰ The growing convergence extended bilateral cooperation from Af-Pak issues to the Balkans, the Caucasus including Turkish-Armenian reconciliation, Cyprus, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Middle East

⁹⁸⁶ "Yıldız: İran Uranyumu Depolarız," *Radikal*, 14 November 2009.

⁹⁸⁷ "Davutoğlu Tahran'la Ara Bulma Çabasında," *Radikal*, 21 November 2009.

⁹⁸⁸ U.S Embassy in Ankara's Cable, "A/S Gordon Pressses FM Davutoglu on Iran," 17 November 2009. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/235183> [20 December 2013].

⁹⁸⁹ "Yunanistan ile Dört Düzlem ve Ahlak-ı Alayi Üzerinden İşbirliği Çabası," *Radikal*, 4 December 2009.

⁹⁹⁰ "Obama Yönetimiyle Dış Politikamız Paralel," *Zaman*, 21 March 2009.

peace process. Thus, Prime Minister Erdoğan's meeting with U.S. President Obama at the White House turned into "a brainstorming exercise on figuring out common interests."⁹⁹¹

As was the case with the U.S., Turkish foreign policy's new orientation entailed a new course in relations with the West. With a stronger base in regional policy and differentiated interests, Turkey was in search of cooperating with transatlantic allies from a more rationalistic "convergence of interests" rather than an ideational "shared identity" point of view. As Türkmen underscored in the particular case of relations with the U.S., the era when all interests were deemed common ended and a case-by-case approach of "retail interests" began to prevail.⁹⁹²

Davutoğlu put into effect the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm with full force. His appointment essentially pointed to the necessary political will and support to that end. Davutoğlu also tried to institutionalize the emerging paradigm primarily moving the MFA away from a vanguard of traditionalism. In his address to the Ambassadors Conference, he outlined the contours of the new paradigm and called upon the Turkish diplomacy to capture the new thinking.⁹⁹³ Most importantly, he referred to history and geography as decisive assets of Turkish foreign policy. He reiterated the policy principles of the new paradigm with a special emphasis on its new objective.

With personal recount, the Turkish diplomats' perception about Turkish foreign policy's new orientation was largely shaped by skepticism as to why Turkey went so far

⁹⁹¹ Cengiz Çandar, "Washington'la 'Normalleşme'ye Doğru...", *Radikal*, 4 December 2009.

⁹⁹² "ABD ile İlişkilerde Perakende Çıkar Dönemi," *Aksiyon*, 24 December 2012.

⁹⁹³ Minister of Foreign Affairs HE Ahmet Davutoğlu's Address to the Second Ambassadors Conference Opening Ceremony, 4 January 2010, Ankara. Available at http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-sayin-ahmet-davutoglu_nun-ikinci-buyukelciler-konferansi-acilis-oturumunda-yaptigi-konusm-_4-ocak-2010_-ankara.tr.mfa [26 December 2013].

to become deeply involved in the Middle Eastern affairs. In general, traditionalism was the predominant stance among the diplomatic corps. The Minister's views to shape the course of events in Turkey's greater neighborhood were deemed in discord with Turkey's capabilities. Notably, closer relations with Iran were regarded as a big if that could harm relations with the West and deemed unlikely to yield any tangible payoffs.

Yet it would be a misrepresentation to reflect the change in Turkey's foreign policy merely as a "Davutoğlu affair." First, the leadership of the JDP, i.e. Erdoğan and Gül were politically committed to the new course. An analysis of their political and discursive tendencies point to the *esprit de corps* among the JDP leadership.⁹⁹⁴ Second, even in the specific case of the Ambassadors Conference, Davutoğlu was not the only official to advocate a reformulation of policy. For one, the Undersecretary of National Intelligence Emre Taner criticized the traditional practice and underscored the need for a revision in the Turkish approach towards the Kurdish question in general and the KRG in particular.⁹⁹⁵ Third, among the senior echelons of the MFA there was growing support and commitment to the emerging paradigm. And the paradigm was evaluated as a rationalistic corollary of Turkey's evolving interests by both the acting and retiree Turkish diplomats.⁹⁹⁶

Keyman aptly put this tension between the government's new orientation and the reverberant skepticism as to where the ship was heading:

⁹⁹⁴ Görener and Ucal, pp. 357-381.

⁹⁹⁵ Deniz Zeyrek, "Barzani'nin Türkiye Vizesi," *Radikal*, 12 January 2010.

⁹⁹⁶ Özlem Sanberk, "Türk Dış Politikasının Bölgeselleşmesi," *Radikal*, 5 January 2010.

We observe “an active, constructive, and multidimensional Turkish foreign policy” that has increasingly gained momentum both on a regional and global scale. The “regional diplomatic activism,” which Turkish foreign policy assumes in the Middle East, Balkans and Caucasias, “zero-problems based relations” with neighbors and realization of “regional cooperation attempts” from economy to energy, culture and visa liberalization expands the Turkish zone of influence on a global scale. In addition to these, the multidimensional diplomatic initiatives that are extended to Africa, Latin America and South Asia and soft power practices based on “economic dynamism- cultural identity/affinity- conflict solver dialogue triangle” within this overall dynamism engender an increasing and pervasive interest about Turkey. Indeed, we can say that Turkey has become an “interest zone, an attraction center” in the contemporary globalized world. As Turkish foreign policy acquires new identities and an active position on issues such as a) regional power, b) key country, c) energy hub, d) model country, e) bridge or interconnector between different cultures and geographies, f) developing and dynamic economic market, g) G-20 country, h) an actor that has both Western and Eastern facets simultaneously and has capacity to engage in dialogue [with them], i) a corridor country that enables dialogue between countries carrying potential risk for tension and conflict; doubts about the goal, intention and realism of the new foreign policy emerges, even becomes widespread.⁹⁹⁷

Keyman moved on to suggest that despite an overall appreciation of the success of this new policy, three lines of skepticism grew especially among the Western quarters: First was “extreme ideological hard skepticism,” which viewed Turkish foreign policy’s

⁹⁹⁷ E. Fuat Keyman, “Üç Tarz Şüphelilik,” *Radikal*, 13 December 2009.

new orientation as Islamization and carried anti-Western, anti-American and anti-Israel features. Second, was a “softer skepticism,” which accepted the possible stabilizing role Turkish foreign policy could play in regional balances but still questioned the weak Western link that formulated this orientation and harmed old alliances with Israel at the expense of new ties with Syria and Iran. Third line, while accepting the second line’s assumptions, believed that the new orientations were based on a rational calculus and rebuffed the arguments alluding to an assumed cultural basis for policy.⁹⁹⁸

Practically the emerging paradigm got into bumpy road after a promising boost following Davutoğlu’s debut as the Foreign Minister. The first casualty of the new paradigm was a sustained divergence with Israel. This partly stemmed from Tel Aviv’s inability to comprehend or rather acquiesce with the new thinking in Turkish foreign policy.⁹⁹⁹ Israel wanted Turkish cooperation and partnership as long as it did not counter the particularistic agenda it has followed in the Middle East. Turkish foreign policy’s new course that aimed at regional integration and espoused an all-inclusive approach essentially contradicted with this Israeli agenda. Despite calls for moderation and caution from both sides,¹⁰⁰⁰ relations eventually came to the brink of breaking down as occasional crises carried the day.¹⁰⁰¹

The Armenian reconciliation also hit the wall. Baku’s reaction prevented a fast track approach. The uncured trust gap led to Erivan’s unofficial rejection of the implicit

⁹⁹⁸ Ibid..

⁹⁹⁹ Bülent Aras, “Turkish-Israeli Relations after the Apology,” *GMF on Turkey Analysis*, 12 April 2013.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Ben-Meir’s article epitomized the call and need for a general overhaul in relations. Alon Ben-Meir, “Time to Rise Above the Fray,” *Huffington Post*, 26 January 2010.

¹⁰⁰¹ “Ayalon’dan Elçi Sürme Tehdidi,” *Radikal*, 17 January 2010.

course drawn for the Protocols. When the Armenian Supreme Court highlighted the need to support the international recognition of “the genocide” and referred to “Western Armenia,” it literally killed down any possibility to move ahead for Turkey.¹⁰⁰² The subsequent course of events, especially the vote in the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee on a “genocide” bill,¹⁰⁰³ were pointing to a *volte face* for the whole process.¹⁰⁰⁴

On Cyprus, the negotiations reverted to its pessimistic terrain as the pro-EU President of TRNC first lost ground and then the elections. Though his successors paid lip service to a final settlement, the Greek Cypriots overtly had no incentive for give-and-take since they regarded themselves as having the upper hand in the negotiations. On the other hand, Turkey’s relations with the EU stalled and more importantly the public started losing faith in the accession process.¹⁰⁰⁵

Held back in certain issues, Turkish foreign policy sailed for new opportunities in others. On that note, relations with Russia continued to further develop. During Prime Minister Erdoğan’s visit to Moscow in 12-13 January 2010, the two countries agreed to enter into a visa free regime and signed a number of cooperation agreements, most notably in the area of nuclear cooperation. Yetkin argued that Ankara was also taking into account the changing balances following a reestablishment of Moscow-Washington balance in the greater neighborhood.¹⁰⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰² “Erdoğan’dan Ermenistan’a Uyarı,” *Radikal*, 21 January 2010.

¹⁰⁰³ David Ignatius, “Armenia and Turkey, Overcome by History,” *Washington Post*, 23 April 2010.

¹⁰⁰⁴ “Davutoğlu: Normalleşme Durabilir,” *Radikal*, 6 March 2010.

¹⁰⁰⁵ “A Fading European Dream.”

In accord with reaching out to other global power centers, Ankara aimed to build up political relations with China, which still remained far behind the level of economic exchanges. There emerged a mutual willingness to expand strategic dialogue on various issues from Afghanistan to the Middle East.¹⁰⁰⁷ On the problematic issue of Xinjiang-Uighur Turks, both sides gradually came to an understanding that cooperation would better serve mutual interests.

Turkish efforts in Afghanistan also became more visible, particularly as an offshoot of transatlantic commitments. The Ankara Process continued as a regular platform for consultation between Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Moreover, Ankara reassumed the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Kabul Command and became one of the foremost donor countries in Afghanistan. Turkey also voiced interest in mediating between the Afghan government and Taliban,¹⁰⁰⁸ a move testing the limits of the new paradigm in reaching out possibly to all regional interlocutors.

Turkey's efforts in the Balkans continued. Davutoğlu declared Bosnia “not an external, but internal affair,”¹⁰⁰⁹ while the Head of the Bosnian Presidential Council expressed support for Turkey's “integrationist” role in the Balkans.¹⁰¹⁰ After a series of trilateral meetings and following the completion of the three steps, Turkey hosted a summit meeting with the Bosnian and Serbian leaders. Relations with Greece continued

¹⁰⁰⁶ Murat Yetkin, “ABD Hata Yapıyor, Rusya Yol Alıyor,” *Radikal*, 17 January 2010.

¹⁰⁰⁷ “Türkiye Çin ile Tarihi Dönemeçte,” *Radikal*, 28 January 2010.

¹⁰⁰⁸ “Ankara'nın Telkini Taliban'la Temas,” *Radikal*, 26 January 2010.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Caner Sancaktar, “Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun Bosna-Hersek Ziyareti,” *TASAM*, 24 December 2009. Available at: http://www.tasam.org/tr-TR/Icerik/91/disisleri_bakani_ahmet_davutoglundun_bosna-hersek_ziyareti [30 December 2013].

¹⁰¹⁰ “Sladzić: Artık Türkiye'nin Güvenirliğine İnanılıyor,” *Radikal*, 21 February 2010.

on a conciliatory tone, yet there remained psychological barriers to overcome structural problems.

Most notably, Davutoğlu's efforts were directed towards carving out a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. He conducted an intensive diplomacy between Tehran and the P5+1 capitals. As he told *The Guardian*, Turkey's efforts concentrated on three policy goals. i.e. establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East, respect for every nation's right to peaceful nuclear technology and opposition to sanctions as they primarily hurt ordinary people and neighboring countries.¹⁰¹¹ Davutoğlu also underlined that such mediation efforts were based on a visionary approach, which was not restricted to conflict resolution, but rather aimed at restoration of long-term regional peace and stability.¹⁰¹² These efforts, later on joined by Brazil, were concluded in a nuclear swap agreement with Tehran that was predicated on the deposit of Iranian enriched uranium in Turkey.¹⁰¹³ Yet the Tehran Declaration rather than its stated peaceful cause,¹⁰¹⁴ put Turkey's relations with the U.S. and Israel under strain.¹⁰¹⁵

On that note, the Israeli attack on the Mavi Marmara followed by Turkey's "no" vote at the UN Security Council against the Iran sanctions alarmed the Western capitals. Ankara's response to these two crises were standing firm and defending Turkish foreign policy's new orientation. As Davutoğlu put it bluntly, Turkey wanted a place in

¹⁰¹¹ Simon Tisdall, "Turkey Starts to Love Its Neighbours," *The Guardian*, 12 January 2010.

¹⁰¹² "Davutoğlu: Biz Basit bir Arabulucu Değiliz, Vizyonumuz Var," *Radikal*, 14 January 2010.

¹⁰¹³ For the background and American perspective of the deal, see Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice: Obama's Diplomacy with Iran* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012); Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy under Retreat* (New York: Doubleday, 2013).

¹⁰¹⁴ Ahmet Davutoğlu and Celso Amorim, "Giving Diplomacy a Chance," *International Herald Tribune*, 26 May 2010.

¹⁰¹⁵ Thomas Friedman, "As Ugly as It Gets," *New York Times*, 25 May 2010.

international decision-making, especially on issues related to its own policy.¹⁰¹⁶ He reasoned that a peripheral role, as was the case during the Cold War or in its wake, was no more acceptable and Turkey would act in accordance with its rightful role in constituting a new regional order.

Despite complications in traditional relationships as a result of the zero problems policy,¹⁰¹⁷ Turkish foreign policy continued reaching out to neighboring regions and beyond. The JDP government's appetite to recover Turkish clout in the greater neighborhood led to a series of agreements and initiatives that put Ankara at the center of regional diplomacy. One such endeavor was the High Level Cooperation Councils, i.e. joint cabinet meetings with neighboring countries. Another was the signature of free trade agreements and visa exemption agreements that aimed to realize the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm policy goals through an integrated and interdependent regional order.¹⁰¹⁸

A crucial step in Turkish foreign policy's regional alignment was the working visit of KRG President Mesoud Barzani to Ankara.¹⁰¹⁹ This was an important step that had not been possible since the JDP's takeover. Now the government was demonstrating that it took the helm and came to offset the bureaucratic resistance against hosting "Kurdish tribal leaders."¹⁰²⁰ In that way, KRG was gradually transformed into one of the

¹⁰¹⁶ "Gücümüz Yetsin ya da Yetmesin," *Radikal*, 21 May 2010.

¹⁰¹⁷ Simon Tisdall, "Turkey's 'Zero-Problems' Policy is a Flop," *The Guardian*, 21 June 2010; Roger Cohen, "Turkey Steps Out," *New York Times*, 25 October 2010.

¹⁰¹⁸ "Rusya ve Yunanistan'la Devrim," *Radikal*, 14 May 2010.

¹⁰¹⁹ Davutoğlu went as far as calling Barzani "Kak (Elder Brother) Mesut." "PKK ve Terör Sözcüklerini Anmadı Bile," *Radikal*, 4 June 2010.

¹⁰²⁰ The ultranationalist circles referred to the KRG officials with similar denigratory terms. Otherwise, the official discourse was still hesitant to pronounce Kurdistan or Kurds, but employed North (Kuzey to denote the K) in referral to the federal administration in northern Iraq.

foremost political and economic partners of Ankara, a process that has had a decisive effect in coming to terms with the Kurdish question.

The UN Somalia Conference gathered in Turkey, an event whereby the Turkish initiatives gained international traction. Ankara followed on its interest in opening up to Africa with expansion of trade and diplomatic relations. Conspicuously, Turkey continued to extend diplomatic representation throughout the continent, almost doubling the number of embassies in two years.¹⁰²¹ Moreover, throughout the UN Security Council membership Turkey assumed the chairmanship of the sanctions committees on the Democratic Republic of Congo and North Korea, which enabled it to participate in global policymaking. Turkey also hosted the Least Developed Countries (LDC) Summit in İstanbul.

The Third Turkish-Arab Forum Ministerial meeting was also held in İstanbul. Prime Minister Erdoğan made a speech marking the government's commitment to further ties. The idea of an integrated and interdependent region was the main theme in Turkish officials' talking points.¹⁰²²

Turkey was also active throughout the political transition in Kyrgyzstan. It also developed a trilateral consultation mechanism with Iran and Azerbaijan.¹⁰²³ Yet this did not prevent criticism about ignorance of the Central Asian republics due to an incorrigible preoccupation with the Middle East.¹⁰²⁴ In essence, Turkey followed up the

¹⁰²¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Afrika Ülkeleri ile İlişkiler (Relations with the African countries)." Available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-afrika-iliskileri.tr.mfa> [3 January 2013].

¹⁰²² "İstanbul'da Ortadoğu Birliğine Doğru," *Radikal*, 11 June 2010.

¹⁰²³ "Ermenileri Kızdıran Toplantı," *Radikal*, 3 September 2010.

¹⁰²⁴ "Davutoğlu'nun Vicdan Çağrısı," *Radikal*, 22 June 2010.

1990s model of prioritizing economic partnership especially after the stall in reconciliation attempts with Armenia. Rather insignificant attempts such as holding the CICA Chairmanship were not intended to magnify the Turkish role, but to keep channels open with the region.

Ankara tried to build up a presence in the Far East. In July 2010, Davutoğlu attended the ASEAN Ministerial meeting in Hanoi to sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. The growing military and political relations with China made headlines.¹⁰²⁵ On the other hand, Ambassador Engin Soysal's appointment as the UN Special Envoy for Assistance to Pakistan was a new step for marking Turkey's international presence in Asia.

The new paradigm was not an impeccable success story for sure. For one, it started feeling a heavy pressure on how to balance the multiple orientations. Commitment to zero-problems was one thing, maintaining traditional alliances another. Despite Davutoğlu's call to transcend the Cold War mentality, Turkey's irreplaceable transatlantic links were occasionally in unconformity with the goals of the diversified regional policy.¹⁰²⁶ The very "order-constituting" role Davutoğlu claimed also came under duress against complex regional balances in Iraq, Lebanon and indirectly Syria. Meanwhile, there was increasing criticism about the JDP's inability to tackle traditional problems such as Cyprus, Armenia and the Kurdish question and inability to overcome differences with Israel.

¹⁰²⁵ David Schenker and Christina Lin, "China's Rise in the Middle East," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 November 2010.

¹⁰²⁶ Ceyda Karan, "Füzyle Kalkıp Radarla Oturursak Vay Halimize," *Radikal*, 18 October 2010.

Yet nothing proved more challenging for the new paradigm than the so-called “Arab Spring” that upended the very order according to which Turkish foreign policy had been operating.¹⁰²⁷ The next section deals with how the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm responded to this formidable test.

¹⁰²⁷ Steven A. Cook, “Arab Spring, Turkish Fall,” *Foreign Policy*, 5 May 2011. Available at: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/05/05/arab_spring_turkish_fall [25 December 2013].

CHAPTER 11

THE JDP-DAVUTOĞLU PARADIGM AND THE ARAB SPRING: ADJUSTING TO THE REGIONAL UPHEAVAL

With the advent of popular uprisings dubbed as “the Arab Spring,” the political regimes that Ankara engaged to generate “win-win” outcomes in the last decade were shaken to the core due to region-wide diffusion of calls basically for good governance, justice, and dignity. Following initial caution, the JDP government came out with a strong position in favor of these popular demands.¹⁰²⁸ The JDP’s ownership perspective towards the region was presumed to entail active engagement and even led to assuming a flagship role. In Tunisia, Turkey supported the end of Ben-Ali’s protracted rule. In Egypt, Ankara was the first to publicly and unequivocally demand Mubarak’s stepping down. In Libya, an initial opposition to Western intervention was followed by first acquiescence and then active participation in NATO operations that aimed at “peaceful transition.” In Yemen and Bahrain, Ankara sought an alternative role. In Syria, political attempts to coax the Assad regime for reform failed, which altered the whole regional landscape in terms of Turkish foreign policy’s modus operandi.

In its earlier stages, Ankara appeared competent in managing the rising disorder. First, Turkey gained ground by siding with the prevailing groups in these turbulent

¹⁰²⁸ Zeyrek, “Mübarek’e Çağrının Tercümesi.”

countries. The fall of “the Arab Presidents for life”¹⁰²⁹ was envisioned to open not only a new scope for better relations but also an accentuated leadership role for Turkey. Second, despite inner doubts and hesitation, Ankara seemed to have caught a tune with the turn of events in due course. This raised the Turkish leaders’ stature in “the Arab street.” In September 2011, Erdoğan received a “hero’s welcome in Cairo;”¹⁰³⁰ while Davutoğlu literally embraced the crowds in Benghazi.¹⁰³¹ These transpired at a time when the Western powers either refrained or shied away from hailing the overthrow of the *ancien régimes*. Third, the political prevalence of the moderate Islamists was thought to have vindicated the JDP’s political inclinations. The rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, which had early on eschewed the aspiration for religious rule in favor of the electoral process,¹⁰³² pointed to a region-wide diffusion of the Turkish model.¹⁰³³

This optimistic projection was construed to indicate the beginning of a normative turn in Turkish foreign policy, which was thought to elevate the ZPP to the next “2.0 version.”¹⁰³⁴ According to such reading of events, Ankara accentuated democratic aspirations and popular legitimacy as two pillars of the new Middle Eastern order. To that end, the Turkish liberal transformation, i.e. civilian and democratic rule, was presented as

¹⁰²⁹ Roger Owen, *Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

¹⁰³⁰ “Erdoğan Receives Hero’s Welcome in Cairo,” *Today’s Zaman*, 12 September 2011.

¹⁰³¹ “Davutoğlu Delights Libyans in Benghazi’s Tahrir Square,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 7 April 2011.

¹⁰³² Robert S. Leiken and Steven Brooke, “The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood: Friend or Foe,” *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 107 (March-April 2007), pp. 107-121.

¹⁰³³ Turkish policymakers believed that the Arab Spring was originally an attempt to emulate Turkey’s political and economic success story. Interview with Abdullah Gül.

¹⁰³⁴ Tarık Oğuzlu, “‘The Arab Spring’ and the Rise of the Version 2.0 of the ‘Zero Problems with Neighbors Policy’,” *SAM Papers*, no. 1 (Ankara: Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, February 2012).

the panacea for burgeoning political and economic crises. Therefore, the Turkish leadership moved on to severe ties with authoritarian and delegitimized regimes, which was in a way accelerated by Western pressures on Turkey.¹⁰³⁵ As such, democracy promotion was supposed not only to further Turkish interests in the region, but also to facilitate Turkey's EU integration and strengthen Western ties with shared values and common interests in a democratic and prosperous Middle East, hopefully driven by Turkish leadership.

The Turkish leadership was not unaware of an element of incompatibility between the Turkish experience and the different political trajectories of the regional countries, which had not experienced comparable levels of interaction with Western concepts and values.¹⁰³⁶ Nevertheless, Turkey still welcomed this “belated transformation” since it was thought as a move towards stabilization, which would eventually serve Turkish interests.¹⁰³⁷ The Arab Spring was initially seen as a development supportive of the Turkish vision that revolved around economic and cultural integration and interdependence to follow political reconciliation. An axis of like-minded and Turkey-inspired countries would form the backbone of “the new Middle East,”¹⁰³⁸ which would imitate if not embrace Turkish leadership.

¹⁰³⁵ Interview with Abdullah Gül.

¹⁰³⁶ Ibid..

¹⁰³⁷ Ibid..

¹⁰³⁸ Danahar argued that following the Arab Spring, the Cold War mentality and political structures in the Middle East including international relations came to an irreversible end. See Paul Danahar, *The New Middle East: The World After the Arab Spring* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2013). The Turkish leadership shared the same conviction, hence “a [favorable] new Middle East.”

This early euphoria, however, hit the wall in Syria. Throughout the 2000s, rapprochement with Syria had been the cornerstone of increasing Turkish clout in the Middle East. Closer relations with Damascus enabled Ankara both to participate in various Arab fora and connect more easily with the so-called “resistance front,” i.e. the anti-Western Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas. Thus, Turkey had been able to assume a mediator role and projected a vision that was supposed to rise above the regional cleavages. This overall engagement also empowered Turkey in its fight against the PKK and its offshoots in the region. However, the flow of events after 2011 overturned this equation. Following a six-month effort to induce the Syrian regime towards political and economic reforms, Turkey “grew increasingly disillusioned and finally broke with Assad in bitter denunciation with a full call for regime change even by force.”¹⁰³⁹

Turkey’s active opposition to the Assad regime and support for the Syrian rebels had a negative impact on its relations not only with Damascus, but also with Tehran, Baghdad, and to a lesser extent with Moscow and Beijing.¹⁰⁴⁰ Prior to that, Turkey’s decision to host the NATO Missile Defense (MD) radar in Kürecik, Malatya could be seen as a precursor to the erosion of trust and confidence with these countries. In fact, the Turkish decision was pending since the NATO Lisbon Summit in 2010, but was postponed until after the general elections a year later. It was also thought as a natural corollary of transatlantic ties. Therefore, Turkish officials consistently refuted claims that it was designed against any of its neighbors, i.e. Iran and Russia, and was a gesture to

¹⁰³⁹ Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey and the Arab Spring: Leadership in the Middle East* (Lexington, KY: Bozorg Press, 2014), p. 200.

¹⁰⁴⁰ The Chinese officials told the Americans that they lost trust in Turkey after its “unconstructive” stance in Syria. Interview with Vali Nasr, Washington, D.C., 20 August 2012.

back up Israel's security. Yet this rejection failed to calm Iranian and Russian concerns.¹⁰⁴¹

It should also be noted that Turkey's relations with the so-called "resistance front" were not problem-free before the Arab Spring. Notwithstanding a common understanding to minimize the risk of a possible confrontation between Iran and the United States based on Iran's nuclear program and to a lesser degree regional ambitions, Tehran and Ankara never completely saw eye to eye on regional issues. In Iraq, Tehran backed the Maliki bloc against the Iraqiyya (List); which won the elections after being tutored and supported by Turkey and the United States, but failed to assume power because it was unable to get support from the Shiite bloc.¹⁰⁴² An eight-month political wrangling ended in Iran-supported Maliki's hold onto the Premiership, whereas Damascus's last minute standing behind Tehran's choice sealed the fate of Ankara-backed coalition. This divergence became more apparent in Lebanon, where Hezbollah's opposition to the Sunni coalition brought about the end of Turkey and Saudi Arabia supported Hariri government in January 2011. In that, Damascus's alignment with Tehran and Hezbollah proved determinant in negating Turkey's attempt to work out a solution.¹⁰⁴³

Following confrontation with the Assad regime, Turkey came to face an unfriendly axis stretching from Iran to Lebanon to include also the Shiite groups in Iraq and Syria. This, in turn, increasingly deprived Turkey of the opportunity to project its

¹⁰⁴¹ Tom Z. Collina, "Turkey to Host NATO Missile Defense Radar," *Arms Control Today* 41, no. 8 (October 2011), pp. 42-43.

¹⁰⁴² Çandar, "Yanlış Hesap Bağdat'tan Döner."

¹⁰⁴³ Çandar, "Lübnan Aynasından Türkiye Ne Kadar 'Bölgesel Güç'?"

values and hence, undermined its interests based on a vision of economically integrated and stable Middle East.

The Syrian debacle gave rise to a debate on- as opposed to a move to an adjusted version- “the end of the ZPP.” This reading alluded not only to the deterioration of relations with Turkey’s neighbors,¹⁰⁴⁴ but also pointed to a growing mismatch between the policy principles of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm, which concurrently advocated better relations with neighbors and democratization in the region.¹⁰⁴⁵ Some critics interpreted the Turkish inability to deal with the growing complexities as disproving a self-assigned “central” role.¹⁰⁴⁶ Moreover, the general framework of the new paradigm was arguably transformed in favor of a pro-Muslim Brotherhood posture and thus invalidated the so-called “new diplomatic approach,” which has accentuated Turkey’s proactive mediatory role.¹⁰⁴⁷ Overall, the burgeoning internal and external constraints were seen as “the end of the Turkish model.”¹⁰⁴⁸

Meanwhile, the JDP’s foreign policy orientation was far from ideationally assured, particularly from a domestic politics point of view. With rising tension after the summer of 2011, the main opposition parties directly contradicted the government’s support for the Syrian opposition and contested involvement in regional conflicts, which,

¹⁰⁴⁴ Cengiz Çandar, “Sıfır Sorun'dan 'Herkesle Sorun'a Geçerken,” *Radikal*, 23 September 2011.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Fuller argued this had to do with the conflicting goals to secure good relations with neighbors and to pursue democracy promotion. Fuller, *Turkey and the Arab Spring*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Philip Robins, “Turkey’s ‘Double Gravity’ Predicament: The Foreign Policy of a Newly Activist Power,” *International Affairs* 89, no. 2 (2013), pp. 381-397.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Cengiz Çandar, “Müslüman Kardeşlerimiz'den Başka Dostumuz Kalmazsa,” *Radikal*, 25 August 2013.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Ömer Taşpınar, “The End of the Turkish Model,” *Survival* 56, no. 2 (April–May 2014), pp. 49-64.

they argued, led to confrontation with neighboring countries.¹⁰⁴⁹ Thereby, the Republican People's Party (RPP) and the Nationalist Movement Party (NMP) praised traditionalism and underlined the importance of “non-intervention” in third countries' internal affairs. The RPP also rejected the JDP's “alignment with moderate Islam and Islamism.”¹⁰⁵⁰ With extrapolation, a non-JDP government in power would have been unlikely to espouse a similar activist line vis-à-vis the Arab Spring.

On its part, the JDP leadership countered the critics and categorically rejected backtracking from the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm's policy principles. In retrospect, Turkey still felt confident about its course especially up until the summer of 2013. Despite the growing distress of Syria, Ankara still believed it held all the cards. Indeed, Turkey was not only acting in tandem with Western allies, but also had like-minded governments in power in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, which were in alignment with Ankara through political, military and economic cooperation.

From a regional perspective, Iran's support for the Assad regime alienated both the Arab public opinion and the Sunni groups living under pro-Iranian regimes. The Gulf monarchies were in a defensive mood to fend off a contagion of the awakening. Maliki and Assad, it was believed, turned themselves into lame ducks. The American and European detachment and Israel's indecisiveness to whether act or react also gave way to Turkey's room for maneuver. At a time when all other actors were making damage

¹⁰⁴⁹ The RPP went one step further via opening a channel of dialogue with the Syrian, Iraqi, and Egyptian regimes, which were in confrontation with Ankara. Mustafa Akyol, “Why the Turkish Opposition Likes Assad?” *Al-Monitor*, 14 March 2013. Available at <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/03/turkey-opposition-chp-assad-meeting-syria.html> [29 December 2014].

¹⁰⁵⁰ “Arab Spring Risks Bearing Islamist Fruit, CHP Warns,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 31 October 2011.

control calculations, Turkish foreign policy felt ready to grasp the opportunity to bring the regional “democratic wave” into its fold.

The JDP government insisted on sticking to the principles of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm in view of this assumedly conducive environment. In an interview published on February 2013, Foreign Minister Davutoğlu reiterated recurring themes from his *Stratejik Derinlik* and underscored the new paradigm’s validity regardless of the flux and upheaval surrounding Turkey.¹⁰⁵¹ Building on his theoretical-political model, he emphasized “the Turkish state tradition” and “kadim (ancient)”¹⁰⁵² to promote his thinking. While the former referred to the Ottoman and Seljukid practice in the state administration, the latter symbolized a broader understanding of Turkey’s neighborhood as a larger civilizational, political and historically united area, based on which Turkey could restore its clout in the neighborhood.

In the interview Davutoğlu came out with a more nuanced view of ZPP, this time emphasizing its psychological importance.¹⁰⁵³ At the same time, he sustained his belief for a united Middle East and referred to the EU as a functional model for his goal of

¹⁰⁵¹ Michel Nawfal and Cengiz Çandar, “Interview with Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 42, no. 3 (Spring 2013), pp. 92-102.

¹⁰⁵² These were employed in a different setting in his earlier writings in the 1990s. For their recent use, see Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Büyük Restorasyon: Kadim’den Küreselleşmeye Yeni Siyaset Anlayışımız [The great restoration: our understanding of politics from the ancient to the global],” Speech at Dicle University, 15 March 2013. Available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleribakani-davutoglu-diyarbakir-dicle-universitesi-ogrencilerine-hitap-etti.tr.mfa> [28 September 2014].

¹⁰⁵³ “When I said ‘zero problems with neighbors,’ I meant normalizing relations with neighbors. Of course, I know that it’s not possible to have zero problems even between brothers, but what I mean is a psychological shift, paradigm shift away from the perception that all around us are enemies.” Nawfal and Çandar, p. 95.

regional reconciliation.¹⁰⁵⁴ He underlined the need for a new regional order and argued that this could only be made possible and sustainable by acknowledging popular aspirations. This cure for “the legitimacy deficit,” i.e. “siding with the peoples rather than the regimes,” and an emphasis on long-termism emerged as adjusted policy norms in the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm’s response to the Arab Spring (See Table 5). Thus, Davutoğlu believed that ZPP- in whichever form- would be reinstated once popular governments assumed power and would reciprocally accept Turkey as a cooperative interlocutor. Turkey was merely sacrificing short-term costs in favor of long-term benefits of a “normalized” neighborhood.¹⁰⁵⁵

Against growing internal and external criticisms about Turkey’s Syria policy, the JDP government stood unrepentant in defending its “principled” position. Davutoğlu defended the government’s policy in the Parliament stating:

A new Middle East is being born. We will continue to be the patron, pioneer and servant of this new Middle East. Instead of tyrannies, suppressions and dictatorships, the will of the people and the voice of the right and the just will rule in this new Middle East. Turkey will be the strong supporter of this voice everywhere.¹⁰⁵⁶

¹⁰⁵⁴ His integrationist model carried economic, cultural and political tones. Here again he referred to the unitarian character of the region, which, for him, was undermined by the nation-state order. However, he acknowledged the long-term validity of the nation states and rebuffed any claim to redraw territorial borders. Instead, he proposed rendering them meaningless through trade and cultural exchanges. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Davutoğlu described the Arab Spring as “normalization (of history)” which would enable the region to overcome the Cold War heritage of political autocracies and a psychology of enmity and distrust.

¹⁰⁵⁶ “Davutoğlu: Ortadoğu’da Değişim Dalgasını Yöneteceğiz,” *Zaman*, 26 April 2012.

As such, Erdoğan went as far as describing the developments in Syria as a “domestic affair,”¹⁰⁵⁷ not a foreign policy problem. Prime Minister’s Chief Foreign Policy Advisor İbrahim Kalın objected to the increasing perception about Turkey’s isolation and asserted that “the claim that Turkey became isolated in the Middle East is not correct. Even if it was so, then it would have been a ‘precious loneliness.’”¹⁰⁵⁸

Despite this unwavering stance, Turkish foreign policy’s earlier unilateralist pretensions soon gave way to a multilateral approach in an attempt to ward against the burgeoning regional disorder. Thereby, Turkey came to underscore the role of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security. The JDP government engaged regional and transregional actors in multilateral platforms such as the Friends of Libya, Syria and Yemen meetings. Ankara also advocated Iran-Turkey-Egypt-Saudi Arabia Contact Group meeting on Syria¹⁰⁵⁹ and Turkey-Iran-Azerbaijan meetings on the Caucasian affairs to bring in local input to regional problems. Moreover, Turkey hoped for an end to the Syrian crisis by underscoring the role of the multilateral Geneva process, which ultimately failed to deliver a political transition against a trans-border civil war more and more hijacked by sectarianism and extremism.

While the UN’s role controversially opened the way for a transition in Libya, it turned ineffective in responding to the crisis in Syria. Thereafter, Turkey became more vocal in publicly questioning the role of the UN and particularly the Security Council’s

¹⁰⁵⁷ “Erdoğan: Davutoğlu’nu Suriye’ye Göndereceğim,” *Radikal*, 6 August 2011.

¹⁰⁵⁸ “Türkiye’nin Yaşadığı ‘Değerli Yalnızlık,’” *Sabah*, 20 August 2013.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Saudi Arabia joined technical level talks, but stayed away from the Ministerial meetings in this abortive quadrilateral mechanism, which was convened in Cairo on September 2012 and February 2013.

mandate and composition.¹⁰⁶⁰ Turkish leaders gave support to a campaign for a rearrangement of the power of veto wielded by the five permanent members of the Security Council.¹⁰⁶¹ This had mainly to do with the Security Council's inability to act decisively to end the bloodshed in Syria as well as its reluctance to give the green light to Palestinian demands for statehood.

Unable to change the military and political balances favorably in Syria, Ankara accentuated its efforts on the humanitarian dimension of the conflict. The Turkish policymakers promoted Turkey's "humanitarian diplomacy," which was thought to point to a "third way transcending realist and liberal approaches in international relations and was singled out as 'the best tool' to overcome the negative effects of the prevailing turbulence in global politics."¹⁰⁶² Beyond its humanitarian dimension, however, the open-door policy for Syrian refugees carried political, economic, and social risks for Turkey.¹⁰⁶³

Turkish foreign policy, not unlike other regional and global actors, tried to manage shifting balances and coalitions in the post-Arab Spring era. Therefore, Turkish policymakers espoused a four-pronged approach to steer the course. Firstly, the JDP government invested significant political capital to finalize reconciliation with the Kurds.

¹⁰⁶⁰ "Başbakan Erdoğan BM'yi Eleştirdi," *Radikal*, 1 September 2013.

¹⁰⁶¹ "Dünya 'Beş'ten' Büyüktür," *Milliyet*, 24 September 2013.

¹⁰⁶² The Turkish Foreign Minister did not visualize this course as merely limited to the Middle Eastern crises. He also alluded to Turkey's efforts in Somalia, Myanmar, and beyond as a donor country. Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Humanitarian Diplomacy: Objectives, Challenges and Prospects," *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 41, no. 6 (2013) pp. 865-870.

¹⁰⁶³ For the broad-range effects of the Syrian refugees in Turkey, see Kemal Kirişçi, *Syrian Refugees and Turkey's Challenges: Going Beyond Hospitality* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, May 2014); Soner Cagaptay and Bilge Menekse, "The Impact of Syria's Refugees on Southern Turkey," *Washington Institute for Near Eastern Policy, Policy Focus* 130, Revised and Updated ed., (July 2014).

The resolution of the Kurdish problem was deemed necessary for the continuation of Turkish soft power and the Turkish model at large. Ankara thought of engagement with the KRG in Iraq as conducive to the domestic “peace process,”¹⁰⁶⁴ as well as for increasing Turkish clout in the region. To that end, Ankara intensified political and economic ties with the KRG, which came to include strategic and energy cooperation.¹⁰⁶⁵

Secondly, Turkey underscored siding with the West in times of crises and acknowledged transatlantic relations as “the primary pillar of its foreign policy,”¹⁰⁶⁶ which was actually the case when Turkey came under NATO’s defensive cover against fallout from Syria. Ankara also tried to maintain strong ties primarily with the United States and recognized these as “vital for a sustainable regional and global order.”¹⁰⁶⁷ Both countries’ agenda on the Arab Spring and its aftermath generally overlapped¹⁰⁶⁸ and built on close contacts between the political leaderships.¹⁰⁶⁹

Thirdly, Turkey endeavored to shift course to constructive sectors such as energy and commercial cooperation to minimize the debilitating effects of the post-Arab Spring

¹⁰⁶⁴ For the JDP government’s position on the reconciliation process, see Yılmaz Ensaroğlu, “Turkey’s Kurdish Question and the Peace Process,” *Insight Turkey* 15, no.2 (Spring 2013), pp. 7-17.

¹⁰⁶⁵ For the growing Turkey-KRG ties, see Cengiz Çandar, “Dış Politikaya 'Reset', Bir Tür 'Türk-Kürt İttifakı', Bir Tür 'Kürt Bölünmesi',” *Radikal*, 13 November 2013.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “With the Middle East in Crisis, Turkey and U.S. Must Deepen Alliance,” *Foreign Policy*, 15 November 2013. Available at: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/11/15/turkey_and_the_united_states_must_deepen_alliance_davutoglu [27 September 2014].

¹⁰⁶⁷ Ibid..

¹⁰⁶⁸ For an argument describing Turkey’s early alignment with the Western countries vis-à-vis the Arab Spring and its possible negative effects on relations with regional countries, see Burak Bilgehan Özpek and Yelda Demirağ, “The Davutoğlu Effect in Turkish Foreign Policy: What if the Bowstring is Broken?,” *Iran and the Caucasus* 16, (2012), pp. 117-128.

¹⁰⁶⁹ See Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (London; New York; Sydney; Toronto; New Delhi: Simon and Schuster UK Ltd., 2014).

era. Energy cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean was envisioned as a possible way out of political disputes.¹⁰⁷⁰ A possible link with Israel over Cyprus was actively supported by the Obama administration, yet failed to yield any concrete results. Despite political wrangling, commercial relations with Israel continued to develop.¹⁰⁷¹ On that note, energy cooperation with Russia including nuclear power plant construction, with Azerbaijan and Georgia based on Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) project, and possibly with the Iraqi government on gas and petroleum pipelines underlined Turkey's preference for better ties with other potential partners.

Beyond the neighborhood, the Africa opening provided a valuable setting for further economic and political opportunities. Unhindered by the political instability in North Africa, Turkey moved inland not only to become an economic, but also a political player in the continent.¹⁰⁷² A recent move to join MIKTA, which brought together a group of pro-Western countries, i.e. Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and Australia, signified a willingness to play a more pronounced role in the contemporary international order. This came on top of the preparations for G-20 Presidency in 2015, which entailed Turkey to articulate its national vision about the global economic order.

Fourthly, Ankara kept channels open with Tehran and Moscow despite visible policy differences in Syria. With Iran a brief period of verbal recriminations gave way to sobriety, although this did not mean a return to common understanding on regional

¹⁰⁷⁰ Mehmet Ögütçü, "Rivalry in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Turkish Dimension," *German Marshall Fund of the United States Mediterranean Policy Program*, Eastern Mediterranean Energy Project, June 2012.

¹⁰⁷¹ "Israeli Trade with Turkey on Track to Reach Record," *Haaretz*, 4 July 2014.

¹⁰⁷² Mehmet Özkan, "Türkiye'nin Afrika'da Artan Rolü: Pratik Çabalar ve Çözüm Arayışları (Turkey's rising role in Africa: Practical efforts and the quest for solutions)," *Ortadoğu Analiz* 4, no. 46 (October 2012), pp. 19-28.

issues. With Russia, Turkey never led Syria stand before the cooperative mood in bilateral relations and opted to sideline it as a fringe issue. Even a later crisis in Crimea, which was driven by Russian expansionism, did not alter this approach.

On the downside, the mending effects of these moves proved inadequate at best. The rapprochement with the Kurds faced challenges rising from Syria and Iraq, especially the extremist threat from Al-Qaeda offshoots including the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Turkish expectations about American activism did not materialize and was followed by mutual recriminations for the burgeoning crises particularly in Syria.¹⁰⁷³ In addition, the EU process was unable to gain steam to overcome the conjunctural stall. Therefore, relations continued in a different form, but essentially devoid of a “membership perspective.”¹⁰⁷⁴ The downturn in relations with Israel also soured Turkey’s Western ties.

In fact, in this quest for balancing and rebalancing vis-à-vis the most complex and fluid international environment, the biggest disappointment for the Turkish policymakers was an inability to ensure a convergence with Western allies. Ankara over time became aware of both Washington’s and other Western capitals’ limitations to fend off the crisis in Syria, which undermined the expectations for a swift return to normalcy. But when, particularly the Obama administration failed to name the military takeover in Egypt as a “coup” and withdrew “red lines” in Syria after a documented chemical weapons attack a

¹⁰⁷³ Adam Taylor, “Behind Biden’s Gaffe Lie Real Concerns about Allies’ Role in Rise of the Islamic State,” *Washington Post*, 6 October 2014.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Tark Oğuzlu, “Turkey and the European Union: Europeanization without Membership,” *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 2, (June 2012), pp. 229–243.

month later, the JDP government felt alienated.¹⁰⁷⁵ This divergence was aggravated by bitter criticisms from the U.S. and European countries denouncing the JDP government's "heavy-handed" response to the Gezi protests in the summer of 2013. Further domestic complications such as the 17 December allegations of graft and pro-Western Gülen movement's open confrontation with the government put new psychological barriers between the JDP leadership and Western governments. In the aftermath, Turkey lost the common ground to cooperate with Western countries.

Unable to move on a common agenda in the latter stages of the Arab Spring, Ankara experienced other disagreements with Western allies. On that note, the quest for diversification of foreign relations occasionally clashed with Turkey's Western ties. The bid to acquire Chinese long-range ballistic missiles turned into a stalemate. Facing American and NATO's protests for not acquiring interoperable military equipment, Turkey hesitated to complete the final deal with Beijing.¹⁰⁷⁶

Despite the government's pretense for an unwavering stance, Turkey apparently seemed to be in need of "a new phase of consolidation of its role in regional politics, through rethinking, re-planning and recalibration of its priorities, mechanism and policies."¹⁰⁷⁷ Backpedalling on the self-assumed leadership role, Turkish foreign policy now felt the need for hedging against growing instability in the neighborhood. This also stemmed from the fact that Turkey either broke with former partners or lost common

¹⁰⁷⁵ Despite awareness about the limits of American activism, the Turkish leadership was particularly frustrated due to the gap between words and deeds of the Obama administration vis-a-vis the Arab Spring. Interview with Abdullah Gül.

¹⁰⁷⁶ "China May Lose Turkish Military Defense Contract," *The Diplomat*, 9 September 2014.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Bülent Aras, "The Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy Revisited," *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 16, no.4 (2014), pp. 415-16.

ground for working on a “positive agenda.”¹⁰⁷⁸ While the JDP government did not show any signs of losing track of its long-term vision towards a cooperative and integrated regional order, it was compelled to restart its efforts to lay the groundwork towards that end. ZPP was automatically rebranded as a long-term ideal, taking into consideration the confrontation between the regimes and peoples in the Middle East. Hence, the long-term expectation that “once the regional transition is completed, [Turkey] will continue [its] work toward regional integration within the spirit of the ‘zero problems with neighbors’ principle.”¹⁰⁷⁹

Notwithstanding the JDP leadership’s insistence on a principled approach, in what might be called ZPP 3.0 version, Turkish foreign policy perpetuated its ideational claims for a new regional order with an agenda this time devoid of Western support and colored more by realpolitik considerations rather than a principled and value-based projection. Again the course of events after the summer of 2013, i.e. domestic developments following the Gezi protests, Western inaction against the Egyptian coup and the Syrian regime’s chemical weapons attack, accelerated this seemingly policy adjustment.¹⁰⁸⁰ With continuous shifting of coalitions and balances as well as heightened external and domestic security risks, Turkey’s options were squeezed against a tacit U.S.-Iran détente, Russia-Iran-Hezbollah-Baghdad alignment in Syria and an implicit Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-Israel-Egypt cooperation. Building on the American withdrawal, the jihadist elements in Iraq reorganized to take root in Syria, which ultimately led Al-Qaeda

¹⁰⁷⁸ Interview with Abdullah Gül. This was basically a call for a return to earlier “win-win” approach.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Zero Problems in a New Era,” *Foreign Policy*, 21 March 2013.

¹⁰⁸⁰ For a recent analysis along these lines See Bilge Ayata, “Turkish Foreign Policy in a Changing Arab World: Rise and Fall of a Regional Actor?” *European Integration* 37, no.1 (January 2015), pp. 95-112.

affiliated groups to prevail among the rebels. This, in turn, hampered international support for the Syrian opposition backed by Turkey and played into the hands of the Assad regime and PKK sympathizer Kurdish groups in Syria. Given this unfavorable setting, Turkey's realpolitik alignment with remaining alternatives, who happened to be exclusively Sunni elements such as Qatar, Hamas, and MB, contradicted ZPP's initial policy norms, above all else "dialogue with all." On balance sheet, Ankara's political clout was in the wane with relations reaching a rock-bottom with Egypt, Syria, and Israel and growing tensions with the Gulf monarchies except Qatar.

This realpolitik shift was coupled with a quest for a legitimizing discourse. There were earlier hints about a willingness to represent Islamic concerns especially after the JDP's third consecutive election victory in June 2011.¹⁰⁸¹ The JDP leadership, particularly Erdoğan and Davutoğlu, became more critical about the Western world's relationship with the Islamic countries and appeared more willing to get involved in the Islamic affairs on a global scale to include Somalia, Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, and even reconciliation talks in the Philippines. The Islamic world's inability to unite and defend its core against burgeoning attacks also engendered resentment,¹⁰⁸² which reflected a sense of loneliness in Turkey's efforts to that end. The JDP's political discourse thus came to more visibly pronounce a civilizational tone that alluded to the

¹⁰⁸¹ Prime Minister Erdoğan in his victory speech "alluded to Turkey's aspiration to be a voice in the West for the Middle Eastern region and Muslims, saying Bosnians, Lebanese, Syrians and Palestinians also benefited from his victory. [He said] 'Believe me, Sarajevo won today as much as Istanbul, Beirut won as much as Izmir, Damascus won as much as Ankara, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, the West Bank, Jerusalem won as much as Diyarbakir.'" "Turkey Election: Victorious Erdogan Pledges 'Consensus'," *BBC News*, 13 June 2011.

¹⁰⁸² "Erdoğan Calls Muslim World for Unity as Sectarian Clashes Hit Middle East," *Daily Sabah*, 17 July 2014; "Erdoğan Criticizes Islamic World's Silence over Israeli Aggression in Gaza," *Daily Sabah*, 2 August 2014.

Islamic civilization's authentic characteristics and Turkey's historical claim for its leadership. Though it seemed in its preliminary stages, the emerging discourse in Turkish foreign policy along these lines transpired against an inability to create a common ground with the Western world both towards EU integration and in terms of regional policy.

Duran construed this emerging posture as the latest phase in the Ottoman-Turkish modernization process with an objective to find the right synthesis between Turkey's Western and Islamic identities.¹⁰⁸³ Yet, the underlying claim for a regional leadership role, its rhetorical domestic relevance aside, failed to produce conceptual remedies to this perennial question of a synthesis that would reflect Turkish foreign policy's multiple orientations. What followed was a domestic rhetoric building on the Ottoman grandeur, which was balanced by occasionally accentuating the policy principles of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm alluding to Turkish foreign policy's cooperative approach. To that end, despite diverging agendas and increasing mistrust, Ankara still thought it could convince Western partners to the long-term importance of supporting "normalization" in the Middle East,¹⁰⁸⁴ which would enhance the possibility of peaceful coexistence once the regional upheaval subsided.

The civilizational rhetoric together with the aforementioned complexities of the post-Arab Spring era gave rise to a debate on whether Turkish foreign policy came to

¹⁰⁸³ Burhanettin Duran, "Understanding the AK Party's Identity Politics: A Civilizational Discourse and its Limitations," *Insight Turkey* 15, no 1 (Winter 2013), pp. 91-109.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Davutoğlu saw a parallel with the post-Cold War transformation in the ex-communist countries and the Arab Spring. He thus implicitly expected a similar support for popular movements from the international community. At a later stage, he seemed rather disappointed with the lack of support and called it an "orientalist approach" to deny the Muslim world the right to seek democratic rule. He also alluded to the Bosnian civil war as a possible scenario in Syria in order to alert against sustained Western inaction. See Ahmet Davutoglu and Zlatko Lagumdžija, "Syria Proves Nothing Has Changed since Bosnia And Herzegovina," *Washington Post*, 1 August 2013.

espouse Sunnism or pan-Islamism as a new ideational orientation.¹⁰⁸⁵ Its proponents broadly underlined Turkey's policy choices in favor of Sunni groups in opposition to the Assad and Sisi regimes. Mufti commenting on this latter stage of regional policy saw "a remarkable coherence and continuity in the JDP's vision," which arguably returned to its ideational Islamic core to reclaim a leadership role in the Middle East.¹⁰⁸⁶ Yet he also warned against the risk that unless the JDP kept domestic reforms on track, its regional aspirations were likely to be impaired. Özkan argued that in view of Davutoğlu's earlier written works based on "pan-Islamist" ideas, the Foreign Minister "predicted that the overthrown dictatorships would be replaced with Islamic regimes, thus creating a regional 'Muslim Brotherhood belt' under Turkey's leadership."¹⁰⁸⁷ Keyman, in response, disapproved the arguments based on pan-Islamism and underlined that the criticism of Turkish foreign policy should focus on strategic errors made after the Arab Spring, not on ideational claims.¹⁰⁸⁸

Although it is too early to pass judgment, the JDP- Davutoğlu paradigm appeared less ascertained on its earlier projections about an integrated regional order. While the emergence of a Hobbesian order in the neighborhood compelled the JDP leadership to hedge against the growing risks in the end; overall, the Turkish foreign policy's response to the regional upheaval was characterized by adjustments still within the parameters of

¹⁰⁸⁵ For a general review of the debate on Pan-Islamism See "'Pan-Islamist Davutoğlu' Thesis Ruffling Feathers in Turkey," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 1 September 2014.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Malik Mufti, "The AK Party's Islamic Realist Political Vision: Theory and Practice," *Politics and Governance* 2, no. 2 (October 2014), pp. 28-42.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Behlül Özkan, "Turkey, Davutoglu and the Idea of Pan-Islamism," *Survival* 56, no.4 (August-September 2014), pp. 119-140.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Fuat Keyman, "Davutoğlu 'Pan-İslamist' mi?," *Radikal*, 27 August 2014.

the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm (See Table 5). First, Turkey felt responsible to act as a regional power. In most cases, notably in Libya and Egypt in the preliminary stages, this was also a role Ankara was called upon. Second, in the initial orientation of the popular movements Ankara saw its case being vindicated with the whole region coming into its fold as a result of Turkey's much accentuated soft power. As such, the Turkish model blending Western best practices with Islamic values was thought to be in the ascendancy. Third, in its engagement with the popular movements Ankara was largely in coordination with Western allies especially until the summer of 2013. Finally, the post-revolutionary expectations of Turkey were not in contravention with its foreign policy goals, but were rather seen as the possible continuation of the extant paradigm supposedly in a more favorable and sustainable environment.

Despite the subsequent derailment and complications in regional policy, which should again be evaluated as offshoots of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm not traditionalism, Turkey responded to the challenging test of the Arab Spring with the same policy goals to become a regional and global power. Given the complexity of the post-upheaval regional order, Turkish foreign policy introduced policy adjustments in order not to lose track of its vision. Nevertheless, how far it has been successful and consistent in that effort will be better understood by future research, which would be in a better position to theorize about the era.

Table-6. The adjustments in the JDP-Davutoğlu Policy Paradigm in the wake of the Arab Spring

Policy principles	Policy norms	Adjustments in policy norms
Balance freedom and security	Defy the Cold War mentality and the reverberant security outlook/ Refrain from post-9/11 securitization (Soft power)	Emphasize foreign policy principles and stand with the popular demands, not (defunct) regimes
		Fend off rising security challenges through Western security identity/ Convince Western partners to stand behind popular and democratic demands
	Turn Turkey into a model with enhanced liberty, prosperity, and security (Turkey as a model)	Support like-minded countries and movements that aspire Turkey as a model
	Turkey is not surrounded by enemies (Break psychological barriers)	Seek potential partners to break the psychological barriers before a reunited, free and secure regional order
Zero-problems with neighbors	Recognize neighbors as potential allies and providers of security (Non-Western security identity)	Lay the groundwork for a long-term secure, stable and viable Middle Eastern order
	Regional policy based on security for all, high-level political dialogue, economic integration and interdependence, and multicultural coexistence (Holism, integration and multiculturalism)	
	Transcend predominant Western orientation and status quoism (Adopt to post-Cold War order)	Cooperation with like-minded countries and non-state actors
Multidimensional and multi-track policy	Broaden Turkish foreign policy's focus and scope (Active multidimensionalism)	Seek multilateral solutions to regional problems
	Rise above regional-global cleavages and define common interests (Regional-global actor)	Engage all potential partners, except illegitimate regimes

	Enlist non-governmental actors (Democratization of foreign policy)	Humanitarian diplomacy and siding with the peoples
	Overcome the negative effects of monoculturalism/ Promote Turkey's insider status in both Western and non-Western fora (Multiculturalism)	Keep channels open with Russia and Iran to overcome policy divergences
New diplomatic approach	Contribute to the intra-civilizational dialogue (Transcend the bridge metaphor)	Do not lose sight of civilizational cooperation/ Convince Western partners for its long-term importance
	Discursive turn (Advocate peaceful-economic cooperation)	Advocate popular demands and democratization
	Manage irregularity and disequilibrium (Proactive diplomacy)	Manage irregularity against shifting balances and coalitions
Rhythmic diplomacy	Diversified relations with Western and non-Western countries (Readiness for fluidity)	Compensate for downturn of relations with former partners with potential and recently empowered partners
	Seek harmony between policies and values, and between institutions and foreign policy actors in Turkish foreign policy (Domestic-foreign policy harmony)	Reinvigorate ties with other regions to make up for the transitional chaos in the Middle East/ Seek cooperation in other fields that would pave the way for solving political disputes
		Give boost to domestic reconciliation process/ Ensure domestic stability to fend off rising threats and perpetuate Turkey's soft power

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

This study built on the assumption that ideas have a causal role in understanding foreign policy change. Concurring with Goldstein and Keohane's arguments, it analyzed the processes through which ideas "increased clarity about goals, affected outcomes of strategic situations and became embedded in political institutions."¹⁰⁸⁹ It came out with a paradigmatic policy change model to measure the ideational turn in Turkish foreign policy.

The dissertation posited that Davutoğlu's ideas had a causal role in foreign policy change under the JDP rule, which indicated a paradigm shift. To extract the role of his ideas, it brought in the traditional bureaucratic policy paradigm as the default posture in Turkish foreign policy. Western orientation, status quoism, and monocultural outlook stood as its normative policy principles. Predicated largely on the early Republican experience and Kemalist worldview, traditionalism did not have much difficulty- with the particular exception of the Cyprus question- to survive the Cold War. It became institutionalized through political and bureaucratic ownership, whereby the bureaucracy accessed any diversion as a threat to the regime itself.

In the 1990s, however, the paradigm had to face rising anomalies due to global and domestic changes. Thus, Turkey had to cope with identity crises both internationally, in pursuit of a new role, and domestically, with the revival of twin threats, i.e. Islam and Kurdish nationalism. Turkish foreign policy of this decade was characterized by a

¹⁰⁸⁹ Goldstein and Keohane, p. 4.

multidimensional and activist attempt first to redefine Turkey's place in the Western political-security alliance; second, to overcome internal security-identity issues; and third, to have links with new markets and investment. The practice, however, rather than fixing the traditional paradigm added anomalies to it.

Under increased pressure, the political authorities tried to introduce adjustments to the paradigm. Inimical to status quoism and monoculturalism, Özal firmly believed in Western orientation. This early on gave him room for maneuver to act within the parameters of traditionalism. Yet he missed an opportunity to stand against the bureaucracy while he was still strong politically. During his Presidency he clearly became a vocal opponent. His verbal attacks, however, ended up sealing political isolation rather than empowering him politically. He fought but lost the struggle against the bureaucracy, which unreservedly clung to the traditional paradigm.

Despite partly embracing the new dynamics of the post-Cold War order, Özal's successors acted in compliance with the traditional paradigm. This was mainly due to the pressing internal challenges. The domestic driven move to maintain a Western oriented, status quoist and monocultural foreign policy also marked a more pronounced role for the bureaucracy. The latter's choice was to either sideline or ignore the growing anomalies in a complicated external and domestic environment. However, the failure of what has been called "the lost decade" did not lead to the bureaucracy's disavowal of traditionalism.

This was largely because traditionalism was thought to ordain a unidirectional Western orientation. Thus, Turkish foreign policy "has always been designed so as to give priority to relations with the West, [and even regional] policy ... has always been

considered an extension of the Western-oriented Turkish foreign policy.”¹⁰⁹⁰ Combined with status quoism and monoculturalism, this approach eventually gave leeway to an unbalanced security outlook that denied Turkey’s multicultural characteristics in favor of a strictly Western orientation. Though, it was moderated after 1999, the security-oriented outlook of the military bureaucracy hindered any attempts that could overcome the anomalies of the traditional paradigm.

After the February 2001 financial meltdown, Turkish politics entered into what Mufti called a “paradigm crisis.”¹⁰⁹¹ This was also true for Turkish foreign policy, which turned into an arena for the battle of ideas. In that sense, Westernism, Eurasianism, and Islamism ran for holding sway. The JDP claimed to embrace all. Yet felt it had to find the right match in order to survive the bureaucracy’s concerns about its Islamic, i.e. “anti-regime” roots. Therefore, assuming power in November 2002 elections, the JDP developed a dual approach in foreign policy embracing status quo and change at the same time. Europeanization and strengthening Turkey’s place in the Western world appealed to the state elite’s worldview, while outreach to the neighborhood including Muslim countries stood as a cautious policy goal to realize the government’s objective for change. Paradoxically, the former, which was envisioned as an element of status quo, was instrumentalized to pave the way for the latter as an element of change.

In such an ambiguous political atmosphere, gradualism and accommodation carried the day. This was seen both as a secure and expedient way to build a power base for the incumbent government. Thereby, nuances were introduced in the outer form,

¹⁰⁹⁰ Criss and Bilgin.

¹⁰⁹¹ Mufti, *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture*, p. 149.

which were supposed to gradually change the inner core. Thus, Western orientation continued, but lost its unidirectional trait. Status quoism and monoculturalism were discontinued as policy principles. Regional and civilizational aspects of the Turkish foreign policy were brought into the fore with a transnational discourse that refused to restrict national interests to territorial borders. This heralded a growing engagement in regional and global affairs. The JDP's divergence from monoculturalism also moved on a double path, which espoused a Westernist-universalist discourse on the one hand, and came to reconcile them with Turkey's multiple identities, most pronouncedly historical (read Ottoman) heritages, on the other. Within these dynamics, the government over time turned to Davutoğlu to carve out an "own" foreign policy, beginning from the regional.

Regarding the foundations of the JDP's emerging foreign policy framework, the novelty and effectiveness of Davutoğlu's ideas has been debated. Overall, these arguments missed two crucial points. First, ideas do not pop up all of a sudden and become entrenched as a policy framework. Rather it takes critical ruptures that pave the way for them to prevail against the existing ideational worldview. Second, paradigmatic policy change follows an accumulation of anomalies, which may end up with a shift in policy discourse. On that note, adjustments in an ideational framework should not necessarily be equated with paradigmatic changes. Also, ideas need not be novel, but ideational changes can transform their role.

The JDP's early term accommodationist approach went hand-in-hand with an urgent need for new ideas to realize its self-declared transformative agenda. Davutoğlu's ideas supplied this demand. And depending on his ideas was a political choice. Davutoğlu's ideas functioned as a road map that prescribed the causal links for achieving

goals in the particular area of foreign policy. They also addressed political, economic and electoral demands of the JDP's agenda.

An in-depth study of Davutoğlu's written works and later interviews made it possible to decipher his worldview. Early on, he analyzed the Western and Islamic *Weltanschauungs* as two different paradigms based on separate epistemological, philosophical, and methodological backgrounds. Alluding to such irreconcilability between the two, he referred to the possibility of instituting an alternative political order based on the fundamental principles of the Islamic paradigm. On that note, he detested the importation of the nation-state order in the Islamic world, which arguably compromised its essential unitarian character. Following this, he made his case for Islamic revivalism, which could overcome the extant conflict between the Western-induced polity (i.e. the nation states) and the Islamic identities of the populations. In Turkey's particular case, he underlined the need for a change in the exclusively Western orientation in foreign policy and an end to isolation from the Muslim world.

His seminal *Stratejik Derinlik* symbolized Davutoğlu's later attempt to carve out a new foreign policy framework for Turkey the nation-state. Regarding the traditional practice, he detested the unidirectional, status quoist, and monocultural traits and the ahistorical and insular approach in Turkish foreign policy. In its stead, he offered a near-basin policy and a geostrategic approach, which took, inter alia, historical (civilizational), geographical, political and even theoretical inputs into account. This framework overall pointed to a multidimensional, multicultural, rhythmic (dynamic) and cooperative-integrationist paradigm, which could only be possible through political and more importantly mentality (ideational) change.

Building on this background, Davutoğlu put his imprint on the JDP's foreign policy from early on. As reflected in the JDP's party program, his adjacent basin policy found a ready audience. In the beginning, his implicit motive was to strike the right balance between Turkey's Western orientation and the JDP's emerging regional policy. Therefore, while the government concentrated on the EU dossier, Davutoğlu worked on the need to broaden the focus of Turkish foreign policy.

After taking a political role in advisory capacity, he started drawing a more practical agenda. Back in early 2003, he envisioned Turkey's evolution from a regional to a global actor within the first term of the JDP. This vision quintessentially became the foreign policy objective of the government within the contours of the emerging JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm.

Davutoğlu also articulated five policy principles, which aimed to transcend the limitations of the tradition paradigm. Thus, he set to defy the Cold War mentality through desecuritization, develop relations with the neighbors, overcome unidirectionalism and status quoism with multidimensionalism, entrench multiculturalism and respond to different policy needs with a view to balance mobility and harmony. His regional perspective carried integrationist tones, whilst he developed a strategic approach to relations with the EU, which claimed to contribute to the EU's civilizational enrichment and global strategic position.

In view of its first term practice, it was evident that the JDP made a prudent yet ambitious start in foreign policy. Though Western orientation as the main pillar of foreign policy was upheld, the JDP government grew more confident and assertive over time. In that sense, politics of accommodation gave leeway to politics of change. In foreign

policy, the end result was a growing penchant for “non-traditionalism.” As such, Turkish foreign policy was being transformed with new tools, methods and most importantly, a new foreign policy objective.

The JDP’s second term symbolized an end to “politics of patience,” when the civilian government was able to take the helm also in foreign policy, this time including matters of “national security.” The prevalence of the government in the political arena made it possible for the new foreign policy paradigm to prevail as well. From the financial crisis in the developed world to changing global balances and the rising significance of economy, various factors were also conducive in this shift.

Neo-Ottomanism, its negative connotations notwithstanding, had a virtue in pointing to the ideational change in Turkish foreign policy. In essence, it pointed to a dismissal of the national project and its replacement by historicism and multiculturalism. Most importantly, it enabled Turkey to both embrace and confront the past. This, in turn, served the objective to spread Turkish political, economic and cultural influence.

The JDP’s anti-bureaucratic thinking and conservative-cum-liberal political model it built upon induced the leadership to embrace “soft power” discourse in seeking clout in regional and global fora. This was in conformity with a global trend whereby the rising powers asked for their long underrated interests to be taken into account. The new paradigm, which has built on a redefined relationship with the West in general, and a corresponding autonomous regional foreign policy, accordingly sought a new articulation of the global status quo. In other words, the JDP refused to perpetuate the peripheral or even the secondary role Turkey assumed within the Western-European strategic framework.

Defusing crises through diplomatic maneuvers was key to Turkey's rising power in its neighborhood. This empowered the civilian government both domestically and externally. The decision to prioritize diplomacy was effective in eliminating the predominant view about Turkey as an outsider in the neighborhood. It also underscored the power of Turkish diplomacy, now able to garner support from both Western and regional capitals.

Against this backdrop, the government found more space to implement the vision set by Davutoğlu. His political role also became more visible. The government's diplomatic agenda increasingly focused on realizing his foreign policy vision through mediation or in certain cases facilitation. Both the election and presence in the UN Security Council became both a test and evidence of Turkey's ultimate foreign policy objective.

The new paradigm got steam under the JDP's political aegis. When Davutoğlu was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm has already been operative. His appointment essentially pointed to a move towards its institutionalization. The foreign policy practice after 2007 verified this assumption. Yet this was not merely a "Davutoğlu affair." It also reflected political, bureaucratic and institutional changes within the Turkish polity.

Turkey indisputably moved to become a regional and global actor, albeit with debatable success. The very "order-constituting" role Davutoğlu claimed also came under duress against complex regional balances. Yet nothing proved more challenging for the new paradigm than the so-called Arab Spring, which upended the very order Turkish foreign policy had been operating. Following initial caution, Ankara embraced the

transformative current at the expense of severing links with the *ancien regimes*. Yet early predictions about a swift and favorable transition gave way to burgeoning political and security risks. The Syrian crisis coupled with the regional upheaval put Turkish foreign policy into a vulnerable position, which not only strained its regional policy but also came to negate its soft foreign policy tools towards regional cohesion.

This move from early euphoria to heightened uncertainty brought about the questioning of the validity of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm. It also strained relations with the Western countries due to a perceptible divergence of agendas. Nevertheless, the Turkish policymakers continued to sustain their ideational orientation and underrated the growing instability as a short-term transition to long-awaited normalization in the Middle East.

Despite the JDP leadership's unwavering stance, there emerged a visible attempt to recalibrate the policy norms to ward off the growing political and security risks. Yet this did not amount to an ideational change or a repudiation of Turkish foreign policy's policy goals. On the contrary, the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm sought consolidation (what Davutoğlu lately called restoration), still holding on to its policy principles. Thus, ZPP turned into a long-term ideal and Ankara felt the need to reevaluate regional and international relations.

What became more pronounced in this attempt though was an emerging political discourse based on a claim to lead the Islamic civilization. Though in its evolving stages, what might be called ZPP 3.0 version seemingly tried to make up for a divergence of foreign policy agendas with the Western allies with domestic and foreign policy rhetoric building on a Islamic discourse. The new political discourse is permissive for critics of

Western “double standards” and cherishes Turkish interests, even if they contradict Turkey’s Western links. How much of this perceptible change relates to ideational factors against shifting international and regional power balances is an issue to be discussed by future studies. Despite such signs of adjustment to the changing regional and global environment, the dissertation concluded that Turkish foreign policy in general responded to the challenging test of the Arab Spring with the same policy goals and principles of the JDP-Davutoğlu paradigm.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of ideas for foreign policy change. As such, it highlights foreign policy as an area amenable to the battle of ideas as opposed to a sphere determined by structural and exogenous factors. In the particular Turkish case, it points to the role ideas have played in paradigmatic policy change. With extrapolation, it suggests that future shifts would also depend on the presence and diffusion of new ideas.

Secondly, it attributes a degree of independence to domestic factors in foreign policy change. It underlines the agency of domestic actors, the theoretical basis of which has been left out of the scope of this dissertation. Therefore, foreign policy is shown to be as much domestically driven as a product of international factors.

Third, in the case of the traditional paradigm it exemplifies the time gap between the validity of ideas and their prolongation through political processes. That is in a way telling for the prospects of the new paradigm and should be borne in mind while accessing its validity.

The JDP- Davutoğlu paradigm has changed not only policy goals and instruments, but also the very nature of Turkish foreign policy as a whole. Yet its institutionalization is

far from assured. The question is will this paradigmatic shift prove sustainable in the long term to overcome the inescapable anomalies? After the Arab Spring, a new debate started about the “recalibration,”¹⁰⁹² i.e. adjustment, if not “the end”¹⁰⁹³ of the new paradigm. As was the case with the traditional paradigm, sustainability entails political and bureaucratic ownership. Therefore, the prospects for the JDP- Davutoğlu paradigm depends either on the political success of the JDP government or will entail adoption by the bureaucratic elites, in which case its institutionalization would be sealed.

¹⁰⁹² Galip Dalay and Dov Friedman, “The AK Party and the Evolution of Turkish Political Islam’s Foreign Policy,” *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 2 (Spring 2013), pp. 123-139.

¹⁰⁹³ Bülent Ali Rıza and Stephen Flanagan, “The End of Zero Problems? Turkey and Shifting Regional Dynamics,” in *2012 Global Forecast: Risk, Opportunity, and the Next Administration*, eds. Craig Cohen and Josiane Gabel (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2012), pp. 28-29.

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