MAKE TURKEY GREAT AGAIN!

NEO-OTTOMANISM: WAS IT REALLY ANTI-WEST?

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the so-called Neo-Ottomanist foreign policy approach over two different periods in the history of Turkey: the Özal period (1980-1993) and the AKP period (2002-09). Despite the common perception that the Neo-Ottomanism was an anti-West foreign policy approach, it is argued that, Neo-Ottomanism as a foreign policy approach was Turkey's effort to integrate into the Western-led world order with a different form and content under changing global conditions. In the Özal period, first due to the re-escalation of the Cold War in early 1980s, then, due to the end of it, Turkey was expected to engage in regional relations with an emphasis on its Islamic/Turkic identity in line with the Western interests. In the AKP period, because of the radical Islamic challenge culminating in the September 11 attacks, this time the West expected Turkey to play the moderate Islamic role model towards the Middle East. Turkish foreign policy in both periods were deemed Neo-Ottomanist due to the unusually diverse and deep relations with the countries of the region and the use of Muslim and/or Turkic identity in the foreign policy language. This thesis challenges this view and claims that this foreign policy approach in both periods were due to a qualitative change in Turkey’s relations with the West under a different global conjuncture.

Keywords: Neo-Ottomanism, Foreign Policy, Identity, Moderate Islam, Role Model

ÖZ

YENİDEN BÜYÜK TÜRKİYE!
YENİ OSMANLICILIK: GERÇEKTEN BATI KARŞITI MIYDI?
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Bu tez, Yeni Osmanlıcılık diye adlandırılan dış politika yaklaşımını Türkiye tarihindeki iki farklı dönem üzerinden incelemektedir: Özal dönemi (1980-1993) ve AKP dönemi (2002-09). Yeni Osmanlıcılığın Batı karşıtı bir dış politika yaklaşımı olduğu yönündeki yaygın algıya karşın, Yeni Osmanlıcılığın, Türkiye'nin Batı liderliğindeki dünya düzenine, değişen küresel koşullar altında farklı bir biçim ve içerikle entegre olma çabası olduğu savunulmaktadır. Özal döneminde, Türkiye, önce Soğuk Savaş'ın 1980lerin başında yeniden tırmanması ile Orta Doğu'da, ardından 1980lerin sonunda sona ermesiyle birlikte Orta Asya ve Kafkaslar'da Müslüman/Türk kimliğine vurgu yaparak, Batının çıkarları ile uyumlu olarak bölgesel ilişkilere yöneldi. AKP döneminde, 11 Eylül saldırılarıyla doruğa ulaşan radikal İslamcılık tehdidi altında, Batı, bu kez Türkiye'den Ortadoğu'ya yönelik ılımlı İslami rol modeli oynamasını talep etti. Her iki dönemde de Türk dış politikası, bölge ülkeleriyle alışılmadık derecede çeşitli ve derin ilişkiler ve dış politika dilinde Müslüman ve/veya Türk kimliğinin kullanılması nedeniyle Yeni Osmanlıcı kabul edildi. Bu tez, bu görüşe karşı çıkmakta ve her iki dönemdeki dış politika yaklaşımının, Türkiye'nin Batı ile farklı küresel koşullar altında kurduğu ilişkilerindeki niteliksel değişimden kaynaklandığını iddia etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yeni Osmanlıcılık, Dış Politika, Kimlik, İslam, Rol Modeli

In Loving Memory of Süha Bölükbaşı, Rest in Peace.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
ANAP	Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party)
BMENAI	Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
CIS	The Commonwealth of Independent States
COMCEC	The Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation
CSCE	Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
D-8	Developing 8 Organization for Economic Cooperation
DECA	Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement
DEIK	Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu (Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board)
DİB	Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (The Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey)
DİSK	Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions)
DP	Demokrat Parti (Democratic Party)
DPT	Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı (State Planning Organization)
DSP	Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party)
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
EEC	European Economic Community
FP	Fazilet Partisi (Felicity Party)
ILSA	Iran-Libya Sanctions Act
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MEI	Middle East Institute
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MESS	Türkiye Metal Sanayicileri Sendikası (Turkish Employers Association of Metal Industries)
METU	Middle East Technical University
MGK	Milli Güvenlik Kurulu (National Security Council)
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party)
MIT	Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı (National Intelligence Agency)
MSP	Milli Selamet Partisi (National Salvation Party)

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Islamic Cooperation Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PKK	Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
RP	Refah Partisi (Welfare Party)
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SHP	Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti (Social Democratic Populist Party)
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
TBMM	Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (Turkish National Grand Assembly)
TDV	Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı (Foundation of Religious Affairs of Turkey)
TIKA	Türk İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Ajansı (Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency)
TIM	Türkiye İhracatçılar Meclisi (Turkish Exporters Assembly)
TÜRKSOY	Uluslararası Türk Kültürü Teşkilatı (The Turkish Cultures and Arts Joint Administration)
TÜSİAD	Türk Sanayici ve İş Adamları Derneği (Turkish Industry and Business Association)
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WB	World Bank

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context and Problem Definition

This thesis examines Turkey's, so called, Neo-Ottomanist foreign policy approach over two different periods. It argues that despite the common perception that Neo- Ottomanism was anti-West and aimed to create a new alternative axis to the West, the foreign policy set in question was compatible with the general foreign policy strategies of the West and even served those strategies from time to time. Furthermore, it is claimed that the approach in the examined periods was not also due to a desire on the part of Turkey to pursue a more independent foreign policy, but due to the form and content of Turkey's relationship with the West and the role it was expected to play in this relationship.

The foreign policies of the Turgut Özal era and the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP) era were deemed neo-Ottomanist because, having a solid Western axis in its foreign policy during the Cold War, Turkey put regional relations, which it had insistently avoided, for most of the times before, on its agenda between 1980 and 1993, and again after AKP's coming to power in 2002, both with a rhetoric emphasizing the shared identities. Those policies of opening towards the regions with which it had geographical, historical, ethnic, religious and cultural ties and strengthening its economic and political ties with these regions, being in contrast to the traditional foreign policy understanding of the previous periods of the Republic, have been considered, with reference to the country's Ottoman past, as the signs of some decision makers' dreams of re-establishing influence on the former lands of the Ottoman Empire.

In the literature, this new foreign policy has been interpreted as the attempts of Turkey, which is a medium-sized state, to gain power and influence in various regions and thus seen as an alternative hegemony project to the Western dominated world order.[1] This so-called Neo-Ottomanist initiative aiming to establish a new order

[1] See for instance Bilgin, P. & Bilgiç, A. (2011). Turkey's "New" Foreign Policy toward Eurasia, Eurasian Geography and Economics, 52(2), 173-195; Türkeş, M. (2016). Decomposing Neo-Ottoman Hegemony, Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies, 18(3), 191-216; Bekić, J. (2021). Revisionism as a characteristic of authoritarian ex-empires: a case study of Turkish neo-Ottomanism (1990-2020), International Studies, Libertas International University, 21(1), 127-144; Wastnidge, E. (2019). Imperial

opposed to the current world order might have been correct without considering the historical environment in which these developments took place. On the other hand, considering the conjuncture in the country and the world before and during the foreign policy behaviors called Neo-Ottomanism, these policies were generally put forward when they were in line with the interests of the Western countries (especially the USA) or when the interests of Turkey and these Western states coincided. Those efforts of Turkey were mostly the result of the motivation to remain valuable for the West. Although those Neo-Ottomanist initiatives were put forward and implemented by the Turkish politicians and bureaucracy on their own initiatives, most of them arose out of the drive to adapt to the interests of Western states in Turkey's nearby regions. Furthermore, during the periods examined, the leaders who adopted these foreign policy approaches thus obtained or hoped to receive the support of the West against their domestic rivals, and beyond that, they used discourses based on these foreign policy approaches to draw nationalist support in domestic politics. Concerning the relationship between domestic and foreign policies, an additional point should be made: Neo-Ottomanism was supported by the Turkish bourgeoisie during both the Özal and AKP periods. The reason for this was the opportunities offered by the Neo-Ottomanist approach, both inside and outside the country, to this power center, which was now trans-nationalized and has common interests with the international capital.

1.1.1. What is Neo-Ottomanism?

First, we need to determine what do we understand from Neo-Ottomanism and which policy practices are considered to be Neo-Ottomanist. In order to discuss what is understood by Neo-Ottomanism, first of all, it is required to look at the novelty of this foreign policy understanding, of its difference, or rather what it is different from. In this regard, it is useful to look at the four characteristics of the traditional foreign policy of Turkey defined by Malik Müfti under the label of "İnönü Doctrine":

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

Grandeur and Selective Memory: Re-assessing Neo-Ottomanism in Turkish Foreign and Domestic Politics, Middle East Critique, 28(1),7-28; Yanık, L. K. (2016). Bringing the Empire Back In: The Gradual Discovery of the Ottoman Empire in Turkish Foreign Policy, Die Welt des Islams, 56(3–4), 466-488; Dönmez, R. Ö. (2015). Nationalism in Turkey under Justice and Development Party Rule: The Logic of Masculinist Protection, Turkish Studies, 16, 554–571

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 local actors."[2]

It could be said that the foreign policies pursued during Özal and AKP periods differed from all these characteristics except, apart from Özal's Mosul and Kirkuk plans, the sensitivity regarding the protection of the existing borders in the third article continues. This sensitivity is particularly evident in the Davutoğlu's definition of foreign policy, labeled as Neo-Ottomanism:

> What we want to do is to contribute to the establishment of a lasting order around us. If Pax-Ottomana is meant by that, pax means order. We are trying to establish an order; such a thing is not wrong. But do this in the modern context, we try to establish it around the parameters of equality of nation states.[3]

Yet, he was also talking about the Sykes-Picot order and nation-states in the Middle East being "geopolitical errors" dividing the Islamic community. He was promising that "we are going to meet again with our brothers in those territories from which we retreated and which we lost between 1911 and 1923."[4] We cannot know how rhetorical these words were or how much they expressed the real feelings, but at least we can say that Davutoğlu behaved respectfully to the borders of the nation states in his foreign policy, which he had the opportunity to implement. Some words can be said just to create enthusiasm or under the influence of enthusiasm, but the important thing is the practical equivalent of these words. After all, Davutoğlu, who had criticized Turkey for being a pawn of the West in the East because of its recognition of Israel in 1947 and vote against the independence of Algeria in 1958,[5] and

[2] Mufti, M. (2009), *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea,* (31-32), Palgrave Macmillan

[3] Davutoğlu Yeni Osmanlı'ya karşı, (2009, December 4). Haber 3. Retrieved January 15, 2023, from: https://www.haber3.com/amp/guncel/politika/davutoglu-yeni-osmanliya-karsi-haberi-488337

[4] Özkan, B. (2014) Turkey, Davutoglu and the Idea of Pan-Islamism, Survival, 56(4), p. 125.

[5] "Ahmet Davutoglu, '21. Yüzyila Girerken Türkiye'nin Uluslararasi Konumu', Cerçeve, no. 17, 1996, pp. 62–8" as cited in Özkan, B. (2014) Turkey, Davutoglu and the Idea of Pan-Islamism, Survival, 56(4), 129.

Davutoğlu, about whom, after he was forced to step down as the prime minister in 2016, an article under the title of "America loses its man in Ankara"[6] appeared in the US press, is the same person. The same could be said for Turgut Özal because of his plans to annex Mosul and Kirkuk which he could not actualize because of the opposition of the civil and military bureaucracy claiming that the purpose of those plans were actually to serve the US interests.[7] Such words, addressing the nostalgia for the glorious Ottoman past may sound irredentist yet they should be evaluated within the context of both their use in domestic politics and Turkey's relationship with global powers under the conditions of the related period as Turkey was a middle-income country unable to pursue such adventures in both periods we will examine.

So, what are we to understand by the discourse of order-building, when viewed with respect for the sovereignty of the nation-states and their borders? Then, Pax-Ottomana must inevitably relate to the revival of certain values from the times of the Ottoman Empire, leaving out the possibility of changing existing borders or sovereignties. As practice shows, this means that Islam is defined as a supra-identity, a framework, and (re)used as a unifier at the regional and domestic level.

In the literature, the use of identity as an element of foreign policy in the definitions of Neo-Ottomanism is a frequent situation, even if it is not stated with the same clarity what this identity is. For example, Aral is of the opinion that Turgut Özal used Islam as a foreign policy instrument and established close relations with the Islamic world, especially with the Middle East countries, [8] and according to Keyman, "…this new foreign policy identity entailed the employment of not only geopolitics but also identity and economy."[9] Similarly, Taşpınar defines Neo-Ottomanism as a proactive foreign policy which redefines Turkish identity by taking into account the Ottoman heritage, thus aiming to increase its influence in the former Ottoman lands, where national and economic interests are united,[10] but draws attention to the fact that

[6] Hudson, J. (2016, May 5). America loses its man in Ankara, Foreign Policy. Retrieved January 10, 2023 from https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/05/05/america-loses-its-man-in-ankara/
[7] Mufti, M. (2009), *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea,* (31-32), Palgrave Macmillan.
[8] Aral, B. (2001). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Özal Decade, 1983-1993, Middle Eastern Studies, 37(1), 76.
[9] See Keyman, E. F. (2010). Globalization, Modernity and Democracy-Turkish Foreign Policy 2009 and Beyond, Perceptions, 15(3-4), 1-20.
[10] Taspinar, Ö. (2008). Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism, Carnegie Papers, 10, 14-15.

it does not have an imperial vision.[11] This specific point is stressed in the publications by AKP affiliated think tanks in particular.[12] Çağaptay, on the other hand, goes one step further and sees Neo-Ottomanism as a "misnomer" and claims that it is pro-Arab and defines the world in terms of religion and economic interests.[13]

Considering the use of Islamic identity intensively not only in foreign policy but also in domestic politics, a more in-depth evaluation can be made on its function. In the rapid neoliberal economic transformation processes that were evident in both periods examined, it could be expected that social injustice would become more visible, especially considering that the export-oriented growth strategy requires higher levels of exploitation. In this case, it can be said that the policies of helping the poor, channeled through communal networks, play an important role in gaining the consent of the working class.[14] In addition, it is a well-known fact that after the 1980 coup, the Islamist discourse was used to cover up the ethnic and class tensions which Turkey had been experiencing especially since the 1970s. Yalvaç claims that the use of Islamic identity as a popular ideology at home and Turkey's promotion abroad as a "model Muslim democracy" helped the AKP strengthen its ties with Muslim countries in both domestic and foreign politics.[15] So, Islamic identity has been presented as a response to the problems and demands in both domestic and foreign policy, then, what could be its function in foreign policy? At this point, it might be useful to question some of the themes that are frequently included, along with identity, in the definitions of Neo-Ottomanism: desire to be a regional power, economy-oriented relations, pragmatism, multidimensionality, model country, soft power.

At this point, one of the first things which comes to mind is the desire to become a regional power, which is another prominent theme besides identity in the definitions of Neo-Ottomanism. It is a known fact that both Turgut Özal and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan had shaped their pragmatic foreign policy approaches and practices by evaluating Turkey's potential to become a regional power, unlike previous periods,

[11] Taspinar, Ö. (2011). The Three Strategic Visions of Turkey, US-Europe Analysis Series [online], No.50, 1-5.
[12] Aras, B. (2009). *Davutoglu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy,* SETA, p. 7.
[13] Çağaptay, S. (2009, April 4). The AKP's Foreign Policy: The Misnomer of "Neo-Ottomanism". The Turkey Analyst, Retrieved January 15, 2023 from https://www.turkeyanalyst.org/publications/turkey-analyst-articles/item/164-the-akps-foreign-policy-the-misnomer-of-neo-ottomanism.html
[14] Kaya, Y. (2011). "Turkey's Turn to the East" and the Intra-Class Contradictions in Turkey, Global Discourse, 2(2), 91.
[15] Yalvaç, F. (2016). A Historical Materialist Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy: Class, State, and Hegemony, Uluslararası İlişkiler, 13(52), p. 15.

through Turkey's identity.[16] Alongside those who emphasized that Turkey was emerging as an independent regional power, playing a complementary role, not contradictory with the West, and that the foreign policy approach, which was seen as "Middle Easternization", should be maintained without changing the European Union orientation,[17] there are also those who claim that Neo-Ottomanism consisted of blood, land, language and Ottoman understanding and that it has the potential to create regional disorder.[18] Murinson claims that Davutoğlu matured Özal's Neo-Ottomanism and Erbakan's multidimensional foreign policy by adding a geopolitical approach, thus developing the formula for being a regional power.[19]

It should be kept in mind that the desire to become a regional power is not only related to the internal dynamics but also to the change in the form or content of the global order, like the transition from bipolarity to unipolarity in 1990s and post-September 11 framework in 2000s. For instance, based on the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, Yado Arin claims that, after the Cold War, the US administrations supported Turkey as a regional power to balance Iran's potential power in the region[20] because of "The New Great Game" in Eurasia.[21] Therefore, as the desire to become a regional power could be read as a break with the past, a change in the understanding of the ongoing foreign policy, it can also be claimed that this desire is the result of a modification in the form of a country's integration into the global order due to a comprehensive change in the functioning of the order. Actually, this sits well with the example of Turkey as its role in the Western Alliance after the end of the Cold War was not and could not have been the same as the one during the Cold War times. As the framework of the relationships had been changed, the relations had to change in form and/or content as well.

Another theme which is frequently mentioned in these definitions is the

[16] Yılmaz, Ö. (2019). A Constructivist analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy in 1980s and 2000s: The example of Turkey-U.S. Relations, Doctoral Thesis, Fakultät I Philosophische Fakultät, Universitat Siegen. p. 2.
[17] Torbakov I. & Ojanen H. (2009). Is Turkey emerging as an independent regional power? Looking for a new strategic identity, The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 4.
[18] See Avatkov, V. A. (2018). Neo-Ottomanism as a Key Doctrine of Modern Turkey, Communication and Public Diplomacy, 1(1), 80-88.
[19] Murinson, A. (2006). The Strategic Depth Doctrine of Turkish Foreign Policy. Middle Eastern Studies, 42 (6), 947.
[20] Arin, K. Y. (2017). Turkey 's New Foreign Policy: the Quest for Regional Hegemony in the Middle East?, The Copernicus Journal of Political Studies, No. 2, 46.
[21] (1996, January 2), The New Great Game in Asia, The New York Times, Retrieved May 13, 2023 from: https://www.nytimes.com/1996/01/02/opinion/the-new-great-game-in-asia.html

economy. William Hale says that the rapid increase in Turkey's international trade, a phenomenon that started with the transition to an export-oriented economy in the 1980s, reversed the hierarchy between politics and economy in the Cold War times, and the effect of trade on politics was increasing day by day.[22] According to Kirişçi, interdependence played a central role in Turkey's transformation into a "trading state". In the development of this, firstly, liberalization of the economy with the reforms of Özal and the adoption of the principles of the Washington Consensus, and, then, the gradual transition from a military and territorial-oriented foreign policy to a commercial state-oriented foreign policy, again with Özal's initiatives, constituted two important stages. Kirişçi says that even though Davutoğlu, who is seen as the architect of this policy, talks little about the economy, the policy of "zero problems with neighbours" can be seen as the "blue-print manifestation" of the trading state.[23]

In this context, apart from the proximity of the region to Turkey and the strategic visions of Özal and Davutoğlu based on the Ottoman heritage, one of the most important factors in the orientation of the aforementioned "trading state" towards the Middle East was the disappointing results that came after the EU Customs Union Agreement reached with the EU in 1996 as it was not followed by a free trade agreement between Turkey and the EU. While Özlem Tür sees this as an important dynamic in the orientation of Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Middle East, she also proposes the ideological affiliation of Islamist-based capital groups to these regions as another reason.[24] One reason why Turkey has made such changes in both the orientation and dominant discourse of its foreign policy is related to the fact that the interests of the Turkish capitalist class, which has rapidly increased its foreign operations since the 1980s, are now both inside and outside the country.[25] The existence of a Turkish capitalist class, which constitutes a "transnational historical bloc" whose material interests are integrating with the international capital, and its demand for the transformation of the state-society complex are mostly encountered during the AKP period. Capital, which had mutual interactions with domestic and

[22] Hale, W. (2000). "Economic Issues in Turkish Foreign Policy," in Makovsky, A.–Sayarı, S. (ed.) *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy.* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 27-29.
[23] Kirişci, K. (2009). The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State, New Perspectives on Turkey, 40(Special Issue on Turkish Foreign Policy), 42-43.
[24] Tür, Ö. (2011). Economic Relations with the Middle East Under the AKP—Trade, Business Community and Reintegration with Neighboring Zones, Turkish Studies, 12(4), 594.
[25] See Öztürk, Ö. (2011). Türkiye Finans Kapitalinin Dışa Açılması, Devrimci Marksizm,13(14), 106-132.

foreign politics during the AKP period, had not been sufficiently centralized in the Özal period and had yet to follow politics in terms of foreign operations.[26]

When we look at the same issue from the perspective of relations with the West, the economic relations that started in the 1970s, accelerated in the 1980s and reached their peak during the AKP period, we can say that, apart from a few exceptions, there is nothing to disturb the West. In addition, it can be said that these relations are supported by the West due to the effect of bringing these countries closer to the Western axis. In fact, there are also opinions that argue that these relations are the continuation of a marketing strategy carried out by Turkey against the West from time to time.[27]

Another term frequently encountered in the definitions of neo-Ottoman foreign policy is pragmatism. Meriam Webster Dictionary defines pragmatism as "relating to matters of fact or practical affairs often to the exclusion of intellectual or artistic matters: practical as opposed to idealistic." When we think about this definition in the context of the Turkish foreign policy, we understand the abandonment of some of the principles or ideals which constituted a central stature (in this case the İnönü Doctrine, the set of principles we quoted from Malik Müfti) and acting as required by the current situation and developing a policy by going beyond the area limited by these principles. This, roughly corresponds to the definition of realism in the discipline of international relations. From this perspective, it becomes controversial that pragmatic understanding represents an important break from the past.

Leonard A. Stone claims that pragmatism is one of the four pillars on which Turkish foreign policy stands, and that it is a legacy inherited from the Ottoman times to the Republic.[28] The Republic of Turkey has consistently pursued a realistic foreign policy since the times of Atatürk, during the War of Independence against the West, got closer to the Soviet Union, then took a more distant position from it. During the Second World War, stood firm against both sides' invitations to join the war on their sides until the winner was evident. Then, joined the Western alliance seeing the Soviet Union as a major threat. It is difficult to say that foreign policy has been shaped around

[26] Şenalp, M. G. (2012). *Ulusötesi Kapitalist Sınıf Oluşumu: Türkiye ve Koç Holding Örneği,* SAV Sosyal Araştırmalar Vakfı, 257.
[27] Bagdonas, Ö. D. (2012). A Shift of Axis in Turkish Foreign Policy or A Marketing Strategy? Turkey's Uses of Its 'Uniqueness' vis-à-vis the West/Europe, Turkish Journal of Politics, 3(2), 13.
[28] Stone, L. A. (2001). Turkish Foreign Polıcy: Four Pillars of Tradition, Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs, 6(2), 2.

this or that ideal throughout this entire process. When we evaluate the foreign policy after the Second World War, we see only the Western orientation as a prominent ideal, and before that, Atatürk clearly determined the direction of the new republic as the West. However, Turkey did not hesitate to flirt with the Soviet Union, for example, when its relations with the West were strained in the 70s. Again, in the 90s, when its own interests and the foreign policy of the West concerning its own region clashed, it got closer to the countries of the region despite disapproval of the US. On the other hand, the warmth of the relationship established with the West during both Özal and AKP periods cannot be questioned. It is sufficient to remember Turgut Özal's statement that the Armenian sympathies in Western countries would push them to an anti-Turkey position as a reason to stay away from the Azerbaijan-Armenia War,[29] and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's efforts to get the US Army to use Turkish lands for the Iraq War.

So, we can expect this pragmatism, which does not represent a serious break from the past, to have a meaning, at least at the definition level, when we evaluate it together with the theme of "multidimensionality", which are mentioned side by side in most definitions. Multidimensionality is based on the idea that Turkey cannot conduct a static, one-dimensional and single-parameter foreign policy within the framework of the dynamic conditions existing in international relations. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a "simultaneous" relationship with different actors in different fields in the field of foreign policy.[30] It can be argued that this "multidimensional" pragmatism is the theoretical basis of the practice of more intense engagement with the countries of the region, which we see as a prominent trend in both periods, without being dependent on the initiatives of the West. So, multilateralism does not mean being anti-Western, but rather entering into relations on its own, without being subject to the West's initiative. Although there are those who claim that the intense relations with countries of the region were established in spite of the USA during the AKP period while the ultimate aim of those intense relations during the Özal period was to strengthen relations with the West[31], we can say that the AKP, at least during the period we

[29] Özal, T. (1992). Türkiye'nin Önünde Hacet Kapıları Açılmıştır, Türkiye Günlüğü, 19, 15.
[30] Kaymak, O. (2017, March 1). Kavramsal Bir Harita; Yakın Dönem Türk Dış Politikası Sözlüğü: Stratejik Derinlik, İlim Ve Medeniyet. Retrieved May 13, 2023 from https://www.ilimvemedeniyet.com/kavramsal-bir-harita-yakin-donem-turk-dis-politikasi-sozlugu-stratejik-derinlik.html
[31] Danforth, N. (2008). Ideology and pragmatism in Turkish foreign policy: From Atatürk to the AKP, Turkish Policy Quarterly, 7(3), 91.

examined, took care not to contradict the West in its foreign policy.

Proactivity is another theme used to explain the novelty of this pragmatist, multidimensional foreign policy compared to previous periods. This approach, which is put forward with reference to the reactive foreign policy in the previous periods of the republican history, requires Turkey to take initiatives, in order to protect the interests of both its own and of the countries in the region regarding the issues in its own region, and thus, to engage in diplomatic initiatives without waiting for these issues to create problems for the region.

We can count many examples of this situation both in the Özal period and the AKP period. However, we can see a similar situation in the 1970s and 1990s, when the relations with the West showed qualitative changes. Turkey has established closer relations with the countries of Middle East since the beginning of the 70s, and intense relations began to be established with Arab countries during the time of the government established after the 1980 coup, that is, before Özal came to power. Davutoğlu's "zero problems with neighbors" policy is a continuation of the relations developed in the second half of the 1990s[32], some of these relations were established despite the US's disapproval. AKP government did not inherit any bad relations with its neighbors from the previous period, may be, with the exception of the Northern Iraq Kurdish Autonomous Administration and Armenia. In that case, we cannot say that the approach expressed as proactivity is put forward by the decision makers, due to their differing worldviews independently of the nature of the relations with the West.

The soft power of Turkey, especially during the AKP period, can be mentioned as another element of the Turkish foreign policy in the periods we examined. Indeed, the popularity of both the image of Turkey and Erdoğan in the Arab street in this period is a well-known phenomenon. However, it should also be considered under which global and regional conditions this soft power became meaningful. As a result of the questioning of Turkey's soft power in these countries in terms of its existence and value in use, the relationship Turkey had with the West, in a different way than the countries in the region, comes to mind. First of all, the reason for the existence of this soft power was that for the people in the countries of the region, which have almost all authoritarian governments, Turkey was an alternative that is Muslim like themselves

[32] Tür, Ö. (2006). Türkiye ve Orta Doğu: Gerilimden İşbirliğine, in Dağı, Z. (Ed.) *AK Partili Yıllar: Doğudan Batıya Dış Politika*, (154-155), Orion Yayınevi.

but has a democratic system and has good relations with the West. If Turkey became a member of the EU, the citizens of these countries would also be neighbors to the European Union (EU), and they saw Turkey as a door opening to the West.[33] In addition, symbolic actions such as not allowing the use of Turkish territory for the US intervention before the Iraq War played an important role in the formation of this soft power. Here, again, we see that the form of a relationship with the West was decisive. Turkey was appreciated as a strong state that both established good relations with the West and could reject its demands when necessary. It is clear that this recognition is different from what Saddam Hussein's defiance of the West saw, who was completely isolated and demonized by the West.

As for the value of soft power, this concept is closely related to the concept of model country, which came to the fore in both periods we examined. Turkey was meaningful and valuable only as long as it represented Western values in the Arab street (and its bureaucracy) and was a Muslim country that had embraced these values and integrated into the Western system. Turkey's increasing soft power in the Middle East did not mean an increase in its influence and dominance in the region. Instead, it aimed to carry the Western values adopted by a Westernized Muslim society to other Muslim societies and thus contribute to their integration into the global system.[34] It was even stated that in order for this model to be more realistic and useful, Turkey should move away from the traditional understanding of radical laicism and adopt a more pluralistic practice to reconcile Islam and democracy.[35]

To sum up, when concepts such as order-building, identity, the desire to be a regional power, economy-oriented relations, pragmatism, multidimensionality, model country, soft power which are frequently included in the definitions of Neo-Ottomanism, are evaluated on their own, they either do not express a break from the past and/or they are closely related to the periodic and qualitative characteristics of the relationship between Turkey and the West. For a correct understanding of Neo-Ottomanism, it should be subjected to a holistic analysis, taking into account factors such as the global conjuncture in the period in which the said foreign policy understanding came into existence, the dynamics of Turkey's relations with the West

[33] Oran, B. et. al. (2013). *Türk Dış Politikası Cilt: III (2001-2012),* (2nd ed., 219), İletişim Yayınları.
[34] Yeşilyurt N. and Akdevelioğlu, A. (2013). 'AKP Doneminde Turkiye'nin Ortadoğu Politikası', in Uzgel and Duru, AKP Kitabı, (408), Phoenix Yayınevi.
[35] See Taspınar, Ö. (2003). An Uneven Fit? The "Turkish Model" And the Arab World, Analysis Paper No. 5, The Brookings Institution.

and with its region in this conjuncture, the balance of power in Turkey's domestic politics in the said period, the needs and problems of its economy, the development level, power and demands of its capitalist class. In this context, Neo-Ottomanism cannot be explained as being related to worldview or vision of the decision makers in the relevant periods, not considering the whole of Turkey's internal conditions and relations with the outside world. Therefore, within the scope of this study, Neo-Ottomanism is defined as Turkey's effort to integrate into the changing global political and economic environment, within its changing domestic conditions in terms of both economy and politics, in line with its traditional Western orientation. Turkey, could not be integrated into the world order in the same way as it did throughout the Cold War period, in a purely security-oriented approach to name it. The way Turkey was proposed to do that was to employ its identity as a Muslim (and/or Turkic) country being on good terms with the West, thus, setting an example to the other Muslim (and/or Turkic) countries.

1.2. Periodization of the Study

The first of the two periods to be examined in this study is the period between 1980 and 1993, which we call the Özal period, starting from the junta government established after the 1980 coup, lasting until Turgut Özal's death in 1993. Indeed, it is technically incorrect to call the period between 1980 and 1983 as the Özal period. However, the continuity in foreign policy understandings and behaviors examined within the scope of this study and the similarity of the junta government in domestic politics with the policies pursued by Özal in the following years made such a pseudo categorization at least useful for this study.

The second period to be examined is the period from 2002, when the AKP came to power, to 2009. Surely, the AKP government continued after this date, and there were foreign policy moves that can be defined as Neo-Ottomanism after this date as well. However, there have been radical changes both in Turkey's domestic political conditions and in the content and form of relations established with Western countries and countries in the region after 2009. One of the features of AKP's foreign policy, which was not mentioned much, was maintaining good relations with Israel, conditions for which started to become uneasy starting with the Gaza War in 2006. Turkey, which became a powerful actor in the Middle East with the support of the West during the period, could not remain silent in the face of Israel's attempts to disrupt the status quo,

and the relations further deteriorated in the following period. In connection with this and due to various other reasons, as well, Turkish-Western relations began to be adversely affected, too. During the Arab Spring in 2011, a chance for cooperation between the West and Turkey emerged, albeit for a short time, over the proposal for Turkey to be a model country for the democratization of the region, but this could not be sustained due to the differing interests and threat perceptions of the two sides in the region.

1.3. Content of the Chapters

This study comprises three chapters in addition to the Introduction: starting the first chapter, the main lines of Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) were drawn in the period between 1950 and 1980 as well as of the domestic economic and political developments of the country in order to provide a background for the evaluation of the post-1980 era. Then, the foreign policy moves of the post-1980 period, which could be considered as Neo-Ottomanism, were analyzed in two different sections as before and after the end of the Cold War.

Concerning the developments before the end of the Cold War, the intensification of relations with the Middle Eastern countries starting from 1980 was evaluated in the scope of neo-Ottomanism. The reason for this was that Turkey's engagements with those countries after 1980 was seen as deeper and more systematic, compared to the one in 1970s, and, also, higher in numbers of the countries involved. The reasons for this set of foreign policies are sorted out as:

1) The US strategy towards containing the Soviet Union and Iran,

2) Özal's pursuit of gaining leverage against the United States by acting in line with this strategy, and

3) The needs of Turkish economy for foreign capital flow and market reach in relation to its significant transformation after the coup.

The main emphasis was on the harmony of the US and Turkish interests in the engagements with Muslim countries under the light of the Carter Doctrine. Staunch USA oriented foreign policy of the junta government is shown through some crucial decisions being in contrast with the previous era of 1965-80 and the steps towards an intensification of relations with the Middle East in the initial stage were sorted out. Later, a sub-section about Özal's career as a bureaucrat and his rise to power was provided with special emphasis on his pro-US, pro-market and conservative leanings,

before the assessment of the foreign policy after 1983, which is considered, within the scope of this study, as the continuation of the junta government's attitudes towards the US and the Middle East.

The foreign policy after the end of the Cold War was labeled Neo-Ottomanist due to two separate set of issues:

(a) Turkey's active foreign policy during the Gulf War and the plans for the occupation and annexation of Mosul and Kirkuk, and

(b) Turkey's active foreign policy towards the Caucasus and Central Asia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The explanation for these developments were provided under the following:

1) Turkey's search for a new role to stay valuable for the West after the end of the Cold War and concerns about Turkey's declining geo-strategic value for the West,

2) Özal's need for popular support for the legitimacy of his presidency and for his ambitious future plans,

3) A "Model Country" concept which was designed in the West for Turkey to facilitate the integration of the newly independent ex-Soviet countries to the new world order,

4) Turkey's export-oriented entrepreneurs' search for new markets as well as new sources of raw materials and energy resources.

Active foreign policy during the Gulf War and the plans for the annexation of Mosul and Kirkuk was not a development, officially, after the end of the Cold War but, by the time, it was surely expected that the Cold War was coming to an end. So, they were analyzed together with Turkey's active foreign policy towards the Caucasus and Central Asia because the conditions were not exactly the same but they were not far cry, either. In the sub-section dealing with this, Turkey's decisions regarding the requests of the US before and during the Gulf War are discussed in relation to what extent the requests were granted and which sorts of debates were sparked by these requests among the political, bureaucratic and military elite and the masses as well. Regarding the plans to annex Mosul and Kirkuk, it has been attempted to clarify whether these plans were adopted by the state apparatus as a whole or they were the products of Özal's own ambitions and reasoning. Reports from the newspapers of the time were used to demonstrate the strong disapproval of the plans by the opposition, the Army and the bureaucratic elite before a sub-section dealing with Özal's questioned legitimacy in the presidency, his plans for the future and the reactions he received from

both his own party, the bureaucracy, opposition and society while trying to realize them.

The section concerning Turkey's active foreign policy towards the Caucasus and Central Asia is divided into four sub-sections in order to unveil the positions taken by the different actors concerned, namely the West, Russia, the newly independent ex-Soviet states and Turkey. This section analyzes the roles expected to be played by Turkey in regional politics within the framework of its long-standing alliance with the West, in the transition from bipolarity to unipolarity and the redefining effect of the said change in political environment in Turkey's place in global order. Under these conditions, the reason and the process of the relationship between Turkish Foreign Policy and the West which was shaped to serve the same purposes have been attempted to be shown.

Filling the power vacuum in the regions which were previously ruled or had been under the influence of the Soviet Union and the integration of these regions into the new global order constituted an important part of the global politics and intellectual debates of the period. In such an environment, Turkey, which had historical, religious, ethnic and cultural ties with these regions and was also a long-standing Western ally, was encouraged to take on various roles in these regions, thus bringing these regions into the global order through Turkey. When this situation is evaluated together with Turkey's efforts to become a valuable actor for the West, it is seen that the Western axis in Turkey's foreign policy in this period continued strongly. In addition, it is seen that Özal, whose legitimacy in the presidency was seriously questioned by the opposition, shaped his discourse on foreign policy issues in a way that would increase his legitimacy in domestic politics, and resorted to expansionist discourses in an environment of Islamism and nationalism which had risen after the 1980 coup in the country.

In the first section of the second chapter, a brief summary about Turkey in the 90s was provided under three sub-sections: politics, economy and foreign policy. Later, a sub-section is added to address the effects of September 11 attacks on the global politics and the reaction of Turkish foreign policy to the new environment. This section has two purposes: first, to provide a background for the analysis of the AKP foreign policy in 2000s and second, to demonstrate the contrast between the attitudes in pre-AKP and AKP periods towards the West and its demands concerning the regional politics.

Then, another section was dedicated to elucidate the two theoretical bases for the shaping of the AKP foreign policy: first, the moderate Islamic model country discourse shaped in the West to employ Turkey in the fight against radical Islamism and second, the Davutoğlu Doctrine which was seen as the embodiment of the AKP foreign policy during the period this study is concerned. For the model country discourse, it is attempted to be shown how the need for such a discourse rose and how its content and shape was designed in order to mutualize the interests of the US and Turkey. Similar to the end of the Cold War and the transition to a unipolar world during the Özal era, the September 11 attacks had significant effects on global politics in 2000s. Supporting moderate Islam against radical Islam, which was perceived as a global threat after September 11 attacks, played an important role in determining the main lines of Turkish Foreign Policy under AKP rule. The concept of "model country", which was much discussed in this period, has been interpreted as the Western world's view of Turkey as a tool for the inclusion of Muslim Middle East countries into the global system in a way that will both facilitate their further integration in global economics and keep the radical religious movements in those countries under control. The second sub-section is dedicated to reveal the main lines of the, so-called, Davutoğlu Doctrine. Davutoğlu's ideas are examined through his criticisms about the traditional foreign policy in the republican era and positioning of his ideas in the history of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. Special emphasis was placed upon how the model country role assigned to Turkey was compatible with Davutoğlu's ideas about how the Turkish foreign policy should place itself in the region and in the world.

Third section of the second chapter is concerned with the relationship between the AKP's domestic and foreign policy, and how the interests of the national and international actors were intersected in such a position to enable the AKP dominance in domestic politics and the support it has received from the West. In the first sub-section, the harmony between the Western demands from Turkey and AKP's foreign policy was attempted to be illustrated in the light of the speeches of the leaders and prominent figures on both sides and the policy preferences in response to the demands of the West. A second sub-section was provided to shed a light on the relationship between AKP's foreign policy and the support it received from the West in domestic politics against the Army and the political opposition, and AKP's use of this support for legitimacy in its efforts towards the transformation of the state apparatus as well as

its use of foreign policy discourses to win the nationalist votes. The last sub-section is concerned with the mutual interest shared between AKP and the, now trans-nationalized, capitalist class of Turkey on the application of moderate Islamic discourse in domestic economic transformation and in the opening towards Middle East. After a brief account of the liberalization of Turkey's economy after the 2001 crisis, the reasons for bourgeois support to the AKP's domestic and foreign policy were attempted to be enlightened under the consideration of the development of Turkish capitalist class and its desires to attract foreign capital, to secure the ownership of government enterprises, to reach the foreign markets as well as its longing for the rearrangement of the labor market and social security system in line with its interests.

In the conclusions part, the common points in both periods examined have been revisited and it is emphasized why and how the Neo-Ottomanist foreign policy set was doomed to failure in this context without the Western support. Various actions that make up this foreign policy set called Neo-Ottomanism did not have successful results in cases where they go beyond compliance with the interests of the West and serve the aforementioned expansionism and patronage motivations because Turkey's deficiencies in capital, human resources, institutional capacity, etc., combined with the apathy of the masses in the targeted regions towards the Ottoman past came into play. In addition, the domestic and international opportunities offered to the Turkish capitalist class by virtue of the Neo-Ottomanist policies employing the Islamic identity was revisited to draw attention to the relationship between the success of these policies and the support they got from national and international capital. Thus, considering the difficulty of carrying out and achieving success in those foreign policy actions without the support of the West and the transnational capital, the impossibility of being anti-Western emerges when the discourse level is left aside. To further strengthen the concluding ideas, an interlude period between Özal and AKP periods has been revisited. Necmettin Erbakan government in mid-90s also had some foreign policy ambitions which could be seen as Neo-Ottomanism as well; but, Erbakan, having an anti-West Islamist ideology, and at least not favoring a neoliberal type of market economy, thus lacking the Western and bourgeois support, could neither create the successful results in foreign policy nor cling to the power in Turkey.

CHAPTER 2

NEO-OTTOMANISM IN ÖZAL ERA

In this chapter, the foreign policy sets of the Özal period, which could be considered as Neo-Ottomanism, will be examined. Within the scope of this study, the Özal period has been evaluated as a process that started in 1980 and continued until Özal's death in 1993, since there was a visible continuity, even if Özal was not in power in 1980-83 period, as mentioned before. In this period, three different foreign policy sets will be evaluated within the scope of Neo-Ottomanism and evaluated in historical order. But before that, in order to understand which historical developments took place leading to the environment in which these foreign policy attitudes and actions took place, we will take a quick glance at the domestic and foreign policy of Turkey from its accession to the Western alliance until the coup d'état of 12 September 1980 and try to determine the prominent trends in these periods.

2.1. A Brief Summary of Turkish Foreign and Domestic Policy Before 1980

2.1.1. Menderes Era (1950-1960)

Turkey, who faced a difficult economic period in the 1940s due to the effects of World War II, and joined the Western alliance after the war, was expected to meet certain needs of industrialized European economies with its agriculture-based economy. The Democratic Party (Demokrat Parti, DP), representing the large land owners and the commercial bourgeoisie who were the winners of the economic order during World War II,[36] took over the power in 1950.

During the 1950s Turkey adopted a much more Western oriented foreign policy stance compared to earlier periods of the Republic; sent troops to join the Western-led UN coalition in the Korean War in 1950, then joined NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) in 1952, and did not abstain from using every chance to prove its loyalty to the West like in the case of voting against Algerian independence in the UN (United Nations) General Assembly, entering into a secret alliance with Israel and allowing the USA to use the Incirlik airbase for intervention in Lebanon in

[36] Özçelik, P. K. (2010), *1960 Darbesi'nin Ekonomi Politiği,* Mülkiye Dergisi, 34(267), p. 130.

1958.[37]

This was a period of unwavering support for US policies in the region and a firm endeavour to prove useful to the Western alliance, sometimes pushing too much like in the case of 1957 crisis on Syria when, also under the pressure of deteriorating economy, the government decided to amass army troops on the border with Syria, claiming it was a satellite of the Soviet Union, causing the thrill of a new world war on both sides of the Cold War.[38] Moreover, DP's strong pro-Hashemite and pro-Israel stance after the coup d'état in Iraq is considered to be the "end of bipartisan foreign policy" of Turkey regarding the Middle East.[39]

2.1.2. The Period between 1960 And 1980

As a solution to the economy, which came to a standstill due to the uncontrollable levels of imports and domestic production being on the verge of bankruptcy[40] in late 1950s, a strategy that prioritized import substitution industrialization was adopted after the 1960 coup d'état. The economic and political transformation demands, put forward by the opposition in the last years of the Democratic Party and put into practice after 1960, were in complete harmony with the dominant view of the West on development in underdeveloped countries. Industrialization through protectionism, private sector focusing on consumer goods manufacturing in return for the state's infrastructure investments, and the idea of triggering demand by increasing the wages of the working classes, were also compatible with the Keynesian approach in the West during the same period.[41] The planning approach which marked the period after 1960 was also seen in the West during the same period. In fact, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) experts made significant contributions to the establishment of the State Planning Organization (*Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı*, DPT), which was the

[37] Altunışık, M. B. (2009). Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East, New Perspectives on Turkey. 40, 174.
[38] Baskın, O. (2019, October 24), Tarihten Bir Yaprak: Menderes'in Suriye Macerası, Agos. Retrieved May 13, 2023 from https://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/23106/tarihten-bir-yaprak-menderesin-suriye-macerasi
[39] Bağcı, H. (1994). 'Demokrat Parti'nin Ortadoğu Politikası' in Faruk Sönmezoğlu, ed., *Türk Dıs Politikasının Analizi*, (p. 118), Der Yayınları.
[40] Kazgan, G. (2005). *Türkiye Ekonomisinde Krizler*, (123-124), İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
[41] Keyder, Ç. (1995). *Türkiye'de Devlet Ve Sınıflar*, (185) İletişim Yayinlari.

concrete image of this approach in the Turkish economy and politics.[42]

Concerning foreign policy, again, a pro-Western but more balanced and status quo-oriented stance was adopted, by turning back on the massive aid offers by the Soviet Union and signing the Jupiter Missile Agreement. Despite the continuous Soviet urge for increased cooperation in the detente period after the Cuban Missile Crisis, there was no particular change in relations.[43] The foreign policy immediately after the coup could be explained by the position between desire to stay away from adventurism, in line with the traditional stance before DP, and feeling compelled to membership in NATO due to the Soviet threat.

Yet, in mid-60s the Cyprus issue and the following Johnson Letter crisis turned out to be a turning point for Turkey to adopt a more multi-faceted foreign policy towards its allies. In this period, increasing Soviet investments in the country and having a more neutral stance towards Arab countries after the decline of Pan-Arabism, some decisions during this period, such as to re-initiate diplomatic relations with Egypt, not to recognize the Israeli occupation of Arab lands in 1967, not to let the US use of İncirlik Base in 1970 against Syria and, again, in 1973 during the Yom Kippur War, consent for opening of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) office in Ankara, all point to a search for a more balanced approach towards the US and the region as well.

The arms embargo towards Turkey after the invasion of Cyprus was retaliated by the establishment of a third army, not affiliated with NATO, in İzmir and the putting a hold on the US use of the airbases in Turkey. In 1978, Foreign Minister Ahmet Gündüz Ökçün stated that Turkey was seeking to improve its relations with the countries outside NATO.[44] Before his visit to the USA for the NATO meeting, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit challenged the arms embargo decision of the US Senate, and declared that "Our confidence in NATO is severely shaken, Turkey cannot sign the NATO Joint Declaration under these circumstances."[45] Then, before his visit to Soviet Union the same year, he declared in London, that the Soviet Union was not a threat for

[42] Mıhçıoğlu, C. (1988). Yine Devlet Planlama Örgütünün Kuruluşu Üzerine, Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi, 43(01), 119.
[43] Ince, N.–Olson, R. (1977). Turkish Foreign Policy 1960-1964: Continuity, Change and the Cyprus Crisis, Oriente Moderno, 57(7-8), 272 and 280.
[44] (1978, February 14), NATO dışındaki ülkelerle de ilişkilerimiz geliştirilecek, Milliyet, 1.
[45] (1978, May 19), Ecevit: Ambargo ile bizi ezmek mümkün değildir, Milliyet, 1.

Turkey anymore.[46] All these were the signs of a more balanced foreign policy moving further away from the strong Americanism of the DP era, as a result of the easing of Cold War tensions by the 1970s and Turkey's own problems with the West, mostly related to Cyprus issue.

Due to the reasons mentioned in this period, Turkey, for the first time after the Second World War, presented an image of such an independent and uncertain direction in its foreign policy. Besides, there was a similar picture in domestic politics. Due to the class tensions starting to emerge at the point where the economic development in the country had reached, the polarization of the whole society within the framework of two different worldviews, the struggling economy and the effects of the embargo, the governments could not establish the hegemony which would determine a certain direction for the society. Yet, there would be another military intervention which would end this uncertainty in both domestic and foreign policy.

2.1.3. 1980 Coup D'état

The 1980 coup aimed at radically changing the country's politics, economy, and society. This radical change aimed to switch to the country's previous import-substitution economic system from an export-oriented neoliberal economic model, and to ensure that politics is conducted on a more nationalist and religious basis, in parallel with the rise of new conservative politics in the West. In fact, the change in the economy was among the plans of the right-wing (nationalist front) governments in power in the late 1970s, but these governments did not have the social support to achieve such a radical change. The January 24 Decisions, announced by the government at the beginning of the year of the coup was a reflection of the Western solution to the global debt crisis, it was essentially a compliance program with the "new world order".[47]

1980 coup had its effects on the foreign policy as well. The foreign policy before the coup was relatively independent as mentioned before. The embargo imposed on Turkey after the occupation of Northern Cyprus in 1974, the closure of the NATO bases to American planes in response, and the US efforts to prevent opium cultivation, which constituted a significant part of Turkish agriculture, had led to the

[46] Mufti, M. (2009), *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea*. (45), Palgrave Macmillan.
[47] Kazgan, G. (2005), *Türkiye Ekonomisinde Krizler*, (196), İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.

deterioration of Turkey-West relations. While the country's economy was constantly struggling with crises and consumers were facing difficulties in accessing many products in the market, due to the effect of the embargo, the anti-US sentiment created by the Vietnam War and the left-wing opposition, which was a result of the class tensions of the time but gained strength from all of these factors and expanded its social base, further questioned Turkey's future within the Western bloc. Moreover, Turkey had established better relations with the Soviet Union since 1964 and had signed a friendship treaty with that country in 1978.

After the detente period of the 1970s, the relations between the West led by the United States and Soviet Union became strained again in the 1980s, and this situation naturally affected Turkey. The difference between the foreign policies after the coup and the previous period was closely related to this change in the West and accordingly the qualitative change in Turkey's relationship with the West. The first announcement made after the coup stating that Turkey would remain committed to all alliances and agreements, including NATO, clarified which side of the Cold War Turkey would be on in the visible future

In conclusion, the Republic of Turkey once more reorganized its economy to conform to the Western economic order and reaffirmed its membership in the existing political/military alliance in the context of the new Cold War between the West and the Soviet Union. The military, which took control of political life following the coup and Turgut Özal on the side of democratic politics, served as the guarantee of this development.

2.2. The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism

Turkish Foreign Policy after the coup shows significant variations compared to the previous periods of the republic, especially the period between 1965 and 1980. Due to the scope of this study, the areas where these differences were seen will be focused. The most important features of these differences are that the relations between Turkey and the USA, which remained cold for various reasons during the 1960s and 1970s, showed a complete harmony aside from minor problems, and that Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle East became much more active, unlike the previous periods of the republic's history.

The reasons why the foreign policy in these periods was called Neo-Ottomanism was that, Turkey followed a more active and systematic policy in its

region, with economic and political dimensions, compared to the previous periods of the republic, and that, during the execution of this policy, used a language based more on identities (Muslim, Turkish, Ottoman) unlike the previous periods. In the literature concerned, Neo-Ottomanism covers the periods when Turgut Özal's foreign policy understanding was dominant, thus his terms as the Prime Minister and the President. However, within the scope of this study, it is claimed that there is a continuity, in the approach to both domestic and foreign policy, between the caretaker government established after the coup and the periods when Turgut Özal was in charge as the Prime Minister and the President. For this reason, it is seen to be convenient to start the historical evaluation of the so-called Neo-Ottomanist foreign policy right after September 12, 1980.

In this framework, the policies that could be called Neo-Ottomanism are divided into three different categories in this study; the evaluation of these categories of policy sets is attempted to be done by, examining these policy sets in historical order, then, determining the prominent common points between them and explaining the connection of these common points to the qualitative difference of Turkey's post-1980 relationship with the West, compared to previous periods. These three sets of policies were analyzed in two different periodic categories, one before the end of the Cold War and two after the end of the Cold War, and within the framework of different arguments because the motivations of the aforementioned policies and the conditions in which they were conducted were diverse as well.

Those three policy sets which could be considered as Neo-Ottomanism were:

Before the end of the Cold War:

• Gravitation of Turkey’s foreign relations towards Middle Eastern countries with an emphasis on the shared identities during the 80s, which significantly differed from the foreign policy understanding maintained throughout the republican history.

After the end of the Cold War:

• Attempts by Turkey to play a more active role during the Gulf Crisis in 1991, unlike its previous regional foreign policy, and plans formulated by Özal and his circle for Mosul and Kirkuk to be annexed to Turkey.

• The idea that Turkey, could fill the power vacuum that emerged in the Caucasus and Central Asia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and foreign policies developed accordingly.

2.2.1. Neo-Ottomanism before the End of the Cold War

About developments before the end of the Cold War, the claim of this study regarding the assertions of Neo-Ottomanism related to the Middle East opening in this period is that the reasons behind this foreign policy change were:

• The objective of the US to contain the Soviet Union and Iran, in the "Green Belt" Strategy[48], after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Islamic Revolution in Iran, and Turkey's role in this project,

• Closely related to the first, coup generals' staunch Americanism continued with Özal's foreign policy approach envisioning Turkey's interests could only be protected by increasing its importance for the Western system, and that this could only be attained by following a foreign policy aligned with the US and establishment of Turkey's strong position in the Middle East so that the US considers Turkey as a valuable ally,

• Transformation of the Turkish economy towards an export-oriented economy during the 1980s leading to a pursuit for foreign markets and the Gulf countries being seen as potential sources of foreign financing due to the oil boom experienced by these countries.

2.2.1.1 Relations with the USA and Europe

After the mid-1960s, due to the impact of the Cyprus issue and the relative decline in its geostrategic value because of the detente period of the Cold War, Turkey did not experience one of its best periods in relations with the West, but there was no break between the two, called as relative autonomy period by Baskın Oran et.al.[49] Turkey's foreign policy between 1980 and 1983, during the time of the technocratic

[48] The Green Belt was a strategy in which the USA aimed to encircle the Soviet Union from its south by supporting Islamist movements in the predominantly Muslim countries which formed its southern border line. The strategy was in line with the Carter Doctrine through which the USA stated that it would use military force, if necessary, to defend its national interests in the Persian Gulf. Although the most visible aspect of it was the support for the mujahedeen fighting against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan with the support of Pakistan and the Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia, this was a much more comprehensive strategy. It has been claimed that the Turkish-Islamic synthesis adopted by the State in Turkey in the 1980s was also related to this. See Yetkin, M. (2017, May 28), We owe radical Islamist militancy to Brzezinski, Hurriyet Daily News. Retrieved 2023, May 16 from https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/opinion/murat-yetkin/we-owe-radical-islamist-militancy-to-brzezinski-113639 ; Balbay, M. - Güneysu, S - Kılıç, L. (2020, September 20), Milliyetçilik Nereye-5: Türk-İslam sentezi Yeşil Kuşak taktiğiydi, Cumhuriyet. Retrieved 2023, May 16 from https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/milliyetcilik-nereye-5-turk-islam-sentezi-yesil-kusak-taktigiydi-1767378

[49] Oran, B. et. al. (2001). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt 1: 1919-1980,* (653), İletişim Yayınları.

caretaker government established immediately after the coup and led by retired general Bülend Ulusu, included steps to strengthen cooperation with the Western bloc and improve its relations with the countries in the context of the Carter Doctrine. In addition, the West had been seen as a unitary actor by Turkey for some time until the late 1970s. However, starting with the 1980s the disagreements between the USA and Europe over many issues, such as militarization, nuclear missiles, trade, support for antidemocratic regimes, made the relations between the two less and less smooth. This also led Turkey to perceive them as two different entities and their perspectives on Turkey began to differ as well.[50]

From the beginning, while the relations with Europe were tense because of criticisms regarding human rights issues, US-Turkey relations were based on mutual understanding as Kenan Evren explained: "For us, the most important feature of the Reagan administration is that although Turkey has moved away from parliamentary democracy for a while, it has not withheld this understanding and support."[51]As a result of this mutual understanding and support, the Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA), which had been signed by the Demirel Government, overthrown by the September 12 coup, on March 29, 1980, but held for approval by the Parliament to be used as a bargaining chip in relations, was approved by Kenan Evren just a few days after the coup and formalized by the Ulusu Government in a month.[52]

The Rogers Plan, which envisaged Greece's return to NATO's military wing, an offer which Turkey had refused for many years, was approved by Kenan Evren. Despite the increased pressure from the USA in previous years, Turkey did not compromise on the issue until the coup of 1980, and accepted the demands of its Western allies without any concessions from NATO or Greece. Thus, Turkey gave up one of its biggest trump cards against the West almost completely for nothing.[53]

During this period, the most important subject which made the relations tense

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[50] Eralp, A. (1996). "Değişen Savaş-Sonrası Uluslararası Sistemde Türkiye ve Avrupa Topluluğu", in Balkır, C. - Williams, A. M. (Ed.). *Türkiye ve Avrupa İlişkileri, Avrupa Topluluğuna Tam Üyelik ve Küreselleşen İlişkiler*. (38) Sarmal Yayınevi.

[51] "Evren, Kenan. (1991), Kenan Evren'in Anıları Cilt IV, Milliyet Yayınları, İstanbul, 1990, P. 94" as cited in Öner, B. A. (2021). 1980 Turkish Coup D'état and Foreign Policy of The Ulusu Goverment in Turkey, (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Necmettin Erbakan University, Institute of Social Sciences), 87.

[52] See Kavuncu, S. (2013). 1990'larda Türkiye-Abd İlişkilerinde Seia ve Abd Yardımı, Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi 15(1), 123-148.

[53] Tezcan, E. (2008). "1980-1999 Döneminin Dış Politika Sorunları" in Çakmak, H (Ed.). *Türk Dış Politikası (1919-2008)*. (P.729), Barış Platin Yayınları.

with the Western alliance was the independence declaration of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. It was argued that Rauf Denktaş, the leader of the Cypriot Turks, strived to convince the junta leaders in Turkey for this and at the end, the decision was almost inevitable due to the development of the talks between two sides in the island so Ankara had to go along with the declaration of independence.[54] Cyprus continued to be the most challenging issue of the relations with the West, like in the 1970s.

Moreover, European countries strongly condemned the human rights violations of the coup era but the reactions did not go beyond that. Turkey continued to receive aid and loans, and the due debts of Turkey were deferred without much hardship. Even if Turkey's exclusion from the Council of Europe had been taken into consideration, no action was taken against Turkey because Europe feared losing Turkey entirely or this was used as an excuse for not acting against a coup.[55]

The only subject matter that was not rapidly decided was the Rapid Deployment Force. Turkey had doubts about the agreement and had several reasons to hesitate. Turkey was concerned about the potential reactions of countries with whom Turkey had good economic relations. There was also the suspicion about these airports and planes being used in an Arab-Israeli War, jeopardizing Turkey's standing towards its Arab neighbors. Turkey did not want the agreement to affect its relationships with the Gulf countries who were also concerned that this power could be used against themselves in peace times. However, despite these concerns of Turkey and its previous firm position against the idea since the 1960s[56] the agreement was still signed in November 1982.[57]

In sum, Turkey, in this period, radically changed the form of its relationship with the US compared to the previous period, made official decisions which it had not consented before or had consented but hold as a trump card in order to be used as a leverage in the relations. For this reason, in this relationship, the bargaining method of the previous period was abandoned and a foreign policy of full alignment, with a few minor exceptions, was followed, thus, it is seen that the relations in question underwent

[54] Ergin, S. (2022, June 22), Barış Harekâtı'nın 48. yıldönümünde KKTC'nin bağımsızlık ilanına ışık tutan tarihi bir mektup, Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023, May 16 from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/sedat-ergin/baris-harekatinin-48-yildonumunde-kktcnin-bagimsizlik-ilanina-isik-tutan-tarihi-bir-mektup-42104928

[55] Oran, B. et. al. (2004). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt:2, 1980-2001*, (p. 84) İletişim Yayınları.

[56] Ibid, p. 124.

[57] Balcı, A. (2013). *Türkiye Dış Politikası: İlkeler, Aktörler, Uygulamalar*, (P. 190), Etkileşim Yayınları.

a qualitative transformation. However, relations with the United States were not the only area where this change was seen.

2.2.1.2 Relations with the Middle East and other Muslim Countries

Alongside the full alignment approach towards the US, Turkey also adopted a more active foreign policy towards the Middle East in this period with a rhetoric emphasizing the common identities. These two radical changes in foreign relations are seen as interconnected and as a product of the shared identification of the interests of the US and Turkey in the region. Of course, those who made this definition were its new rulers, who were on the opinion that Turkey should be a compatible ally of the United States.

In one respect, showing that these relations were part of a larger whole, Turkey received the same warmth in return from its neighbors, with which Turkey wished to establish closer relations and who were themselves aligned with the US. For example, Saudi King Khalid was one of the first leaders to congratulate Evren for his success after the coup.[58] During the Military Government period, one of the most conspicuous issues in the relations between Saudi Arabia and Turkey was the organization "Rabıtat-al Alem al-Islami." This organization, which tried to impose the principles of sharia on all Muslim countries in general terms, paid the salaries of Turkish clerics who worked abroad from 1982 to 1984, in accordance with the agreement they made with the military government.[59]

Pakistani President Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, himself a former military officer who staged a coup in Pakistan in 1977 and later adopted a pro-US foreign policy in the wake of Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, was the first head of a state to visit Turkey after the September 12 coup. The visit took place on 12-14 January 1981 as the official guest of Kenan Evren. Turkey-Pakistan relations, which gained a new momentum, were strengthened with agreements on commerce and industrial cooperation.[60] The same year Kenan Evren went to Pakistan on 22-27 November 1981

[58] Oran, B. et. al. (2004). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt:2, 1980-2001,* (125) İletişim Yayınları.
[59] Mumcu, U. (1993). *Rabıta*, (172), Tekin Yayınevi. For an investigation of the Saudi effect in the development of political Islam in Turkey see Yeşilada, B. (1998). Islamic Movements in Post-1980 Turkey and the Saudi Connection, (1988-1989 series, no. 18.), Universities Field Staff International. About domestic political dynamics in the development of political Islam in Turkey see Ayata, S. (1996). Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey, Middle East Journal, 50(1), 40-56.
[60] (1981, January 13), Ziya-ül-Hak'ın 3 günlük dostluk ziyareti başladı, Milliyet, 1.

for a return visit.

Another striking development was the first-time prime minister level representation of Turkey in a meeting of Islamic Cooperation Organization (OIC) in 1981.[61] Furthermore, in 1982, during the opening speech of the 6th Annual Meeting of the Islamic Development Bank, President Kenan Evren's words "Turkey is an integral part of the Islamic world" were one of the indications that there would be changes in Turkey's Middle East policy in the new era.[62] Evren became the first Turkish President to attend the Islamic Summit Conference in 1984 in which he was elected deputy chairman for the conference.[63] Then, he also became the chair of The Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) which is one of four standing committees of the OIC.[64] He asked for the strengthening of economic ties between Islamic countries in his speech in the opening session of COMCEC meeting held in İstanbul.[65]

In 1981, the Emir of Kuwait came to Turkey and Evren, paid a return visit to Kuwait, being the first president of Turkey to do so, between 20 and 25 March 1982. As a result of this visit, an Economic Industry and Technical Cooperation Agreement was signed with Kuwait.[66] In 1982, Minister of Commerce Kemal Cantürk went to Jordan and at the end of this visit, a Commercial and Economic Cooperation Protocol and a labor agreement was signed in Amman.[67] Those developments altogether showed that Turkey was moving towards deeper and more comprehensive relationships with the Muslim countries who were also aligned with the US.

Turkey remained neutral in the Iran-Iraq War, called as active neutrality by Turkey, and participated in mediation initiatives, in addition, continued to increase its trade with both countries. With the agreement signed with Iraq in 1981, the capacity of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık Oil Pipeline was increased and as a step that would contribute to the economy significantly. Furthermore, the agreement for the

[61] see İhsanoğlu, E. (1997), Turkey in the Organization of the Islamic Conference: An Overview, Insight Turkey, 8, 103-118.
[62] "Devlet Başkanı Kenan Evren'in, 26 Mayıs 1982'de Ankara'da İslam Kalkınma Bankası 6. Yıllık Toplantısı Açış Konuşması bkz. Newspost 28.05.1982" as cited in Mor, H. (2001), Türk Dış Politikasında Belirleyici Faktörler Ekseninde Özal'ın Dış Politika Konsepti, Selçuk Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi, 9(1), 1.
[63] (1984, January 15), Evren, İslâm Zirvesi için bugün Fas'a gidiyor, Milliyet, 1.
[64] (1986, March 15), Delegeleri kabul etti, Milliyet, 3.
[65] (1984, November 15), Evren, İslâm ülkesi temsilcilerine, "Yapabileceklerimizi konuşalım" dedi, Milliyet, 1.
[66] (1982, March 20), Devlet Başkanı Evren bugün Kuveyt'e gidiyor, Milliyet, 1.
[67] (1982, April 4), Türk-Ürdün Ticaret Anlaşması İmzalandı, Milliyet, 12.

construction of a new pipeline parallel to the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline, which would enable Iraq to transport liquefied petroleum gas to the Mediterranean, was signed on October 19, 1983.[68]

To summarize the period between 1980 and 1983, Turkey further improved its relations with the Western alliance, except for the Cyprus issue and human rights criticisms from the European Union, which had limited concrete effects. Despite the criticisms, Turkey prioritized efforts not to clash with the Western alliance, sometimes even at the expense of its own interests, as in the case of Rogers Plan. Turkey began to approach its Middle Eastern neighbors in line with its economic interests as well as the interests of the US regarding the region. Due to the excellent cooperation between Turkey and the US on the Middle East during this time, The US Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who visited Turkey in 1982, could not help but express that: "Evren regarded the regional issues as a world leader". [69] This trend would continue during Özal's time in power.

2.2.1.3 Özal's Career and Rise to Power

Here, it would be useful to take a look at the career of Turgut Özal, an engineer, a bureaucrat, and ultimately a politician. The profile of Özal and his relation to Western values throughout his life as an engineer, bureaucrat, and ultimately politician were essential to the argument made in this study.

Turgut Özal quickly rose to prominence in Turkish politics, serving first as the undersecretary of the prime minister during the Demirel government, then as the deputy prime minister of the government established by the coup administration, and ultimately as an elected prime minister. After working in various state institutions he worked at the World Bank (WB). In 1970s, Özal worked in numerous corporations and was the leader of the Turkish Employers Association of Metal Industries (Türkiye Metal Sanayicileri Sendikası - MESS), a dominant employer union.[70] In 1979, he returned to public service as the undersecretary of the Demirel government before the coup. Demirel government aimed to borrow from Western financial institutions to get out of the economic crisis, and Özal was tasked not only with authorizing economic

[68] (1983, October 26), Irak'la ikinci boru hattı için anlaşma imzaladık, Milliyet, 1.
[69] Güldemir, U. (1986), *Çevik Kuvvetin Gölgesinde Türkiye (1980-1984)*, (153), Tekin Yayınevi.
[70] See Yeşilbağ, M. (2015, February 1). Sermayenin vurucu gücü MESS, Sol, Retrieved May 18, 2023 from https://haber.sol.org.tr/yazarlar/melih-yesilbag/sermayenin-vurucu-gucu-mess-106655

reforms but also with conducting negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), leading him to be considered as "the shadow prime minister."[71]

Following the coup, a technocratic caretaker government, headed by retired general Bülend Ulusu, was put in place to rule the nation. When the previous government, in which Özal played a significant role in the preparation of the January 24 Decisions as the undersecretary of the State Planning Organization (DPT), was overthrown, Özal was appointed as Deputy Prime Minister in the government instituted by the coup, because it was impossible for the putschist generals to manage the fundamental transformation of an economy of Turkey.

Özal was not only a proper politician for adapting the economy to the Turkey's new role in the world order. Although he remained out of pre-coup political fragmentation during his life, his conservative leanings were well known because he was a candidate for the parliament from the National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi, MSP) in the 1977 elections, and belonged to the Nakshibendi order,[72] which embraced a strict interpretation of Islam. Özal, who was known to side with liberal understanding of the economy, and a religious understanding of society all at once, was an appropriate candidate to play a prominent part in bringing Turkey to a path of similar social and economic transformation like in the West. In other words, it could have been expected that the coup generals, who had only a general idea of the political and economic path they wanted to take the nation in, would back someone like Özal, who seemed to be cut out for the position and had avoided the political division that existed prior to the coup.

Özal founded the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi-ANAP), one of the three parties that received consent from the coup generals to take part in elections the same year, after serving in the post-coup government until July 1982. Prior to the elections, a Wall Street Journal article emphasized the significance of Özal's party winning the elections for Turkish democracy.[73] Yalım Eralp, the Turkish Embassy's chargé d'affaires, was then summoned to the Department of State to notify him that the article

[71] Doğan, Y. (1979, December 12). Gölge Başbakan, Cumhuriyet, 12.
[72] Demiray, M. (2007). Turgut Özal, TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi. Retrieved 2023, June 6 from https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ozal-turgut See also Heper, M. (1997). Islam and Democracy in Turkey: Toward a Reconciliation?, Middle East Journal, 51(1), 32-45.
[73] "Turkish Turning Point, Wall Street Journal, 26 August 1983, s.14." as cited in Kavuncu, S. (2006). Turgut Özal'in Başbakanlığı Döneminde Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri, Unpublished P.H.D. Thesis, İstanbul University, Institute of Social Sciences, 107.

was dictated by them, indicating their support for Özal.[74]

In the elections held in 1983, in a situation with two main political parties, that obtained the bulk of the votes during 70s, were barred from entering into elections, ANAP won 45% of the votes and Turgut Özal, the leader of the party, became the prime minister. From that point until his death in 1993, Özal would continue to be one of the most significant figures in Turkish politics.

2.2.1.4 Relations with the USA during Özal Era

Relations with the United States followed a similar course during the Özal period as it was during the coup government. Özal preferred to avoid crises with the USA, and relations mostly proceeded smoothly. For the US, Turkey became more valuable after the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian Islamic Revolution, both in 1979. Now, the idea that Turkey could be used as a base for the Western military forces when necessary for the security of the Gulf oil, could set an example for the Muslim countries in the region and create a natural barrier to the radical Islamist movements began to come to the fore.[75]

For Özal, the idea of balancing the power of the USA with other possible relations, as in the 1970s, would not yield any results, instead, the country's functionality in the USA-led order should be increased in order to gain leverage in this relationship. According to Özal, Turkey did not have the necessary tools and resources to pursue an independent strategy that would harm the US interests.[76] Özal also thought that by developing a foreign policy towards the region that would instrumentalize Turkey's common historical and cultural values with the Middle East, a leverage could be gained against the United States.[77] His way of defining the ideal foreign policy approach for Turkey roughly corresponds to the definition of Neo-Ottomanism in this study.

One of the most obvious examples of Turkey's strategy to avoid problems with the USA was the Defense and Cooperation Agreement (DECA), which was planned

[74] Kavuncu, S. (2006). Turgut Özal'in Başbakanlığı Döneminde Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri, Unpublished P.H.D. Thesis, İstanbul University, Institute of Social Sciences, 107.
[75] Uslu, N. (1997). The Cooperation Amid Problems: Turkish-American Relations in the 1980's. The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations/27, 30.
[76] Aral, B. (2001). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Özal Decade 1983–93. Middle Eastern Studies, 37(1), 76-77.
[77] Altunışık, M. B. (2009). Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East. New Perspectives on Turkey. 40, 182.

to be extended in 1984. Despite Turkey's objections on the issues such as the Armenian Genocide Resolutions in the US Senate, the preservation of the 7/10 ratio in military aid with Greece, and the lack of desired development in the trade relations between the two countries, none of these objections were met by the US. Thus, the extension of the treaty with a side letter in 1987 was criticized within the country that all problems were resolved as the USA wanted.[78]

Throughout the 1980s, although US aid gradually decreased, Turkey remained far from causing any trouble to the US on any issue.[79] In this period, the fact that Turkey did not participate in the voting of the resolution condemning the US invasion of Panama in the UN General Assembly became the symbolic image of Turkey's policy not to conflict with the US under any circumstances.

2.2.1.5 Relations with the Middle East during Özal Era

Turkey's Middle East orientation was in a way related to this. As mentioned before, after the developments in the late 70s, USA evaluated Turkey, due to its geostrategic position, within the framework of containment of Iran and the Soviet Union and the radical Islamic organizations such as Hezbollah. This was an effective dynamic in Turkey's Middle East orientation.[80] Turkey, on the other hand, aimed to continue to be a valuable ally for the West by undertaking the task of integrating Islamic countries into the Western order within this strategy of its ally.[81] Özal, who was already known for his sympathy for the Muslim world and the Western world,[82] argued that Islam would not have a problem with a capitalist economy and a pro-Western foreign policy.[83] The fact that Vahit Halefoğlu, from Hatay, who was appointed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Özal government established after the November 1983 elections, spoke Arabic very well was almost a symbolic indicator that the policy of rapprochement towards the Middle East would be continued.

Yet, the reasons for Turkey's opening towards the Middle East region and its establishment of closer relations with the countries in this region were not only related

[78] Birand, M. A. (1988, March 1). ABD Ne İsterse Kabul Ediyoruz… Nedir Bu Telaş?, Milliyet, 9.
[79] Güldemir, U. (1992). *Texas-Malatya*. (2nd Ed., 178-179), Tekin Yayınevi.
[80] Oran, B. (2004). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt:2, 1980-2001*, (11), İletişim Yayınları.
[81] Çalış, Ş. (2017). *Turkey's Cold War: Foreign Policy and Western Alignment in the Modern Republic*. (186), I.B. Tauris.
[82] Gözen, R. (2000). *Amerikan Kıskacında Dış Politika: Körfez Savaşı, Turgut Özal ve Sonrası.* (77), Liberte Yayınları.
[83] Güldemir, U. (1992). *Texas-Malatya*. (2nd Ed., 360), Tekin Yayınevi.

to its synergy with the US. Most of the foreign policy actions were economy oriented. Turkey's economic engagement with the Middle East started after 1973 oil crisis, with foreign exchange problems of its economy at the time, started to buy oil from those countries on credit.[84] Yet, with 1980s, Turkey sought to add exports to this relationship. The reason for this is that with the 1980s, the Turkish economy was transforming into an export-oriented one and therefore needed new markets. It was also a fact that these countries in the close vicinity of the country largely relied on imports for consumption. Another reason for the need to raise the economic cooperation with Middle East was, due to the 12 September coup, the deteriorating trade relations with Europe, which had constituted a big chunk of Turkish exports in previous decade.[85] In the new economic model implemented, Turkey not only needed foreign markets, but also external financing, when the state was preparing to transfer its investor role in the economy to the private sector, except for infrastructure spending.

Seeking to increase the trade and investment ties with foreign markets, particularly the Gulf countries, a series of economic policies and reforms were initiated. In addition, Turkey also implemented a number of domestic arrangements to make foreign capital inflows easier. These included the liberalization of foreign exchange controls, the elimination of import licensing requirements, and the removal of restrictions on foreign ownership of Turkish companies. Another important development was the liberalization of Turkey's economy aimed to boost the country's competitiveness in global markets. This included the removal of trade barriers and the implementation of export incentives, such as tax exemptions and subsidies for exporters.[86]

Free trade zones located near the major ports (Mersin and Antalya) were established in 1985 to provide favourable conditions for foreign investors, including tax breaks, reduced customs procedures and access to skilled labour. Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board (Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu, DEIK), aimed to promote foreign trade and investment, and Turkish Exporters Assembly (Türkiye İhracatçılar Meclisi, TIM) aimed to promote Turkish exports and increase their competitiveness in

[84] Sander, O. (1998). *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*. (227-229), İmge Kitabevi
[85] Ataman, M. (2002). Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy. Alternatives, 1(1), 54.
[86] Aral, B. (2001). Dispensing with Tradition? Turkish Politics and International Society during the Özal Decade, 1983–93. Middle Eastern Studies, 37(1), 76.

foreign markets were established in 1986. In addition to the domestic arrangements Turkey also established a number of joint economic committees and agreements with Middle Eastern countries, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria and Kuwait, to promote trade and investment.

In Özal's view, foreign trade was the most important factor in foreign policy, complementing the domestic liberal transformation of the economy.[87] One of the best examples for the relations in this context, was with Saudi Arabia. After President Evren's visit to Saudi Arabia in 1984 and Prince Abdullah's return visit the same year, Özal also travelled in an official visit to Saudi Arabia in 1985, being the first Turkish Prime Minister to do so. Prime Ministry decrees allowing Saudi financial institutions Al-Baraqa and Faisal Finance to establish their branches in Turkey were decreed the same year.[88]

Özal was aiming to develop the economy making use of the financial resources from the Gulf countries which were much needed in the new era. After the adoption of required legal regulations, financial resources from the Gulf Region started to flow in and some entrepreneurs from the region started to appear in Turkish economy owing to similar economic engagements with Kuwait, Qatar and Jordan. Those countries also aimed to modernize their armies in the wake of Iran-Iraq War and inclined to benefit from Turkey's experience. An agreement for production of military equipment was signed between Turkey and Saudi Arabia.[89]

Another initiative taken by Özal in this period was "Peace Water Pipeline" aiming to transport water from rivers in Turkey to some countries in the Middle East. Özal was aiming to bring stability to region with trade, cooperation and interdependence in line with his liberal view and pro-US outlook.[90]

In this period, relations with a neighbouring country Syria were also seen as an opportunity to increase foreign trade opportunities but with a security dimension as well. Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan – PKK), became a priority in relations with Syria starting from the middle of the decade. A border

[87] Altunışık, M. B. (2009). Worldviews and Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East. New Perspectives on Turkey. 40, 182.
[88] Oran, B. (2004). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt: 2, 1980-2001.* (127), İletişim Yayınları.
[89] Özev, M. H. (2016). Siyasi, Ekonomik Çıkarlar ve Kimlik Politikaları Çerçevesinde 1929-2015 Arası Türkiye-Suudi Arabistan İlişkileri. Uluslararası Politik Araştırmalar Dergisi, 2(2), 19.
[90] Ataman, M. (2002). Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy. Alternatives, 1(1), 137.

security protocol was signed with this country in 1985. Another security agreement between parties stating they would not allow terrorist activities in their soil was reached during Özal's visit to Syria in 1987 together with an economic cooperation agreement and Turkey's commitment to leaving 500m^3/sec of water to Syria. This was seen as Özal's response, when going to an election the same year, to the criticisms of his government for insufficient measures against the terrorist attacks coming from abroad.[91]

Turkey's relations with the other neighbors Iraq and Iran were defined as "active neutrality" during 1980s in the context of the war between the two, during which Turkey continued to trade with both which reached the highest levels in the history. Iran was seen by Özal as an important party in regional matters as well as a trading partner. In return, Iran was also willing to further the relations because of the economic problems brought by the war and in order to forestall the containment policy pursued by the West.[92] Özal's economy-oriented, opportunistic approach towards Iran could be seen as a disagreement with USA on account of being against the containment policy towards Iran but it was revealed with the *Contra Affair (Irangate)* that during the war the US itself provided Iran with spare parts for the US-made weapons anyway. Relations with Iraq during this period were also both economy and security oriented. In 1983 two countries signed a border security and cooperation agreement only after reaching an agreement on pumping more oil through the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık Oil Pipeline.[93]

To sum up, the reasons for Turkey's new its initiatives towards the Middle East were multi-fold. First, Turkey's orientation towards an export-oriented economy required new markets, the domestic market was relatively small and could not sustain long-term economic growth without increased exports. The Middle East was seen as a promising market for Turkish products and services, particularly in construction and textiles. Second, the Gulf countries, in particular, were experiencing an oil boom and had significant financial resources that Turkey could tap into through trade and investment. Finally, the Turkish government believed that increased trade and

[91] Gökcan, Ö. (2019). Türkiye'nin Suriye Politikasında Turgut Özal Dönemi. Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 7(4), 297.
[92] Sinkaya, B. (2014). Türkiye'nin Devrim Sonrası İran ile İlişkileri in İdris Demir (Ed.). *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası: Yeni Eğilimleri, Yeni Yönelimleri, Yeni Yaklaşımları*. (138), Dora Yayıncılık.
[93] Oran, B. (2004). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt: II, 1980-2001*. (133), İletişim Yayınları.

investment with the Middle East would enhance Turkey's geopolitical position and promote its regional power status in the region vis a vis the West. In fact, Turgut Özal expressed this idea himself in his official visit to USA in 1985 stating that a powerful Turkey would serve US interests better in the region.[94] Hesitations of Turkey about the Rapid Deployment Force and its delay, one of the rare issues where Turkey was not very enthusiastic about fulfilling the wishes of the USA, could be considered in that respect. Turkey's delay in approving the agreement was due to the concern that it would reduce its regional power status by agreeing to a solution that would alienate the countries of the region.

2.2.2. Neo-Ottomanism after the End of the Cold War

In this study, of the developments which took place in the period after the end of the Cold War, two separate sets of policies are considered to be able to classify under the label of Neo-Ottomanism:

1. Active Foreign Policy during the Gulf Crisis and the plans for the annexation of Mosul and Kirkuk.
2. Active Foreign Policy towards the Caucasus and Central Asia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

About the developments after the end of the Cold War, the claim of this study regarding the assertions of Neo-Ottomanism is that the reasons behind this foreign policy difference were:

- Turkey’s search for a new role to stay valuable for the west after the end of the Cold War and concerns about Turkey’s declining value for the West,
- Özal’s need for popular support for the legitimacy of his presidency and for his ambitious future plans,
- A “Model Country” concept which was designed in the West for Turkey to facilitate the integration of the ex-Soviet countries to the new world order,
- Turkey’s export-oriented entrepreneurs’ search for new markets as well as new sources of raw materials and energy resources.

2.2.2.1. Active Foreign Policy of Turkey during the Gulf Crisis

Turkey’s foreign policy during the Gulf Crisis, was dubbed Neo-Ottomanist due to its unusual activism and Özal’s plans to annex Mosul and Kirkuk to Turkey

[94] (1985, February 3), Ortadoğu’da İstikrarı Türkiye Sağlar”. Milliyet, 7.

during the crisis. The reason for the latter to be considered Neo-Ottomanist is obvious and needs no further explanation. Yet, the former was also unusual in the sense that Turkish foreign policy was deviating from the principles formerly adopted, such as avoiding involvement in regional conflicts and the isolation of the regional policies from the relations with the great powers. The reasons for these policies to could be explained with two factors:

- Turkey's desire to regain its geostrategic value vis-a-vis West which had been decreasing due to the end of the Cold War especially after its membership request in EEC denied in 1989.
- Özal's need for a popular support because of his questioned legitimacy as the president as well as his future political ambitions and the opposition they faced at a time of worsening economic conditions which required foreign financial resources and better foreign trade conditions to improve

All of the above could be addressed, at least for Özal, with a solution which could be defined as staunch Americanism in foreign policy. As previously shown, Özal did not think it was possible for Turkey to gain leverage against the USA by using/showing the alternative way. He was convinced that proving useful for the superpower was the only way Turkey could ensure that the USA supports Turkey in its endeavors.[95] And in order to prove useful, it was necessary for Turkey to have a big hand, which is having a regional power status. Following this path, loss of Turkey's geostrategic position could be restored and the much-needed financial resources could be injected to the economy either with aid and credit or with better conditions for bilateral trade between the two, thus Özal could gain the popular support he needed so much in domestic politics for his ambitions to install a US style presidential system and in order to neutralize the opposition.[96] Yet first we need to take a look at the international conditions which caused Turkey to seek for a regain of value in its geostrategic position.

2.2.2.1.1. Turkey's Search for a New Role

Following the détente period in 1970's the Cold War escalated again after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Starting with the Carter Doctrine, US Administration under Ronald Reagan also contributed to the reescalation of the cold war with

[95] Güldemir, U. (1992). *Texas-Malatya*. (2nd Ed., 97), Tekin Yayınevi.
[96] Yetkin, M. (2022). *İyi Günler Bay Başkan: Körfez Savaşı'nda Özal-Bush Görüşmeleri.* (120), Doğan Kitap.

increasing military spending, supporting anti-Soviet forces in Angola, Nicaragua and Afghanistan, increasing confrontational rhetoric and the plans of Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in early 1980s.

As previously shown, Turkey adapted to this new era during 1980s in its foreign policy, taking decisions at the instigation of its Western allies in almost every issue, even to its own detriment in some cases. However, despite the initial reescalation of the Cold War, there were several developments in the 1980s implicating that the cold war could be finally coming to an end.

The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s was a great step towards the end of conflict between the Eastern Bloc and the West. This was followed by Soviet Union's withdrawal of its military forces from the region, and then from Afghanistan as well. Finally, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War. As the Iron Curtain lifted, at least the focus of the Cold War was shifting away from Europe. The signing of the START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) was seen as a final blow to the Cold War.

Turkey, which had been firmly tied to the Western alliance with the threat of the Soviet Union since World War II, had to adapt politically, economically, and militarily to the political environment that had been changing radically in just a few years. Turkey had taken on the role of NATO's forward base during the Cold War, and thanks to this role, the country had attained protection against external threats and received economical support from the West. With the gradual disappearance of the Soviet threat, which formed the basis of the alliance, some NATO members started to question whether Turkey was worthy enough to stay in the alliance.[97] In those conditions, Turkey seemed to be losing its value for the Western civilization[98] Turkish decision makers were aware of that situation and in fact Özal expressed the idea himself in a press conference in 1990: "Turkey's importance in NATO is decreasing."[99]

Turkey's concerns were further aggravated by the decline of its application to the EEC for full membership. Turkey's unexpected full membership request was

[97] Tür, Ö. - Han, A. K. (2015). *2000'li Yıllarda Türk Dış Politikası Anlamak. 2000'li Yıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: Fırsatlar, Riskler ve Krizler,* (20), Nobel Yayıncılık.
[98] Hale, W. (2003). *Türk Dış Politikası: 1774-2000*. (231), Mozaik Yayıncılık.
[99] Mufti, M. (2009), *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea*. (67), Palgrave Macmillan.

denied at the end of 1989.[100] The fall of Berlin Wall and the dissolution of Eastern Bloc in Central and Eastern Europe decreased the value of Turkey for the West and European Economic Community (EEC) was now more concerned about the integration of newly democratized former Warsaw Pact countries instead of Turkey.[101] In Europe, Turkey started to be seen as more of a bridge between East and West instead of being a part of the West.[102] Turkey needed to take on new roles in the new era in order to become a meaningful partner for the West again. Özal's proposal to establish a free trade zone, during his Washington trip in 1990, between the two countries was rejected, and the number of US soldiers in Turkey had begun to be reduced.[103] Özal and the other Turkish decision makers focused on answering the following question: how could Turkey retain its position/function in the Western Alliance?[104]

The answer to this question according to Özal was to serve the US interests. Özal told to the press that Turkey should not clash with the only remaining superpower in the world politics and abstain from clashing with it in any condition.[105] Apart from his eccentric ideas about playing a stabilizing role inside the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), he was in line with the role assigned to Turkey regarding regional matters such as in the containment Iran and its ideology of radical Islamism.[106] Turkey would be rewarded with the help of the USA in its problems on foreign policy issues.[107]

2.2.2.1.2. US-Turkey Cooperation during the Gulf Crisis

The first chance Özal needed to prove Turkey, and himself, useful to the US interests came with the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein in August 1990. The 1990-91 Gulf Crisis was the first significant foreign policy issue known to have been largely decided by President Özal's personal preferences, disregarding the bureaucracy

[100] "Haberman, Clyde., "Turks Fear Changes Undercut Ties to Europe," New York Times, December 10, 1989, and Randal, Jonathan C., "Shifts in Ties with West Challenge Turks' Identity," Washington Post, July 8, 1990" as cited in Sayari, S. (1992). Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis. Middle East Journal, 46(1), 9-2.1

[101] Oran, B. (2004). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt:2, 1980-2001*, (101-102), İletişim Yayınlar.

[102] See (1991, December 14). Star of Islam: A Survey of Turkey. The Economist.

[103] Oran, B. (2004). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt:2, 1980-2001,* (252), İletişim Yayınları.

[104] Balci, A. - Madakbaş Gülener, E. (2018). Turgut Özal Dış Politikası: Amerikan Düzeninde Yeniden Konumlanma Ve Otonomi Arayışı. Muhafazakâr Düşünce Dergisi, 15(55), 86.

[105] Gözen, R. (2000). *Amerikan Kıskacında Dış Politika: Körfez Savaşı, Turgut Özal ve Sonrası*. (122), Liberte Yayınları

[106] (1991, January 28), America Abroad: An Ally Deserves Better, Time

[107] Abramowitz, M. (2013). Remembering Turgut Ozal: Some Personal Recollections. Insight Turkey, 15(2), 41-42

(and often the foreign minister himself) who traditionally played an essential role in foreign policy, and instead taking into account only the opinions of his advisors. It was obvious that the crisis, which began with Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 would be of great interest to Turkey and that Turkey's Western allies, especially the United States, would have various expectations from Turkey in this war. In such situations, Turkey's traditional foreign policy has been in favor of cooperation with Western powers. However, considering the international conjuncture at the time of the crisis, some believed that it presented important opportunities for Turkey as well as significant threat to her. The foremost among them was President Turgut Özal.[108]

The USA requested from Turkey the closure of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık Pipeline, deployment of forces to the border with Iraq and the permission for the American planes to use the air bases in Turkey to attack targets in Iraq. Turkey, as a member of NATO and possessing the second largest army in the alliance, surely was not concerned about Iraq's military response to the closing of the pipeline. Except for the public panic about the (alleged) possibility of Saddam Hussein regime's use of chemical weapons, concerns were rather economical with two thirds of Turkey's oil provided by the same pipeline which was also a financial asset for the country with more than 300M USD income for passing over of oil annually. Turkey also had more than 1B USD worth of annual exports to Iraq and Iraq incurred a debt approaching 2B USD to Turkey from these exports.[109]

Deployment of Turkish forces to the border also met with opposition, this time from Özal's party ANAP as well. Parliamentary resolution could only pass with a simple majority of 216 to 151, even though ANAP had 276 deputies. In addition to the concerns that the PKK may be strengthened as a result of the disintegration of Iraq and that an important commercial partner would be lost, there could also have been reactions against taking part in a coalition against a Muslim country. Despite the opposition from the parliament, army and society, all of the requests were delivered. Özal explained his decisions to the press stating "USA will be the only superpower" and "Turkey has just done its duty and shown that it was a better ally by accepting the demands."[110]

The idea that Turkey would be affected badly from an intervention in Iraq was

[108] See Özal, T. (1992). Türkiye'nin Önünde Hacet Kapıları Açılmıştır. Türkiye Günlüğü, 19, 5-23
[109] Brown, C. S. (2007). Turkey in the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003. Turkish Studies, 8(1), 86.
[110] (1991, February 24), Özal: ABD Tek Süper Güç Olacak. Cumhuriyet, 14.

a shared position among the opposition. Bülent Ecevit, the head of Democratic Left Party (Demokratik Sol Parti, DSP), accused Özal of looking at the Middle East with "a foreigner's eye" and not from Turkey's perspective.[111] This was an answer to Özal's statements, a day before, in which Özal was warning Turkey that it would be marginalized and could not continue to enjoy the backing of Western allies if it did not pursue an active foreign policy. He was repeating one of his earlier statements about the decreasing significance of Turkey for NATO.[112]

There was one more which was believed to be a request from the USA until recently: participation of Turkish troops to the coalition forces deployed in Saudi Arabia. Yet, a recent book based on the phone conversations between Özal and Bush during the Gulf Crisis, revealed that the participation of Turkish Army to the coalition forces was not requested by the USA, instead it was Özal's suggestion to the President Bush, which was ignored at first and then politely denied.[113] This issue was the one which met the fiercest opposition from the other parties in the parliament as well as his own party, the military and the society.

As could be seen from the fierce opposition within the state apparatus and the parliament to participation in the coalition forces and the hesitation towards meeting the other demands of the USA[114] it could be inferred that the active foreign policy of Turkey during the crisis was not a shared position within the state. It was due to Özal's personal belief that accepting the demands from the USA was the only way Turkey could prove its worth as an ally,[115] just like the decision to send troops to Korean War in 1950, through which Turkey succeeded in being accepted to NATO.

2.2.2.1.3. Mosul and Kirkuk Plans

Özal's plans were not limited to joining the war coalition against Iraq. There were rumors that he had plans to carry out a military operation in northern Iraq to annex Mosul and Kirkuk to Turkey because of his activism during the war and

[111] (1990, August 13), Ecevit'ten Suçlamalar, Milliyet, 9.
[112] (1990, August 8), Özal: Tarafsız kalamayız, Milliyet, 1.
[113] Yetkin, M. (2022). *İyi Günler Bay Başkan: Körfez Savaşı'nda Özal-Bush Görüşmeleri*, (245), Doğan Kitap. Özal's insistence on Turkish troops joining the coalition forces could be seen in many conversations between Özal and Bush throughout the book.
[114] Çancı, H. - Şen, Ş. S. (2011). The Gulf War and Turkey: Regional Changes and Their Domestic Effects. International Journal on World Peace, 28(1), 62.
[115] Kösebalaban, H. (2011), *Turkish Foreign Policy Islam, Nationalism, and Globalization*. (123), Palgrave Macmillan.

statements by his close associates to the press regarding those two cities.[116] He might have been encouraged by the reports in the US press, when there was a danger of Iran taking over these areas in 1986, that Turkey ruled these areas for 400 years,[117] but it is also argued that the plan of a military operation into Northern Iraq was not due to his desire to annex the region but to gain economic advantages after the war and to prevent the strengthening of PKK which had found a living area after the developments in 1980s.[118]

According to journalist Cengiz Çandar, a close associate and one of Özal's advisors, the idea of annexing Mosul and Kirkuk and linking them with the Kurdish regions in Turkey through a federation framework was a grand plan aimed at stopping the rising separatist Kurdish movement through peaceful means (to assemble this region with the Kurdish regions in Turkey and connect both to Turkey within a US style framework of federation) as well as gaining new oil rich territory, which Özal saw as an opportunity during the US intervention in Iraq. This American style win-win dream was based on his belief that Iraq would be either divided or restructured after the war.[119] Özal did not hesitate to express his unorthodox opinions, such as federation, regarding the Kurdish issue which was a taboo at that time. He also did not hesitate to host and talk to the Kurdish leaders of Northern Iraq in Ankara. This confidential meeting, which was organized by National Intelligence Agency (Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı, MIT), created tensions in Ankara. Later, Özal would explain this meeting as an effort to balance the requests of Kurdish leaders from the US and France for independence.[120]

One of the Kurdish leaders, Jalal Talabani, after their meeting in Ankara, stated that they only care for what Özal says not Mesut Yılmaz, the Prime Minister of Turkey at that time.[121] This statement led to criticisms from the press and the public in a period when Özal was also criticized for excluding the foreign ministry and bureaucracy from the decision-making processes in foreign policy. In fact, Özal had been trying to decide

[116] Oran, B. (2004). *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt: 2, 1980-2001,* (256), İletişim Yayınları.
[117] Ibid, P.52
[118] See Gözen, Ramazan. (2000). *Amerikan Kıskacında Dış Politika: Körfez Savaşı, Turgut Özal ve Sonrası*. Liberte Yayınları.
[119] Çandar, C. (2013). Turgut Özal Twenty Years After: The Man and the Politician. Insight Turkey, 15(2), 32.
[120] Yetkin, M. (2022). *İyi Günler Bay Başkan: Körfez Savaşı'nda Özal-Bush Görüşmeleri,* (218), Doğan Kitap.
[121] (1991, September 2), Biz Yalnız Özal'ı Tanırız!. Cumhuriyet, 10.

alone in these processes since he became the prime minister and was criticized for trying to bypass the division of power and the bureaucracy. For example, his statements about Turkey's readiness to accept all the Turkish refugees from Bulgaria in 1989 resulted in resignation of Mesut Yılmaz, his foreign minister, in protest. In 1990, another foreign minister, Ali Bozer, also resigned in protest after he was not included in the meeting between Özal and Bush while his equivalent James Baker, US Secretary of State, was inside. Özal, instead, preferred his private chief of staff Nabi Şensoy to be in the meeting.[122]

In the literature that focuses on that period, there is no evidence (or opinion) suggesting that the plan was assumed as a state project, other than by Özal himself and his advisors. In fact, Kenan Evren, predecessor of Özal as president, stated that Özal was determined to invade Mosul and Kirkuk and shared this idea with him but he rejected it.[123] Furthermore, General Kemal Yavuz, the then commander of the 2nd Army, which was to be used for invasion of Mosul and Kirkuk if Turkey pursued Özal's plans, later disclosed a conversation between Özal and himself in a meeting during the crisis, in which Özal says: "We will take Mosul and Kirkuk, we will leave from Basra. I wrote this script." and then the General replies: "No, Mr. President, that script was written by someone else, not you. You are just one line in that scenario."[124] This could be translated as the Army's suspicions towards the intentions of the USA regarding the fate of Kurds in Northern Iraq, and eventually in Turkey, which was already a major issue in Turkish politics by then.

The Army was not the only one to deny Özal his ambitions, the political parties both from left and right also opposed to his plans. For example, Süleyman Demirel, the leader of the True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi–DYP), referring to Ottoman Empire's entry into the First World War, stated "this is no longer the land of Enver Pasha."[125] Social Democratic Populist Party (Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti-SHP) leader, Erdal İnönü, was also suspicious about Özal's intentions when he asked the ANAP parliamentarians if the people elected them to the National Assembly to support someone's desires for dictatorship.[126] Later, Demirel would once again blame Özal for

[122] (1990, October 12). Ali Bozer İstifa Etti. Milliyet, 14.
[123] (1995, May 23). Musul'a Ben Engel Oldum, Milliyet, 1.
[124] Çölaşan, E. (1998, February 8). Geçmişin gerçekleri, Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023, May 20 from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gecmisin-gercekleri-39005607
[125] (1990, August 11). Kriz İçinde Kriz, Hürriyet, 15.
[126] (1990, August 13). İnönü, Özal'a yüklendi. Milliyet, 9.

acting on his behalf and claimed that the US was pushing Turkey to "Middle East swamp."[127]

This idea of Özal shocked the Chief of Staff of Turkish Army, Necip Torumtay, as well as the Prime Minister Yıldırım Akbulut when he shared it with them in the early stages of the Gulf Crisis, resulting in the resignation of Torumtay.[128] According to Torumtay, the reason for his resignation was that when he discovered he had been excluded from a high-level meeting, and addressed the president for an explanation of the government's position about the issue, he received the Official Directive, which had never been submitted to parliament for consideration or approval. Instead, it was signed only by a retired general who served as Özal's military advisor and "had some unacceptable aspects"[129] Later on, Torumtay, would further clarify the reason for his denial of the operation in his book. He held the opinion that the foreign powers had been playing games with Kurdish nationalism and pushing Turkey to have an influence in Northern Iraq for the establishment of an autonomous Kurdish entity there. For him, this would not only have embroiled Turkey in the Middle East swamp but also destabilize Turkey through its own Kurdish population.[130] Also, the opposition in the Turkish National Grand Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, TBMM) should have been aware of the situation and shared Torumtay's position because, the day after general's resignation, Demirel said that the reason was "a crucial matter" and Erdal İnönü said that the situation was really serious and the parliament should take over the case.[131] They also seemed to be worried about Özal's handling of the issue without Parliament's approval and the public opinion was in the same direction[132] with suspicions about the negotiations between Özal and Bush.[133]

So far it is clear that Turkey's unusual activism in the Gulf War was due to Turkey's concern for decrease in its value for the West and Özal's conventional belief that standing side by side with the US, even if the US does not request it in some cases, would solve all the problems. Plans to annex Mosul and Kirkuk to Turkey was owing to Özal's ambitious plan to connect an oil rich territory to Turkey through a US style

[127](1990, August 25). Bush'a müşavirlik yapılıyor. Milliyet, 10-11.
[128] Hale, W. (2003). *Türk Dış Politikası: 1774-2000.* (231), Mozaik Yayıncılık.
[129] Mufti, M. (2009*), Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea*,(69), Palgrave Macmillan
[130] Ibid, p. 72.
[131] (1990, December 4). Siyasilerin Görüşü. Milliyet, 1.
[132] Birand, M. A. (1990, December 4). Tek adam yönetimi istifa ettirdi. Milliyet, 1-16.
[133] Tokatlı, O. (1990, December 4). ABD'ye Verilen Açık Bono Bardağı Taşırdı. Milliyet, 16.

federation framework while solving the domestic Kurdish problem as well, and not to a well discussed and planned state project.

We don't have any information about the alleged involvement of the US in this plan, as implied by the political opposition and military officials, except for some articles suggesting that "the borders could change" if the countries in the region "were unable to make the necessary political and cultural changes" allowing Kurds "to achieve their ethnic and cultural aspirations"[134] There were some reports of the US agreement with Özal concerning the Kurdish issue.[135] We know that Özal was alone, at least in Turkey, in his desire to invade Northern Iraq and the military and civil bureaucracy blocked his plans, and that he would even welcome a few missiles from Iraq to Turkey to facilitate his response.[136] So, what was the reason for Özal to hold those ambitions? Was it just his belief that Turkey would enjoy the full Western support when it was a powerful regional actor? This leads us to his domestic ambitions and the problems he was facing in domestic politics.

2.2.2.1.4. Özal's Domestic Ambitions and Problems

Özal's dream of resolving a potential problem about a terrorist organization which had a claim over a part of Turkey's territory by gaining land for the country instead was not only related to his admiration for the American system. After winning the 1983 elections and establishing the first single-party government in the country in many years, Özal faced a more competitive political environment due to a deterioration in the high-flying economy of the early years of the coup in the mid-80s[137] and the return of important figures to politics, who were sidelined by the military regime, just before the elections. ANAP, which won a significant portion of the votes in the 1983 elections (%45), had to settle for 36% in the 1987 elections. However, thanks to the 10% election threshold imposed by the 1980 coup, ANAP still won two-thirds of the seats in the parliament despite receiving only about a third of the votes, retaining single-party rule. In the local elections held in March 1989, ANAP would have to

[134] Fuller, G. E. (1993). The Fate of the Kurds. Foreign Affairs, 72(2), 120.
[135] (1992, September 25). CIA gözüyle Kürt sorunu. Milliyet, 17 The aforementioned report is disclosed by the CIA but three pages concerning PKK are blackened. Retrieved 2023, June 1 from: https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000469140.pdf
[136] Mufti, M. (2009), *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea,* (74), Palgrave Macmillan.
[137] Fırat, E. (2009). Türkiye'de 1980 Sonrasi Yaşanan Üç Büyük Kriz ve Sonuçlarının Ekonomi-Politiği. Sosyal Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi, 9(17), 501-524.

accept an even greater defeat. This time, it could only win 21.8% of the votes and lost in all major cities that constituted a significant portion of the country's economy. Due to his party's poor performance in the last two elections and the economy returning to a crisis reminiscent of the pre-1980 era, Özal's future in Turkish politics was precarious.

With the end of Kenan Evren's presidential term, just six months after the local elections defeat, in 1989, Özal became a candidate for the presidency. The other two parties with representation in the parliament, had decided not to participate in the elections arguing that ANAP's poor performance in the local elections, held in March of the same year, would prevent Özal from being elected as president. Thus, Özal's presidency was voted only by ANAP deputies in the parliament, and the fact that the party had received only 36.3% in the 1987 general elections and a mere 21.8% in the 1989 local elections had brought into question the legitimacy of his election.

After Özal ascended to the presidency, he continued to intervene in politics and the executive branch reminiscent of the US presidential system, thus well beyond the scope of largely symbolic, non-partisan role defined for the president in the Constitution.[138] The idea that Yıldırım Akbulut, whom Özal had identified as the leader of his party and helped to elect, being a kind of secretary following Özal's orders was widely accepted in society. So much so that Soviet-style cynical jokes about Akbulut had spread among the people. Not content with this, Özal also appointed his wife Semra Özal as head of the party organization in Istanbul, the country's largest city, despite strong opposition from within the party. Four ministers who opposed this were declared unwanted by Özal, and one of them was dismissed from his position by Prime Minister Yıldırım Akbulut.[139]

After taking office as president, Özal did not just settle for leading his party and the government. After a while, through interviews with the press conducted by his inner circle and advisors, he began to bring up the discussion of whether the US-style presidential system would be a more accurate political order for the country and he wanted Turkey to consider transitioning to this system.[140] As expected, he presented

[138] Bilginaytaç, G. B. (2009). Dış Politika Karar Alma Mekanizmaları Bağlamında Özal Dönemi Ortadoğu İle Ilişkiler (Basıldı). Yebko Siyaset, Devlet Ve Diş Politika Siyaset Bilimi, Kamu Yönetimi Ve Dış Politika Üzerine Bildiriler, 2.Ulusal Yönetim Ve Ekonomi Bilimleri Konferansı, İzmir, Turkey, 194.
[139] Yetkin, M. (2022). *İyi Günler Bay Başkan: Körfez Savaşı'nda Özal-Bush Görüşmeleri*, (199-202), Doğan Kitap.
[140] Ibid, P. 290.

himself as the best candidate to be the president in this new system. However, he could not find support for this idea from the Turkish state apparatus, the army (which was still a powerful actor), from other political parties or even from his own party. In the following years, he did not give up on this idea and had the plan to run for election again by forming a new party, believing that he could obtain the necessary support from the people even if his party did not support him.[141]

It is possible to say that he had a belief that getting the support of the USA in this matter (as in almost every other issue) would be sufficient to turn all the negative conditions in his favor. Considering Turkey's relationship with the United States since the 1950s, it is not easy to say that Özal's optimism was naive. However, no matter how influential the US influence was in Turkish politics, it still wasn't able to change everything. So far, as the activism in the Gulf War had not given him the result he needed and the plans to annex Mosul and Kirkuk failed, the fate of Turkey's northern neighbor would give another chance to realize his ambitions as well as to Turkey in order to prove its worth to the West.

2.2.2.2. Turkey in Caucasus and Central Asia

As a result of the unsuccessful military coup attempt against Gorbachev in 1991, the events that followed led to the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The developments in the second half of the 1980s indicated the end of the Cold War, which had shaped world politics for the past 50 years, and all political actors began to take steps to adapt to this new world. As previously mentioned, Turkey also began to experience the pains of this transformation and entered into new searches, focusing on what the new order would take away rather than what it would bring.

When the long-awaited end of the Soviet Union finally became official, new questions that needed to be answered arose in world politics. The question of how the pieces of the dissolved empire, now emerging as nation-states, would be integrated into the world system was one of the most pressing ones. Those countries forming the southern border of the Soviet Union, all of whom were Muslim, were the biggest point of uncertainty. One of the most important factors that complicated the question of what kind of policies these countries would pursue in domestic and foreign politics was Islamic Republic of Iran. Isolating and weakening Iran, which was actively exporting

[141] Ibid, P. 293.

its regime, and closing its doors to Central Asia became an important part of the United States' strategy towards the region.[142]

The claim of this study, regarding the assertions of Neo-Ottomanism related to Turkey's active foreign policy towards the Caucasus and Central Asia, is that the reasons behind this foreign policy difference were:

- A "Model Country" agenda formulated by the West to use Turkey as a secular, democratic model for the integration of the newly independent republics to the new world order, considering the historical, ethnic and religious, ties between Turkey and them as well as the fear of Iran's influence increasing thus the rise of radical Islam in the region
- Turkey's search for a new role to stay relevant for its Western allies in a time when its geostrategic value for the West was decreasing especially after a failed EEC membership request
- Turkey's export-oriented entrepreneurs' search for new markets as well as new sources of raw materials and energy resources

2.2.2.2.1. Formation of the "Model Country" Discourse and Western Support

Turkey's geostrategic value for the West as a loyal Western ally with a secular and democratic political structure and a market-based economy increased, once again, in response to potential regime export policy of Iran thus possible Islamic upsurge in newly independent countries. The United States and Europe were in favor of Turkey, rather than Iran, as a possible role model for these nations because of its secular, democratic political system and market-based economy. Turkey saw this as an opportunity to prove it was a useful ally to the West.[143]

Western politicians and the media took the initial moves toward Turkey assuming this position. For instance, The Economist referred to Turkey as the heart of a Turkish world that would develop in the post-Cold War age, while Associated Press stated as early as December 1991 that Turkey might serve as an example to the Turkic nations. The "Turkish Model" started to appear in several publications within a short period of time, including Newsweek, Le Monde, Die Welt, and The Washington Post,

[142] See Thomas L. F. (1992, February 6). U.S. to Counter Iran in Central Asia. New York Times.
[143] Ziya O. (2001). Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence. Middle East Review of International Affairs, 5(2), 66.

in both Western Europe and the United States. [144]

Then the "Turkish Model" started to appear in the statements of the politicians. In February, 1992, President Bush after his meeting with Süleyman Demirel, the then prime minister of Turkey, showed Turkey as an example of a democratic and secular model to follow for the countries in the region and stated that Turkey stands as a bastion of stability. Then the US Secretary of State James Baker, when he visited Central Asia in early 1992, stated that the aim of USA was protecting the region from radical Islam[145] and asked the newly independent Turkic republics to follow the Turkish model.[146] Likewise, the general secretary of the council of Europe, depicted Turkey as a valid and important model for many newly liberated countries in Asia.[147]

On 1 February 1992, Henry Kissinger, when he was the moderator of a meeting under the name of "Turkey with Wide Opportunities for Regional and Global Cooperation" in World Economic Forum, mentioned the phrase "Turkic world from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China" for the first time.[148] Later it would be adopted by Süleyman Demirel for his nationalistic rhetoric.

This unexpected support from the West was based on the hypothesis that if those states adopt the Turkish Model, they would be more likely to be politically stable and circumvent the effects of Iran's potential export of its radical Islamic regime.[149] The fear of Islamic radicalism spreading through the region was a great concern for the West as emphasized by NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner. Wörner also one of those who offered the Turkish solution to the problem.[150]

2.2.2.2.2. Position of Russia towards the Turkish Model

Turkey taking the role of a model was not only supported by the West but also by Russia. There were expressions supporting Turkey to build relationships with the

[144] Dal, E. P. – Erşen, E. (2014). Reassessing the "Turkish Model" in the Post-Cold War Era: A Role Theory Perspective. Turkish Studies, 15(2), 264.
[145] Cavlan, T. (2000). *1992-1993 Arası Türkiye ve İran'ın Orta Asya'ya Bakışı ve Uygulanan Politikalar*, (64-65), Özgür Üniversite Yayınları.
[146] "The Wall Street Journal, February 14, 1992" as cited in Dal, E. P. – Erşen, E. (2014). Reassessing the "Turkish Model" in the Post-Cold War Era: A Role Theory Perspective. Turkish Studies, 15(2), 265.
[147] Sander, O. (1998). Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası, (247), İmge Kitabevi.
[148] Kut, G. (1994). Yeni Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Uluslararası Ortam in Behar, B. E. (1994) *Bağımsızlığın İlk Yılları: Azerbaycan, Kazakistan, Kırgızistan, Özbekistan, Türkmenistan*, T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, 13.
[149] Winrow, G. (1992). Turkey and Former Soviet Central Asia: National and Ethnic Identity. Central Asian Survey, 11(3), 107.
[150] Bal, İ. (2000). *Turkey's Relations with the West and the Turkic Republics: The Rise and Fall of the "Turkish Model"*. (115), Ashgate.

newly independent republics in the agreement between Turkey and Russian Federation signed in May 1992.[151] Also the official document under the name of "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation" clearly expressed that friendly relations between Turkey and The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries was important for the trade relations between Russia and Turkey as well as the in terms of having a positive effect on the formation of civil society in those countries. Besides, Russia was also concerned about the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the region. In fact, they were almost certain that if those countries did not orientate towards Turkey, they would, soon, be under the domination of Iran.[152] Yet, Russia would engage in a competition with Turkey after the initial shock wave of the dissolution of the USSR.

2.2.2.2.3. Reaction of the Newly Independent States to the Turkish Model

At least immediately after the independence, newly independent republics were also eager to admit Turkey assuming the model country role for them. The immediate reason for this was that they wanted to receive quick international recognition and attract political, economic and technical aid to overcome the vast difficulties of the post-independence period.

Kyrgyz President Askar Akaev visited Turkey in late 1991 and labeled Turkey as a "morning star" which was guiding them while his Uzbek equivalent Islam Karimov said he viewed Turkey as an "elder brother" in his visit to Turkey.[153] Karimov extended his appreciation for Turkey when he praised Demirel for bringing them together and gifted a handmade box to him saying "In this chest we offer you our heart, take it whenever you want"[154]

Another reason for eagerness on the side of those new states was that Turkey had already achieved what they were craving to do, namely transition to a market economy. For instance, Kazak President Nazarbayev in his visit to Turkey in 1991 stated that they were determined to transition in to market economy and the only model before them was Turkey, and not their neighbor South Korea, because they had

[151] Turan A. - Bekar, O. (1997). *Türkiye'nin Orta ve Uzun Vadeli Çıkarları Açısından Türk-Rus ilişkileri*, (93), Tesev Yayınları.
[152] Kut, G. (1994). Yeni Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Uluslararası Ortam in Behar, B. E. (1994) *Bağımsızlığın İlk Yılları: Azerbaycan, Kazakistan, Kırgızistan, Özbekistan, Türkmenistan,* T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, 15.
[153] Bal, İ. (2000). *Turkey's Relations with the West and the Turkic Republics: The Rise and Fall of the "Turkish Model"*. (146-147), Ashgate.
[154] Koçer, G. (2003). Türk Dış Politikasında İslam-Arafat Olmak Ya Da Bir Pragmatizm Örneği, (113), Pegem Yayınları.

historical ties and what Turkey had accomplished in a short time required them to give this priority to Turkey.[155] On the other side, the Turkic leaders' emphasis on the secularity of Turkey, when Nazarbayev stated that their movement (regarding Turkic Summit) did not involve large-scale religious or ethnic chauvinism,[156] and Uzbek opposition leader's emphasis on the secularity of Turkey, when he stated that religious matters and legal and political affairs should be separate and Turkey was the model country doing that, shows that they were also concerned about the threat of Islamic fundamentalism in their countries..[157]

2.2.2.2.4. Turkey's embracing of the "Model Country" Discourse

Thus, both Russia and the West were enthusiastic about the Turkish Model and as could be seen, yet, since this "model" concept was mostly developed outside of Turkey, it was an unexpected development for Turkish elites as well..[158] Then why would Turkey assume such a role? The answer to that was obvious in terms of ending the concerns that Turkey's strategic importance was decreasing in the post-Cold War era. Such a support by the West was the confirmation that Turkey was still strategically important. Once again Turkey and the USA were in the same line for a new groundwork for cooperation[159] with Turkey serving as a door for the West opening to Eurasia.[160]

Yet, this concept of model role also helped Turkey to find an appropriate plan regarding its relations with the newly independent republics.[161] Especially, after the rejection of Turkey's membership submission to EEC there was a wide sense of exclusion on cultural, ethnic and religious grounds in the public and elites as well. So, the U.S. support for Turkish Model served as an important ground for the acceptation of this new activism.[162]

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[155] Toker, Y. (1992). *Büyük Uyanış,* (184), Toker Yayınları.
[156] Sander, O. (1998). *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, (269), İmge Kitabevi.
[157] Karpat, K. (2003). *Türkiye ve Asya,* Translator: Hakan Gül, (359), İmge Kitabevi Yayınları.
[158] Yalçın, A. (1993). "Türk Modeli Kavramı ve Türkiye'nin İktisadi Kalkınmasındaki Bazı Özellikler" in Yeni Forum Uluslararası II. Sempozyumu; 16-23 Kasım 1992, Türkiye-Azerbaycan ve Orta Asya Cumhuriyetlerinde Demokrasi ve Piyasa Ekonomisine Geçiş¸Süreci, 9–11.
[159] Ahrari M. E. - Mcnair, J. B. (1996). The New Great Game in Muslim Central Asia, Paper 47, (62), Institute for National Strategic Studies National Defense University Washington DC.
[160] Erşen, E. (2013). The Evolution of 'Eurasia' as a Geopolitical Concept in Post-Cold War Turkey. Geopolitics, 18(1), 6-7.
[161] Bal, İ. (2004*). Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türk Dış Politikası İçin Türk Cumhuriyetlerinin Önemi, 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası.* (387), Nobel Yayınları.
[162] Onis, Z. (2001). Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence, Middle East Review of International Affairs, 5(2), 67.

In fact, even before the dissolution of Soviet Union, in May 1991, President Özal was passionate enough to state that the 21st century would be century of Turks talking about what he had seen in his visit to USSR, first to Moscow than to the Turkic Republics, as the expectation on behalf of the Turks in this country for Turkey to take the lead.[163] There was still the effect of the disappointment of the rejection from the EEC on him in late 1991 when he pointed out that Turkey should diversify its options but he was still careful not to alienate the West: "We cannot have all our eggs in the same basket. I am not saying that to challenge EEC. This is not the case. But we should consider every alternative."[164] His disillusionment with EEC, once again, directed him towards supporting U.S. against the EEC when he stated that EEC was trying to confront the USA as an alternative superpower by suppressing other powers in the region and Turkey should support the USA in this race. US was playing a critical role in his plan to unite the geography between Caspian and Adriatic Seas as a competitor against the EEC as "The Union of East and Middle Europe"[165]

Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, after his meeting with President Bush during his visit to US in February 1992, started using his famous phrase, originally coined by Henry Kissinger in 1990, stating that a great Turkic World was emerging 'From Adriatic Sea to The Great Wall of China' in his speeches in Turkic Summits.[166] He became the greatest advocate of that model concept for Turkey in the following years and also showed that he understood the designed role very well by stating that Turkey was the proof of compatibility of Islam with democracy, human rights and market economy.[167]

Cengiz Çandar, a journalist, advisor to Özal and a proponent of the Neo-Ottomanist school of thought, recommended that Turkey should develop an imperial vision but this should not be interpreted as "expansionism or adventurism". Rather this vision meant the "free movement of people, ideas and goods in the lands of the old Ottoman Empire."[168] Similarly, Bilal Samir, from the Turkish Foreign Ministry, was

[163] Koçer, G. (2003). *Türk Dış Politikasında İslam-Arafat Olmak Ya Da Bir Pragmatizm Örneği,* (113), Pegem Yayınları.
[164] Dündar, L. (2016). Özal Dönemi Türk Dış Politikasında Turgut Özal'ın Kişisel Özelliklerinin Rolü. Atatürk Yolu Dergisi, 15, 9.
[165] (1992, December 21). Osmanlı Planım Yok. Milliyet, 1 and 11.
[166] Winrow, G. M. (2002). Türkiye'nin Orta Asya Trans-Kafkasya Politikası in Sayarı S. - Makovsky, A. (2002) *Türkiye'nin Yeni Dünyası,* (159), Alfa Yayınları.
[167] See Demirel, S. (1997). The Compatibility of Islam, Democracy and Secularism. Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs, 2(2).
[168] Hunter, S. (1999). Bridge or frontier? Turkey's Post-Cold War geopolitical posture. The International Spectator, 34(1), 11.

careful to express that building of close relations and developing ties with the other Turkic people was not an effort towards Pan-Turkism, it would be just like the Organization of American States or Nordic Council, underlining the economic and cultural aspects of it rather than political.[169]

In fact, economy played an important role in Turkey's assumption of that role. Anatolian Tigers, newly emerging export-oriented entrepreneurs with an Islamic background, were also enthusiastic about the developments. After the neo-liberal policies implemented in 80s, small and medium sized enterprises from central and eastern parts of Turkey emerged as exporters of manufacturers on the world market.[170] Those were desperately looking for new markets considering domestic market was relatively small at that time. They saw this as an opportunity to reach new markets as well as alternative raw materials and energy resources.[171] Especially Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan were offering lucrative oil transport revenues in addition to access to this vital energy resource. This could also guarantee Turkey's geostrategic value to the West who would always appreciate the secure access to energy.[172]

Again, the potential to be the transit route to the new energy sources was evaluated in terms of economic gains and being a valuable asset to West. Cengiz Çandar, mirroring Özal like in most cases, was praising Turkey's geostrategic potential to constitute a junction, to be a trading state between East and West, North and South. For this he was suggesting Turkey should get along well with its environment and create a zone of peace and stability around itself.[173]

Özal, himself, was optimistic in summer 1992. It might be, because he needed to be optimistic for his ambitions and in the wake of his lack of support in the public and elite level. He claimed that Turkey had all the requirements to be a great power again: being in a good position, having a large and qualified population and the existence of Turkic peoples from Balkans to Central Asia to create a big land of opportunities.[174]

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[169] Kohen, S. (1992). Contacts with Central Asian States A Foundation For "Pan-Turkism". Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, 17-18.
[170] Onis, Z. (1997). The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of Welfare Party in Perspective. Third World Quarterly, 18(4), 763.
[171] Sander, O. (1998). *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası,* (246), İmge Kitabevi.
[172] Aras, B. (2000). Turkey's Policy in the Former Soviet South: Assets and Options. Turkish Studies, 1(l), 39.
[173] See Çandar, C. (1993, April 17). Dış Politikada Özal, Nokta Özel Ek: Turgut Özal 1927-1993.
[174] (1992, June 5). Hedeflerimiz Gerçekleşti, Cumhuriyet, 1 and 18.

Despite those great ambitions, Turkish foreign policy makers were cautious in the beginning and preferred a foreign policy in this period careful enough to conduct the relations based on Moscow, just as it was during the Cold War. Özal, went to Moscow to sign the "Treaty of Friendship, Brotherhood, Good Neighborhood and Cooperation" before going to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Ukraine in March 1991, which constituted the first official visit of a Turkish president to USSR.[175] Furthermore, when he was asked about the developments regarding the conflict between Azerbaijanis and Armenians, he answered that this was more of a concern for Iran than Turkey because the Azerbaijanis belonged to the Shia sect of Islam, which created a negative reaction in opposition parties, in his own party and society as well.[176]

Prime Minister Demirel's visit to Caucasus and Central Asia in early 1992 was a sign of change towards more active foreign policy after the initial hesitation and caution. Demirel had many suggestions to the countries of the region including an exit from the Ruble zone, transition from Cyrillic to Latin script and transport of energy resources through Turkey. Now, Turkey was actively assuming the role of a model.[177]

By attempting to exert influence and forge strong cultural and economic ties with the emerging states of the Caucasus and Central Asia, civil society organizations in Turkey had also evolved into an interest group arguing for the maintenance of close ties. These included non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and entrepreneurial businesses involved in cultural activities, such as establishing educational institutions to prepare the next generation of elites to interact with Turkey more effectively. The second group was made up of religious organizations like the "Nurcus," which was run by nationalists and Turkish Islamists like Fethullah Gülen. One of the goals of Gülen's movement was to establish an elite class of moderate believers who were trained in English,[178] similar to the imperialistic Western approach.

The year 1992 witnessed the establishment of many institutions, such as Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (Türk İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Ajansı, TİKA), which aimed to promote economic cooperation between Ankara and the newly

[175] Demir, A. F. (1996). SSCB'nin Dağılmasından Sonra Türkiye-Azerbaycan ilişkileri in Sönmezoğlu. F. (1996). *Değişen Dünya ve Türkiye,* (32), Bağlam Yayınları.
[176] Karpat, K. (2014). *Türkiye ve Orta Asya,* Translator: Hakan Gül, (378), İmge Kitabevi Yayınları.
[177] Aydın, M. (2001). *Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler,* (384), İletişim Yayınları.
[178] Öniş, Z. (2001). Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence, Middle East Review of International Affairs, 5(2), 67.

established republics. The organization's objectives were similar to those of USAID (the United States Agency for International Development). In order to act as a bridge between the cultural representatives of Turkish governments and those of Turkish communities in the Russian Federation, (TÜRKSOY) was founded as an umbrella organization. By broadcasting Turkish-language programs on the TRT Avrasya (Eurasia) channel, Turkey had been encouraging the use of the Turkish language in Azerbaijan and Central Asia since April 1992. In addition to strengthening Turkey's position in the newly independent republics, another organization, the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey (TDRA) and the Foundation of Religious Affairs of Turkey (TDV), also worked to stop the infiltration and spread of Iranian and Wahhabi Islamic ideologies.[179]

Turkey also sought furthering the integration of newly independent states into the international system via international organizations such as NATO, WB, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), sometimes representing them in the international meetings when they abstained from sending representatives like in the case of
Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan for the meeting in Prague in 1992 where Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) membership of the Turkic Republics would be discussed.[180]

Turkey started to act more freely in its policies and have expectations toward these nations after recognizing all the independent republics from the former Soviet Union in December 1991. The cooperation agreement that was reached during the October 1992 meeting between Turkey and the five Central Asian countries was the first move in this direction. Despite Özal's high level of confidence throughout the summit, disappointment resulted from the final communiqué's adoption of less ambitious generalizations as opposed to the ambitious draft statement and economic blueprint Turkey had suggested. It was later revealed that the final communiqué fell short of expectations when a foreign ministry official said that "it will take time for these republics to get rid of Russia's influence."[181] The newly independent states did

[179] Aras, B. (2000). Turkey's Policy in the Former Soviet South: Assets and Options. Turkish Studies, 1(l), 44-45.
[180] Çandar, C. (1994). Değişmekte Olan Dünyada Türkiye'nin Bağımsızlığını Kazanan Yeni Türk Cumhuriyetlerle İlişkileri in Şen, S. (1994). *Yeni Dünya Düzeni ve Türkiye,* (138), Bağlam Yayınları.
[181] Geray, H. (1992, November 1). Türk Zirvesinde Rus Gölgesi. Cumhuriyet, 17.

not want to participate in formations of only Turkish origin now that their confidence had been restored because they did not want to provoke reactions from other regional states like Russia and China; they had the chance to learn more about Turkey's exaggerated capacity within a year; and they did not want to risk losing their chance to do so.[182]

This demonstrated that Turkey, or simply Özal, placed too much significance on the Soviet Union's break-up and bought into the false notion that post-Soviet Central Asia experienced a political power vacuum. Then, in order to quicken relations with the five Turkish republics, Özal set off on a thorough tour of Central Asia in April 1993 with a sizable team of 221 individuals, including senior officials from several ministries and numerous businesses. During the 11-day journey, Özal discussed his desire to revitalize the Turkic world, although this time he put a stronger emphasis on economic rather than political issues.[183]

2.2.2.2.5. The Decline of the Turkish Model

Before concluding the first chapter, it could be better to look at the reasons for the failure of the Turkish Model:

Firstly, the new republics were anxious about a domination of Turkey as "an elder brother", just replacing Russia in this sense. Strong nationalistic rhetoric especially on the side of Turkey furthered suspicions. Also, Turkey's suggestion for the democratic transition and pluralism did not sit well with the elites of the new states which were authoritarian themselves. Then, there was not at all the lack of Russian influence in the region with its troops, population and with the previous careers of the elites of the new states as part of the nomenklatura of USSR. Considering the fact that Turkey was, at best, a middle-income country in those years, it also lacked the capacity to play the role of a model country in that sense. After the, rather emotional, initial period, those Turkic states started to realize that they can access to the Western markets, arms and technology themselves without Turkey's assistance.[184]

More importantly, especially after 1993 when the Russian influence started to resurrect again and the West started to realize that the anxiety about the potential

[182] Karpat, K. (2014). *Türkiye ve Orta Asya*, Translator: Hakan Gül, (378), İmge Kitabevi Yayınları.
[183] Kohen, S. (1993, April 4). Özal'ın 'Türk Dünyası' Çıkarması. Milliyet, 14.
[184] Öniş, Z. (2001). Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence, Middle East Review of International Affairs, 5(2), 68

influence of Iran was overstated to say the least, Turkey started to lose the initial support of West for being the model country. Considering Turkey had problems with its own domestic politics, the most important being the Kurdish issue, and the region itself was about to bring more security related problems, like the one between Azerbaijan and Armenia, US made a strategic choice of a more direct involvement rather than using proxies like Turkey.[185]

The assumption that Turkey might help the West by restricting Iran's influence and incorporating target regions into the new order led to the birth of the Turkish model. Turkey saw this as a chance to demonstrate its value to its Western allies as well as a chance to grow its economy by opening up new markets to its export-oriented businesses, connecting with new alternative energy sources, and having the opportunity to become a major trading force due to its location at the nexus of two continents. It soon became clear that both the threat of the spread of radical Islam from Iran and the possible contribution Turkey might make to the integration of these areas had been exaggerated. So, the West stopped funding this effort when the newly independent Turkish states had settled down and proceeded to explore the world, and eventually Neo-Ottomanism was left as a memory to be recalled once more in the twenty-first century.

2.3. Concluding Remarks

To sum up, following generalizations can be made on the common points that emerged after examining the policy sets that can be considered as Turkey's Neo-Ottomanism experience. From the beginning of the 1980s, in line with the process which started in the 70s but this time, a deeper, more systematic Middle East expansion was seen. Especially in the first years, the prominent dimension of the relations was economic, but it can also be seen that the cooperation was attempted to be enriched on different subjects, at different levels and through different platforms.

After the coup, the military and civilians who ruled the country carried out an important economic transformation, and they started to make the regulations regarding the state-society complex and foreign relations required by this transformation. Although the Turkish business world was satisfied with the developments in this regard and had started to benefit from the opportunities opened before it, the initiative

[185] Ibid, P. 69

was still entirely in the hands of the administrators of the state. As a result of the relations established with Arab countries and ex-Soviet countries, foreign trade with these countries increased, and Turkish capitalists, who became more powerful and centralized with the ongoing economic transformation in the country, developed their trade and investment activities in these regions throughout the 1990s. This development meant that there would be some transformations in the relationship of the Turkish bourgeoisie with the state and its administrators starting from the 1990s.

In all of the periods examined, except for a few cases, relations were established and tried to be developed and deepened in a way that the West either demanded or at least approved. Those relations were multifaceted in terms of being related to both the periodic needs of the Turkish economy, the balance in its domestic politics and the worldviews of the decision makers, as well as the effects of global developments on Turkey and its region, and the expectations of the West from Turkey in the changing global conditions depending on these developments. However, in the final analysis, it was seen that the general framework in those foreign relations, which were called Neo-Ottomanism, was compatible with the global and regional strategies of the West.

Most of the developments during the Gulf Crisis and after the collapse of the Soviet Union emerged as a result of Turkey's efforts to remain valuable to its Western allies. What to do in order to protect this value in question was formulated in the West, and the decision makers in Turkey made efforts to adapt to these formulations. It can be argued that the plans for the occupation of Mosul and Kirkuk were an exception to this. Yet, even if the claims, by some members of the military bureaucracy and the opposition, that Özal acted on the initiative of the USA in this matter, were ignored, within the framework of Özal's general thought and approach to the matters, it can be claimed that these plans were also aimed at increasing the value of Turkey in the eyes of the United States by increasing its weight in the region.

After Özal's death in 1993, staunch Americanism tendency stemming from his weight decreased. Although Turkey did not give up on its Western axis, it followed a more balanced foreign policy, reminiscent of the 1970s. Relations with the United States were shaped mostly in the security framework, thus through the Army in Turkey’s unstable political environment, and although there was cooperation in the war with the PKK, especially regarding the Northern Iraq Kurdish Autonomous Region, both sides had different views and attitudes and this became a source of

tension in bilateral relations. In these years, the perspectives on the region in general had also changed, the policies of the USA and Turkey regarding the region had become contradictory in this period, especially after 1999, and Turkey took actions that the USA did not approve of in many issues.

CHAPTER 3

NEO-OTTOMANISM IN 2000s

In this section, the foreign policy approach considered as Neo-Ottomanism between the AKP's coming to power in 2002 and 2009 will be examined. In this period, which had significant similarities and differences with the Özal period, Turkey again sought to establish intense relations with the countries in its region, and Islam was used as an identity in the establishment of these relations. These relations have developed under the influence of an approach to the Middle East in the Western world due to various global developments. Before examining how the foreign policy of the period in question differed from the traditional Turkish foreign policy and what kind of relationship it had with the West, it is required to briefly return to the 1990s, when relations with the West were more balanced.

3.1. A Brief Summary of Turkish Domestic and Foreign Policy in 1990s

3.1.1. Domestic Politics

The unstable political environment that started even before Özal's death and the economic situation that had already started to deteriorate at the end of the 80s showed that the 90s would be challenging for Turkey. The Kurdish issue, which grew stronger during the 80's and turned into a low-intensity war in the Southeast in the early 90s, became one of the most important problems of the country. The military, which continued to virtually monopolize the political decisions on security and the political powers that did not have a real different attitude from it, resorted to measures that go beyond the legal limits in the face of the demands of rising Kurdish nationalism. The scattering of these in a traffic accident in 1996 undermined the legitimacy of the actions of the state apparatus in Turkey and made it questionable, at least for a part of the population. Last but not least, Islamism gaining strength thanks to the Turkish-Islamic synthesis-oriented policies, which were put into practice in order to give a new direction to society after the coup, were among the most important issues.

The Welfare Party (Refah Partisi-RP), which formed the main body of political Islam in Turkey, had a clearly anti-Western rhetoric and at least uneasiness towards

free market economy,[186] came to power with a coalition government (Refah-Yol) in 1996. Then, its practices which contrasted with the secular political atmosphere which the country was familiar until then, caused discomfort in some parts of the society, some political elite strata and most importantly in the Army, which had assumed different roles in various periods in order to code itself as the protector of the republic, as well. When the social opposition to the illegal actions of the state was added to that after the so-called Susurluk Scandal[187] which broke out in the same year, the Army positioned itself this time as a patron who steers politics through the protection of secularism in the country. In this period, Islamism (under the name of reactionism, *irtica* in Turkish) was determined as a national security threat for the first time.[188] Eventually, several decisions against reactionism were taken at the National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu–MGK) on February 28, 1997 resulted in the resignation of the government after a while. Thus, the social opposition which emerged after the Susurluk Scandal began to wither away after the overthrow of the government, and, the demand for civil democratization, which had such a wide social support for the first time in the history of the country, was left to fade over time in the dark corridors of the bureaucracy.[189]

The Welfare Party, which was removed from power as a result of the indirect intervention of the Army, was later closed by the Constitutional Court and its leader Necmettin Erbakan was banned from politics. This situation paved the way for the emergence of a group called "reformists"[190] in the Felicity Party (Fazilet Partisi-FP), which was founded in place of the Welfare Party, who questioned the anti-Western and incompatible position of National Vision (*Milli Görüş*) with the free market economy. Having lost the power struggle within the party, the group later separated from the main body and founded the AKP. It was claimed that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the leader, and Abdullah Gül, another prominent name, of the movement was contacted by the US officials before the “post-modern coup” of the February 28 and the closure of Welfare Party. Morton I. Abramowitz, the then US Ambassador to

[186] (1996, October 10). Onlara paket yok. Milliyet, 7. Erbakan rejects IMF proposals for a new pack of policies in line with the liberalization of economy.
[187] The scandal which broke out with the emergence of state-police-mafia relations as a result of a traffic accident. See Sağlar, F. - Özgönül, E. (2007). *Derin İlişkiler–Kod Adı Susurluk*, Arkadaş Yayıncılık.
[188] Ergin, S. (1997, November 2). İrtica tehdidi, devletin en önemli belgesinde, Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023 June 4 from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/irtica-tehdidi-devletin-en-onemli-belgesinde-39271634
[189] (1997, March 22). Susurluk Güme Gitti, Milliyet, 1.
[190] Çakır, R. (2000). Fazilet Kongresi: Demokrasi Virüsü FP'ye de Sızdı, Birikim Dergisi, 134(135), 23-29.

Ankara, visited Erdoğan when he was the mayor of İstanbul and gave some "warm messages"[191] while Abdullah Gül travelled to the USA to get in touch with centers of power and to make a speech in Council on Foreign Relations.[192] Gül declared in New York that Turkey was on better terms with the US compared to Europe.[193] He seemed moderate when he responded to the US Secretary of State Madelene Albright's call for a secular Turkey: "we can agree with the USA on secularism"[194]

Thus, a version of Islamism, as the rising value of Turkey in the 1990s in an atmosphere of increasing radical Islamist challenge globally, in harmony with the West and the free market was created. In this context, an aspect of the post-modern coup, the secular Army's removal of an Islamist political entity from power, which was not highlighted much, was the fact that an anti-Western government was overthrown by the Army, the patron of Westernism in the country, with the support of the media.[195] This open anti-democratic action did not receive a significant reaction from the West, which claimed to support the democratic functioning in Turkey.[196]

Following the removal of the Welfare Party from power, during the new coalition government, formed with the support of the Army, the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan made nationalist sentiments decisive in the next election, and this time the (left nationalist) Democratic Left Party and (right nationalist) Nationalist Movement Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi–MHP) became the coalition partners as the winners of the election. However, Turkey's long, action-packed 90s had not yet come to an end. With the earthquake that took place in the economic heart of the country (Marmara Region) on 17 August 1999 and cost tens of thousands of lives, the state, which had shown itself immediately in the face of all kinds of social demands and opposition, and drawn an extremely strong profile, could not fulfill its duties towards its citizens in the event of such a disaster. It was revealed to the public how

[191] (1996, October 16). ABD'den RP'ye sıcak mesaj. Milliyet, 19.
[192] Uzgel, İ. (2006). AKP: Neoliberal Dönüşümün Yeni Aktörü. Mülkiye Dergisi, 30(252), 11.
[193] (1997, February 9). Gül: Türkiye ABD ilişkileri Avrupa'dan İyi, Milliyet, 14.
[194] (1997, February 18). Gül: ABD ile laiklikte iyi anlaşırız, Milliyet, 14.
[195] For some headlines of Turkish newspapers during the 28 February process, see: Temel, F. - Çelebi, B. (2016). 28 Şubat Sürecinde Egemen Güç Ve Basin in I. International Social Sciences and Muslims Congress Proceedings Book.
[196] It is noteworthy that in the Turkey Progress Report published by the European Commission in 1998, there is no direct comment on the 28 February process. In the report, the word itself or any allusion to the coup is not used, only the NSC's involvement in political decisions is criticized. Avrupa Birliği Komisyonu, 1998, *Türkiye İlerleme Raporu,* 17 Retrieved 2023, June 15 from: https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/AB_Iliskileri/AdaylikSureci/IlerlemeRaporlari/Turkiye_Ilerleme_Rap_1998.pdf

far it was from its ability. [197]

3.1.2. Economy

The great economic crisis, which was triggered by the Prime Minister's voice of the hard discussion between the President and himself in front of the press after a National Security Council meeting in 2001, was the last event that could be evaluated in Turkey's long 90s, even if it was not technically in the 90s. Although the export-oriented growth strategy gave positive results in the early 80s, over time led to high imports, thus foreign trade deficit[198] and foreign debt became chronic.[199] Policies such as privatizations, reducing the number of public employees, weakening the economic and social rights of workers in favor of entrepreneurs, which are the prerequisites for the foreign capital inflow necessary to finance this deficit, could not be fulfilled by weak coalition governments. As the repressive environment of the coup eased, the working-class organizations regained their strength and had a say in the country's politics since the late1980s, reminding them of their former strengths.[200] [201] These conditions, which meant the completion of the neoliberal transformation of the Turkish economy, could not be met, and weak coalition governments based on the partnership of parties far from broad social support resorted to populism in the opposite direction to stay in power. Thus, inflation got out of control and became one of the most important features of the Turkish economy in 1990s.[202]

Another issue that would be important for the future in terms of economy in the 90s was the rise of the “green capital”, which had been developing during the 70s and 80s. These small and medium-sized companies, also known as the "Anatolian Tigers", had difficulties in obtaining credit support from the state and western institutions, unlike the Istanbul-based and Western-oriented big bourgeoisie, which has assumed a dominant role in the Turkish economy since the import-substitution era.

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[197] (1999, August 19). Depremden çok ihmal ve sorumsuzluk katlediyor. Milliyet, 1.
[198] Altıok, M. (2002). Yeni Liberal İstikrar ve Yapısal Uyum Programları: Türkiye Ekonomisinde Sermaye Birikimi ve Kriz. Praksis. 5, 107.
[199] See Yeldan, A. E. (2005). Türkiye Ekonomisi’nde Dış Açık Sorunu ve Yapısal Nedenleri. Çalışma ve Toplum, 4(7), 47-60.
[200] (1991, January 6). Dev yürüyüş Mengen'e vardı, anlaşma suya düştü. Milliyet, 1; (1991, January 6). “Kuru gürültüden korkmam”. Özal: “Bu başkanla anlaşma olmaz", Milliyet, 1.
[201] Çetik, M. - Y. Akkaya. (1999). *1990’lı Yıllarda Türkiye’de Endüstri İlişkileri*. (134), Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı.
[202] Yılmaz, K. (2018, June 14). Türkiye’de Enflasyon Siyasi Bir Olgudur. Sarkac. Retrieved 2023, June 8 from https://sarkac.org/2018/06/turkiyede-enflasyon-siyaset-1/

However, these companies, which were mostly export-oriented, found the opportunity to do business with the state, the largest economic structure of the country, after the Islamist politics first took over the metropolitan municipalities and then came to power.[203] As they had the chance to be more visible over time, they expanded their operations and had a say in the country's economy, albeit at a scale incomparable with the traditional bourgeoisie. For instance, in 1996, Kombassan Holding won the privatization tender of PETLAS, a state-owned tire manufacturing company, which was criticized in the National Security Council that Refah-Yol government was giving priority to Islamic companies in privatizations.[204]

Although the relations of the governments established after 1997 with the West were more harmonious, the state was incapable of producing consent both because all its weakness was revealed as a result of the great earthquake in 1999 and it lacked the political leadership to provide social unity and support. After the economic crisis in 2001, it was seen as incapable of providing a healthy economic infrastructure as neither the Istanbul nor the Anatolian capital demanded.[205] In this respect, it was clear that the Turkish economy was in need of a new story.

3.1.3. Foreign Policy

The "model country" discussions in the field of foreign policy at the beginning of the 90s, were forgotten after a while due to Turkey's lack of capacity to carry this role, and other international developments. Instead, Turkey turned its direction to the West, just as it did during the Cold War period. While relations with the US were mostly positive and on the security axis, Turkey continued its perspective of full membership to the European Union with the support of the US but could not obtain the candidacy status until 1999. The most obvious reasons for this were Turkey's bad record on human rights, the lack of democratization and economic development level

[203] Koçal, V. (2013). Türkiye'de Siyasal Değişme Bağlamında Küreselleşme Sürecinde Muhafazakârlığın Dönüşümü in II. Türkiye Lisansüstü Çalışmalar Kongresi (TLÇK), Uludağ Üniversitesi, 33-34.
[204] Oğuz, Ş. (2008). Globalization and the contradictions of state restructuring in Turkey, (Unpublished PhD thesis,), York University, 136.
[205] For an analysis of economic crises in Turkey since 1990's, see Keyder, N. (2002). Türkiye'nin Kriz Deneyimleri 1994, 2000-2001, 2008-2009 ve 2018-2022 Krizleri. İktisat ve Toplum Dergisi, 12(141), 4-13.

by the EU, the Cyprus issue and relations with Greece.[206] Turkey, which was not given candidate status at the 1997 Luxembourg Summit for these reasons, taking a tough stance by suspending relations with the EU and assuming important duties in Kosovo, thanks to the security-oriented affinity it established with the US throughout the 1990s, had its status of candidacy recognized in 1999.[207] However, this rapprochement with the EU was on a strategic level,[208] and it was doubtful when the negotiation process would start for Turkey after waiting in line for 30 years, in a time when even the Eastern European countries, which had not yet completed the 10th year of independence, were starting for negotiations. The reasons for not recognizing candidate status at the previous summit were still there as well.

In such an environment, Turkey started to take some initiatives towards the Middle East, which it had avoided during most of the Cold War. Relations with Syria, which had previously been strained due to this country's support for the PKK, began to improve after the 1998 Adana Accord. President Sezer's attendance in Hafız Esad's funeral was considered to be of capital importance considering the history of the relations between the two countries.[209]

The decrease in the PKK's effectiveness after the capture of Abdullah Öcalan in 1999 had a positive impact on relations with both this country and Iraq, as well as with Iran after the natural gas agreement signed despite the opposition of the USA. Even before these developments Foreign Minister İsmail Cem travelled to Iraq in 1998, when the containment (and frequent bombing) of Iraq and rumors of a new military operation were at their heights, to call for a cease of hostilities and to propose a peace initiative including an end to the embargo and the renouncement of military solutions by the USA.[210] Those initiatives were in part due to the good economic relations with Iraq but mostly due to the suspicions among Turkish political elite and military cadres about the US intention of an independent Kurdistan in Northern Iraq. During 1990s the USA mostly supported Turkey's war on PKK but only inside

[206] See "A European strategy for Turkey" under "Luxembourg European Council 12 And 13 December 1997 Presidency Conclusions" Retrieved 2023 June 12 from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lux1_en.html

[207] Gözen, R. (2006). Türkiye-AB Yakınlaşması: 1999 AB Helsinki Zirvesinden 2003 Irak Savaşına Stratejik Algılamalarda Dönüşüm Süreci, Uluslararası İlişkiler/International Relations, 3(10), 124.

[208] See Eralp, A. (2000). Turkey in the Enlargement Process: From Luxembourg to Helsinki, Retrieved 2023 May 28 from http://sam.gov.tr/pdf/perceptions/Volume-V/june-august-2000/Atila-Eralp.pdf

[209] Heper, D. (2000, June 13). Olumlu karar: Sezer Şam'da. Milliyet, 18.

[210] Bila, F. (1998, February 9). ABD'nin planı, Milliyet. Retrieved 2023, May 28 from https://www.milliyet.com.tr/yazarlar/fikret-bila/abdnin-plani-5362176

Turkey. When it came to cross border operations, the USA rarely granted permission for Turkey and requested that the operations were conducted quickly and Turkish Army left Iraq after that. During these years, Turkish position was to demand for a re-establishment of Iraqi sovereignty in the region.[211]

Contrary to previous years, a more sensitive policy was followed in the Palestine issue, President Sezer's condemning of Israel's violence[212] and Prime Minister Ecevit's describing Israel's actions as "genocide" caused a great reaction on the Israeli side.[213] Those were not the only words of Ecevit that were not welcomed by the US. When Öcalan was in search of a country to get asylum after he had to leave Syria and landed on Russia, Ecevit declared that Chechenia was an internal problem of Russia.[214] Then, when there was yet another threat of a resolution about the Armenian Genocide in the US Senate, he declared that Turkey could impose sanctions on the USA[215] and these could include the closure of İncirlik to the use of the USA.[216]

To further aggravate the Western anxiety about Turkey's new path, the General Secretary of the National Security Council, Tuncer Kılınç, suggested that Turkey should look for alternatives to the EU and search for a regional alignment which includes Iran and Russia,[217] and received mixed responses from the political spectrum, mostly positive from the Islamist and nationalist parties and negative from the business circles, center left and center right political figures, including Erdoğan.[218]

It is clear that the Middle East expansion in the late 90s cannot be explained by the security aspect alone, namely the PKK and the potentially independent Kurdish entity in Northern Iraq. As mentioned before, Turkish capital, which gained strength thanks to the neoliberal policies followed during the 80s and 90s, started to develop a vision for markets abroad. The Customs Union agreement reached with the EU in 1995 was undoubtedly welcomed by the business community, as this agreement increased

[211] (1996, September 2). Turks, Opposing U.S., Urge Iraq to Take Control of Kurdish Area. New York Times. Retrieved 2023, May 28 from https://www.nytimes.com/1996/09/21/world/turks-opposing-us-urge-iraq-to-take-control-of-kurdish-area.html
[212] (2000, October 26). İsrail'e ilk tavır, Milliyet, Retrieved 2023, May 28 from https://www.milliyet.com.tr/siyaset/israile-ilk-tavir-5335343
[213] (2002, April 6). Başbakan Ecevit: Soykırım' alınganlık yarattı, Milliyet, 20.
[214] (1999, November 3). Ecevit Çeçenistan'ı değerlendirdi, Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023, May 28 from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/ecevit-cecenistani-degerlendirdi-39111321
[215] (2000, October 6). Ecevit: Yaptırımları uygulayacağız, Milliyet, 22.
[216] (2000, October 5). Ecevit: Yaptırım İncirlik olabilir. Milliyet, 23
[217] (2002, March 13). Kılınç Paşa yanlış mı konuştu?. Hürriyet, Retrieved 2023, May 27 from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/kilinc-pasa-yanlis-mi-konustu-59415
[218] (2002, March 9). Şahsi görüş Ankara'yı sarstı, Milliyet, 16.

export opportunities for Turkish capitalist class but offered the same opportunity to the European capitalists as well.[219] As a result of this situation, it became inevitable for Turkish businesses, who were still far from competing with the Western capital[220], to seek alternative routes. After this opening, Turkey's exports to the Middle East countries had increased[221] , but it was not at a level that would satisfy the Turkish business world, which had especially suffered from the 2001 crisis.

In summary, the general outlook for 2002 was negative. After the earthquake and the economic crisis, it turned out that the state could not fulfill its most basic duties, it lacked the consent of the society. Thus, it was far from providing the environment that the capital needed and demanded. Although reforms started with the IMF agreement signed after the crisis, in line with the demands of Western financial institutions and domestic capital, the government lost its social support due to the "bitter prescription" inevitably brought along with these. In foreign policy, Turkey was clearly moving away from a purely Western oriented approach and trying to have better relations with the countries in the region. It was not a great surprise that the governing parties were defeated in the 2002 elections by the new Islamism, which had rejected both its harsh Islamist rhetoric and anti-Westernism after February 28.

3.1.4. September 11 and the Immediate Reaction of Turkish Foreign Policy

Contrary to the claims of the end of history theses put forward at the beginning of the 1990s, new developments took place in global politics as a result of the continuing activity of man and nature at all levels. The indisputable leader of this new world, the USA, tried to deal with one of the most visible reactions to the new order in the periphery of the world, radical Islamism, with security-oriented policies throughout the 90s.[222] Although the attacks on the twin towers in New York were seen as the beginning of a new era, they were actually the culmination of a process that had been going on for a while. These attacks were only the latest of the ones in 1993 in New York, in 1995 on the Paris Metro, in Riyadh the same year, in Luxor in 1997, in

[219] Seymen, D. (2009). Has Customs Union Changed The Country Concentration Of Trade Between Turkey And The European Union?. Suleyman Demirel University, The Journal of Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences. 14(1), 204.
[220] Alkan, H. (1998). Türkiye'de Baskı Grupları: Siyaset ve iş adamı Örgütlenmeleri (Odalar-TÜSİAD–MÜSİAD). (Unpublished PhD Thesis). Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 340-2.
[221] Akal, M. (2008). Ortadoğu Sınır Ülkeleriyle Dış Ticaret Yoğunlaşması ve Yapısal Değişim, Gaziantep Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 7(2), 294.
[222] Esposito, J. L. (1996). Political Islam and U.S. Foreign Policy. The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, 20(2), 122.

Nairobi and Dar-As-Salaam in 1998.

The Clash of Civilizations thesis of Samuel Huntington[223], which came to the fore after the Cold War, was now beginning to take shape, with the rise of neo-con dominance in American politics throughout the 1990s[224] and its takeover as a result of the 2000 US Presidential election by George W. Bush.[225] The USA, which had tried to solve the problems that arose in various parts of the world during the 1990s (Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Sudan, Afghanistan, etc.) within the framework of unipolarity (simply by bombing it), went the old way and perceived the problem again as purely security-oriented, in the atmosphere of anger and fear which emerged right after 9/11. The invasion of Afghanistan began in a short time and it was clear that the Middle East countries, defined as the "axis of evil", would be next.

When the aforementioned security-oriented policies were put into practice after 9/11, there was a wounded coalition government in Turkey, which was still struggling with the effects of the great earthquake and the economic crisis and trying to carry out many reforms in order to adapt to the global neoliberal hegemony in its economy after the great turmoil. The government which had been making some initiatives towards the Middle East since the end of the 90s, did not hesitate to take sides with the global hegemony regarding the invasion of Afghanistan in the atmosphere created after 9/11.[226] However, inevitably, when it was time for the invasion of Iraq through the “axis of evil” discourse, Turkey, this time, had a lot to lose in this regard.

Although relations with the Kurdish Autonomous Administration, which was established in Northern Iraq after the First Gulf War, were more positive after Öcalan's capture, Turkey still had the fear that this structure would turn into an independent state over time and that this would encourage its own Kurdish population in the same direction.[227] Besides, as a result of the economic relations developed during the 90s, Iraq was one of Turkey's biggest trading partners and it was clear that the invasion of

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[223] See Huntington, S. P. (1996). *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*. Simon & Schuster.

[224] Lind, M. (2003, September 18). The Strange Turn of U.S. Neoconservatism, The Globalist. Retrieved 2023, June 1 from https://www.theglobalist.com/the-strange-turn-of-u-s-neoconservatism/

[225] See Abrahamian, E. (2003). The US media, Huntington and September 11, Third World Quarterly, 24(3), 529–544 for an in-depth analysis of how the US media explained the post-September 11 crisis by resorting to Samuel Huntington’s ‘Clash of civilizations’.

[226] Bila, F. (2001, December 12). Ecevit - Powell Görüşmesi. Milliyet, 1.

[227] Aydin M. – Aras, D. (2005). Political Conditionality Of Economic Relations Between Paternalist States: Turkey's Interaction With Iran, Iraq, And Syria, Arab Studies Quarterly, 27(1/2), 35.

Iraq would damage it[228] and, equally important, a significant part of Turkey's energy needs were met by Iraq. Another delicate matter, was the negative image, in the eyes of neighboring Muslim countries, of actively supporting the invasion of Iraq, at a time when Turkey wanted to have a more balanced foreign policy in the region unlike previous periods, as no one could have denied the existence of a view that saw Turkey as the West's pawn in the region.[229]

In this period, when the "dual containment" strategy had been questioning for a long time starting from the mid-90s,[230] the government in Turkey was struggling to keep the USA from attacking Iraq. Prime Minister Ecevit's profile was not an appreciated one by the neo-con- dominated Bush Administration favoring regime change in Iraq, not just because he was the one to meet Saddam Hussein in Iraq before the First Gulf War to persuade Saddam Hussein to prevent the war,[231] but also because of his government's desire to pursue a more balanced regional foreign policy, with the moves, mentioned earlier, by the foreign minister İsmail Cem and the President Sezer towards Iraq, Syria and Iran definitely being a concern for the US Administration at that time.

Considering that, historically getting the support of the West (especially the USA) was a very important factor to hold on to power in the country, Turkey's ruling elites were torn between not losing this support and not damaging the regional relations that they had begun to give some weight to in recent years.[232] Yet, the nationalist government in Turkey was not a favored one at that time and a campaign aimed at compelling Ecevit to resign was conducted with the help of mass media.[233] Kemal Derviş, "the super minister" who had left his job at the World Bank to assume the management of the economy after the crisis of 2001, was the one who would initiate the process for an early election when he said "the election should not be postponed" while there was no actual discussion about the issue.[234] Derviş would state that the

[228] Ibid, 25.
[229] Bengio O. -Özcan, G. (2001). Old Grievances, New Fears: Arab Perceptions of Turkey and Its Alignment with Israel. Middle Eastern Studies, 37(2), 54.
[230] See Clawson, P. (1997, December 18). Dual Containment: Revive It or Replace It?, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy; Brzezinski, Z. (1997, May 23). Rethinking 'Dual Containment' of Iraq and Iran, The Christian Science Monitor; Lippman, T. W. (1997, December 12). Critics Want U.S. To Reevaluate 'Dual Containment' Policy On Iran And Iraq, The Washington Post.
[231] Yetkin, M. (2004). *Tezkere.* (55), Remzi Kitabevi.
[232] (2001, June 5). Ecevit, ABD'yi uyardı. Milliyet, 1.
[233] Uzgel, İ. (2006). AKP: Neoliberal Dönüşümün Yeni Aktörü. Mülkiye Dergisi, 30(252), 13.
[234] (2002, May 11). "Seçimi ertelemek yanlış' sözleri, ortakları kızdırdı. Milliyet, 1 and 21.

economy was strong just within two days[235] and in fact the economic indicators were turning positive.[236] After Ecevit had to stay in recuperation for about ten days after his treatment in the hospital[237] some prominent columnists like Hasan Pulur[238] and Emin Çölaşan[239] started to call for his resignation. There were also claims that TUSİAD (Türk Sanayici ve İş Adamları Derneği-Turkis Industry and Business Association) and the Army wanted Ecevit to resign and Hüsamettin Özkan, a prominent member of Ecevit's party, was encouraged by army generals and a group of businessmen to take the lead of the party.[240] In fact, Özkan would resign from his party in the same period and many MPs would follow him further weakening the government and necessitating an early election. Prime Minister Ecevit was really sick in that period and seemed like he did not have the intention to step down. Yet, despite this, it was at least unusual for the Army, the media and the MPs in Ecevit's party to simultaneously campaign for the resignation of an incumbent prime minister. During the Ergenekon trials, it was claimed by the defendants that this process was actually a coup against the government and the head of the coup was Hilmi Özkök, The Chief of Turkish General Staff at the time.[241] Since we do not have enough clear evidence, it would not be a scientific attitude to defend the accuracy of this claim, but we can say that Ecevit's government had strong opponents both from within and without the country, as of the general view of the period we have examined above. The situation bears resemblance to a few years earlier when the Refah-Yol Government's foreign policy was not in line with the USA, partly because of that, the big bourgeoisie was not happy with the government and the Army was once again trying to design the politics in those circumstances.

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[235] (2002, May 13). 'Ekonomimiz artık sağlam'. Milliyet, 1.
[236] (2002, May 11). Enflasyon beklentisi düşüyor, Milliyet, 7.
[237] His wife Rahşan Ecevit would later claim that Ecevit was deliberately mistreated and he got better after they took him out from the hospital. See (2015, November 21). Türk siyasetinde 'suikast' şüphesi, Cumhuriyet, Retrieved 2023, June 05 from: https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turk-siyasetinde-suikast-suphesi-427553
[238] Pulur, H. (2002, May 11). Onurlu Insanlar Yüzüne Tükürülünce Yarabbi Şükür, Demez. Milliyet. 3.
[239] Çölaşan, E. (2002, June 18). Yeter artık Bay Ecevit. Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023, June 5 from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yeter-artik-bay-ecevit-79171; Çölaşan, E. (2002, July 2). Ecevit'in bilinmeyenleri (Acı gerçekler). Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023, June 5 from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ecevitin-bilinmeyenleri-aci-gercekler-81915 Dedication of Çölaşan on this issue can be seen in his articles which repeatedly violate the principle of privacy and push the boundaries of journalism. Another prominent columnist Fikret Bila would claim in, his book, that Emin Çölaşan was included in the campaign to topple Ecevit. See Bila, F. (2003). *Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Ankara'da Irak Savaşları*, Ümit Yayıncılık.
[240] Murat Yetkin tells about the issue in his book, based on one-to-one and collective conversations with Özkan and the generals. Yetkin, M. (2004). *Tezkere.* (55-56), Remzi Kitabevi.
[241] Terkoğlu, B. (2010, February 15). Yalçın Küçük'ün Ecevit'in Zehirlenme İddiasıyla Ne İlgisi Var?, Oda TV. Retrieved 2023 June 4 from https://www.odatv4.com/yazarlar/baris-terkoglu/yalcin-kucukun-ecevitin-zehirlenme-iddiasiyla-ne-ilgisi-var--1502101200-8710

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the leader of the "reformers movement", who lost the power struggle in Felicity Party, broke away from the main Islamist party by declaring that he had taken off his "National Vision shirt" and, seeing the weakness of the central politics in the country, chose a more moderate position. Erdoğan, made two visits to the United States, first, before he officially founded his party and second, just before the election in 2002. It was claimed by his companions at that time, who later followed separate political routes from him, that he had a number of high-level meetings with US officials including with the Chairman of the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee Richard Perle,[242] Deputy Secretary of the State Paul Wolfowitz[243] and some Jewish Lobbyists.[244] During these meetings he, allegedly, gave assurances about the policies, which he would follow if he came to the power, would be compatible with the interests of the United States. During Erdoğan's second visit to the United States without holding an official title (in the period when he was unable to take part in the government due to his political ban), Erdoğan's hosting at the White House by President Bush, the President's expressing his full support to Erdoğan in his efforts towards Turkey's European Union membership showed that the American side was also eager to work with Erdoğan.[245] He also had meetings with Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Middle East Institute (MEI) and RAND Corporation during his visit.[246]

3.2. Two Theoretical Bases of the AKP's Neo-Ottomanist Foreign Policy

At the theoretical level, this cooperation between the USA and the AKP, which would continue until the end of the 2000s, had two complementary bases, one from the outside and the other from the inside:

1. The role of a moderate Islamic country assigned to Turkey by the USA in the post-9/11 global order

[242] (2018, June 1). Erdoğan'ın 20022'deki ABD Ziyaretinde Öne Çıkan Kişi, Bianet,retrieved 2023 June 4 from https://bianet.org/bianet/siyaset/197776-erdogan-in-2002-deki-abd-ziyaretinde-one-cikan-kisi Richard Perle tells the story of their meeting in the video on the page.
[243] Yetkin, M. (2004). *Tezkere.* (96), Remzi Kitabevi .
[244] (2018, June 7). Erdoğan'ın Apar Topar ABD Ziyaretine 3 İsim Eşlik Etti, Gazete Duvar. Retrieved 2023, June 4 from https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/politika/2018/06/07/erdoganin-apar-topar-abd-ziyaretine-3-isim-eslik-etti
[245] Full Text of the meeting retrieved 2023, June 5 from: https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/20021210-8.html
[246] Çongar, Y. (2002, January 31). Tayyip, kabuk değiştirmiş!, Milliyet. Retrieved 2023, June 5 from: https://www.milliyet.com.tr/siyaset/tayyip-kabuk-degistirmis-5226383

2. AKP's active foreign policy concept embodied in Davutoğlu Doctrine

3.2.1. Moderate Islam and Turkey as A Role Model-Once Again

Although the opposite was claimed in official discourses, it had been viewed, at least in the Muslim world and in some parts of the Western world as well, that the war against terrorism was actually waged against Islam.[247] As the impossibility of chastening the peripheral regions, which were seen as the source of terrorism, using purely weapons was recognized, a new set of policies based on soft power was formulated. The basis of this new policy, which aimed to reclaim these regions by integrating them into the political and economic order of the West, was the discourse of moderate Islam. The strategy of this policy was to prevent the strengthening of radical Islamist movements by supporting moderate regimes and practices in the regions in question. It was clear that this situation would have some consequences for Turkey, which had, in a way, disciplined its Islamism in the mid-90s.[248]

After the invasion of Iraq, the purely security-oriented policies did not provide the results for the US, so, the necessity of policies based on soft power began to be expressed. As it was during the Cold War and in the 90s, the USA's strategy of cooperating with dictatorships in the periphery of the world which lacked popular support did not give the desired results (the first example of this situation was the Islamic Revolution in Iran), and radical Islam could not be prevented without taking into account the economic and social factors. The idea that moderate Islam was needed to pacify the radical Islamist reaction began to come to the fore.[249] However, this idea envisaged not only the support of moderate Islamic structures, but also the overthrow of dictatorial regimes that might create resistance to this strategy by force.[250]

The concrete image of the aforementioned idea of supporting moderate Islam against radical Islam would first emerge as the Middle East Partnership Initiative

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[247] Pandith, F. (2021, September 1). The U.S., Muslims, and a Turbulent Post-9/11 World. Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved 2023, June 5 from: https://www.cfr.org/article/us-muslims-and-turbulent-post-911-world

[248] Rabasa, A. - Benard, C. - Chalk, P. - Fair, C. C. - Karasik, T. W. - Lal, R. - Lesser, I. O. - Thaler, D. E. (2004). *The Muslim World After 9/11*, (190-192), RAND Corporation for an in-depth analysis of the Muslim world after 9/11. This document, prepared for the United States Air Force, contains a whole chapter dedicated to Turkey, and moderate Islamist networks around the AKP is exalted as an alternative to secularist elite for moderation in Islamic world.

[249] Fuller, G. E. (2002). The Future of Political Islam, Foreign Affairs, 81(2), 48.

[250] Nişancı, E. (2005). Klasik Oryantalizmden Neo-Oryantalizme; İslam, Demokrasi ve Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi Üzerine. Avrasya Dosyası, 11(3), 89-92.

(MEPI) and later as the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative (BMENAI). BMENAI was launched as a series of high-level conferences and meetings where government officials, civil society representatives and private sector leaders from participating countries meet and discuss the numerous challenges facing the region. It was stated that it aimed to facilitate the establishment of partnerships between governments, non-governmental organizations and international institutions and the implementation of projects and programs focused on the development of the region. Regional cooperation in the participating countries had sub-topics such as good governance, rule of law, economic development, education and women's empowerment.[251]

In a report, prepared by Rand Corporation in 2003 and presented to President Bush, titled "Civil Democratic Islam: Partners, Resources, and Strategies"[252], as a result of detailed research on various Islamic countries, it was concluded that it was necessary to harmonize Islam and Muslims with the values of Western democracy and the global order. Otherwise, it was reported, that the clash of civilizations thesis could turn into reality. Among the evaluations regarding Turkey in the report, Fethullah Gülen was seen as the country's foremost representative of moderate Islam, Turkey was the most successful Islamic country thanks to the principle of secularism, yet the secular sections were generally anti-US due to the influence of nationalism, and the country, it was stated, was a good model for moderate Islam, therefore, the government should be supported in the current political situation.[253]

Besides the AKP's potential to transform Turkey in the desired way, another point that made it attractive for US ambitions, was the transformation it experienced on its own behalf. It came out of the National Vision, which was seen as an anti-Western and anti-capitalist movement, and realized exactly the transformation expected from the Islamic world and adapted to Western values. Therefore, it was thought that it could inspire similar movements in other countries.[254] As a result, the "Turkish model for the Arab-Muslim World" was defined for Turkey in the environment of Western intervention in the Middle East and the reaction against

[251] Summarized From, Erhan, Ç. (2005). Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative and Beyond, Perceptions, 153-170.
[252] Retrieved 2023, May 31 from https://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1716.html
[253] Günal, A. (2004). Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi Ve Türkiye. Ege Academic Review, 4, 158-159.
[254] Oran B. et. al. (2013). *Türk Dış Politikası Cilt: III (2001-2012)*, (256), İletişim Yayınları-Araştırma-İnceleme Dizisi.

Western values, following the post-9/11 security-oriented policies.[255]

It was stated, as early as 2002, the AKP, along with Pakistan's Tablighi Jamaat and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Movement, should be seen as one of the moderate structures that should be supported in the region[256], not only because it condemned the reactionary views of the sectarian party from which it emerged, but also because it transformed a strict state ideology.[257] There were, reportedly, some sources of funds and networks in the Middle East that fed radical Islam, in response, the West's support of moderate networks and structures were needed.[258] In response to radical Islamist ideas emanating from these networks in the Arab world, translation of the moderate thoughts of intellectuals in Islamic countries out of the Arab world, such as Indonesia and Turkey, into Arabic was recommended.[259] [260]

The concept of a model country, reminiscent of the one in the early 1990s, was initially expressed by Western academics and media, but later, it started to be promoted by high-level politicians, just like in the 90s. One of the first to talk about the concept of Turkey as a model country was Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz: "Modern Turkey shows that a democratic system is actually compatible with Islam."[261] Later on, his boss, US Secretary of State Colin Powell was not that successful at articulating the same point when he carelessly called Turkey as an "Islamic republic" and earned the ire of Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer in his speech for the opening of the TBMM.[262]

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[255] Ovalı, Ş. (2013). Decoding Turkey's Lust for Regional Clout in the Middle East: A Role Theory Perspective. Journal Of International and Area Studies, 20(1), 11.
[256] Fuller, G. E. (2002). The Future of Political Islam. Foreign Affairs, 81(2), 49.
[257] Ibid, p. 59
[258] Rabasa, A. - Benard, C. – Schwartz, L. H. - Sickl, P. (2007). Building Moderate Muslim Networks, (57), RAND Corporation.
[259] Ibid, Pp. 64-65.
[260] Such articles, books, speeches and reports were common at that time. It is sufficient to mention only a few here, as they are mostly written for operational purposes and repeating the same ideas. Newsweek Staff. (2004, October 10). And Now, The Turkish Model; Newsweek; Nasr, V. (2005). The Rise of Muslim Democracy. Journal of Democracy, 16(2), 13-27; Abramowitz, M. I. - Barkey, H. F. (2009). Turkey's Transformers: The AKP Sees Big. Foreign Affairs, 88(6), 118-128; Haas, R. N. (2002, December 4). Towards Greater Democracy in the Muslim World, Remarks to the Council on Foreign Relations; Fuller, G. E. (2004). Turkey's Strategic Model: Myths and Realities. The Washington Quarterly, 27(3), 51–64.
[261] Mufti, M. (2023). Turkey at 100: Between Constancy and Change. Uluslararası Iliskiler - Advanced Online Publication, 9.
[262] (2004, October 1), Address Of His Excellency President Ahmet Necdet Sezer at The Opening Session of The Turkish Grand National Assembly, Retrieved 2023, June 03 from https://www.tccb.gov.tr/konusmalari-ahmet-necdet-sezer/1721/7718/address-of-his-excellency-president-ahmet-necdet-sezer-at-the-opening-session-of-the-turkish-grand-national-assembly-22nd-term-3th-legislative-year

Later, The US Ambassador to Ankara, Eric Edelman, declared Turkey as the leader of this project (BMENAI) just after it was declared in the G8 summit.[263] The day Erdoğan would be hosted at the White House in early 2005, the New York Times had already described Erdoğan, who had been working with all his might to repair Washington-Ankara relations despite the strong opposition of the Turkish public after the events before the Iraq War, and Turkey under his leadership, as a success story.[264] Finally, during Erdoğan's visit to Washington in June 2005, President Bush declared Turkey as an "example of democracy in the Middle East". Over the course of the following years, this praise of Turkey as a model to be followed was to be repeated by many high-ranking officials and leaders including President Barack Obama[265] and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton[266] among many others.

3.2.2. Davutoğlu Doctrine

At this point, it is necessary to visit another source that reveals the view of the AKP, and the sum of the economic, political and economic powers represented in it, in a more comprehensive way and had an impact on foreign policy in the following years. This source is Strategic Depth, published in 2001, by Ahmet Davutoğlu, who served as the Prime Minister's chief foreign policy advisor in the first term of the AKP government, foreign minister in the second term, and prime minister after Erdoğan became president in 2014. In this book, Davutoğlu rejects the role of Turkey as a "bridge between East and West", the traditional definition of Turkey, and argues that Turkish foreign policy should be based on five basic principles: a balance to be established between security and freedom, zero problems with neighbors, rhythmic diplomacy that can adapt to different situations, flexibility and multi-channel, multidimensional foreign policy.[267]

Davutoğlu criticized the foreign policy of the Republican (i.e., Kemalist)

[263] Köylü, M. (2015). Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi (BOP), Türkiye ve Suriye. Uluslararası İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi, 1(2), 95.
[264] (2004, January 28), A Turkish Success Story," The New York Times, Retrieved 2023, May 31 from https://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/28/opinion/a-turkish-success-story.html
[265] (2009, April 6). Obama says U.S., Turkey can be model for world. Cnn. Retrieved 2023, May 31 from https://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/04/06/obama.turkey/
[266] (2011, July 16). Clinton eyes Turkey as model for Arab reform. Seacoast Online. Retrieved 2023, May 31 from: https://www.seacoastonline.com/story/news/nation-world/2011/07/16/clinton-eyes-turkey-as-model/49965708007/
[267] Summarized from Davutoğlu, A. (2008). Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007, Insight Turkey, 10(1), 77-96.

period for taking an inward looking and static position by ignoring the Ottoman past, and he claimed that Turkey, as the heir of the Ottoman Empire, had not only great opportunities but also important duties on a regional and global scale. The most comprehensive expression of these duties of Turkey, as the successor of the Ottoman Empire, was to provide an environment of peace, stability and prosperity, first in its region and then in the whole world. For this, first of all, the strict Kemalist foreign policy understanding had to be abandoned and a more flexible and pragmatic method had to be adopted. Davutoğlu uses historical references for this and shows the Tanzimat period of the Ottoman Empire and Özal period of the Turkish Republic as examples. According to him, the struggle of the Tanzimat era elites, who formed alliances with powerful Western states to protect the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and Özal's pragmatic foreign policy are similar efforts.[268] These similarities were:

- Restructuring of the state to adapt to the international conjuncture.
- Efforts to create a new political identity and culture, taking into account the influence of rising nationalist movements in both periods, threatening the integrity of the state.
- Adopting an eclectic attitude that seeks to harmonize Western values with traditional values.
- Efforts, during the Tanzimat period, to integrate into the European system formed with the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and, in the post-Cold War period, into the EU system, which had a deep integration trend
- There have been strategic pursuits in line with Britain, which was the rising power in the balance of power system brought by the Congress of Vienna, and the United States, which became the sole superpower in the Cold War period.[269]

Davutoğlu's concept of "strategic depth" consists of four basic factors:

- Geographic depth: Turkey's geographical location with equal access to the Balkans, the Middle East, Central Asia and Russia.
- Historical depth: The regions shared Ottoman history and Turkey's

[268] Davutoğlu, A. (2011). *Stratejik Derinlik*, (86), Küre Yayınları.
[269] Şenalp, M. G. (2017). Yeni-Osmanlıcılığın Ekonomi Politiğinin Bir Eleştirisi: Ulusötesi Bir Hegemonya Projesinin Yükseliş ve Düşüşü. Praksis, 44(45), 955.

unique position as the Ottoman's successor in using this position as a diplomatic tool.

- Geo-cultural influence: current cultural similarities with the post-Ottoman world stemming from common heritage (i.e., Islam).
- Geographical-economic importance: Turkey's central position as a transit country for Europe's energy resources.[270]

In summary, Davutoğlu's thoughts based on a more active foreign policy with the emphasis on Islamism against nationalism, harmony with Western states and Western international institutions, and the adoption of Western values (i.e., free market economy) by adapting them to local values were seen as Neo-Ottomanism. It has been argued that it has similarities with the foreign policy in Özal period. There was indeed a situation similar to the 90s: international conditions were once again conducive to Turkey's activism, Turkey was supported by the USA, again, and there was still a neoliberal environment, but unlike this time, the socioeconomic transformation of the country, which started during the Özal era, had made great progress.[271]

Despite all the nostalgic praise of the Ottoman past, Davutoğlu did not hesitate to state that Turkey is a medium-sized state and within the current balance of power, it needs the strategic weight of the USA, reminding Özal.[272] Therefore, it was not surprising that his attitude had a positive impact on the other side of the ocean and that his book was defined as "the most systematic, substantial, and comprehensive vision of Turkey's strategic position yet written".[273] In this respect, the main lines of Davutoğlu's foreign policy, just like in the Özal period, can be explained by the increased regional activity compared to previous periods (which was not possible under the conditions of the Cold War anyway), cooperation with the West, and the search for influence through this cooperation. This has nothing to do with resurrecting the Ottoman Empire, as claimed. Apart from the Ottoman and Islamic praises in his book and articles, there was nothing anti-Western in the items Davutoğlu formulated as the ten-year goals of foreign policy: EU membership in 2023, regional integration

[270] Murinson, A. (2006). The Strategic Depth Doctrine of Turkish Foreign Policy. Middle Eastern Studies, 42(6), 948-951.
[271] Oran B. et. al. (2013). *Türk Dış Politikası Cilt: III (2001-2012)*, (197), İletişim Yayınları-Araştırma-İnceleme Dizisi.
[272] Davutoğlu, A. (2008). Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007, Insight Turkey, 10(1), 88i
[273] Fuller, G. E. (2008). *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*. (96), United States Institute of Peace Press.

in terms of security and economic cooperation, playing an effective role in the resolution of regional conflicts, taking part in all global arenas, taking an important role in international organizations and being among the top 10 economies of the world.[274]

When the objectives set by Davutoğlu are assessed bearing in mind the shifting global conjuncture after the Cold War, it can be said that the main determinant in this foreign policy concept change is Turkey's effort to integrate into the new world order with a different content, rather than Turkey's aiming to remember the Ottoman past and re-establish it. Connected to the global order through security, geography and strategy in the past, Turkey was trying to re-integrate into the post-Cold War order through civil society, capital movements and identity politics. Providing the content of this change, AKP presented its transformation model as a strategic value to the Western system. That is, if Islamists could transform in Turkey, similar transformations could take place elsewhere.[275] In other words, Turkey has started to use its Muslim identity, ironically useful, in this sense, because it was secularized by the earlier policies of the republican era, as a solution to its domestic identity and democratization problems and also as the basis for developing good relations with its neighbors. This identity-based politics replaced the Cold War policies based on Turkey's geopolitical importance.[276] At the same time, this identity which was moderate and did not conflict with Western values, had the chance to continue to be a strategic value for the West, as it served as a model for Islam, which the West desired to see in the Muslim world at the same time.

3.3. Three Pillars Of the AKP's Foreign Policy

Moving from here, we can list the three pillars of the Turkish foreign policy of the AKP period, which was expressed in the concept of strategic depth formulated by Davutoğlu and was compatible with the moderate Islamic role model defined by the USA for Turkey:

1. The foreign policy harmony between the West and the AKP in the concept of a moderate Islamic role model.

[274] Oran B. et. al. (2013*). Türk Dış Politikası Cilt: III (2001-2012),* (140), İletişim Yayınları-Araştırma-İnceleme Dizisi.
[275] Uzgel İ. et. al. (2009). *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu*. (379), Phoenix Yayınevi.
[276] Yalvaç, F. (2012). Strategic Depth or Hegemonic Depth? A Critical Realist Analysis of Turkey's Position in the World System. International Relations, 26(2), 167.

2. Closely related to the first, the AKP's reliance on the Western support to gain legitimacy and advantage over its rivals in domestic politics.
3. At the point where the development of the Turkish economy had reached at the time, merits of the AKP's domestic and foreign policy choices for the Turkish and International Capital.

3.3.1. Foreign Policy Harmony between AKP and the West

The question of whether Turkey was really able to carry out the role designated to it or whether the achievement of the Turkish model could be tailed by other Islamic nations will not be discussed here, as it is outside the constraints of this study.[277] Yet, what is really a concern to this study is the reaction of the Turkish ruling elite to this. As could be seen in the case of Colin Powell and the President Sezer, secular elite of Turkey was not very comfortable with the idea of being the model for moderate Islam. Yet, on the side of AKP it was seen as an opportunity rather than a threat.

After Erdoğan came to power, he did not draw a profile that would refute the allegations about his trips to the USA in 2001 and 2002. He made great efforts[278] to meet the demand for the Turkish territory to be used in order to open a front from the North regarding the occupation of Iraq, which would begin right after he had come to power. To a group of activists, including the founders of his party, who went to Iraq to be human shields, he did not hesitate to say "why did you come back, you should have stayed there".[279] However, both the great opposition in the society against this demand and the fact that the Army could not take a determined stance, resulted in a negative decision in the parliamentary vote. This caused great disappointment on the US side and the famous "hood incident"[280] took place shortly after this. With this operation, the USA was both sending a message to the Army, which it believed had an

[277] For a detailed discussion see Altunışık, M. B. (2005). The Turkish Model and Democratization in the Middle East. Arab Studies Quarterly, 27(1/2), 45-63.
[278] Bila, B. (2003, February, 28). Yığınakta hata. Milliyet, 16; (2003, February, 28). Gün gün Tezkere krizi. Milliyet, 16.
[279] (2003, February 27). “Niye döndünüz, kalsaydınız orada”, Milliyet, 17.
[280] Following the 2003 American invasion of Iraq, an incident known as "The Hood Event" (Turkish: *Çuval Olayı*) occurred on July 4, 2003, in which a group of Turkish military troops operating in Northern Iraq were apprehended, led away while wearing hoods, and interrogated by American forces. It was claimed that the Turkish Army was planning to kill the Iraqi-Kurdish governor of the province of Kirkuk. For the details of the incident under the light of Wikileaks documents see (2011, April 2). Çuval Olayı'nın perde arkası WikiLeaks'te. T24, Retrieved 2023, May 28 from: https://t24.com.tr/haber/cuval-olayinin-perde-arkasi-wikileakste,136878

important role in not preventing this decision,[281] and that it would no longer tolerate Turkey's constant presence in Northern Iraq. An important proof of Erdoğan's faithfulness to the promises he allegedly made during his first visits to Washington was that he even refrained from protesting the United States diplomatically after this event, which caused a great reaction in the society, and mocked the opposition's criticism in this direction.[282]

In the continuation of the process, Erdoğan, who was disturbed by the negative atmosphere created by the issue of the resolution, would first try to bring a second bill to the parliament but give up after the reactions,[283] then he would need to confirm that Turkey is a friend of the USA in an article he wrote to the Wall Street Journal.[284] Minister of Defense, Vecdi Gönül, on the other hand, was going to declare that they allowed the USA to use Incirlik as they wished, even though the resolution did not pass.[285] Here again, an important point was that the US was claiming that the Army, which was the main agent the USA blamed about the issue of the resolution[286], was preparing a conspiracy without permission from the government[287], and AKP, on the other side, was following a policy in line with this in order to gain an advantage over the Army in domestic politics. This pattern would be frequently repeated in the following period, as the AKP used foreign policy engagements to its advantage in domestic politics.

In May 2003, Abdullah Gül, the then foreign minister of Turkey, called for measures against the radical movements and for the initiation of reforms toward democracy within the Islamic world, in line with the concept of Turkey as a role model, in his speech at the Tehran summit of Organization of the Islamic Conference.[288]

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[281] (2023, May 7). "Wolfowitz: Accept your mistake, our partnership shall continue". Hürriyet, Retrieved 2023, May 28 from: https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/wolfowitz-accept-your-mistake-our-partnership-shall-continue-145127

[282] (2023, July 8). Erdoğan'dan Muhalefete "Nota" Eleştirisi, Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023, May 29 from: https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/erdogandan-muhalefete-nota-elestirisi-157980 Erdoğan answers a question about the opposition's demand for a diplomatic note to be sent to the USA regarding the "Hood Incident": "What kind of note are you giving, musical note?"

[283] (2003, March 7). Ülke İşgal Altında, Anayasa Suçu İşleniyor, Bianet. Retrieved 2023, May 29 from: https://m.bianet.org/kadin/siyaset/17146-ulke-isgal-altinda-anayasa-sucu-isleniyor

[284] Erdoğan, R. T. (2003, March 31). My Country is Your Faithful Ally and Friend. The Wall Street Journal.

[285] (2005, May 18). Tezkereyi Ret Hata Oldu, Hürriyet. 1.

[286] Birand, M. A. (2003, May 10). ABD'yi şaşırtan Türkler kim?. Milliyet. Retrieved 2023, May 30 from: https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/abd-yi-sasirtan-turkler-kim-145736

[287] Bila, F. (2003, July 20). Özel Siyaset Belgesi ve Rumsfeld. Milliyet. Retrieved 2023, May 30 from: https://www.milliyet.com.tr/yazarlar/fikret-bila/ozel-siyaset-belgesi-ve-rumsfeld-316460

[288] (2003, May 29). Gül'den Demokrasi Çağrısı. Voice of America, Retrieved 2023, Ma 30 from: www.voaturkce.com/a/a-17-a-2003-05-29-13-1-87900592/809268.html

Abdullah Gül revealed his views on Turkey's projected new role with an article[289] and later openly declared that they were acting together with the US in BMENAI in order to "bring freedom and democracy to Islamic countries."[290] Prime Minister Erdoğan made a speech at Harvard University in November 2003, stating that Islam and democracy are compatible and the case of Turkey proves that democracy can flourish in Muslim countries.[291] Later, In February 2004, when the BMENAI plans were leaked to the press Erdoğan stated in a TV program that Diyarbakır could be the capital of this project.[292]

The USA expectations from Turkey regarding Middle East was not limited to Turkey's role as a moderate Islamic "source of inspiration", the USA expected Turkey to improve its relations with Israel, support the stability in Northern Iraq and lastly join the efforts for containment of Syria and Iran.[293]

Regarding relations with Israel, Erdoğan decided to visit Israel in May 2005 just before his visit to Washington in June. Turkey had already decided to buy spy aircraft from Israel in April 2005, but during Erdoğan's visit, several agreements were reached between the two countries regarding modernization of Turkey's combat aircraft, buying missiles from Israel and military personnel exchange as well.[294] Later on the relations with Israel would deteriorate due to various factors including Israel's hard line policy in Gaza, Turkey's building of better relations with the other regional countries and so less need to be on good terms with Israel and alleged intimacy between Israel and Northern Iraq.[295] Concerning relations with Northern Iraq, AKP was forced to pursue its foreign policy with a security centric vision because of Erbil's *de facto* independent status but the situation started to change in 2005 with Turkey's participation in BMENAI. Turkey supported Jalal Talabani's presidency, hosted a meeting between representatives of Iraqi Sunni groups and US Ambassador to

[289] See Gül, A. (2004). Turkey's Role in a Changing Middle East Environment. Mediterranean Quarterly, 15(1), 1-7.
[290] (2006, March 10). Gül: BOP içinde ABD ile Birlikte Hareket Ediyoruz. Radikal, 1.
[291] Oran B. et. al. (2013). *Türk Dış Politikası Cilt: III (2001-2012),* (268), İletişim Yayınları-Araştırma-İnceleme Dizisi
[292] (2004, February 18). Milliyet, 17.
[293] "Robert Olson, "Relations Among Turkey, Iraq, Kurdistan-Iraq, the Wider Middle East, and Iran", Mediterranean Quarterely, C. XVII, No. 4 (Güz 2006), s. 23" as cited in Yeşilyurt, N. - Akdevelioğlu, A. (2009). Turkey's Middle East Policy under the JDP Rule, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, 40, 52.
[294] Yeşilyurt, N. - Akdevelioğlu, A. (2009). Turkey's Middle East Policy under the JDP Rule, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, 40, 54.
[295] Hersh, S. M. (2004, June 20). Plan B. New Yorker. Retrieved 2023, June 1 from: https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/06/28/plan-b-2

Baghdad and then supported the new Iraqi constitution, *de facto* recognizing the Kurdistan Regional Government.[296]

So, the first two requests were delivered but the containment of Iran and Syria was too big of a bite for Turkey to swallow, for security concerns and because of its economic relations with the two as well. Improving relations with Syria was, later, tolerated by the USA because the good relations between the two was seen as an opportunity to move Syria away from Iran and closer to the West.

The Middle East was not the only place where Turkish foreign policy coincided with the foreign policy of the Western Alliance. Some initiatives taken in the Western Balkans within the framework of the Davutoğlu Doctrine were also appreciated by the European Commision in the 2010 Progress Report on Turkey: "…Turkey supports integration of all countries in the region both with the EU and at the Euro-Atlantic level."[297] Turkey, in line with its Atlanticist approach towards Balkans in 1990s, participated in diplomatic, humanitarian, and stabilization efforts in both Bosnia and Kosovo and also engaged in mediation activities in the region, the greatest success of which being the İstanbul Declaration on Peace and Stability in the Balkans signed by Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2010.[298] In fact, the "zero problems with the neighbors" policy was seen as an approach compatible with and complementing the West in the context of its foreign policy in the Balkans.[299] Only after the mid-2000s when the EU integration process of the regional countries drifted towards stagnation, thus the decrease of the EU's hegemony in the region, Turkey started to take a more active role in the reigon with a reference to Ottoman Empire's legacy in the region. Yet, despite the references to the common Ottoman heritage, Turkey's activities were seen as being still in line with the West, aiming at cooperation within the region and supporting the integration processes of the Balkan countries into the EU.[300]

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[296] Yeşilyurt, N. - Akdevelioğlu, A. (2009). Turkey's Middle East Policy under the JDP Rule, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, 40, 58-59.

[297] See European Commission Turkey 2010 Progress Report. Retrieved 2023, August 31 from: https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/AB_Iliskileri/Tur_En_Realitons/Progress/turkey_progress_report_2010.pdf Retrieved 2023.

[298] Rašidagić, E. K. – Hesova, Z. (2020). Development of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards the Western Balkans with Focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatian International Relations Review, 26(86), 101

[299] Aydıntaşbaş, A. (2019). From Myth to Reality: How to understand Turkey's role in the Western Balkans, European Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved 2023, August 31 from: https://ecfr.eu/publication/from_myth_to_reality_how_to_understand_turkeys_role_in_the_western_balkans/

[300] Koç, Z. E. – Önsoy, M. (2018). An Evaluatıon of Turkey's Western Balkans Policy under The Akp and Prospects for the Postdavutoğlu Era, SUTAD, (43), 358.

The BMENAI was a significant factor in the United States' support for Turkey's foreign policy, but it cannot account for all of it. With a few exceptions, the US has largely supported Turkish foreign policy. The following list substantially sums up the justifications for this support:

- AKP was a party that rejected its Islamist past and tried hard to show it, presenting itself as “conservative democrat”, and in this case, its opening to the Middle East was a process that was closely followed and generally supported by the United States.
- The most important dimension of the Middle East initiative was the Greater Middle East Project, and the AKP was presented as a model or a source of inspiration for democratization in the region in question.
- While the AKP was getting closer with the Muslim countries in the region, it continued to develop close economic, military and political relations with Israel, at least until 2009, and to have warm relations with the Jewish lobbies in the USA.
- With the overthrow of the minority Sunni government in Iraq after the US invasion in 2003, Iran's influence in this country increased, and in this case, Turkey, a close ally of the USA, was preferred to play a balancing role against Iran.
- Strengthening Turkey's military ties with the Gulf States was a policy supported by the United States since the 1980s, in line with the Carter Doctrine.
- Again, in the context of balancing Iran's growing power in the region, Turkey started to establish close relations with Syria in order to weaken and reduce the ties between Syria and Iran. This rapprochement was already increasing since the 1998 Adana Accord. Although the US initially did not welcome Turkey's rapprochement with Syria because it wanted this country to be contained like Iran, over time it was more tolerant due to the potential of this close relationship to bring Syria closer to the Western system.
- Turkey had the potential to be useful in solving various problems with its increasing power and effectiveness in the region. Convincing Syria to allow UN investigation into the Hariri assassination, mediation attempts between Iraqi Sunni and Shiite groups, the US and Iraqi Sunni groups, Israel and

Palestine, Israel and Syria were seen as constructive policies and supported by the US.[301] [302]

3.3.2. Domestic Battles and Western Support to AKP

At this point, it is useful to dwell on the effects, on Turkey's domestic politics, of the role which the West wanted Turkey to play in the post-9/11 period and the AKP's enthusiastic stance to take on this role. After the 1999 elections, with the effect of Öcalan's capture, the jump in nationalist votes created, to say the least, unrest on the US side, and it was stated that the approach of the new governments to alliances and their stance in solving long-term problems (such as Cyprus and Iraq) may be uncertain.[303]

The United States saw the Army as the most reliable partner in Turkey during the Cold War, as the relations were security-oriented. Later, when Özal came to power, relations somewhat diversified and the weight shifted towards the government as Özal was a leader strongly supported by the USA. But in the continuation of the 1990s, besides security-oriented issues such as the encirclement of Iraq and the defeat of the PKK, relations with the Army came to the fore again in the process of removing the Welfare Party from power as well.[304]

Since the beginning of the 2000s, it had been emphasized that Turkey was no longer important with where it was but what kind of country it was. It had also been stated that the USA was always in favor of more democracy in Turkey and that the AKP did a successful job on this path.[305] Considering that one of the most important lessons taught by the history of the US-Turkey relations was the value of getting along with the US in order to gain and hold on to power in Turkey, it was unthinkable that the AKP did not appreciate this support. For this reason, AKP embraced the BMENAI, which was among the most important conditions for the USA to support AKP in

[301] Summarized from Oran B. et. al. (2013). *Türk Dış Politikası Cilt: III (2001-2012),* (264-265), İletişim Yayınları-Araştırma-İnceleme Dizisi .
[302] Regarding the 7th article in the list, Turkey's use of soft power will not be discussed here in detail because this study is only interested in whether it was connected to Western interests and why it was welcome by the West. For an in–depth discussion about Turkey's soft power in the Middle East see Altunışık, M. B. (2008). The Possibilities and Limits of Turkey's Soft Power in the Middle East. Insight Turkey, 10(2), 41-54.
[303] Makovsky, A. (1999). Turkey's Nationalist Moment. The Washington Quarterly, 5-7.
[304] Uzgel İ. et. al. (2009). AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu. (367), Phoenix Yayınevi.
[305] See Roundtable Discussion. (2007). Turkey, Now and in the Future. Turkish Studies, 8(1), 151–163.

domestic politics, and acted as the advocate of this project.[306]

After the AKP came to power, opposition to it took a Kemalist and nationalist tone, largely due to the party's Islamist past and current rhetoric and practices. The principle of secularism in the founding of the republic began to be the most important matter of opposition, and in addition to the political opposition, a segment of civil society and the Army began to show sensitivity. At this point, what surprised the Army and the Kemalist opposition around it, which had traditionally received the support of the USA, was that they realized the fact that their old friend was no longer such a close one. In this period, evaluations began to emerge, from the other side of the ocean, accusing the Army of adopting a more doctrinal and dogmatic Kemalist approach instead of supporting AKP's efforts to modernize and move away from its fundamentalist past, and that the nationalists were against the European Union membership.[307]

While the USA had been a major supporter of Turkey's EU membership for many years, now an institution (Rand Corporation), which had close relations with the American government institutions, was stating, in its report, that Turkey's EU membership was a dream in the current state of civil-military relations in the country, and even it was said that if Turkey applied for NATO membership at that time, it was doubtful whether it would be accepted.[308] It was emphasized that Kemalism alienated the country from its history and culture, that now with the removal of the Kemalists from power, Turkey started to turn to the Middle East region by itself and could establish reasonable relations, and that Turkey could remain meaningful for the United States in the Middle East only with a moderate Islamist administration.[309]

Authors with similar profiles such as Henri Barkey and Graham Fuller often stated in their articles and books that the Kemalist approach, which excluded identities other than "Turkish", was statist, stayed away from making reforms on human rights, argued that the Army should protect its place and immunity in politics, should be abandoned. During the AKP rule, the statements and articles of various American officials and experts suggesting the withdrawal of the Army to its main duties, also made it clear that the US preferred to work with a political movement which supported

[306] Uzgel İ. et. al. (2009). *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu*. (369), Phoenix Yayınevi .
[307] Larrabee, F. S. - Lesser, I. O. (2003). *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*. (63), RAND Corporation.
[308] Ibid, p. 29.
[309] Ibid, pp. 188-9

the BMENAI in this period, was loyal to the free market principles, adopted the discourse of human rights and democratization, aimed at EU membership, was conservative but had good relations with both Muslim countries and Israel as well.[310] In later publications, it was clearly stated that this attitude was adopted in the early years of the AKP: "The United States has a strong stake in a stable, democratic Turkey and, beyond U.S. interests in Turkey, in the success of a political model that showcases the coexistence of a ruling Islam-rooted political party and secular democracy"[311]

As a party trying to hold on to the power, the AKP received reactions from both its own base and opposition bases and from different power groups (for different reasons) in the country, as it tried to create a political transformation that opposed to the traditional state structure (because of AKP's concern for transforming the political life and critical institutions to its own benefit) and a neoliberal transformation in the economy.[312] One of the examples of this was the removal of the administrative powers of the National Security Council within the framework of the European Union Harmonization package in 2004, transforming it into a consultative structure only, and the appointment of a civilian secretary general to its board.[313] In this case, the AKP inevitably lost its legitimacy in the eyes of a section of the people and various power groups, and used this Western orientation in foreign policy and the support of the USA and the EU as a means of legitimacy. In this way, with the legitimacy provided by the EU process and the support provided by the participation in the BMENAI, the position of the Army on the legal ground could be regressed, and a position was gained in daily politics.[314]

The reward for being the center party, establishing good relations with the West, was not merely to provide security against the Army, which had intervened in various ways before; this was also the way to gain legitimacy in the eyes of liberal circles, who were led by TÜSİAD as an institution and had sided with the Army in the last (post-modern) coup. It is possible to evaluate, Turkey's EU membership process, which means deepening its integration into the globalization process, participation in

[310] Oran B. et. al. (2013). *Türk Dış Politikası Cilt: III (2001-2012),* (255), İletişim Yayınları-Araştırma-İnceleme Dizisi.
[311] Rabasa, A. - Larabee, F. S. (2008). *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*. (98), RAND Corporation.
[312] Uzgel İ. et. al. (2009). *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu.* (357-358), Phoenix Yayınevi .
[313] (2004, October 27). MGK'da Bugün Sivil Dönem Başladı, Voice of America. Retrieved 2023, June 5 from: https://www.voaturkce.com/a/a-17-a-2004-10-27-9-1-87942037/822623.html
[314] Roundtable Discussion. (2007). Turkey, Now and in the Future. Turkish Studies, 8(1), 153.

the BMENAI and the Cyprus policy in particular within this framework.[315]

The foreign policy followed by the AKP regarding the solution of the Cyprus issue, which has been one of Turkey's biggest problems with the Western alliance for many years, is one of the most visible examples of the above-mentioned situation. Cyprus was admitted to EU, with Turkey's all objections ignored, in spite of the fact that a part of the island was officially under occupation. In this environment, AKP tried to solve the Cyprus issue in line with the Western interests despite the intense nationalist opposition in both Northern Cyprus and Turkey and the opposition of Rauf Denktaş, who had become the symbolic name of the Turkish Cypriots. Many efforts were made to obtain positive results from the referendum in which the Annan Plan was voted, with many diverse methods, from changing the government in Northern Cyprus[316] to marginalizing Denktaş.[317] Even though the government that resisted the plan was overthrown and another government was formed under the leadership of Mehmet Ali Talat, who defended the same position as the AKP,[318] the problem could not be resolved as the Greek Cypriot side still voted against the referendum. Even though the result was unsuccessful, the AKP's efforts at least paid off in the eyes of the United States: "What made Erdoğan's star shine the most in Washington was that he led political reforms by embracing the EU goal and standing behind the Annan Plan on Cyprus despite the opposition he faced inside." [319]

Erdoğan's star was not only shining in Washington. The EU actively stood by the AKP through the discourse of democratization, in the problems faced by the AKP while changing the political balances in its favor with the EU harmonization packages in order to secure itself in domestic politics, and against the difficulties caused by the Army, bureaucracy and the judiciary. In the crisis before the 2007 Presidential election, when a controversial set of statements, released on the website of the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces, was deemed e-memorandum (or e-coup), the support for AKP was not late. Just a day after the occasion, EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn stated: "The timing is rather surprising and strange. It's

[315] Uzgel İ. et. al. (2009). *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu.* (366), Phoenix Yayınevi.
[316] Doğan, Y. (2006, September 19). Ada'daki Darbenin Suyu Çıktı. Milliyet. Retrieved 2023, June 5 from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ada-daki-darbenin-suyu-cikti-5108330
[317] (2006, October 1). AKP 'Babanı Sustur' Dedi. Habertürk. Retrieved 2023, June 5 from: https://www.haberturk.com/gundem/haber/1717-akp-babani-sustur-dedi
[318] (2006, September 3). Mehmet Ali Talat: Erdoğan Avantajımız. Yeni Şafak. Retrieved 2023, June 5 from: https://www.yenisafak.com/roportaj/mehmet-ali-talat-erdogan-avantajimiz-3987
[319] Çongar, Y. (2005, August 29). Erdoğan'ın Amerika'da İmajı Düzeliyor. Milliyet.

important that the military respects also the rules of the democratic game and its own role in that democratic game"[320] The USA support was also right there when Secretary of the State Condoleezza Rice warned the Army not to interfere in politics.[321]

Under these circumstances, the general evaluation of the so called e-memorandum incident on April 27 in the Turkish press was pro-government, not only in pro-AKP newspapers such as Yeni Şafak and Zaman, but also in Milliyet, Hürriyet, Sabah, Aksam and Vatan, which could be seen as the voice of the Istanbul-based big bourgeoisie represented in TÜSİAD at that time.[322] The fact that the event was generally evaluated within the framework of intervention in democracy in newspapers could be seen as a result of the Western support given to AKP against the Army. As could be remembered, on February 28, 1997, when a similar attempt was made by the Army in a much more serious manner, headlines supporting the position of the Army were made by the newspapers representing the same circles.

The AKP's friends in the West were of the opinion that the old established order wanted to remove the AKP from power by any means, including a coup, and they strongly stood behind the AKP with the rhetoric of supporting the democratic process in any case, as in the case of the closure lawsuit brought against the AKP by the Constitutional Court. During the closure lawsuit, which was an important moment when the society in Turkey was divided into two, the expected support came from the USA. Former US Ambassador to Ankara Morton Abramovitz described this case as a judicial coup.[323] In another article published on the same day, it was stated that the Turkish Constitution was anti-democratic together with a threat for "enormous economic consequences for the country" in case the decision was made for the closure of the AKP.[324]

It was not only the support of the West that strengthened the AKP internally by embracing the EU reforms and supporting the BMNEAI. Again, in relation to the

[320] (2007, April 28). EU warns Turkish army over vote. BBC News. Retrieved 2023, June 8 from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6602661.stm
[321] (2007, May 2). U.S., EU warn Turkish military on crisis. Associated Press. Retrieved 2023 June 8 from:
https://www.ctvnews.ca/u-s-eu-warn-turkish-military-on-crisis-1.239695
[322] Atay, S. E. (2019). Çerçeveleme Kuramı: 27 Nisan e-Muhtıra Haberlerinin Türk Yazılı Basında Sunumu. Ata İlet Dergisi, 18, 22-23.
[323] Abramowitz, M. I. (2008, May 4). Turkey's Judicial Coup D'etat, Newsweek. Retrieved 2023, June 8 from:
https://carnegieendowment.org/2008/04/14/turkey-s-judicial-coup-d-etat-pub-20232
[324] Matthews, O. (2008, May 4). Attack Of The Judges, Newsweek. Retrieved 2023, June 7 from: https://www.newsweek.com/attack-judges-85999

BMNEAI, AKP's assertive, extrovert and independent (at least in the eyes of the electorate) attitude in foreign policy enabled it to receive the support of the nationalist voters as well as the religious voters who supported it from the very beginning. Erdoğan's pro-Palestinian rhetoric[325] on the Palestinian-Israeli issue, his criticism of Israel's harshness[326] and brutality in the Gaza war, [327] his taking an active position with a Middle East tour which included Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to stop the war,[328] succeeded in capturing an important parallel with the feelings of the Turkish people on this issue. It is noteworthy that the main opposition Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi–CHP), which was probably aware of this situation, described Israel's operations as "state terrorism" in order not to fall behind.[329] Erdoğan used his proactive foreign policy particularly effectively to project his image of an extrovert, globalist and progressive, thereby gaining an advantage over his "defensive nationalist" rivals, CHP and MHP.[330] Thus, it had been revealed that domestic policy was heavily intertwined with foreign policy and foreign policy was used as an important tool to gain competitive advantage in domestic policy.[331]

AKP's active foreign policy was also supported by the liberal circles in Turkey on the grounds that the traditional defensive and secular approach led to hostile relations with neighbors, while the new proactive foreign policy redefined Turkey's own strategic value thanks to its "multicultural, democratic and pluralistic" structure that none of the other countries in the region had.[332] Indeed, the AKP, having seen the mistakes of the Welfare Party, relied on US support, as well as relying on the support of a rapidly enriching capitalist class, thanks to its integration into the global economy. Owing to this bilateral support, it was able to take the steps of democratization, which

[325] (2008, March 5). İsrail dostumuz, dost acı söyler, Milliyet. Retrieved 2023, June 7 from: https://www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/israil-dostumuz-dost-aci-soyler-501870
[326] (2008, December 29). Erdoğan: İsrail'in Saldırısı Barışa Darbe. NTV Haber.
[327] (2008, December 29). Erdoğan: Ciddi İnsanlık Suçu, Milliyet. Retrieved 2023, June 7 from: https://www.milliyet.com.tr/dunya/erdogan-ciddi-insanlik-sucu-1033943
[328] (2008, December 31). Başbakan Erdoğan'dan önemli açıklamalar, Milliyet. Retrieved 2023, June 8 from https://www.milliyet.com.tr/siyaset/basbakan-erdogandan-onemli-aciklamalar-1886723
[329] (2008, December 29). "İsrail'in Gazze Saldırıları" under "Ankara, Melih Gökçek'ten kurtulacak". Cumhuriyet. Retrieved 2023, June 8 from: https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/ankara-melih-gokcekten-kurtulacak-31536
[330] Weymouth, L. (2009, February 9). "We Believe We Can Achieve Something" Turkey's prime minister speaks out from Davos". Newsweek.
[331] Öniş, Z. (2011). Multiple Faces of the New Turkish Foreign Policy. Insight Turkey, 13(1), 57. See also Öniş, Z. (2007). Conservative Globalism versus Defensive Nationalism: Political Parties and Paradoxes of Europeanization in Turkey. Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans, 9(3), 247-262.
[332] See Keyman, F. (2009). Globalization, Modernity and Democracy: In Search of a Viable Domestic Policy for a Sustainable Turkish Foreign Policy. New Perspectives on Turkey, 40, 7–26.

previous governments could not achieve, that would provide a stronger connection to the Western system, and to realize the neoliberal economic transformation as well.[333]

3.3.3. Reciprocal Support between AKP and the Capital

When the AKP came to power, it had been only one and a half years since the Turkish economy experienced one of the biggest crises in its history. After the economic crisis of 2001, neoliberal reforms, which were constantly delayed due to the adoption of populism, by weak coalition governments throughout the 90s as a way of holding on to power, and the strengthening of the labor movement from the late 80s, began to be carried out. Kemal Derviş, left his "star" position at the World Bank[334] in order to carry out these reforms and to provide the foreign finance[335] that Turkey would need in this reform process, and assumed the duties of the Ministry of State Responsible for the Economy and the Undersecretary of the Treasury. With Derviş's arrival, a stand-by agreement was reached with the IMF as a result of long negotiations,[336] and the urgent need for external funding was provided.[337] But this was not free at all. IMF officials ensured the smooth realization of the desired transformation by imposing conditions on Derviş such as accelerating privatizations,[338] appointing market-friendly managers to partially privatized public institutions, and if this does not happen, the resources to be provided as per the agreement would not be released.[339] Derviş frequently used the threat of resignation against the resistance of the bureaucracy[340] and politics.[341]

Derviş's privatization and marketization moves extended to every sector, including health and education.[342] Measures were taken to ensure that the capital sector

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[333] Oran B. et. al. (2013). *Türk Dış Politikası Cilt: III (2001-2012),* (133), İletişim Yayınları-Araştırma-İnceleme Dizisi.
[334] (2001, May 12). Kemal Derviş, Dünya Bankası'nın yıldızıydı. Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023, June 10 from: https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/kemal-dervis-dunya-bankasinin-yildiziydi-39247405
[335] (2001, May 1). Derviş Mayası Tuttu! 'Dış Yardım Gelir. Milliyet, 1
[336] (2001, May 6). IMF'den gelecek 8 milyar doların vadesi de uygun. Milliyet, 7.
[337] (2001, May 1). İki ayda 7 milyar dolar. Türkiye'nin IMF ve Dünya Bankası'ndan sağlayacağı toplam 14,3 milyar dolarlık kredinin yaklaşık yarısı önümüzdeki iki ayda geliyor, Milliyet, 7.
[338] (2001, May 1). Telekom çok kritik. Milliyet, 7.
[339] (2001, June 28). Hatlar karıştı, Bakan Derviş, Telekom yönetim değişikliği operasyonunda, uluslararası kuruluşlara tam mesajın verilebilmesi için Genel Müdür İbrahim H. Alptürk'ün de değiştirilmesinde ısrar etti. Milliyet, 7.
[340] "(2001, June 28). Enis Öksüz, Telekom'da gün boyu direndi. Kemal Derviş, istifanın eşiğine geldi. IMF, "Telekom çözülmezse para yok"' dedi. Milliyet, 1.
[341] (2001, June 11). Sıra 'Bal' krizinde MHP'li Faruk Bal "Emlakbank kapatılmamalı" deyince Derviş bir kez daha IMF'ye karşı zor durumda kaldı. Milliyet, 1.
[342] (2001, May 6). Sağlıkta Derviş düzeni. Milliyet, 8.

is included in the decision-making processes in the management of economy[343] as envisaged by neoliberal economics, the weight of technocrats was increased instead of the elected ones, the decision-making processes were cleansed from its political character,[344] the free exchange rate regime was adopted, the interest rate was increased[345] and taxes were reduced[346] in line with the demands of external financial resources.

As the Turkish lira depreciated, exports became more attractive,[347] and after a few months, relatively successful results began to appear in inflation, as Derviş promised.[348] Derviş's program received full support from foreign government[349] and private sector representatives.[350] As a result, foreign capital, which responded to the attractive invitations of the "Super Minister" in his trips abroad,[351] began to slowly flow into the Turkish economy.[352]

The AKP, which came to power in such an environment where the economy got back on track after a period when the people had already swallowed the bitter recipe and punished those responsible at the ballot box, continued the reforms initiated by Derviş with the ease of having a single party government. In this, as well as the fact that it came after coalition governments that pursued unsuccessful economic policies for the previous ten years, AKP also had in its arsenal the teachings of the solidarity society promised by Islam. So, it used and supported the structures within this framework against the social disintegration which would arise from the liquidating feature of the neoliberal transformation in the labor market and the protectionist environment of the public economy and, in return, was supported by them as well.[353]

Using these advantages, AKP made strong interventions in the labor market

[343] (2001, May 1). Patronlardan deklarasyon .Altı maddelik bir deklarasyon yayımlayan patronlar, hükümete 'bize danışın' çağrısında bulundu. Milliyet, 8.
[344] (2001, May 31). BDDK'da en az üç kişi sektörden olsun. Milliyet, 9.
[345] (2001, May 28). Olayların içinden. Ya faiz yükselecek yada döviz. Milliyet, 7.
[346] (2001, June 14). Hedef vergiler. Devlet Bakanı Derviş, New York'ta yatırımcılara açıkladı: Orta vadede vergileri düşürüp daha çok vergi toplamayı hedefliyoruz. Milliyet, 1.
[347] (2001, June 5). Kriz, ithalatçıları ihracatçı yaptı. Milliyet, 6.
[348] (2001, May 31). 'Yaz sonu iş imkânı doğar' Kemal Derviş, sıkıntıların bir süre daha devam edeceğini, ancak yaz sonuna doğru yeniden büyüyen bir Türkiye'ye kavuşacağımızı söyledi. Milliyet, 1.
[349] (2001, June 11). Frenkel'in ciddi ikazları: Geçtiğimiz hafta Kemal Derviş, İsrail Dışişleri Bakanı Şimon Perez'in jest olarak gönderdiği dünyaca ünlü İsrailli ekonomistleri ağırladı. Milliyet, 6.
[350] (2001, June 5). İsrail mucizesinin mimarı programı konuşmaya geldi. Derviş'in özel davetiyle Türkiye'ye gelen, Merrill International'ın Başkanı Jacob Frenkel,"Programın başarısı onu anlatana da bağlı" dedi. Milliyet, 7.
[351] (2001, June 14). “Erken gelen kazanır.” Derviş, New York'ta yatırımcılara Türkiye'nin Temmuz ayında ciddi bir iyileşme sürecine gireceğini, ülkede iyi kâr olanaklarının olduğunu söyledi. Milliyet, 7.
[352] (2001, June 14). Yabancıların pozisyonu artacak. Milliyet, 7.
[353] Uzgel İ. et. al. (2009). *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu.* (512), Phoenix Yayınevi.

and social security system. With the advantage of being a one-party government, it succeeded in making the legislation changes easily, both to make the labor markets flexible and to reduce the inclusiveness of the social security system, and thus, it was able to realize a transformation in line with the demands of domestic and foreign capital.[354] By using the same advantages, even in its first term in power, AKP government obtained many times more income than the previous governments from privatization.[355] [356] Among those that had been privatized was Türk Telekom, which ranked 13th among the largest telecommunications companies of the world and paid the country's highest corporate tax for the last four years before it was sold.[357] Privatization is not just something that is done for the purpose of obtaining resources through the sale of public institutions, it is actually a process that aims to completely remove public participation, public control and protectionism from the economy. It is apparent, in his following words about the privatization of ERDEMİR, a public owned steel producing company, that Erdoğan also comprehended this process correctly:

> Privatization is not the sale of loss-making enterprises in the hands of the public to the private sector. Privatization is a means, based on the view of the state, society, economy and public sector, having consequences beyond the sale of public enterprises. We are in favor of privatization because we adopt a state mentality stronger, more effective and fully performing essential functions.[358]

Thus, the AKP not only portrayed a liberal party following the policies that the international financial circles wanted to see, but also, through these privatizations, supported a capital accumulation which was affiliated with itself.[359] Indeed, it is true that an Anatolian-based capitalist group with Islamic references rose since 1980s and

[354] Ibid, p. 519.
[355] (2021, April 30). "AKP iktidarında 62 milyar dolarlık özelleştirme yapıldı, 300 milyon metrekare Hazine arazisi ihaleyle satıldı". T24. Retrieved 2023, June 9 from: https://t24.com.tr/haber/akp-iktidarinda-62-milyar-dolarlik-ozellestirme-yapildi-300-milyon-metrekare-hazine-arazisi-ihaleyle-satildi,949385
[356] Angın, M. - Bedirhanoğlu, P. (2013). AKP Döneminde Türkiye'de Büyük Ölçekli Özelleştirmeler ve Devletin Dönüşümü, Praksis, 30(31), 76.
[357] (2022, October 29). Cumhuriyet yaptı, AKP sattı: "20 yılda 273 kurum elden çıkarıldı". Cumhuriyet. Retrieved 2023, June 9 from: https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/cumhuriyet-yapti-akp-satti-1997428
[358] "Baykal: Kirvesi mi akıllı, Erdoğan mı?, Hürriyet, 11.05.2005" as cited in Angın, M.- Bedirhanoğlu, P. (2013). AKP Döneminde Türkiye'de Büyük Ölçekli Özelleştirmeler ve Devletin Dönüşümü, Praksis, 30(31), 82.
[359] Uzgel İ. et. al. (2009). *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu.* (531), Phoenix Yayınevi.

had a much bigger say in the Turkish economy in the 90s and 2000s.[360] The point which this well-known narrative about the rise of green capital generally extends is that these segments of capital played the economic carrier role in the AKP's transformation by adding Western democratic and free-market values to traditional Islamism and thus coming to power.

However, there is another point that has been overlooked in this regard. The Anatolian Tigers were not the only ones affected by the neoliberal transformation since the 1980s. Just as the state, which was the biggest power in the country's economy, created the traditional Istanbul capital from nothing with its import substitution policies in the past,[361] with the neoliberal transformation, it also partially changed them and made them stronger. Even though "green capital" gained the opportunity to benefit from state opportunities during the AKP period[362], it was the country's settled big bourgeoisie that got the lion's share of the said privatizations.[363] One of the most well-known examples of this was the sale of TÜPRAŞ, one of the biggest investments of the public sector, which recorded high profit rates before its privatization period, to the Koç Group, one of the oldest and largest İstanbul based conglomerates.[364] In fact, during the AKP period, all established big bourgeois groups such as Koç, Sabancı and Eczacıbaşı reached heights that they could not reach in their history.[365] As in the rest of the world, it was something to be expected that when Turkish capital became strong enough, it would seek out bigger financial resources and new markets from abroad.

Here, it is possible to find the reason for the opposition of the Turkish established capital, which worked very well with the AKP administration, to the Welfare Party government in the 90s. As a result of the process that started in the 1980s, with the effect of increasing exports by the Turkish capitalists and the control established by the holdings over the bank capital during the 1990s, encouraging the

[360] See European Stability Initiative. (2005). Islamic Calvinists Change and Conservatism in Central Anatolia. Insight Turkey, 7(3), 59-88. Retrieved 2023 June 10 from: https://www.esiweb.org/publications/islamic-calvinists-change-and-conservatism-central-anatolia
[361] Zaifer, A. (2018). The Acceleration of Privatization: Understanding State, Power Bloc, and Capital Accumulation in Turkey. Review of Radical Political Economics, 50(4), 815.
[362] Angın, M. - Bedirhanoğlu, P. (2013). AKP Döneminde Türkiye'de Büyük Ölçekli Özelleştirmeler ve Devletin Dönüşümü, Praksis, 30(31), 83.
[363] Öztürk, Ö. (2008). Türkiye'de büyük sermaye grupları finans kapital ve faaliyet çeşitliliği üzerine bir inceleme. (P.H.D. Thesis), Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 219.
[364] (2006, January 27). Tüpraş'ta Devir Işlemi Tamamlandı. Yeni Şafak. Retrieved 2023, June 10 from: https://www.yenisafak.com/ekonomi/tuprasta-devir-islemi-tamamlandi-2747324
[365] Şenalp, M. G. (2017). Yeni-Osmanlıcılığın Ekonomi Politiğinin Bir Eleştirisi: Ulusötesi Bir Hegemonya Projesinin Yükseliş ve Düşüşü. Praksis, 44(45), 955.

entry of international money capital into the country, which was the main form of integration into global accumulation, became more important.[366] It has been claimed that these capital groups also played a role[367] in the overthrow of the Refah-Yol government, which did not meet their expectations.[368] Although this issue was discussed only on the axis of secularism/conservatism at that time, it is overlooked that the reason for the support given by the big bourgeoisie to the post-modern coup was that the government's anti-Western discourses and policies harmed the relations of the capital and disturbed its traditional allies in the West.[369]

It was quite expected that the part of the Capital took a position against the negative attitude of the state in its relations with the West, which was indispensable for itself, at least at that time, both as a source of credit and a market. In this context, here, is the difference made by AKP being neoliberal in domestic politics and "Neo-Ottomanist" in foreign policy. The Turkish capital, which experienced a serious centralization not only in foreign trade but also in domestic trade in the 1990s[370], had reached the desired environment since the beginning of the 2000s, with foreign direct investment reaching record levels in the country's history.[371]

AKP governments, on the one hand, enabled Turkish capitalist classes to attain stronger financial funds by both realizing the economic transformation required by the Western economical system and successfully playing the moderate Islamist role that the Western political leadership had assigned to Turkey; and on the other hand, through this moderate Islamic discourse, it led both Green Capital and İstanbul Capital to reach new Middle Eastern markets and financial resources from this region.[372] At

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[366] Karakas, D.G. ve Ercan, F. (2008). Türkiye'de Uluslararasılasma Sürecindeki Sermayenin Üretken ve Para Sermaye Arasındaki Zaman Yönelimli Stratejik Tercihi. İktisat İşletme ve Finans. 23(262), 41-47.

[367] (1996, August 21). Söylemez:"TÜSİAD kriz tellalı": Milliyet, 7.

[368] Öztürk, Ö. (2008). Türkiye'de büyük sermaye grupları finans kapital ve faaliyet çeşitliliği üzerine bir inceleme. (P.H.D. Thesis), Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 221.
For the formulation of the neoliberal transformation expected by the İstanbul based big bourgeoisie in 90s, see TÜSİAD. (1995). Türkiye İçin Yeni Bir Orta Vadeli İstikrar Programına Doğru. Retrieved 2023, May 18 from: https://tusiad.org/tr/yayinlar/raporlar/item/1801-turkiye-icin-yeni-bir-orta-vadeli-istikrar-programina-dogru

[369] See TÜSİAD. (1997, January 20). Türkiye'de Demokratikleşme Perspektifleri. Retrieved 2023, May 18 from: https://tusiad.org/tr/yayinlar/raporlar/item/1797-turkiyede-demokratiklesme-perspektifleri

[370] Alkan, H. (1998). Türkiye'de Baskı Grupları: Siyaset ve iş adamı Örgütlenmeleri (Odalar-TÜSİAD–MÜSİAD). (Unpublished PhD Thesis) Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 215.

[371] See Hazine Bakanlığı. (2008). Uluslararası Dogrudan Yatırımlar 2007 Yılı Raporu. Retrieved 2023, June 10 from: https://www.turmob.org.tr/ekutuphane/Read/7a2c4eee-a11b-4cd2-9b15-a8c88d3b0684

[372] (2003, December 11). Abdullah Gül: Körfez sermayesinin yönü Türkiye. NTV. Retrieved 2023, June 10 from: http://arsiv.ntv.com.tr/news/247622.asp ;
(2005, July 14) Arap sermayesi Türkiye yolunda. Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023, June 10 from: https://bigpara.hurriyet.com.tr/haberler/genel-haberler/arap-sermayesi-turkiye-yolunda_ID528059/

this point, considering its organic ties with AKP, it can be claimed that green capital had at least a transformative effect on the state structure and economy of Turkey.[373] However, while not losing sight of the impact of this phenomenon, it should also be kept in mind that the strengthening Turkish bourgeoisie experienced a collective internationalization and, the state-society complex and the dominant capital language also internationalized during this period.[374] In the period following the AKP's coming to power, there were record levels of foreign investment in Turkey, as well as great increases in foreign operations, cross-border trade and overseas investments of Turkish companies. The Muslim geography of the Middle East and North Africa was the place where these operations were predominant.[375]

Although Turkey's established industrial infrastructure, financial opportunities and military power were not enough for it to be a global power, its location and a more advanced level of capitalist development compared to its neighbors with similar cultures, made possible for it to play an intermediary role in the integration of the Middle East and other peripheral countries to the global system. At this point, Davutoğlu's moderate Islamism provided great advantages over the old-style chauvinistic Turkish nationalism in opening up Turkish capital to these regions.[376]

This is the main reason for the cooperation between AKP's Neo-Ottomanism and the Turkish bourgeoisie, because after 2002, in the context of reorganized international capitalism, AKP changed Turkey's foreign policy and geopolitical vision by redefining the state-society and state-economy relations. This Neo-Ottomanist politics represented an articulation between neoliberalism and Turkish Islamism, and due to its Islamic ideology, it was more cosmopolitan than traditional Kemalist foreign policy, more in line with the expectations of globally dominant politics from Turkey. One of the points to be noted here is the compatibility between the neoliberal approach adopted by AKP in the state-society and the state-economy relations in domestic affairs and the vision it offers to the bourgeoisie. The other one is the harmony of the hegemonic project arising from the compatibility of these two with the dominant

[373] Hendrick, J. D. (2009). Globalization, Islamic activism, and passive revolution in Turkey: the case of Fethullah Gülen. Journal of Power, 2(3), 344.
[374] Şenalp, M. G. (2017). Yeni-Osmanlıcılığın Ekonomi Politiğinin Bir Eleştirisi: Ulusötesi Bir Hegemonya Projesinin Yükseliş ve Düşüşü. Praksis, 44(45), 941. Also for the transnationalization of Turkish bourgeoisie, see Şenalp, M. G. (2012). *Ulusötesi Kapitalist Sınıf Oluşumu: Türkiye ve Koç Holding Örneği*. SAV Sosyal Araştırmalar Vakfı.
[375] Şenalp, M. G. (2017). Yeni-Osmanlıcılığın Ekonomi Politiğinin Bir Eleştirisi: Ulusötesi Bir Hegemonya Projesinin Yükseliş ve Düşüşü. Praksis, 44(45), 947.
[376] Öztürk, Ö. (2011). Türkiye Finans Kapitalinin Dışa Açılması, Devrimci Marksizm,13(14), 129-130.

neoliberal hegemony in the international order.[377]

So, we can deduce that AKP was able to offer the most relevant, and also the most internationally promoted, way of strengthening the Turkish capitalist class both inside (through legislations and other tools against the bureaucracy and the working class) and outside (with its vision and alliances opening the gates of foreign capital support and creating opportunities to reach the profitable markets abroad) the country in line with the dominant global economy approach of the time. Moderate Islamism was presented both as a solution to Turkey's problems of identity and democratization in domestic politics, and as a method of transferring Western values to its neighbors by developing good relations with its neighbors, thus, Neo-Ottomanism in foreign policy emerging as an attempt to redefine the country's place in the world system. This is similar to the Neo-Ottomanism of the past in this sense; Özal also tried to redefine Turkey's role in global and regional politics by employing the country's Islamic identity in order to prove useful to great powers as well as a solution to the ethnic and class tensions in the country and as a way of integrating the Turkish economy to the global economy. However, in Özal period, the capacities of both the Turkish state and business, was not at the same level as the 2000s thus the results were less successful, as expected. Also, it is claimed that in terms of domestic politics, Özal's Neo-Ottomanism failed as a construct of identity.[378] Yet, it should be kept in mind that the Özal period was the first-time use of identity in such a way was adopted by the state, and its effect could be observed in the long term.

3.4. Concluding Remarks

In 1990s, Turkey tried to establish close relations with the countries of the region, especially after 1999, without losing its general Western orientation in its foreign policy, but they were not supposed to be in line with the Western foreign policy approach to the region. Reminiscent of the foreign policy between 1965 and 1980, regional relations and relations with great powers were formulated separately from each other. This understanding of foreign policy, which sometimes contradicted the US approaches to the region, needed to pass a difficult test after 9/11 and as a result,

[377] Yalvaç, F. (2012). Strategic Depth or Hegemonic Depth? A Critical Realist Analysis of Turkey's Position in the World System. International Relations, 26(2), 172.
[378] Ongur, H. O. (2015) Identifying Ottomanisms: The Discursive Evolution of Ottoman Pasts in the Turkish Presents. Middle Eastern Studies, 51(3), 423.

the foreign policies of the USA and Turkey were in conflict before the invasion of Iraq.

After the AKP's rise to power in 2002, Turkish foreign policy was shaped within the scope of BMENAI. The foreign policy approach formulated by Ahmet Davutoğlu was almost fully compatible with the moderate Islam model, the role which the West expected Turkey to play after 9/11. Great efforts were made to ensure this harmony in practice, and a near-perfect coordination was achieved up to a certain point.

In return, the AKP gained advantages over its rivals by gaining the support of the West and both the global and Turkish capitalist class in domestic politics. In this period, which was one of the most comprehensive transformation periods in the history of Turkey, the economy was rapidly transformed within the scope of global neoliberal hegemony and the management of the economy was purged of its political character, and great steps were taken to reorganize the state apparatus in a way that would strengthen the AKP's power vis a vis its opponents. Thus, the AKP not only took measures to bring the Army, its biggest rival in domestic politics, under civilian control, but also completed the neoliberal transformation of the country's economy in line with the demands of domestic and foreign capital.

The neoliberal transformation of the economy, which started in the 80s and continued in the 90s, albeit at a slower pace, finally started to provide the desired results when entering the 2000s. In this context, AKP's Neo-Ottomanism policy in domestic and foreign politics was perfect for the Turkish bourgeoisie, which, unlike the Özal era, had grown, centralized and strengthened, and had its eyes on foreign markets and foreign investment opportunities. The Islamic discourse played an important role both in mitigating the destructive effects of the neoliberal transition in the country and as an essential background for the foreign operations of the Turkish bourgeoisie.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Main Argument of the Thesis

In this study, the foreign policy sets which were evaluated as Neo-Ottomanism in the Özal Period between 1980 and 93 and the AKP Period between 2002 and 2009 were examined. The thesis defended by the study is that Neo-Ottomanism was not an anti-Western foreign policy approach which proposed an alternative order to the Western order, on the contrary, this foreign policy approach was Turkey's effort to integrate into the Western-led world order with a different content and form under changing conditions.

The formal change in this integration is the abandonment of Turkey's previous policy of staying away from regional relations as much as possible and/or keeping relations with regional countries separate from relations with great powers. Starting from the 1980s, within the periods we examined, the foreign policy adopted by Turkey towards its region showed compatibility with the regional interests of the West. After Özal's death, although the old understanding which separated regional relations from those with great powers returned for a while, in the 2000s, with the coming to power of the AKP, the understanding of Özal's era came to the fore again and Turkish Foreign Policy has acted in accordance with BMENAI, which was the embodiment of the regional foreign policy of the USA.

The change experienced in terms of content was the use of Islam (and/or Turkish, Ottoman) as an identity, which was carefully avoided before. This emphasis on common identity accompanied mostly economic, but sometimes also security-oriented, relations towards regional countries. Islam was highlighted as a common identity in the relations established with Arab countries in the 1980s, and Turkishness was added to the common identity emphasis used in the period after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In this period, Turkey was presented to the newly independent ex-Soviet countries as a state/society model that was Turkish and Muslim but in good relations with the West. In the relations in the 2000s, Islam took the leading role again, but this time Turkey wanted to play a role as a moderate Islamist model that showed the compatibility of Islam with democracy and free market economy.

4.2. Historical Development

The Republic of Turkey was founded after the First World War, on the ruins of the disintegrating Ottoman Empire, by fighting with the Western powers and against other enemies, supported by the West, who claimed rights over Anatolia. Its only ally in this war was the Soviet Union, which, like itself, was not accepted by the West. After the founding of the Republic, Turkey, under the leadership of Atatürk, turned its direction to the West, with whom it had to fight to gain its independence. The foreign policy aspect of this new structure, which set its goal as reaching the level of contemporary civilizations and made many Westernization moves in a short time, was neutrality. The new republic, adopting Atatürk's motto "Peace at Home, Peace in the World", preferred to stay away from Pan-Islamism, which was adopted by Abdulhamid II in the last periods of the Ottoman Empire, and then Pan-Turkism, which was adopted by the Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti-ITC).

Maintaining its neutrality despite the insistence of both sides during the Second World War, Turkey took its place in the Western camp as it perceived the Soviet Union, which emerged as a very powerful actor at the end of the war, as a major threat for both current and historical reasons, and chose to organize the country's economy in line with the wishes of the West. After being accepted into NATO in 1952, the Turkish government under the leadership of Adnan Menderes, which took every opportunity to show its loyalty to the Western Alliance, established close relations with Israel and adopted a security stance against Arab nationalism in the region as it was seen as being under Soviet influence.

After the 1960 coup, Turkey adopted the import-substituting industrialization model in domestic politics, again on the axis of the dominant paradigm of the West, continued to take part in the Western Alliance, but tried to pursue a more balanced foreign policy. In this period, when relations with the Soviet Union were relatively mild, the general approach did not change much. It was the Cyprus issue that would make the real difference, and which would later continue to poison Turkey's relations with its Western allies. After the famous Johnson Letter in 1964, relations between Turkey and the West started to deteriorate. As a result of the economic policies which prioritized industrialization instead of agricultural development in the 1960s, large masses of workers accumulated in the periphery of the big cities, as the rural

population migrated from the countryside to the cities. As a result of the combination of leftist politics which had an influence on them and the nationalism emerging from the Cyprus issue, the general mood in the country became more and more anti-Western.

Since the early 1970s, especially after the 1973-74 oil crisis, Turkey started to establish closer relations with the Arab countries in its region and showed that it started to care about the sensitivities of its Arab neighbors by not allowing the US to use the Incirlik base in the two Arab-Israeli wars in 1967 and 1973. In the 1970s, with the Cold War's detente period, Turkey's value in the eyes of its Western allies decreased, and after the Cyprus Operation in 1974, its Western friends even imposed an arms embargo on Turkey. The response to this attitude was again by limiting the use of bases in Turkey, but it did not stop there. Turkey's Prime Minister took a trip to the Soviet Union, stating that they would not sign the NATO Joint Declaration due to the embargo,[379] while also saying that the Soviet Union was no longer seen as a threat.[380] There were those who saw all these as signs that Turkey was on the way to an axis change.[381]

The military coup in 1980 put an end to all these doubts. The coup, which aimed at a serious transformation of the country in political, economic and social aspects, was in favor of continuity in relations with the Western Alliance. Turgut Özal, who was the Undersecretary of the Prime Ministry in the last government period before the coup and known to have an important role in the preparation of the January 24 Decisions, which foresaw the abandonment of the import substitution industrialization model and the transition to the export-oriented growth model, was appointed as the Deputy Prime Minister in the government established after the coup. The conservative identity of Turgut Özal, who was chosen to oversee the radical economic transformation determined by the January 24 Decisions, coincided with another aim of the coup. The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, adopted after the coup, aimed to reunite the polarized society in pursuit of the doctrines of nationalism and socialism throughout the 1970s under Islamic values and to update nationalism, the prominent ideology of the state, by making it more conservative with Islam, which had been

[379] (1978, May 19), Ecevit: Ambargo ile bizi ezmek mümkün değildir. Milliyet, 1.
[380] Mufti, M. (2009*), Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture: Republic at Sea*, (45), Palgrave Macmillan.
[381] Kaya, F. (2022). 1965-1971yılları arası Türkiye'nin çok yönlü dış politika perspektifinde Sovyetler Birliği ile ilişkileri. Tesam Akademi Dergisi, 9(1), 144-145.

suppressed since Ottoman times. This orientation showed that, as a reflection of the conservative-neoliberal governments on the rise in the West and the rise of Thatcherism and Reagonomics, this country somehow shaped its domestic and foreign policy in line with the wishes of the West.

The decisions taken by the putschist generals, and the government established with their support, on certain critical issues gave some clear clues about the way this new administration interacted with the United States. Some of these were the hasty signing of the Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA), whose parliamentary approval was awaited by the Demirel Government as a bargaining element, just a few days after the coup, the similar approval of the Rogers Plan, envisaging the return of Greece to NATO's military wing, which was not accepted despite the great pressures of the USA at the end of the 70s, and the acceptance, after a brief period of hesitation, of the Rapid Deployment Force agreement which Turkey persistently rejected in previous years.

There was a continuity in the relations with the Arab countries which were started in early 1970s, but there was also a significant difference in the establishment of these relationships. The relations developed since the early 1970s were not relations that served a certain global agenda, compatible with the demands and interests of the Western Alliance. Those relations were mostly due to the disappointment from the Western policies and the lack of support from the Arab World regarding the Cyprus issue but also under the influence of economic constraints and decreasing Soviet threat. In those circumstances Turkey moved towards a rapprochement with the Arab countries.[382] In the 1980s, a much more comprehensive set of relations regarding the line forming the Southern border of the Soviet Union, determined by the Carter Doctrine, was initiated. Turkey now started to establish relations with its region in a much more comprehensive and deliberate way compared to the past, and it had begun to act as a part of the Middle East, which it had previously avoided carefully. The participation of Prime Minister Bülend Ulusu in the Islamic Cooperation Organization meeting in 1981 had a symbolic significance as the representation of Turkey at the Prime Minister level for the first time in this structure. This unusual regional engagement, which continued increasingly throughout the 1980s and was seen not only in trade but also in the field of security, was interpreted as Turkey's desire to re-

[382] Jung, D. (2005). Turkey and the Arab World: Historical Narratives and New Political Realities. Mediterranean Politics, 10,(1), 9.

establish influence in the former lands of the Ottoman Empire as the heir to the Ottoman Empire, and was labeled as Neo-Ottomanism.

It was true that Turkey was re-orienting towards the Middle East, but the reason was more than a nostalgia for Ottoman times. In July 1979, a few months after the Iranian Islamic Revolution threatened the security of the Persian Gulf, President Jimmy Carter advised the American people to reduce their energy consumption.[383] It is known that the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan at the end of the same year increased the security concerns of the USA in the region. In these circumstances, it was natural for the USA, which stated with the Carter Doctrine that the security of the Persian Gulf was of vital concern for itself, to request its biggest ally in the region to develop close relations with the Gulf countries for this purpose. The relations, which were developed initially in the field of economy, later enriched to include security-oriented relations, as in the agreement with Saudi Arabia for the production of military ammunition. As a result of the destabilizing effect of the Iran-Iraq War, the Rapid Deployment Force agreement, which would enable the direct intervention of the USA in this region, was accepted by Turkey and put into practice.

Losing its value for the West in the 1970s, with the Cold War entering the detente period, Turkey started to regain its importance after the Iranian Islamic Revolution and the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, but this time in the context of the Middle East as the weight of the Cold War shifted southward. In an environment where the US had lost Iran, one of its biggest allies in the region, and this former ally had begun exporting an anti-Western ideology that would threaten the entire region, it was logical for the US to consider Turkey, as the only NATO ally in the region, in a Middle East context. Turkish administrators, especially Özal, were aware of this. Özal did not believe that the way to gain leverage against the United States, as Turkey did in the 1970s, was to show it the alternative ways and pursue a more balanced foreign policy. His path was to take a firm pro-US stance and adapt as much as possible to US foreign policy. With few exceptions, full compliance with the US foreign policy was achieved throughout the 80s, and the crises that emerged in the relations in this process were resolved as the US wanted.

Another aim of Turkey's Middle East orientation in this period was to reach

[383] Halloran, R. (1979, July 14). Carter Has Long Focused on Need to Curb Use of Energy, The New York Times. Retrieved 2023, June 15 from: https://www.nytimes.com/1979/07/14/archives/carter-has-long-focused-on-need-to-curb-use-of-energy-critical-of.html

the markets it needed within the framework of its export-oriented growth strategy. It was a natural development for Turkish investors, who had not yet had the chance to compete with their western rivals, to turn to the Middle East markets, where they had a relative competitiveness in selling their goods. Exports to the Middle East region, which were negligible at the beginning of the 1980s, became a significant part of Turkey's exports within ten years, mainly due to the Iran-Iraq war. But this development also proved to be temporary as the Turkish trade started to decline after 1985.[384] However, Turkey's economic orientation to the Middle East was not only due to the search for markets. With the increase in oil prices in the 1970s, the Gulf countries, which had become an important source of financing, had a different attraction for Turkey, whose economy had been deprived of foreign currency inflows for a long time. For this reason, Turkey made many legal arrangements throughout the 1980s, which would enable investments from the Gulf countries on the one hand, and make the economy more export-oriented, on the other.

Another feature which distinguished these relations, starting during the period of the coup government and continuing during the Özal period, from the previous periods was the increasing level of representation and effectiveness of Turkey in the multilateral organizations whose members were Muslim countries. In this period, Turkey started to be represented in regional organizations both at the prime minister and president level and started to take part in the management of these organizations. In addition, the language used during the establishment of these relations was also unfamiliar with the previous periods. Turkish elites, who in previous periods had been adamant about codifying Turkey as part of the West, now began to express that Turkey was an inseparable part of the Middle East and the Islamic world.[385] This situation was in line with the regional policy adopted by the USA since the end of the 1970s and its expectations from Turkey within the framework of this policy.

Towards the end of the 1980s, as it became clear that the end of the Cold War was coming, the foreign policy priorities of both the West and, accordingly, Turkey began to change. After the collapse of the Iron Curtain, Turkey's geostrategic importance, which had been evaluated in the context of the Middle East for a while,

[384] Önis, Z. (1995). Turkey in the post-Cold War era: in search of identity. Middle East Journal, 49(1), 61.
[385] Poulton, H. (2006). *Top Hat, Grey Wolf and Crecent: Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic*. (180), Hurst & Company.

especially by the USA, declined again. After Turkey's EEC membership application was rejected in 1989, the rulers of Turkey began to look for ways which this country could remain valuable to the Western alliance. The first opportunity in this context emerged with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. After this incident, Turkey fulfilled all the wishes of the USA before the operation to be carried out in Iraq. Although some of them faced great opposition, the reason for the fulfillment of all requests was that Turkey's importance for the Western alliance decreased and, as could be understood from Özal's words reflected in the newspapers, the country's rulers found the solution to this problem as remaining a useful ally of the USA. Özal took this solution a little further and even suggested that the Turkish army join the coalition forces, even though the USA did not demand it. Özal's regional plans were not limited to this.

Özal's plans to occupy Mosul and Kirkuk, the oil-rich regions of Northern Iraq, and to connect them to Turkey within the framework of a federation, calculating that Iraq would be divided or restructured after the Gulf War, were blocked by the Turkish military bureaucracy. Perhaps one of the most important motivations of Özal for this plan, which can be predicted to aim both to prevent the PKK from getting stronger and to possess oil-rich regions, was Turkey's emergence as a regional power and thus turning into a more valuable ally for the United States. We do not know what role the US played in Özal's making of these plans, but we do know that the military bureaucracy, who opposed his plans, was of the opinion that these plans were originating from the US, and within this scope, Turkey's patronage was desired for the establishment of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. Apart from this, it can be deduced from the publications of the institutions and authors that were in close relations with the US state apparatus at that time that the US was not at least opposed to an autonomous or independent Kurdish entity in Northern Iraq.[386]

Before the Gulf War, Turkey proved how valuable an ally it was by fulfilling all the wishes of the USA, but with the dissolution of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, it began to fear that its value in the eyes of the Western alliance would decrease even more. However, the West had a new role prepared for Turkey in the new conjuncture. Within the framework of this new role, which was first voiced by the Western press and then by the official authorities, Turkey was expected to take part in the integration of the former Soviet countries, with which it had historical, religious

[386] See Fuller. G. E. (1993). The Fate of the Kurds. Foreign Affairs, 72(2), 108–121.

and ethnic ties, into the new world order. Turkey adopted this role, even supported by Russia for a while because of Iran's policy of exporting its regime after the Islamic Revolution and the fear that these new Muslim states would quickly fall under the influence of radical Islam, and tried to establish an unprecedented set of relations with the Caucasus and Central Asian States. Turkey, calculating the economic profits it could obtain in this context, tried to have a say in the region, both through official channels and through civil elements. Just as Islam emerged at the level of discourse in the Middle East expansion in the previous decade, the emphasis on Turkishness began to come to the fore this time. Turkey, which had seen Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism as adventurism since the times of Atatürk and stayed away from it, now clearly included these concepts in its foreign policy language.

It was natural for Turkey to aim at gaining new markets, energy resources and incomes, and beyond that, to achieve long-term political influence under these conditions, and to achieve these goals to a certain extent, but the support to this role of Turkey by the West was based on two main functions of this role: to prevent the spread of Iranian influence and to ensure the successful economic and political integration of the newly independent countries into the new world. After a while, it was seen that the potential danger from Iran and Turkey's potential contribution to the integration of these countries into the world order were exaggerated. It was also seen over time that Turkey had difficulties even in coping with its own internal problems, and that it was far from the capacity to contribute to the development of these countries, so the Western support for Turkey's role model disappeared, and Neo-Ottomanism was shelved to be recalled in another global conjuncture.

The strong Americanism tendency, which became more evident in Turkish foreign policy after 1980, began to lose its influence after Özal's death. As far as we can understand from the reasons why the military bureaucracy opposed Özal's plans for Mosul and Kirkuk, the Army was of the opinion that the interests of Turkey and the United States no longer coincided in the region. The possibility of the establishment of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq, which was thought to be of particular importance in the US's vision of the future for the region, became a vital issue in Turkish foreign policy in this period. Throughout the 1990s, the United States and Turkey collaborated on the fight against the PKK, but only within Turkey's borders, the operations to be carried out in Northern Iraq depended on the permission of the USA and had to be kept as short as possible. For this reason, the autonomous structure

formed in Northern Iraq remained an element of tension in Turkey-US relations throughout the 90s.

In domestic politics, the period after Özal was marked by unstable coalition governments. In the rest of the 1990s, Turkey mostly dealt with internal problems due to bad economy, social problems, terrorism and unstable political structure. Islamist politics, which emerged as a result of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis-oriented policies of the 1980s, came to power with a coalition government in the mid-1990s. The Islamist discourse of the Welfare Party was not tolerated by the Army, which positioned itself as the protector of secularism in the country, and the government was overthrown in a "post-modern coup" supported by established Turkish bourgeoisie and the media under its control.

The governments, after the political Islamist movement was overthrown with the cooperation of the army and the big bourgeoisie, which can be defined as nationalist in general, did not prefer to return to the past in regional foreign policy and to minimize relations with the countries of the region. Instead, they preferred to establish relations with the countries in the region on different agendas. These were not like the relations which were harmonious with the regional agendas of the great powers, as in the so-called Neo-Ottomanist periods. In a way, the principle of keeping regional relations and relations with great powers separate from each other, which is one of the foreign policy principles we conveyed from Malik Mufti, was recalled after a while. As mentioned earlier, some of these relationships were economy-oriented, some security-focused, and some of them both. Especially after the capture of Abdullah Öcalan in 1999, the PKK factor disappeared for a while, and Turkey's relations with its southern and eastern neighbors began to improve. Needing energy resources from these countries, Turkey also started to export to these countries at growing rates. However, not all of these relations were approved by the West (especially the USA).

During the post-Gulf War period, that is, when Bill Clinton was the President, the USA followed the policy of dual containment of Iraq and Iran. Accordingly, it was envisaged that the two countries would be isolated and weakened. However, for a long time, Turkey did not agree to a cooperation similar to that of Özal's period. Turkey's signing of a natural gas agreement with Iran, its efforts to establish good relations with Syria, which was another country sought to be contained by the USA because it was under the influence of Iran, increasing the amount of trade with Iraq especially after

the capture of Öcalan and proposing peaceful solutions instead of regime change in this country, were not approved by the USA. Especially when the invasion of Iraq came to the agenda after 9/11, it was a big problem that the government in Turkey continued to resist the demands of the USA. At this point, the fact that the AKP, which was expected to maintain more harmonious relations with the USA, came to power instead of the government, which already had weak social support, due to the impact of the severe economic crisis and the earthquake that created great destruction, changed the regional equation.

Those who founded the AKP were "the reformers group" who lost their struggle for power in the Virtue Party, which was established in place of the recently closed down Welfare Party. Contrary to the traditional leadership at the National Vision movement, this group proposed a policy compatible with the West and the free market economy. They had good relations with various bureaucrats, politicians and think tanks from the USA when the party was newly established. The leader of the party was hosted by President Bush at the White House and praised when he did not even have an official title yet. The main reason for this interest in the initial period on the US side was the expectation that the AKP administration would not cause any difficulties to the US regarding Iraq, unlike the previous government, and on the AKP side, it was the benefit of getting US support as a way of getting and clinging to power in Turkey. Even though the parliament's rejection of the motion regarding the use of Turkish lands by the US soldiers for the occupation of Iraq, immediately after the AKP came to power, caused a minor crisis, the relations between the two countries followed a near-perfect course in the following period. In any case, the US administration blamed the military, rather than the AKP which had just came to power, for the failure to approve the motion.[387]

The main reason for the support of the USA to Turkey under AKP rule in the post-Iraq War period was the realization that the security-oriented policies against the global radical Islam threat, which grew throughout the 1990s and reached its peak on 9/11, did not yield the desired results alone. After 9/11, BMENAI was implemented instead, which included overthrowing dictatorial regimes, which were seen as sources

[387] (2003, May 7). Wolfowitz: Accept your mistake, our partnership shall continue, Hürriyet. Retrieved 2023 June 16 from: https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/wolfowitz-accept-your-mistake-our-partnership-shall-continue-145127 "…particularly the military. I think for whatever reason they did not play the strong leadership role on that issue that we would have expected."

of nourishment for radical Islam, and supporting moderate governments and movements in the region. AKP was cut out to be supported within the scope of this project. The AKP, freed from the anti-Western and anti-free market features of the structure it emerged from, was the living example of the change that the USA wanted to see in the Islamic world in this period. US support first became visible in the publications of state-affiliated think-tanks, such as the Rand Corporation, and later in the rhetoric of various bureaucrats and politicians. The equivalent of this approach on the Turkish side was the set of policies known as the Davutoğlu Doctrine. Criticizing the pre-1980 foreign policy of the Republic as being status quo-oriented, Davutoğlu was of the opinion that the country should pursue a more active foreign policy with reference to its Ottoman past. The new foreign policy approach, formulated and put forward by Ahmet Davutoğlu, envisaged the use of Islam as a foreign policy element, the adoption and localization of Western values, and leverage in regional relations with the support to be provided by conducting a foreign policy in harmony with the Western powers. AKP provided the moderate Islamist content to this foreign policy understanding, which was almost in full harmony with the BMENAI, and received the support of the West by presenting this content to the West as a strategic value.

The most important condition of the West's support for the AKP in the first years was participation and support for BMENAI. The AKP administration did not hesitate to fulfill this request and assumed the banner of moderate Islam in the region. Besides, another demand was to continue and even to improve relations with Israel, which was accepted by the AKP. Another request was to keep relations with Iran and Syria at a distance in order to contain these two countries. The AKP did not comply with this request for various reasons, but later on, relations with Syria were tolerated and supported on the grounds that it would move this country away from influence of Iran and closer to the Western camp. Apart from this, the AKP intervened to resolve the Cyprus issue, which had been Turkey's biggest problem with the West for many years, in line with the Western demands despite the nationalist opposition both in Turkey and in Northern Cyprus. Just like in the Özal period, a high level of foreign policy harmony between Turkey and the USA was achieved in this period as well.

The reward for the AKP's alignment with the United States in regional politics was the Western support, which gave it a great source of legitimacy in domestic politics and a foothold against dangers during its first years in power. While AKP changed the structure of the state with legal regulations in order to reduce the political

power of its biggest opponent, the Army, and to secure its own future, the West was the biggest support behind it. The AKP was able to overcome many problems in domestic politics, largely with the support of the West. In the e-memorandum incident during the 2007 presidential election and the closure case against the AKP, the AKP's biggest support against the Army and the Judiciary was the Western support.

The support the AKP received from the West did not only work against the Army and the Judiciary, but also prevented the big bourgeoisie, which had taken a position against the anti-Western attitude of the Welfare Party in the mid-90s, from joining the anti-AKP camp on the side of the Army. In fact, the moderate Islamism adopted by the AKP in order to gain the support of the USA and the Neo-Ottomanist foreign policy carried out through this channel were also supported by the Turkish bourgeoisie. The Turkish capital, which became stronger and centralized in the 1980s and 90s, had grown too large to be satisfied with the domestic gains in the 2000s. The bourgeoisie, which also benefited from the comprehensive privatizations and neoliberal transformation policies implemented by the AKP in the labor market and social security system, now set its sights on foreign markets and investment opportunities. In this way, with the support of both the West and the domestic bourgeoisie, the AKP was able to implement regulations to abolish the tutelage of the Army, which had been the most stable actor since the founding of the country, together with a neoliberal economic transformation unprecedented in the country's history. The support of the bourgeoisie to the AKP was related not only to foreign markets and investment opportunities thanks to Neo-Ottomanism, but also to the AKP's good relations with the West, because the interests of this power center, which had now acquired a transnational character, had entered the path of integration with international capital. In other words, the relationship established with the countries of the region through Islamist discourse was not sufficient, but it was also very important to develop a common language and positive relations with Western institutions. For this reason, the Neo-Ottomanism of the Welfare Party, which made an opening towards Muslim countries with an Islamist language in the 1990s, was not appreciated by the same circles.

4.3. Neo-Ottomanism without Western Support

At this point, it would be useful to take a brief look at the experience of Neo-Ottomanism, which lacked Western support, under the Welfare Party government.

Many actions and discourses of the Welfare Party, even coming to power of which caused great uneasiness in certain sections of the society, became the subject of discussion. As a matter of fact, the head of the army, which became the sole ruler of the country by a coup d'état just fifteen years ago, had recited verses from the Qur'an during the rallies he held, religion classes had been made compulsory in the same period, and the state made an open effort to make the society more religious in general. As the rural population, flowing into the cities throughout the 1960s and 1970s, proletarianized in the cities, it naturally began to enter the sphere of influence of leftist politics. The state invited these masses to associate with Islam instead of the Left, and the masses accepted this invitation.

The coming to power of an Islamist party in such an environment should not have been so surprising and unsettling. The real problem with the Welfare Party was the nature of its Islamism, otherwise Islamism itself could not have been the problem in a country where President Kenan Evren held rallies with the Qur'an in his hands 10 years ago. The Islamism of the Welfare Party was different from that of Kenan Evren and Özal; it had a political language with anti-capitalist elements symbolized in the discourse of "*Adil Düzen*" (Just Order). The "National Vision" movement, which had emerged as the voice of small and medium-sized businesses in the 1970s and formed the main body of the Welfare Party, developed during the 70s and 80s, as a policy appealing to the urban poor in general, the area emptied by the Left. Therefore, it had a position reminiscent of Third Worldism, emphasizing the egalitarian aspects of Islam.

The leader of the movement, Necmettin Erbakan, compared the "interest-based capitalist system" and "racist imperialism" to a crocodile. He claimed that the upper jaw of this crocodile was the USA, its lower jaw was the EU, its tail was Israel, and its body was the executives, journalists, businessmen and bankers of some Muslim countries. Institutions such as the IMF, UN, World Bank were imperialist institutions and that they served monopoly capital.[388] According to Erbakan, who also criticized the US's sending of troops to the Gulf Region after the invasion of Kuwait, the reason for this according to him was the rich oil reserves of the region and the fact that the

[388] "Erbakan, Necmettin., D-8'in 12. Kuruluş Yıldönümü Konuşması, İstanbul, 2009" as cited in Arpacı, İ. (2022). Necmettin Erbakan Örneğinde Türk Dış Politikasının İslamcı Eleştirisi. Anadolu Akademi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 4(2), 249.

Gulf countries had 700 billion dollars in US and Western banks.[389]

What made the Welfare Party's foreign policy experience interesting for us was that it followed a foreign policy which could be described as Neo-Ottomanist. Like Özal and Davutoğlu, Erbakan also promised a great Turkey,[390] stating that a strong Turkey was a guarantee for the happiness of the world, and emphasized the necessity of a multi-faceted foreign policy based on mutual benefits with all fair countries, and the need to increase trade with Western countries.[391] Again, similar to Özal and Davutoğlu, he claimed that Turkey should assume the leadership of the Islamic world.[392] However, the Islamic Union in Erbakan's dream was not compatible with the West, unlike the ones proposed by Özal and Davutoğlu. According to Erbakan, the ultimate goal of the "colonial West" was to erase the existence of Turks from Anatolia.[393] Therefore, he said that after he came to power, he made his first trip to Asia and North Africa by rejecting the invitations of Western states and that this was a "dignified foreign policy".[394]

When the Welfare Party came to power, it was stated in the government program that strategic agreements would be adhered to, while Erbakan did not compromise his rhetoric and emphasized that they would not allow them to be used against the national interests of the country.[395] The first visit of Erbakan to Iran, his first trip abroad as the prime minister, to sign a 20-billion-dollar natural gas agreement was met with suspicion by the West, and even a warning came from the USA not to sign the agreement.[396] Both the domestic and Western press saw this visit as establishing friendly relations with a "rogue state" and drew attention to the tension this would create in relations with the United States.[397]

Erbakan, whose foreign policy was not limited to visits to Muslim countries, had previously shared the goal of establishing the “Islamic United Nations”, and one

[389] Erbakan, N. (1989, April 29). Demokrasi Kurultayı Konuşması. Retrieved 2023, June 18 from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bl_a4Kz_zxY
[390] Erbakan, N. (1989, April 29). Demokrasi Kurultayı Konuşması. Retrieved 2023, June 18 from: https://altsayfa.com/necmettin-erbakan-esam-konferansi/
[391] Ruşen, Ç. (1994). *Ne Şeriat Ne Demokrasi*, (165-166), Metis Yayınları.
[392] Erbakan, N. (1991). *Adil Ekonomik Düzen*, (255-257), MGV Yayınları.
[393] See Akgönenç, O. (2012). Şahsiyetli Dış Politika ve Prof. Dr. Necmettin Erbakan. Milli Şuur Dergisi, 46-54.
[394] Özcan, G. (1998). Onbir Aylık Saltanat: Siyaset, Ekonomi ve Dış Politikada Refahyol Dönemi. (273), Boyut Kitapları.
[395] Oran, B. (2004*). Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt:2, 1980-2001*, (506), İletişim Yayınları.
[396] (1996, August 9). ABD:"İran'la anlaşmayın". Milliyet, 15.
[397] Robins, P. (1997). Turkish Foreign Policy under Erbakan. Survival, 39(2), 90-91.

of the first steps in this direction was the establishment of Developing 8 (D-8), which brought together eight Islamic countries and was considered an alternative to the G-8.[398]

Erbakan's signing of a natural gas agreement with Iran was evaluated in the USA as a violation of the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA), adopted by the US Congress. The defense cooperation agreement, which was planned to be signed during the Iranian leader Rafsanjani's visit to Turkey at the end of 1996, received a similar reaction and could not be signed due to the negative attitude of the Army on this issue.[399]

In the following period, the Army was disturbed by the Welfare Party's attitude both in domestic and foreign policy and embarked on a restoration in order to maintain its hegemony.[400] For this purpose, the mainstream media, some trade unions and associations also supported the campaign launched to overthrow the government.[401] Organizations such as DİSK (Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu – Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions) and TÜSİAD, which would normally be expected to take place in the opposite camps, came together within the framework of this campaign. This group contributed to social demonstrations against the government and made statements against reactionism (*irtica*).[402] Mainstream media followed a line defending the legitimacy of non-political interventions against the Welfare Party[403] and that there was a significant threat of religious reactionism in Turkey.[404] Some columnists went so far as to report those who dress in violation of secular clothing laws to the police.[405] TÜSİAD, one of the most important actors of this process, argued in the report it published that the conditions imposed by the army on the government and the changes proposed to be made within this scope (such as putting the Quran courses under the control of the Ministry of National Education, reducing the number

[398] (1997, June 16). D-8 start aldı. Milliyet, 1.
[399] Ortay, H. (2022). Türkiye'de Refahyol Hükümetinin Dış Politikası. Strategic Public Management Journal, 8(15), 81.
[400] Erdoğan, N. (2001). Neo-Kemalizm, Organik Bunalım ve Hegemonya in Bora, T. – Gültekingil, M. (2001). *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: Kemalizm, Cilt 2*, (584), İletişim Yayınları.
[401] Yavuz, M. H. (2011). Erbakan'dan Erdoğan'a: Laiklik, Demokrasi, Kürt Sorunu ve İslam. Translator: Leman Adalı. (86), Kitap Yayınevi.
[402] Güzel, S. Ç. (2021). "Postmodern Darbe" Üzerine Gramsciyan Bir Okuma: Bir Hegemonya Girişimi Olarak 28 Şubat Süreci. Şarkiyat İlmi Araştırmalar Dergisi, 13(1), 212.
[403] Özipek, B. B. (2005). "28 Şubat ve İslâmcılar" in in Bora, T. – Gültekingil, M. (2009). *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: İslamcılık, Cilt 6* (641), İletişim Yayınları.
[404] (1997, April 30). Tehdidin adı irtica. Milliyet, 1.
[405] Altaylı, F. (1997, March 3). Yeni Vatandaşlık Görevim, Hürriyet, 1.

of Imam Hatip schools) were necessary.[406] In addition, dissatisfaction with the economic program of the government was expressed at every opportunity.[407]

On the other hand, it was stated in the Western press that the government's foreign policy moves were not welcomed[408], and they were particularly disturbed by its policies regarding Iran and Iraq.[409] After the "post-modern coup", European Parliament Socialist Group President Pauline Green first met with the representatives of non-governmental organizations and trade unions that supported the coup and gave them assurances about EU integration, then accepted General Çevik Bir, one of the leading figures of the coup, as a political interlocutor and received assurances from him for the development of democracy in Turkey.[410] This was one of the signs showing that the EU was not positioned against the intervention of the Army with a sharp democracy rhetoric. The US was also not sharp in its rhetoric when they warned the Army halfheartedly against a coup, after Erbakan already accepted the demands of the National Security Council.[411]

In this process, Western media frequently featured discourses questioning the role of the Army in politics regarding February 28 but discourses legitimizing the coup and evaluations that the government's Islamist policies were provocative, as well.[412] Mesut Yılmaz, who became the Prime Minister after the fall of the Refah-Yol government, was introduced in the US press as "Mr. Secular", it was said that NATO would love his stance[413], and it was stated that Yılmaz was a staunch supporter of the traditional pro-Western Turkish Foreign Policy.[414] In the ongoing process, the Welfare Party's closure by the Constitutional Court was supported by European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) because this party had values contrary to the European

[406] Tanör, B. (1997). Türkiye'de Demokratikleşme Perspektifleri. (109-113), TÜSİAD.
[407] (1996, September 21). TÜSİAD hükümetten ümidi kesti. Milliyet, 7.
[408] (1996, August 9). Ankara-Şam ilişkilerinde yumuşama. Milliyet, 15.
[409] Çongar, Y. (1996, September 21). CIA: Saddam'ı Hoca kurtardı. Amerikan Merkezi Haber Alma Teşkilatı, Refah'ın Irak politikasından şikâyetçi. Milliyet, 1.
[410] (1997, March 23). Sosyalist Grup Başkanı Pouline Green, Sivil Dayanışma ile görüştü. Milliyet, 11.
[411] (1997, June 14). No Coups, U.S. Warns Turkish Military. Los Angeles Times. Retrieved 2023, June 16 from: https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1997-06-14-mn-3167-story.html
[412] (1997, February 14). Erbakans Provokation, Die Zeit. Retrieved 2023, June 16 from: https://www.zeit.de/1997/08/Erbakans_Provokation. For a detailed analysis of how the 28 February process was seen in Western Media see Akın, Ş. (2016). Darbeler ve Batı Medyası: 28 Şubat Darbesi Üzerinden Bir Analiz. Liberal Düşünce Dergisi, 21(84), 35-56.
[413] Owen, E. (1997, June 20). Meet Mr. Secular, Time. Retrieved 2023, June 16 from: https://content.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,8341,00.html
[414] Kinzer, S. (1997, June 21). In Rebuff to Turkish Islamists, Secularist Gets a Call to Lead. The New York Times. Retrieved 2023, June 16 from: https://www.nytimes.com/1997/06/21/world/in-rebuff-to-turkish-islamists-secularist-gets-a-call-to-lead.html

Convention on Human Rights[415] Altogether, it would be going a bit too far to claim that the West supported the coup but it is also difficult to claim that it stood strongly against it.

As a result, just like in the Özal and AKP periods, the Welfare Party, using Islam as an identity in foreign policy, made an effort to establish close relations and intensive trade networks with Muslim countries, and similarly, with reference to the Ottoman past, argued that Turkey could be a regional power that would lead the Islamic World. The foreign policy of the government, of which the Welfare Party was a part, was similar to that of Özal and AKP. However, the main difference from these two periods was that these relations established or intended to be established were not under the initiative of the West, but sometimes against it, the interests of the West were ignored while developing these relations, and an anti-Western, Third Worldist language was used. As a result, these policies did not receive the support from Turkey's traditional Western allies, they were even tried to be discouraged and at the end were largely unsuccessful

It would be inappropriate to claim that the cause of the Welfare Party government's overthrow was its foreign policy moves. The post-modern coup was carried out under the cooperation of the Army, which was afraid of losing its hegemonic position in politics, and the big bourgeoisie, which was disturbed by the strained relations with the West. The issue that interests us here is that Western states and multilateral institutions did not take a clear position in the face of this anti-democratic action. The fierce reaction from the West to the Army's attempt to overthrow the pro-Western AKP government in 2007 and to the closure case of the AKP by the Constitutional Court in 2008 with similar motives constitutes an important contrast with this.

The closest conclusion we can draw from this is that despite its rhetoric of glorifying democratization in Turkey, and in other countries as well, the West always prioritized its own interests in Turkey's domestic and foreign policy and this is what shapes its certain reactions to certain situations. An inference that can be made from the Welfare Party's misery in domestic and foreign policy is that Western support was

[415] Ambrose E. P. - Zaman, A. (2001, August 1). European court backs Turkey's ban on Islamists. The Telegraph. Retrieved 2023, June 16 from: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/turkey/1336071/European-court-backs-Turkeys-ban-on-Islamists.html

an indispensable element for the foreign policy concept labeled as Neo-Ottomanism. It can be argued that foreign policy of the AKP in recent years falsifies this claim. After all, in recent years, unlike the pre-1980 foreign policy, the AKP has frequently used the Muslim and Turkish identity in foreign policy, and again, unlike before 1980, it has entered into intense regional relations, and besides, Turkey is more independent and distant in its relations with the West. However, AKP's new foreign policy takes place in an environment where the unipolar world is now openly questioned. For instance, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the USA has difficulty in getting the sanctions that it wants to impose on this country, other than its traditional allies such as Western Europe, Canada, Japan, Australia, etc. Saudi Arabia, a traditional ally of the USA, after long years of enmity, establishes relations and signs cooperation agreements with Iran, which is one of the prominent members of the rival camp, under the mediation of China.[416] Medium sized states like India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Brazil refuses to take sides with the Western Camp.[417] As a medium-sized country, Turkey maintains good relations with both the US-led Western alliance and the Sino-Russian axis, and does not feel compelled to choose a particular side. So, an important factor in the emergence of this situation is the fading of unipolarity and therefore the necessity for having good relations with the USA in order to stay in power in Turkey. Another important factor is that the AKP, which managed to abolish the military's tutelage over politics with the support of the West in the 2000s, is now comfortable in domestic politics and does not need external support in this regard, or Western support is not the only option anymore, since it has a solid hegemony over the country's politics.

[416] Choksy, J. K. Choksy, C.E. B. (2023, June 20). Iran Is Breaking Out of Its Box, Foreign Affairs. Retrieved 2023, June 16 from: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/iran/breaking-out-its-box-washington-tehran-regional-influence

[417] (2023, June 16). The Global South is forging a new foreign policy in the face of war in Ukraine, China-US tensions: Active nonalignment, The Conversation. Retrieved 2023, June 16 from: https://theconversation.com/the-global-south-is-forging-a-new-foreign-policy-in-the-face-of-war-in-ukraine-china-us-tensions-active-nonalignment-207078

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APPENDICES

A. TÜRKÇE ÖZET/TURKISH SUMMARY

Bu çalışmada 1980-93 yılları arasındaki Özal Dönemi ve 2002-2009 yılları arasındaki AKP Döneminde Yeni Osmanlıcılık olarak değerlendirilen dış politika setleri incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın savunduğu tez, Yeni Osmanlıcılığın Batı düzenine alternatif bir düzen öneren Batı karşıtı bir dış politika yaklaşımı olmadığı, aksine bu dış politika yaklaşımının Türkiye'nin Batı öncülüğündeki dünya düzenine değişen koşullar altında farklı bir içerik ve biçim ile uyumlanma çabası olduğudur.

Bu uyumlanma çabasındaki biçimsel değişiklik, Türkiye'nin geçmişteki bölgesel ilişkilerden mümkün olduğunca uzak durma ve/veya bölge ülkeleriyle ilişkilerini büyük güçlerle ilişkilerinden ayrı tutma politikasının terk edilmesidir. 1980'li yıllardan itibaren incelediğimiz dönemlerde Türkiye'nin bölgesine yönelik izlediği dış politika Batı'nın bölgesel çıkarlarıyla uyumluluk göstermektedir. Özal'ın ölümünün ardından bölgesel ilişkileri büyük güçlerden ayıran eski anlayış bir süreliğine geri dönse de 2000'li yıllarda AKP'nin iktidara gelmesiyle Özal dönemi anlayışı yeniden gündeme gelmiştir. Böylece, Türk Dış Politikası ABD'nin Ortadoğu bölgesine yönelik dış politikasının vücut bulmuş hali olan ve kamuoyunda "Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi (BOP) olarak bilinen Genişletilmiş Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika İnisiyatifi"ne uygun olarak şekillenmiştir.

Bu süreçte Türk Dış Politikasında içerik açısından yaşanan değişim, daha önce özenle kaçınılan İslam'ın (ve/veya Türk'ün, Osmanlı'nın) bir kimlik olarak kullanılmasıydı. Ortak kimliğe yapılan bu vurgu, bölge ülkeleriyle çoğunlukla ekonomik, bazen de güvenlik odaklı ilişkilere eşlik etti. 1980'li yıllarda Arap ülkeleriyle kurulan ilişkilerde İslam'ın ortak kimlik olduğu vurgulanmış, Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasından sonraki dönemde kullanılan ortak kimlik vurgusuna Türklük de eklenmiştir. Bu dönemde Türkiye bağımsızlığını yeni kazanan eski Sovyet ülkelerine Türk ve Müslüman ama Batı ile iyi ilişkiler içinde olan bir devlet/toplum modeli olarak sunuldu. 2000'li yıllardaki ilişkilerde yine İslam başrolü üstlendi ancak bu kez Türkiye, İslam'ın demokrasi ve serbest piyasa ekonomisiyle uyumluluğunu gösteren ılımlı İslamcı bir model olarak rol oynamak istedi.

Bu tez dört bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm giriş kısmı olup, geleneksel tanımları üzerinden yapılan bir sorgulama ve arka plan bilgisi sunularak Yeni Osmanlıcılık'ın bu çalışma kapsamındaki özgün tanımı yapılmaya çalışılmıştır. Türkiye'nin 1950 sonrası iç ve dış politikasını özetleyerek başlayan ikinci bölümde 12 Eylül 1980 darbesinin ardından yaşanan dış politika değişimine odaklanılmıştır. Bu tarihten başlayarak Turgut Özal'ın 1993 yılındaki ölümüne kadarki tarihsel aralığı kapsayan bu dönemde Türkiye'nin Yeni Osmanlıcılık olarak adlandırılan dış politika setleri tarihsel bir sıra ile incelenmiştir. Üçüncü bölümde, öncelikle Özal'ın ölümünün ardından Türkiye'nin iç siyaseti ile ekonomisinde 1990lar boyunca yaşanan gelişmeler ışığında Türk Dış Politikasında yaşanan değişim özetlenmiştir. Daha sonra Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin iktidara geldiği 2002'den 2009'a kadarki dönemde Yeni Osmanlıcılık olarak adlandırılan dış politika yaklaşımın teorik temelleri ile bu dış politika yaklaşımının uygulamadaki sacayaklarına açıklık getirilmeye çalışılmıştır. Dördüncü bölüm ise son bölüm olup çalışmanın kısa bir özeti ile çalışma sonunda varılan sonuçların sıralandığı sonuç kısmıdır.

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, Birinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında, dağılmakta olan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun yıkıntıları üzerinde, Batılı güçlerle ve Anadolu üzerinde hak iddia eden Batı'nın desteklediği diğer düşmanlarla savaşarak kuruldu. Bu savaşta onun tek müttefiki, kendisi gibi Batı tarafından kabul edilmeyen Sovyetler Birliği idi. Cumhuriyetin kuruluşundan sonra Atatürk'ün önderliğindeki Türkiye, hedefini muasır medeniyetler seviyesine ulaştırmak olarak koydu. Kısa sürede pek çok Batılılaşma hamlesi gerçekleştiren bu yeni devletin dış politikadaki yönü ise tarafsızlıktı. Atatürk'ün "Yurtta Sulh, Cihanda Sulh" düsturunu benimseyen yeni Cumhuriyet, Osmanlı'nın son dönemlerinde II. Abdülhamid'in benimsediği Pan-İslamizm'den, ardından da İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyetinin benimsediği Pan-Türkizm'den uzak durmayı tercih etti.

İkinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında her iki tarafın ısrarlarına rağmen tarafsızlığını koruyan Türkiye, savaşın sonunda çok güçlü bir aktör olarak ortaya çıkan Sovyetler Birliği'ni, güncel ve tarihsel sebeplerden, büyük bir tehdit olarak algılayarak Batı kampında yerini aldı ve ülke ekonomisini de Batı'nın istekleri doğrultusunda düzenlemeyi seçti. 1952 yılında NATO'ya kabul edildikten sonra Batı İttifakına bağlılığını göstermek için her fırsatı değerlendiren Adnan Menderes liderliğindeki Türk hükümeti, İsrail ile yakın ilişkiler kurmuş ve bölgede Arap milliyetçiliğine karşı, Sovyet etkisi altında olduğu gerekçesiyle, güvenlikçi yaklaşımın öne çıktığı bir duruş

benimsemiştir.

1960 darbesinden sonra iç politikada ithal ikameci sanayileşme modelini benimseyen Türkiye, yine Batı'nın hâkim paradigması ekseninde Batı İttifakı'nda yer almaya devam etmiş, ancak daha dengeli bir dış politika izlemeye çalışmıştır. Sovyetler Birliği ile ilişkilerin nispeten ılımlı olduğu bu dönemde genel yaklaşım pek değişmedi. Asıl farkı yaratacak olan ve daha sonra Türkiye'nin Batılı müttefikleriyle ilişkilerini zehirlemeye devam edecek olan Kıbrıs meselesiydi. 1964'teki ünlü Johnson Mektubu'ndan sonra Türkiye ile Batı arasındaki ilişkiler bozulmaya başladı. 1960'lı yıllarda tarımsal kalkınma yerine sanayileşmeyi ön planda tutan ekonomi politikaları sonucunda, kırsal nüfus kırsal kesimden kentlere göç ederken, büyük kentlerin çeperlerinde büyük işçi kitleleri toplandı. Bu kitleler üzerinde etkili olan sol siyaset ile Kıbrıs meselesinden doğan milliyetçiliğin birleşmesi sonucu ülkede genel hava giderek Batı karşıtlığına dönüştü.

1970'li yılların başından itibaren, özellikle 1973-74 petrol krizinin ardından bölgesindeki Arap ülkeleriyle daha yakın ilişkiler kurmaya başlayan Türkiye, 1967 ve 1973'teki iki Arap-İsrail savaşında ABD'nin İncirlik Üssünü kullanmasına izin vermeyerek Arap komşularının hassasiyetlerini önemsemeye başladığını gösterdi. Soğuk Savaş'ın 1970'lerdeki yumuşama dönemiyle birlikte Türkiye'nin Batılı müttefikleri nezdindeki jeostratejik değeri azalmaya başladı ve 1974'teki Kıbrıs Harekâtı'ndan sonra Batılı dostları Türkiye'ye silah ambargosu uyguladılar. Bu tutuma yanıt yine Türkiye'deki üslerin kullanımının sınırlandırılması oldu ancak bununla da kalmadı. Türkiye Başbakanı Bülent Ecevit Sovyetler Birliği'ne uzun yıllar sonra ilk kez bir resmi ziyarette bulundu, Batılı müttefikleri tarafından uygulanan ambargo nedeniyle NATO Ortak Deklarasyonu'nu imzalamayacaklarını belirterek, Sovyetler Birliği'nin artık bir tehdit olarak görülmediğini söyledi. Bütün bunları Türkiye'nin eksen değişikliğine doğru gittiğinin işaretleri olarak görenler oldu.

12 Eylül 1980'de gerçekleşen askeri darbe tüm bu şüphelere son verdi. Ülkenin siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal açıdan ciddi bir dönüşümünü hedefleyen darbe, Batı İttifakı ile ilişkilerin sürekliliğinden yanaydı. Darbeden önceki son hükümet döneminde Başbakanlık Müsteşarı olan ve ithal ikameci sanayileşme modelinden vazgeçilip ihracat odaklı büyüme modeline geçilmesini öngören 24 Ocak Kararlarının hazırlanmasında önemli rolü olduğu bilinen Turgut Özal, darbeden sonra emekli amiral Bülend Ulusu liderliğinde kurulan hükümette Başbakan yardımcılığı görevine getirildi. 24 Ocak Kararlarının belirlediği radikal ekonomik dönüşümü denetlemek

üzere seçilen Turgut Özal'ın muhafazakâr kimliği darbenin bir başka hedefiyle örtüşüyordu. Darbeden sonra devlet tarafından benimsenen Türk-İslam Sentezi odaklı politikalar 1970'li yıllar boyunca milliyetçilik ve sosyalizm öğretileri çevresinde iki kutba ayrılmış olan toplumu İslami değerler altında birleştirmeyi ve Osmanlı'dan bu yana baskı altında tutulan İslamcılığı kullanarak devletin öne çıkan ideolojisi olan milliyetçiliği, daha muhafazakar hale getirerek güncellemeyi amaçlıyordu. Bu yönelim ise Batı'da yükselişe geçen muhafazakâr-neoliberal iktidarların bir yansıması olarak bu ülkenin iç ve dış politikasını bir şekilde Batı'nın istekleri doğrultusunda şekillendirdiğini gösteriyordu.

Darbeci generallerin ve onların desteğiyle kurulan hükümetin bazı kritik dış politika konularında aldığı kararlar, yeni yönetimin ABD ile nasıl bir etkileşim içinde olduğuna dair net ipuçları veriyordu. Bunlardan ilki, darbeden önceki Demirel Hükümeti tarafından imzalanan fakat bir pazarlık unsuru olarak parlamento onayı bekletilen Savunma ve Ekonomik İşbirliği Anlaşması'nın (SEİA) darbeden sadece birkaç gün sonra aceleyle onaylanmasıydı. Yine darbeden birkaç gün sonra, Yunanistan'ın NATO'nun askeri kanadına geri dönmesini öngören ve 70'li yılların sonunda ABD'den gelen büyük baskılara rağmen kabul edilmeyen Rogers Planı Yunanistan'dan ya da NATO'dan herhangi bir karşılık beklenmeden imzalandı. Bunun ardından yine Türkiye'nin önceki yıllarda ısrarla reddettiği Çevik Kuvvet Anlaşması kısa bir tereddütten sonra kabul edildi.

1980 yılından itibaren Arap ülkeleriyle kurulan ilişkilerde ise 1970'li yılların başında başlayan ilişkiler ile bir süreklilik vardı ama bu ilişkilerin kurulma biçiminde ve içeriğinde de önemli farklılıklar mevcuttu. 1970'li yılların başından itibaren gelişen ilişkiler, Batı İttifakı'nın talep ve çıkarlarıyla uyumlu ya da belli bir küresel gündeme hizmet eden ilişkiler değildi. Bu ilişkiler, çoğunlukla Kıbrıs Harekâtı sonrası Batılı devletlerin politikalarından kaynaklanan hayal kırıklığı ile Arap Dünyasından yine Kıbrıs konusunda destek alınamamasından kaynaklanıyordu ve bu ilişkilerde ambargodan kaynaklanan ekonomik kısıtlamaların ve dönemsel olarak azalan Sovyet tehdidinin de etkisi vardı. Türkiye Arap ülkeleriyle yakınlaşma yoluna bu koşullar altında girdi. 1980'li yıllarda kurulan ilişkilerde ise, Carter Doktrini'nin belirlediği, Sovyetler Birliğinin güney sınırında Müslüman ülkelerden oluşan bir "Yeşil Kuşak" hattının oluşturularak bu ülkenin nüfuzunun sınırlandırılmasını öngören dış politika yaklaşımı ile bağlantı söz konusuydu ve bu kapsamda Arap ülkeleri ile çok daha kapsamlı ilişkiler başlatıldı. Türkiye artık bölgesiyle geçmişe göre çok daha kapsamlı

ve bilinçli ilişkiler kurmaya başlamış, daha önce özenle kaçındığı Ortadoğu'nun bir parçası gibi hareket etmeye başlamıştı. Başbakan Bülend Ulusu'nun 1981 yılındaki İslam İşbirliği Teşkilatı toplantısına katılması, bu yapıda Türkiye'nin ilk kez Başbakan düzeyinde temsil edilmesi açısından sembolik bir önem taşıyordu. 1980'li yıllar boyunca artarak devam eden ve sadece ticarette değil güvenlik alanında da görülen bu alışılmadık bölgesel angajman, Türkiye'nin, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun mirasçısı olarak, bu imparatorluğun eski topraklarında yeniden nüfuz kurma arzusu olarak yorumlandı ve Yeni Osmanlıcılık olarak etiketlendi.

Türkiye'nin yeniden Ortadoğu'ya yöneldiği doğruydu fakat bunun nedeni Osmanlı nostaljisinden öte bir şeydi. Temmuz 1979'da, İran İslam Devrimi'nin Basra Körfezi'nin güvenliğini tehdit etmesinden birkaç ay sonra, Başkan Jimmy Carter Amerikan halkına enerji tüketimini azaltmalarını tavsiye etti. Aynı yılın sonlarında Sovyetler Birliği'nin Afganistan'ı işgal etmesinin ABD'nin bölgedeki güvenlik kaygılarını artırdığı bilinmekteydi. Bu koşullar altında Carter Doktrini ile Basra Körfezi'nin güvenliğinin kendisi için hayati önem taşıdığını belirten ABD'nin bölgedeki en büyük müttefikinden bu amaçla Körfez ülkeleriyle yakın ilişkiler geliştirmesini talep etmesi doğaldı. Başlangıçta ekonomi alanında gelişen ilişkiler, daha sonra Suudi Arabistan'la yapılan askeri mühimmat üretimi anlaşmasında olduğu gibi güvenlik odaklı ilişkileri de içerecek şekilde zenginleşti. İran-Irak Savaşı'nın istikrarsızlaştırıcı etkisi sonucunda ABD'nin bu bölgeye doğrudan müdahalesini sağlayacak Çevik Kuvvet Anlaşması Türkiye tarafından kabul edilerek uygulamaya konuldu.

1970'li yıllarda Soğuk Savaş'ın yumuşama dönemine girmesiyle birlikte Batı ittifakı nezdindeki değerini kaybeden Türkiye, İran İslam Devrimi ve Sovyetler Birliği'nin Afganistan'ı işgal etmesiyle bu önemini, bu kez Soğuk Savaş'ın ağırlığı güneye doğru kaymasıyla birlikte Ortadoğu bağlamında olmak üzere, yeniden kazanmaya başladı. ABD'nin bölgedeki en büyük müttefiklerinden biri olan İran'ı kaybettiği ve bu eski müttefikin tüm bölgeyi tehdit edecek Batı karşıtı bir ideoloji olan radikal İslam'ı ihraç etmeye başladığı bir ortamda ABD'nin bölgedeki tek NATO müttefiki olan Türkiye'yi Ortadoğu bağlamında değerlendirmesi mantıklıydı. Başta Özal olmak üzere Türk yöneticiler de bunun farkındaydı. Özal, Türkiye'nin ABD'ye karşı elinin güçlü olmasını sağlamasının yolunun, 1970'lerde yapıldığı gibi, Sovyetler Birliğine yakınlaşmayı da kapsayan dış politika girişimlerine yönelmek ve daha dengeli bir dış politika izlemek olduğuna inanmıyordu. Onun yolu, sıkı bir ABD

yanlısı duruş sergilemek ve mümkün olduğunca ABD dış politikasına uyum sağlamaktı. 1980li yıllar boyunca birkaç istisna dışında ABD dış politikasına tam uyum sağlandı ve bu süreçte ilişkilerde ortaya çıkan krizler ABD'nin istediği gibi çözüldü.

Türkiye'nin bu dönemdeki Orta Doğu yöneliminin bir diğer amacı da ihracat odaklı büyüme stratejisi çerçevesinde ihtiyaç duyduğu pazarlara ulaşmaktı. Henüz batılı rakipleriyle rekabet etme şansı yakalayamayan Türk yatırımcıların, mallarını satma konusunda göreceli bir rekabet gücüne sahip oldukları Orta Doğu pazarlarına yönelmeleri doğal bir gelişmeydi. 1980li yılların başında yok denecek kadar az olan Ortadoğu bölgesine ihracat, özellikle İran-Irak savaşı nedeniyle olmak üzere, on yıl içinde Türkiye'nin ihracatının önemli bir kısmını oluşturmaya başladı. Ancak 1985'ten sonra Türk ticaretinin gerilemeye başlamasıyla bu gelişmenin de geçici olduğu ortaya çıktı. Ancak Türkiye'nin ekonomik olarak Orta Doğu'ya yönelmesi sadece pazar arayışından kaynaklanmıyordu. 1970li yıllarda petrol fiyatlarının artmasıyla birlikte önemli bir finansman kaynağı haline gelen Körfez ülkeleri, ekonomisi uzun süre döviz girişinden mahrum kalan Türkiye için ayrı bir çekiciliğe sahipti. Bu nedenle Türkiye 1980'li yıllar boyunca bir yandan Körfez ülkelerinden yatırım yapılmasını sağlayacak, diğer yandan ekonomiyi ihracata yönelik hale getirecek birçok yasal düzenleme yaptı.

Darbe iktidarı döneminde başlayıp Özal döneminde de devam eden bu ilişkileri önceki dönemlerden ayıran bir diğer özellik de, Müslüman ülkelerin üye olduğu çok taraflı kuruluşlarda Türkiye'nin giderek artan temsil ve etkinlik düzeyiydi. Bu dönemde Türkiye bölgesel teşkilatlarda hem başbakan hem de cumhurbaşkanı düzeyinde temsil edilmeye ve bu teşkilatların yönetiminde yer almaya başladı. Ayrıca bu ilişkilerin kurulması sırasında kullanılan dil de önceki dönemlerden farklıydı. Önceki dönemlerde Türkiye'yi Batı'nın bir parçası olarak görmek konusunda kararlı olan Türk elitleri, artık Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu'nun ve İslam dünyasının ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğunu ifade etmeye başladı. Bu durum, ABD'nin 1970'li yılların sonlarından itibaren benimsediği bölgesel politika ve bu politika çerçevesinde Türkiye'den beklentileriyle uyumluydu.

1980'li yılların sonlarına doğru Soğuk Savaş'ın sonunun yaklaştığının netleşmesiyle birlikte hem Batının hem de buna bağlı olarak Türkiye'nin dış politika öncelikleri değişmeye başladı. Demir Perde'nin yıkılmasının ardından bir süredir özellikle ABD tarafından Ortadoğu bağlamında değerlendirilen Türkiye'nin jeostratejik önemi yeniden azalmaya başladı. 1989 yılında Türkiye'nin AET üyelik

başvurusunun reddedilmesinin ardından Türkiye'yi yönetenler, bu ülkenin Batı ittifakı açısından değerli kalmasının yollarını aramaya başladı. Bu bağlamda ilk fırsat Irak'ın Kuveyt'i işgal etmesiyle ortaya çıktı. Bu olaydan sonra Türkiye, Irak'a yapılacak operasyon öncesinde ABD'nin tüm isteklerini yerine getirdi. Bazıları büyük muhalefetle karşı karşıya kalsa da tüm isteklerin yerine getirilmesinin nedeni Türkiye'nin Batı ittifakı açısından öneminin azalmasıydı ve Özal'ın gazetelere yansıyan sözlerinden de anlaşılacağı üzere ülkeyi yönetenler bu sorunun çözümünü ABD'nin yararlı bir müttefiki olarak kalmakta buluyorlardı. Özal, bu çözümü biraz daha ileri götürerek, ABD bunu talep etmemesine rağmen, Türk ordusunun Irak'ı işgal edecek olan koalisyon güçlerine katılmasını bile önerdi. Bu plana göre Türkiye ABD'ye maksimum fayda sağlayarak iyi bir müttefik olduğunu gösterecek ve böylecce ABD desteğini alabilecekti.

Körfez Savaşı sırasındaki planları bununla kalmayan Özal'ın, savaş sonrasında Irak'ın bölüneceğini veya yeniden yapılandırılacağını hesaplayarak Kuzey Irak'ın petrol zengini bölgeleri olan Musul ve Kerkük'ü işgal etme ve bunları bir federasyon çerçevesinde Türkiye'ye bağlama planı Türk askeri ve sivil bürokrasisi tarafından engellendi. Hem PKK'nın güçlenmesini engellemeyi hem de petrol zengini bölgeleri ele geçirmeyi hedeflediği tahmin edilebilecek bu plan ile Özal'ın belki de en önemli motivasyonlarından biri, Türkiye'nin bölgesel bir güç olarak ortaya çıkması ve dolayısıyla Amerika Birleşik Devletleri için daha değerli bir müttefike dönüşmesiydi. Özal'ın bu planları yapmasında ABD'nin nasıl bir rol oynadığını henüz bilimsel bir kesinlik ile bilinmiyor fakat planlarına karşı çıkan askeri bürokrasinin itirazının asıl sebebinin bu planların ABD kaynaklı olması ve bu kapsamda Türkiye'nin himayesinde Kuzey Irak'ta bir Kürt devletinin kurulmasının amaçlanması nedeniyle olduğu biliniyor. Bunun dışında o dönemde ABD devlet aygıtıyla yakın ilişki içinde olan kurum ve yazarların yayınlarından da ABD'nin Kuzey Irak'ta en azından özerk veya bağımsız bir Kürt varlığına karşı olmadığı sonucu çıkarılabilir.

Körfez Savaşı öncesinde Türkiye, ABD'nin tüm isteklerini yerine getirerek ne kadar değerli bir müttefik olduğunu kanıtlamış ancak 1991 yılı sonunda Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasıyla Batı ittifakı nezdindeki değerinin daha da azalmasından da korkmaya başlamıştır. Ancak yeni konjonktürde Batı'nın Türkiye için hazırlanmış yeni bir rolü vardı. Önce Batı basınında, daha sonra da resmi makamlarda dile getirilen bu yeni rol çerçevesinde, Türkiye'nin tarihi, dini ve etnik bağları olan eski Sovyet ülkelerinin yeni dünya düzenine entegrasyonunda rol alması bekleniyordu. Türkiye,

İran'ın İslam Devrimi'nden sonra kendi rejimini ihraç etme politikası ve bu yeni Müslüman devletlerin de hızla radikal İslam'ın etkisi altına girebileceği korkusu nedeniyle bir süre Rusya tarafından bile desteklenen bu rolü benimsedi ve bu kapsamda Kafkasya ve Orta Asya devletleriyle benzeri görülmemiş bir dizi ilişkiler kurmaya çalıştı. Bu bağlamda elde edebileceği ekonomik kazancı da hesaplayan Türkiye, hem resmi kanallar hem de sivil unsurlar aracılığıyla bölgede söz sahibi olmaya çalıştı. Nasıl ki 1980lerdeki Orta Doğu açılımında İslam söylem düzeyinde ortaya çıktıysa, bu kez de Türklük vurgusu ön plana çıkmaya başladı. Atatürk'ten bu yana Panislamizm'i ve Pantürkizm'i maceracılık olarak gören ve bundan uzak duran Türkiye, artık bu kavramlara dış politika diline açıkça yer vermeye başlamıştı.

Türkiye'nin bu koşullar altında yeni pazarlar, enerji kaynakları ve gelirler elde etmeyi, bunun da ötesinde uzun vadeli siyasi nüfuz elde etmeyi hedeflemesi ve bu hedeflere belli ölçüde ulaşması doğaldı, ancak Batı'nın Türkiye'nin bu rolü üstlenmesine destek vermesinin nedeni bu rolün iki temel işlevine dayanıyordu: İran'ın nüfuzunun yayılmasını önlemek ve bağımsızlığını yeni kazanan ülkelerin yeni dünyaya başarılı ekonomik ve siyasi entegrasyonunu sağlamak. Bir süre sonra İran'dan gelebilecek potansiyel tehlikenin ve Türkiye'nin bu ülkelerin dünya düzenine entegrasyonuna sağlayacağı potansiyel katkının abartıldığı görüldü. Zamanla Türkiye'nin kendi iç sorunlarıyla bile baş etmekte zorlandığı, bu ülkelerin kalkınmasına katkı sağlayacak kapasiteden uzak olduğu anlaşılınca Batı'nın Türkiye'ye verdiği rol model desteği ortadan kalktı ve Yeni Osmanlıcılık başka bir küresel konjonktürde tekrar hatırlanmak üzere rafa kaldırıldı.

Türk dış politikasında 1980'den sonra belirginleşen güçlü Amerikancılık eğilimi, Özal'ın vefatından sonra etkisini kaybetmeye başladı. Özal'ın Musul ve Kerkük planlarına askeri bürokrasinin karşı çıkmasının nedenlerinden anlaşıldığı kadarıyla Ordu, Türkiye ile ABD'nin bölgedeki çıkarlarının artık örtüşmediği görüşündeydi. ABD'nin bölgeye yönelik gelecek vizyonunda özellikle önem taşıdığı düşünülen Kuzey Irak'ta bir Kürt devletinin kurulması ihtimali, bu dönemde Türk dış politikasının hayati bir konusu haline geldi. 1990'lı yıllar boyunca ABD ve Türkiye, PKK'ya karşı mücadelede işbirliği yaptı, ancak bu işbirliği yalnızca Türkiye sınırları içerisinde geçerliydi. Kuzey Irak'ta gerçekleştirilecek operasyonlar ABD'nin iznine bağlıydı ve mümkün olduğu kadar kısa tutulması gerekiyordu. Bu nedenle Kuzey Irak'ta oluşan özerk yapı, 90lı yıllar boyunca Türkiye-ABD ilişkilerinde bir gerilim unsuru olarak kaldı.

İç siyasette Özal sonrası döneme istikrarsız koalisyon hükümetleri damgasını vurdu. 1990lı yılların geri kalanında Türkiye çoğunlukla kötü ekonomi, sosyal sorunlar, terör ve istikrarsız siyasi yapı nedeniyle iç sorunlarla uğraştı. 1980li yıllarda Türk-İslam Sentezi odaklı politikaların bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkan İslamcı siyaset, 1990'lı yılların ortalarında bir koalisyon hükümetiyle iktidara geldi. Kendini ülkede laikliğin koruyucusu olarak konumlandıran Ordu, Refah Partisi'nin İslamcı söylemine tolerans göstermedi ve hükümet, yerleşik Türk burjuvazisi ve onun kontrolü altındaki medyanın desteğiyle gerçekleştirilen bir "post-modern darbe" ile devrildi.

Ordu ve büyük burjuvazinin işbirliğiyle siyasal İslamcı iktidarın devrilmesinin ardından gelen ve genel olarak milliyetçi olarak tanımlanabilecek hükümetler, bölgesel dış politikada geçmişe dönmeyi ve bölge ülkeleriyle ilişkileri en aza indirmeyi tercih etmedi. Bunun yerine bölge ülkeleriyle farklı gündemlerde ilişkiler kurmayı tercih ettiler. Özellikle 1999 yılında Abdullah Öcalan'ın yakalanmasından sonra PKK faktörü bir süre ortadan kaybolmuş, böylece Türkiye'nin Güney ve Doğu komşularıyla ilişkileri düzelmeye başlamıştı. Bu ülkelerden enerji kaynaklarına ihtiyaç duyan Türkiye, bu ülkelere de artan oranlarda ihracat yapmaya başladı. Ancak bu ilişkilerin çoğu Batı (özellikle ABD) tarafından onaylanmıyordu.

Körfez Savaşı sonrası dönemde ABD, Irak ve İran' a karşı ikili çevreleme politikası izledi. Buna göre iki ülkenin izole edilmesi ve zayıflatılması öngörülüyordu. Ancak Türkiye uzun süre Özal dönemindeki işbirliğine benzer bir işbirliğine yanaşmadı. Türkiye'nin İran'la doğal gaz anlaşması imzalaması, İran etkisi altında olduğu için ABD tarafından kontrol altına alınmaya çalışılan bir diğer ülke olan Suriye ile iyi ilişkiler kurma çabaları, Irak'la ticaret miktarının arttırılması, bu ülkede rejim değişikliği yerine barışçıl çözümler önerilmesi ABD tarafından kabul görmedi. Özellikle 11 Eylül sonrasında Irak'ın işgali gündeme geldiğinde, Türkiye'deki hükümetin ABD'nin taleplerine direnmeye devam etmesi büyük bir sorundu. Bu noktada, yaşanan şiddetli ekonomik kriz ve büyük yıkım yaratan 1999 depreminin de etkisiyle zaten toplumsal desteği zayıf olan hükümetin yerine, ABD ile daha uyumlu ilişkiler sürdürmesi beklenen, AKP'nin iktidara gelmesi bölgesel denklemi değiştirdi.

AKP'yi kuranlar, kapatılan Refah Partisi'nin yerine kurulan Fazilet Partisi'ndeki iktidar mücadelesini kaybeden “Yenilikçiler” grubuydu. Milli Görüş Hareketi'ndeki geleneksel liderliğin aksine bu grup, Batı'ya ve serbest piyasa ekonomisine uyumlu bir politika öneriyordu. Partilerinin (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) yeni kurulduğu dönemde, ABD'deki çeşitli bürokrat, siyasetçi ve düşünce

kuruluşlarıyla iyi ilişkileri vardı. Henüz resmi bir unvanı bile olmayan partinin lideri Erdoğan, Başkan Bush tarafından Beyaz Saray'da ağırlandı ve övgüyle karşılandı. ABD tarafında, ilk dönemdeki bu ilginin temel nedeni, AKP yönetiminin önceki hükümetlerden farklı olarak ABD'ye Irak konusunda zorluk çıkarmayacağı beklentisiyken AKP tarafındaki ilginin sebebi Türkiye'de iktidara gelmenin ve ona tutunmanın bir yolu olarak ABD'nin desteğinin sağlanmasıydı. AKP'nin iktidara gelmesinin hemen ardından Türk topraklarının ABD askerlerince Irak'ın işgali için kullanılmasına ilişkin önergenin TBMM tarafından reddedilmesi küçük bir krize yol açsa da iki ülke arasındaki ilişkiler sonraki dönemde mükemmele yakın bir seyir izledi. Her halükarda zaten ABD yönetimi de önergenin onaylanmamasından yeni iktidara gelen AKP'yi değil, Orduyu sorumlu tutuyordu.

Irak Savaşı sonrası dönemde ABD'nin AKP yönetimindeki Türkiye'ye verdiği desteğin temel nedeni, 1990lar boyunca büyüyen ve 11 Eylül'de zirveye ulaşan küresel radikal İslam tehdidine karşı güvenlik odaklı politikaların tek başına istenen sonuçları vermediğinin farkına varılmasıydı. 11 Eylül'den sonra bunun yerine, radikal İslam'ın beslenme kaynağı olarak görülen diktatörlük rejimlerinin yıkılmasını ve bölgedeki ılımlı hükümetlerin ve hareketlerin desteklenmesini içeren Genişletilmiş Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika İnisiyatifi ya da kamuoyunda bilinen adı ile Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi (BOP) uygulamaya konuldu. Ortaya çıktığı yapının Batı karşıtı ve serbest piyasa karşıtı özelliklerinden kurtulan AKP, bu dönemde ABD'nin İslam dünyasında görmek istediği değişimin canlı örneğiydi. ABD desteği ilk olarak Rand Corporation gibi devlete bağlı düşünce kuruluşlarının yayınlarında, daha sonra da çeşitli bürokrat ve politikacıların söylemlerinde görünür hale geldi. Bu yaklaşımın Türk tarafındaki karşılığı ise Davutoğlu Doktrini olarak bilinen politikalar bütünüydü. Cumhuriyetin 1980 öncesi dış politikasını statüko odaklı olmakla eleştiren Davutoğlu, ülkenin Osmanlı geçmişinden hareketle daha aktif bir dış politika izlemesi gerektiği görüşündeydi. Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun formüle ettiği ve ortaya koyduğu yeni dış politika yaklaşımı, İslam'ın bir dış politika unsuru olarak kullanılmasını, Batılı güçlerle uyumlu bir dış politika izlenmesini Batılı değerlerin benimsenmesini ve yerelleştirilmesini, bu sayede sağlanan Batı desteği ile bölgesel ilişkilerde bir kaldıraç oluşturmayı öngörüyordu. AKP, BOP ile neredeyse tam uyum içinde olan bu dış politika anlayışına ılımlı İslamcı içerik sağladı ve bu içeriği Batı'ya stratejik bir değer olarak sunarak Batı'nın desteğini aldı.

Batı'nın ilk yıllarda AKP'ye desteğinin en önemli şartı BOP'a katılım ve

destekti. AKP yönetimi bu isteği yerine getirmekten çekinmedi. Ayrıca İsrail'le ilişkilerin sürdürülmesi, hatta geliştirilmesi yönündeki talep de AKP tarafından kabul edildi. Bir diğer talep ise İran ve Suriye ile ilişkilerin mesafeli tutulması ve bu iki ülkenin etkisini sınırlandırılmasıydı. AKP çeşitli nedenlerle bu talebe uymamış ancak daha sonra Suriye'yle olan ilişkilere, bu ülkeyi İran etkisinden uzaklaştırıp Batı kampına yaklaştıracağı gerekçesiyle hoşgörüyle yaklaşılmış ve desteklenmiştir. Bunun dışında AKP, uzun yıllardır Türkiye'nin Batı ile en büyük sorunu olan Kıbrıs sorununun, hem Türkiye'deki hem de Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki milliyetçi muhalefete rağmen, Batı'nın talepleri doğrultusunda çözülmesi için müdahalede bulundu. Tıpkı Özal döneminde olduğu gibi bu dönemde de Türkiye ile ABD arasında üst düzey bir dış politika uyumu sağlandı.

AKP'nin bölge siyasetinde ABD'ye yakınlaşmasının ödülü, iktidara geldiği ilk yıllarda iç siyasette kendisine büyük bir meşruiyet kaynağı ve tehlikelere karşı bir dayanak sağlayan Batı desteği oldu. AKP, en büyük rakibi Ordu'nun siyasi gücünü azaltmak ve kendi geleceğini güvence altına almak amacıyla yasal düzenlemelerle devlet yapısını değiştirirken, arkasındaki en büyük destek Batı'ydı. AKP iç siyasette pek çok sorunun üstesinden büyük ölçüde Batı'nın desteğiyle gelmeyi başardı. 2007 Cumhurbaşkanlığı seçimi sırasında yaşanan e-muhtıra olayında ve AKP'ye açılan kapatma davasında AKP'nin Ordu ve Yargı'ya karşı en büyük dayanağı Batıdan gelen destekti.

AKP'nin Batı'dan aldığı destek, Ordu ve Yargı'nın muhalefeti karşısında işe yaradığı gibi gibi, 90'lı yılların ortasında, aynı AKP gibi İslamcı olan Refah Partisi'nin Batı karşıtı tutumuna karşı tavır almış olan büyük burjuvazinin de Ordu'nun tarafında ve AKP karşıtı kampa katılmasını da engelledi. Aslında AKP'nin ABD'nin desteğini kazanmak amacıyla benimsediği ılımlı İslamcılık ve bu kanal üzerinden yürütülen Yeni Osmanlıcı dış politika, Türk burjuvazisi tarafından da destekleniyordu. 1980li ve 90lı yıllarda güçlenen ve merkezileşen Türk sermayesi, 2000li yıllarda yurt içi kazanımlarla yetinemeyecek kadar büyümüştü. AKP'nin işgücü piyasası ve sosyal güvenlik sisteminde uyguladığı kapsamlı özelleştirme ve neoliberal dönüşüm politikalarından da yararlanan burjuvazi, artık gözünü dış pazarlara ve dış yatırım fırsatlarına dikmişti. Böylece AKP, hem Batı'nın hem de yerli burjuvazinin desteğiyle, ülke tarihinde benzeri görülmemiş bir neoliberal ekonomik dönüşümü gerçekleştirmenin yanı sıra ülkenin kuruluşundan bu yana en istikrarlı aktörü olan Ordu'nun siyaset üzerindeki de vesayetini kaldıracak düzenlemeleri de hayata

geçirebildi.

Türk burjuvazisinin AKP'ye desteği ise, Yeni Osmanlıcılık sayesinde sadece dış pazarlar ve yatırım fırsatlarıyla değil, aynı zamanda AKP'nin Batı ile iyi ilişkileriyle de ilgiliydi. Çünkü bu güç merkezinin çıkarları artık ulus-ötesi bir nitelik kazanmıştı ve uluslararası sermayeyle bütünleşme yoluna girmişti. Yani bölge ülkeleriyle İslamcı söylem üzerinden kurulan ilişkilerin yanı sıra Batılı kurumlarla ortak dil ve olumlu ilişkiler geliştirmek de çok önemliydi. Bu nedenle 1990'lı yıllarda yine İslamcı bir dille Müslüman ülkelere açılım yapan Refah Partisi'nin Yeni Osmanlıcılığı aynı çevreler tarafından takdir görmedi zira Batı ile ilişkileri iyi olmayan bir iktidar, çıkarları uluslararası sermaye ile bütünleşmekte olan bir sermaye sınıfı için bir tehditti.

Sonuç itibarıyla, Türkiye'nin hem Özal döneminde hem de AKP döneminde Yeni Osmanlıcılık olarak adlandırılan dış politika yaklaşımı, yaygın kanının aksine Batı karşıtı olmadığı gibi, söz konusu dönemlerde, Batı dış politikası ile son derece uyumluydu. Türkiye, Soğuk Savaş dönemi boyunca, jeostratejik konumu ve bu konumun gereği olarak Batı ile kurduğu güvenlik odaklı ilişkiler sayesinde Batı için değerli bir müttefik olarak kalabilmiş ve bu sayede Batı liderliğindeki dünya düzeninin bir parçası olabilmişti. Ne var ki Soğuk Savaş'ın sonlanmasıyla birlikte Türkiye artık bu eski avantajlarına sahip olmadığını görmüş ve yeni dünya düzenine entegre olabilmek için, bölgesel ilişkilerini büyük güçler ile kurduğu ilişkilerden ayrı tutma prensibinden vazgeçmiş, daha önceleri özenle kaçındığı Müslümanlık, Türklük gibi kimliğe dayalı söylemlere dış politika dilinde yer vermeye başlamıştır. Bu bağlamda Yeni Osmanlıcılık, Türkiye'nin değişen küresel koşullar ile kendi iç siyaseti ve ekonomisinde yaşadığı değişimlerin etkisi altında Batı ittifakı liderliğindeki dünya düzenine uyum sağlama, bu düzende bir rol ve değer sahibi olma arayışının ürünüdür.

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