

Türkiye's Century-Long Foreign Policy Experience: Key Takeaways

Türkiye'nin Yüzyıllık Dış Politika Deneyimi: Temel Çıkarımlar

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze a century-old Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP). The year 2023 was the anniversary of the centenary of the foundation of Turkey. Therefore, this article aims to analyze the century old TFP through the main determinants/dynamics affecting the formation of TFP to extract key takeaways. Accordingly, Turkey has implemented a self-focused foreign policy based on pragmatism, influenced by geographical and power constraints. Turkey almost never abandoned its Western-oriented, non-interventionist, cautious and pragmatic foreign policy. Following the change of political power in Turkey in 2002, the new rulers have gradually pursued an assertive foreign policy that was multilateral, multifaceted, religiously focused, and Eastern-oriented, particularly centered on the Middle East. This study will analyze all these processes.

Keywords: Turkish Foreign Policy, analysis, key takeaways, century-long foreign policy, 1923

Öz

Bu makale, bir asırlık Türk Dış Politikasını (TDP) analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. 2023 yılı, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin kuruluşunun yüzüncü dönüm yılıydı. Bu nedenle, bu makale, önemli çıkarımları tespit etmek amacı ile TDP oluşumunu etkileyen temel belirleyiciler/dinamikler vasıtası ile asırlık TDP'ni analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye, coğrafi ve güç kısıtlamalarından etkilenen, pragmatizme dayalı, kendine odaklı bir dış politika uygulamıştır. Türkiye, Batı odaklı, müdahaleci olmayan, ihtiyatlı ve pragmatik dış politika esasından neredeyse hiç vazgeçmedi. Ancak, 2002 yılındaki Türkiye'de siyasi iktidar değişiminin ardından, yeni yöneticiler yavaş yavaş çok taraflı, çok yönlü, dini odaklı ve daha Doğu yönelimli, özellikle Orta Doğu'ya yönelik odaklanan iddialı bir dış politika izlediler. Bu çalışma tüm bu süreçleri analiz edecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Dış Politikası, analiz, temel çıkarımlar, yüzyıllık dış politika, 1923

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Introduction

The year 2023 was the centenary of the foundation of the Republic of Türkiye (hereinafter TR), which was born in 1923 from the ashes of the collapsed Ottoman Empire. TR's century-old foreign policy has been shaped by many dynamics, determinants and factors. Foreign policy has also differentiated according to increasing or decreasing external threats, the will of governments, internal dynamics, alliance commitments, and global security dynamics. Of course, the role of each of the dynamics and factors in question has not been the same.

Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) is generally examined according to time periods in which threats, global security and domestic political struggles show dissimilar characteristics. In this context, there are five stages in which the Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) can be analyzed:

- Early Republican Period (1923-1939)
- World War II Period until 1950 (1939-1950)
- Cold War Period (1950-1990)
- 1990s-until 2000
- After 2000s-present

This study also tries to examine a century long TFP according to timeframe as mentioned above. In order to make analysis, the focus, for each phase, will be on the key foreign policy determinants/dynamics, on global and regional security that impact TFP, role of the ruling powers in formation TFP, alliance commitments and internal dynamics that impact TFP.

A qualitative research method supported by historical archives data, article, books, internet documents will be utilized for this research.

A Brief Literature Review of Foreign Policy Analysis

Foreign policy analysis is an important functional area of international relations. This analysis includes the interaction between the actors of foreign policy (state, international institutions, non-governmental actors), at what level foreign policy will be handled (international, unit or individual) and factors affecting foreign policy (such as power, population, leadership influence, geographical location).

In summary, foreign policy mainly includes the examination of tools that have an influential role in determining the main course of FP. These tools can generally cover diplomacy, economy, army, science and culture, but not excluding any other significant factor which might have an influential role in FP.

As for the theoretical aspects of international theories, realist theory argues that the main factor determining foreign policy is "national interests", taking into account the anarchic structure between states. Hans Morgenthau, one of the leading scientists of realist theory (Morgenthau, 1948), identifies national interest with "power" and therefore emphasizes that the state will act with the motivation to protect its power and therefore its national interests in foreign policy. Thus, states will be able to play a decisive role in foreign policy by acting rationally and increasing their military and economic power (Jackson, Sørensen, 2013: 254).

Contrary to the view of realism based on national interest and power in foreign policy, the behaviorist theory, which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, argues that the thoughts, perceptions, cognitive capacities and world understanding of decision-making individuals in foreign policy are effective in their foreign policy preferences (Brown and Ainley, 2005: 32-33). The leader's psychological tendencies and information capacity or the information framework provided are important in the selection of foreign policy decisions. The comparative approach to FP was enthused by the behaviouralist discourse. The aim of this discourse was to construct systematic models and clarifications of the FP. This can have attained by collecting a numerous of data to analyze the content and setting of the FP of many countries (Jackson, Sørensen, 2013: 254).

The most important example in history in terms of the influence of leaders on foreign policy is the decisive roles played by Hitler and Stalin in the foreign policy of their countries during the Second World War.

In some countries, the effectiveness of the "bureaucratic structure" comes to the fore in foreign policy preferences. For example, the Ministry of National Defense, the military bureaucracy, the Ministry of Commerce or the intelligence agency can play an important role in a country's foreign policy understanding. Corporate influence is very decisive in foreign policy in the USA. For example, the views of the US Department of Defense, also known as the Pentagon (and its subsidiary, the Joint Chiefs of Staff), have great weight in determining US foreign policy. In Türkiye, until 2002, soldiers had a very strong influence on foreign policy and governments determined foreign policy with the General Staff. However, after 2002, during the AK Party period, the army's power to determine foreign policy decreased greatly over time.

Per the pluralist theory of IR, the monopoly power of the states in FP has been considerably reduced thanks to the new actors that have emerged since the 1970s (Keohane and Nye, 1971). The activities of non-state actors, that is, various international organizations and non-governmental organizations, in the international arena have questioned the role of the state as the sole actor in the international system. So much so that it has been argued that the new international structure defined as global governance has moved states away from the position of sole and powerful international actors, and that states share governance authority with non-state actors such as international organizations and civil initiatives. However, today it can be said that the increase in international global terrorism, the emergence of challenges to the unipolar world order after 1990, and the hybrid wars first seen in the Middle East and then spreading to Europe have stopped. The decline roles of states in international politics. Those factors led to a renewed increase in the role of states in the 2010s.

Marxist theory of international relations sees the state as a tool utilized by the hegemonic bourgeoisie class to exploit the laborers. Marxist theory also sets for that the bourgeoisie requires a strong state in order to boost its economic sphere against others. State, as representative of specific interests is an instrument of the bourgeois class to subdue laborers in Marxist discourse (Brown and Ainley, 2005: 68).

On the other hand, constructivist IR discourse quests influence of identity, norm and values in forming FP, implying the importance of social structuring in FP.

In summary, foreign policy analysis can be conducted at the systemic level; the nation-state level; and the individual level (Jackson and Sørensen, 2013: 257).

A Brief Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy of the Ottoman Empire

Historically, the ruling powers of a state could determine foreign policy, defining its direction, context, and means of implementation. These foreign policy tools vary depending on the threat perception, power of the states, the regional and global security environment and the power of rivalry between neighboring states. Ultimately, survival determines the tools, choices and dynamics of foreign policy.

Foreign policy preferences, dynamics and decision makers differed according to the rise, standstill and decline periods of the Ottoman Empire. In general, the FP of the Empire was shaped mostly in line with the preferences of the sultans during the rising period. While the personalities and wishes of the sultans played a determining role in foreign policy, the opinions of the grand viziers and palace officials who were advisors were also taken into consideration. Sultans had a decisive role in foreign policy in terms of their activities and capacities. However, during the period of decline, foreign policy was carried out according to the understanding, knowledge and capacities of the grand viziers.

During the decline, foreign relations constituted an important part of the duties of the grand viziers. However, Powerful sultans like Abdulhamid II also directly handled foreign affairs. Because they saw that the existence of the state largely depended on the struggle and competition between major external powers. The main goal of the FP of the Empire in the last two hundred and fifty years was to keep the Empire out of the struggle of the great powers and thus ensure the survival of the weakened and shrinking state. It was aimed to keep the Empire, which was perceived as " East question" in the eyes of the Western powers, alive with the "balance of powers" policy. Thus, it aims to gain time to keep the Empire afloat by taking advantage of the conflicts of interest between the great powers and to return it to its former power with modernization efforts. For example, we see that the Ottoman Empire frequently changed its alliance relations with France, Russia and England within the scope of its balance of power policy in the early 19th century. The approach of utilizing the balance of powers policy provided an important foreign policy experience in foreign relations that could be transferred to the republican period (Hale, 2013).

The Translation Chamber, which was established in 1821 to replace the Reis-ül Küttap and carried out the translation and paperwork works of the Ottoman Empire, later became the office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1871, pioneering the core of the foreign affairs. Their role in determining foreign policy began to increase day by day. This institution formed the basis of today's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In the late period of the Ottoman State, the leaders of Ittihat ve Terraki Cemiyeti (The Society of Unification and Progress-CUP) were the main decision makers of foreign policy. Their miscalculated assertive foreign policy practices resulted in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

The Early Republic Period (1923-1939)

As a new country, TR was severely depleted in human and material resources due to the wars that continued in the last decade, and the country was militarily and economically weak, poor and powerless. Additionally, the everlasting defeats against the Western powers and Tsarist Russia since the Treaty of Karlowitz signed in 1699 created a "break up trauma" among the statesmen of the Ottoman and later early Republican periods that pushed them to seek to guarantee state security. Considering all hardships, Türkiye, at the incept, implemented a self-focused foreign policy based on pragmatism, influenced by geographical and power constraints.

The Republic of Türkiye was established after serial series of violent wars with Western countries or their proxies (Lewis, 1968: 238-268), The winners of WWI had aimed at to terminate the existence Turkish state an international actor (Hale, 2013: 31). They launched war and provoked Greece to attack Türkiye. These violent developments "shattered, impoverished and demoralized" the country (Lewis, 1968: 241). Eventually, however, after successfully driving out all the invaders form the lands of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal, later Atatürk, and his colleagues were able to establish the Turkish Republic from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire (Demir and Bingol, 2020). Although the founders of the Republic were heavily influenced by Western ideologies, they founded the Republic in opposition to the colonial understanding of the West (Demir and Bingol, 2020).

Although Ataturk had founded the new Republic by fighting Western powers, he undoubtedly implemented a Western model of modernization and development in order to improve the country economically, politically, socially and culturally. A new foreign policy was designed according to the dynamics of an existence paradigm, which implemented stable foreign relations in order to develop the country as rapidly as possible (Baran, 2010: 107). The country was ruined and paralyzed, with heavily diminished labor power due to wars, internal struggles and uprisings and population moves. As a result, poverty and starvation prevailed owing to insufficient economic production. Thus, the country needed a peaceful period in order to heal the wounds of prolonged wars and to develop as rapidly as possible. Additionally, it maintaining the Ottoman state's foreign policy would have been both too costly and unsustainable as the new republic was now mostly limited to Anatolia due to the Ottoman Empire's disintegration, meaning that it had to be very cautious, refraining from risky foreign political attitudes so as not to jeopardize its security. Moreover, its new leaders had recently learnt the bitter and painful aspects of war through personal experiences.

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was cautious in implementing Türkiye's foreign relations, and refrained from any adventurous dreams Cohen (2012). Atatürk rejected imperial ambitions as clearly unrealistic and inappropriate to the new nationalist ideology that he used to organize the Turkish Republic (Danforth, 2009: 86). Therefore, Türkiye's new foreign policy was pragmatic, realistic and based on the motto of 'peace at home peace abroad'.

Türkiye was particularly cautious regarding Russia, which was heavily responsible for the Ottoman Empire's gradual dissolution after 1774. By 1923, as a poor, medium-sized country, Türkiye could not consider competing with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which had become a major global power. Until 1939, Türkiye's

historical perceptions and mutual understandings during the War of Independence made it align its foreign policy with Moscow's.

Türkiye's foreign policy decision-makers also considered the 'Sevres Syndrome', the fear induced by the Treaty of Sevres (Zurcher, 1997: 147; Narlı, 2005: 216), which the Entente Forces (Britain, France, Italy) tried to impose on the Ottoman Empire after WWI. This aimed at the partition and dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. This syndrome refers to the continued conviction, widespread among Turkish elites, that Türkiye is surrounded by enemies' intent on dividing up the country. Although this treaty was superseded by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, which laid the foundations of Turkish Republic, it had largely shaped Turkish security culture since the foundation of the republic (Narlı, 2005: 216).

During Ataturk's era, regional collaboration and alliance became very critical in deterring nationalist expansionism emerged in Europe after World War I. For example, in the face of the threat posed by Italy and Germany, which sought to seize the Balkans, four Balkan states - Greece, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Türkiye - signed the Balkan Pact in Athens on February 9, 1934. According to this Entente, the Balkan countries would respect each other's existence. Another one was the Saadabad Pact; a quadruple non-aggression pact signed on July 8, 1937, at the Saadabad Palace in Tehran between Türkiye, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

In sum, foreign policy during Ataturk's rule, 1923-1938, can be depicted as non-irredentist, neutral or non-aligned, pragmatic, non-intrusive and profoundly focused on internal matters (Rastow, 1989: 2 cited in Aydın, 2000: 103). All his policies were tailored to turn Türkiye into a modernized European country in all aspects. For this reason, Ataturk's foreign policy was inclusive towards increasing the economic wealth of the people. This pro-Western orientation did not, however, mean a reluctance to cooperate with the East as Türkiye established close ties with various Middle Eastern countries in the following years.

World War II until 1950 (1939-1950)

Turkish foreign policy under İnönü, 1938-1950, was the most challenging one in Republican history. Although the general pattern of İnönü's foreign policy was almost the same as during Ataturk's era, some coercive dynamics in international relations forced Türkiye to take radical decisions, such as abandoning its non-alignment policy in favor of with allying with England and France in October 1939. However, despite participating in this tripartite alliance, Türkiye remained de facto neutral throughout the war, resisting strong pressure from both the allies and Germany to join the war on their side (Hale, 2013: 56). Türkiye was now in a unique situation in which a relatively small country could follow an independent path through skilled diplomatic maneuvering in a time of global struggle (Hale, 2013: 56). As Baran (2010: 108) notes, its foreign policy had to change again at the end of the war Türkiye had to abandon its neutral policy owing to Stalin's threat, when it sided with the USA to resist the Soviet Union's demands, which jeopardized Türkiye's sovereignty in the Turkish straits and some parts of eastern Türkiye. In short, between 1939 and 1950, Türkiye involuntarily abandoned the non-alignment policy that had been a basic tenet of the republic since its foundation.

Cold War Period (1950-1990)

During the Cold War, Turkish foreign policy mostly aligned with US priorities. In order to deter any Soviet threat, Türkiye voluntarily participated in United Nations' operations in Korea in 1950, which enabled it to gain NATO membership in 1952.

At the same time, Türkiye's geo-strategic location was deemed an important factor in establishing the West's security policy during the Cold War. The West continuously attach greater attention to Türkiye's geostrategic importance rather than to its political functioning (Karabelias, 2009: 58). Between 1950 and 1960, Türkiye acted as a forward post of the USA, particularly in the Middle East, by disregarding the republic's initial policy of non-interference in the Middle East.

During the 1960s and 1970s, various foreign developments indicated that depending solely on the USA in foreign relations could harm Türkiye, and that its vital interests could easily be overlooked if they diverged from those of the USA. A number of key problematic issues created tension between the two allies: the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 (settled by the removal of Jupiter missiles from Türkiye in return for the removal of Russian missiles from Cuba), the Johnson letter of 1964, declaring that NATO might not help Türkiye if she was attacked by Russia because of Türkiye's probable intervention in Cyprus and the USA's refusal to allow US war equipment to be used in Türkiye's Cyprus intervention, Turkish opium production in the early 1970s, and the arms embargo imposed on Türkiye in 1975 because of its peace operation in Cyprus in 1974.

After the nuclear crisis in 1962 in which decisions were taken without Türkiye and in which Türkiye could potentially be a target, Türkiye has prompted it to pursue a more independent foreign policy. Türkiye has come to realize that complete dependence on America may not align with its strategic interests in all areas. As a medium-sized country, Türkiye has also learned that it could be adversely affected by the competition among nuclear powers.

On the other hand, President Johnson's letter, which clearly expressed not using the US equipment and weapons in Cyprus, has clearly served as the starting point for American antagonism that created a deep rupture in relations in Türkiye. Türkiye started to follow a multilateral foreign policy, facilitated by the detente period between the two pacts, which began in the mid-1960s. However, the main course, the alliance with the US and West, did not change.

1990-2002 Era

The end of Cold War was the major dynamic that altered the foreign relations paradigm of most countries. The conditions shaping Turkish foreign policy had considerably altered so Türkiye adopted a more proactive stance with the aim of becoming a regional actor (Adam, 2012: 140). With Russia no longer considered a threat, Western security concerns also changed towards coping with failed states, terrorism, and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. It also meant that Türkiye's strategic importance for the West was reduced.

As the world underwent drastic changes in the 1990s with the collapse of the USSR, Türkiye once again reoriented its foreign policy according to the new global context. Most

importantly, the Russian threat, which had been the main determinant of Turkish foreign policy since 1945, has lost its major importance. This gave Türkiye a great opportunity to redesign its foreign relations and implement a multilateral foreign policy. Türkiye therefore abandoned the policy implemented since its foundation, which can be briefly characterized as a western oriented and non-interventionist policy in Türkiye's neighborhood.

Meanwhile, Türkiye's desire to gain full European Union membership was also determinedly overlooked in 1987 and in 1997, increased Türkiye's sense of isolation in the evolving global political, economic and military platforms. Türkiye itself started a greater variety of more multilateral FP tools in the newly globalized world, with political shifts in the Balkans, Central Asia and Caucasus providing significant new opportunities. Türkiye's influence as a regional power was reinvented by Turks as well as by the West to cope with crises in the Balkans, Middle East and Caucasus. Ethnic, religious and sectarian conflicts that stimulated masses of refugees or deportations, and all kinds of smuggling unexpectedly boosted Türkiye's geopolitical importance, as it was now, geographically, the Western ally closest to the new crisis areas. This first materialized in the Gulf Crisis of 1990-1991 when Türkiye, on the initiative of President Özal, provided support to the American campaign against Saddam Hussein, even though Türkiye was harmed by the war through economic losses and increased domestic terrorism.

Since the 1990s, Türkiye has generally started to utilize soft power. In this regard, Türkiye has followed more assertive policies in the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia (Öniş, 2001: 67). Türkiye has much enjoyed its new neighborhood role because its traditional threat perception has been replaced by a new global pattern that supports collaboration and friendly relations. Additionally, the USA/West encouraged Türkiye to be a role model for the new Turkic Republics to prevent an Iranian type of development. These successor states to the Soviet Union were also looking for international cooperation to end their half-century of isolation. Türkiye therefore acted wisely by utilizing its soft power in its surroundings. However, this policy could only be realized due to other countries' perceptions of Türkiye as reliable, which had been generated over many years through the republic's secular, modern and liberal political philosophy, and its respect for international commitments and obligations. Despite some shortcomings, Türkiye remains the only Muslim country able to achieve a sustainable democracy and execute a peaceful, reputable foreign policy. Although Türkiye has followed a more assertive foreign policy since the 1990s, these policies have been consistent with the main axis of Turkish foreign policy. Thus, after the collapse of Warsaw Pact, Türkiye's traditional FP was subject to some changes in terms alliance's restrictions. While Turkey still pursued its traditional FP, it also acted relatively more assertive and multilateral activism (Sayarı, 2000: 169–182;

As to assertive policies in 1990s, Türkiye's supportive role in the First Gulf War in 1990, Türkiye's strained relations with Syria and Iraq, hosting "Northern Watch Operation", and the military training and education agreement signed with Israel in 1996 and the formation of BLACKSEAFOR in in 2001 were the examples of assertive policies (Çakır and Akdağ, 2016: 3; Larrabee and Lesser, 2003). On the other hand, the US tolerated Türkiye's assertive policies as Türkiye was seen as a model for the Central Asian Turkish states and was acting in harmony with the US policies.

Post-2002 and Onward

Türkiye has been governed by a single party continuously since 2002. This means that the TFR also incurred diversity and differences in many respects. Although the main principle of TFP has not undergone a comprehensive radical change, it shows a wide variety of approaches compared to previous periods in terms of purpose, policy, method and decision cycles and defining national security objectives.

Following the change of political power in Turkey in 2002, the new rulers have gradually pursued an assertive foreign policy that was multilateral, multifaceted, religiously focused, and more Eastern-focused, particularly centered on the Middle East. With the Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AK Parti-*JDP*), TFP has been subjected to a deep diversification in terms of priorities, preferences, tools and discourses to be used for FP. The AK Party first centered on democratization reforms and EU membership. This policy was also well appreciated by the EU and Turkish liberal intellectual (Demir and Bingöl, 2020; Ülgül and Demir, 2020: 138-158; Karaveli, 2015)

JDP foreign policy until 2015, based on several basic tenets, can be described as a multi-dimensional approach using soft power, ‘zero problems with neighbors’ and rhythmic diplomacy (Öniş & Yılmaz 2009, Cırlıg 2013, Turkmen 2013). As these comments suggest, JDP’s foreign policy was well received by Western intellectuals, although they became more critical after the Arab uprisings started in 2011.

As foreign policy analysts have noted, a country’s internal political structure, philosophy, regime and leadership help determine the direction and framework of foreign policy. Türkiye’s case also confirms theories of foreign policy analysis in how its internal political structure has affected foreign policy since 2002 in Türkiye.

In its first five-year term in office, JDP focused on Türkiye’s European Union membership bid, speeding up democratization and expanding freedoms in order to legitimize its ruling authority. The government embraced the idea of aspiring to join the EU, launching a series of reforms aiming to align Turkish laws with the European *acquis communautaire* by 2006 (Türkmen, 2013: 1). During this period, JDP nevertheless ensured that Türkiye maintained good relations with European states. Additionally, Türkiye’s constructive engagement demonstrated its good will internationally (Türkmen, 2013: 1), and the government received significant international support.

Although JDP tried to improve relations with the USA, the latter’s intervention in Iraq in 2003 made this very challenging. In particular, the Turkish parliament’s refusal, in March 2003, to allow American troops to attack Iraq from Türkiye marked a strategic breaking point in relations. In order to counter these problems, the Turkish government improved relations with the USA by using Türkiye’s power as a good example for other Muslim countries to imitate, in which a ‘moderate’ Islamic government could rule a secular Muslim state. Initially, the US administration highly appreciated this approach as Washington wanted to strengthen democracy, civil liberties and a liberal economy in the Middle East in order to prevent extremism, through a project called the Greater Middle East and North Africa. This initiative was abandoned because of the unwillingness of Arab States and Lebanese-Israeli wars in 2006.

In implementing an active, multi-directional foreign policy, while trying to sustain its Western alliance, the JDP government's main focus was on strengthening relations with the Arab world and regionally with the Middle East. This was the most major axis shift for the Turkish Republic since its foundation as previous governments had preferred a policy of non-interference in Middle East issues and a reluctance to increase relations with Arab countries.

JDP implemented a more active policy in participation with various organizations that former administrations had ignored. One of these was Türkiye's participation and leadership of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009: 10). This indicated its desire to increase its involvement in international platforms. The JDP government also deliberately focused on Arab and Muslim countries, drawing on its historical, cultural and religious connections with the Arab world and other Muslim countries in Africa and South Asia. This approach also coincided with American policy viewing Türkiye as the best example of the co-existence of secular democracy and Islam.

Türkiye also wanted to further promote its effectiveness in foreign relations as a mediator. For example, it desired to act as a bridge between the Christian and Islamic worlds when Islamophobia prevailed in Western countries after 9/11 (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009: 11). In 2005, Spain and Türkiye imitated one project called the "Alliance of Civilizations" to facilitate intercultural dialogue (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009: 11). But, the attempt was abandoned as it did not yield success.

Türkiye also started a series of mediation efforts, such as between Syria and Israel, and Iran and the P5+1 group. In the 2010s, Türkiye also displayed similar approaches in disputes among neighbors. The major mediation efforts have been seen between Russia and Ukraine in 2022 and 2023 to end the war among these countries. These efforts have been well appreciated by the UN, The US, NATO and other global players. Despite the lack of success, these efforts clearly indicated Türkiye's willingness to increase its efficacy in international politics.

The zero problems policy, which places greater emphasis on the use of soft power and developing friendly relations with all neighbors, signals a deviation from the classical fixed positions of Turkish foreign policy (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009: 9; Grigoriadis, 2010: 3). The dynamics of this foreign policy have involved less dependency on the western alliance.

The controversial foreign policy of JDP includes implementing zero problems with neighbors. In reality, this approach has never achieved its aims because Türkiye's problems with its neighbor have historical roots and are long-term unresolved matters. Thus, it was always unlikely to be so easy to end such disputes. Implementing such a policy also means making various concessions over each problematic issue without considering too much Turkish national interests. Thus, given this significant downside, no Turkish government can realistically resist the resulting criticism or handle the negative domestic political consequences (Demir, 2016). Therefore, JDP's policy of zero problems based on the strategic depth (Davutoğlu, 2014) was merely conducted as a way to appease major power pressure, to distract attention from internal issues towards external issues, and to give a clear signal of following friendly relations with neighbors (Abramowitz and Edelman, 2013: 6).

Considering the first ten years of the AK Party government (2002-2012), the main foreign policy issues of this period were the EU membership efforts, the Second Gulf War Crisis, the decision of the Grand National Assembly on March 1, 2003 not to allow the transit of American forces through Turkish territory, efforts for the solution of the Cyprus problem, the increasing terrorist activities of the PKK, the "one minute" crisis with Israel at the Davos Summit, the Mavi Marmara incidents, Israel's attacks on Gaza. These issues can be further increased. FP's decision-makers have often approached these crises unconventionally and pragmatically. Depending on the power of the rival or competitive actors, sometimes more assertive and sometimes more soothing discourses were preferred. Ultimately, the logical attitude prevailed over other problematic choices that could put Türkiye in an arduous situation.

Türkiye was subjected to criticism for deviating from the basic principles of TFP. Türkiye's activist policy towards neighboring Muslim countries has also been perceived as a part of this axis change (2013: 5). These doubts were strengthened by the JDP's various statements about strengthening relations with the Middle East, China and Russia, and joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). These approaches, which were seen as quite assertive and activist, were perceived as Türkiye leaving the Western Bloc and changing its axis towards the East. Although this shift of axis has been viewed as a move away from the West, the Turkish government has generally claimed that Türkiye has not shifted axis, but rather aimed at a more autonomous regional approach (Cîrlig, 2013: 5). The decision makers of FP of TR defined Türkiye's increasing aloneness in international politic as "valuable aloneness" to defend TR activist and assertive policies.

As to the second ten-year era (2013-2023), the Arab uprising has posed completely novel problems for Türkiye. Therefore, the JDP government has been busy mostly with the Syrian crisis (Türkmen, 2013: 2; Elman, 2013: 3). Türkiye's self-assertive policy toward Syria has been the main policy dispute with Washington (Abramowitz and Edelman, 2013: 5). As a result of the weakening of the central Syrian government, the power vacuum was filled by the YPG, Syrian Kurds affiliated to PKK terror organization, and the radical terrorist organization the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS-DAESH), affiliated with Al-Qaeda. Syria became the field of global proxy war and the new hybrid war type. The Syrian Kurds' attempt to establish an independent state in an area almost extending to the Mediterranean, in cooperation with the PKK terrorist organization, has emerged as the biggest threat to Türkiye's external security. The Turkish Army launched an operation in Northern Syria on its own initiative in August 2016 and stopped the YPG/PKK terrorist organization's possible territorial gains in Syria. Two more operations carried out by the Turkish Army in the North demonstrated Türkiye's determination to take action against an unexpected development in Syria. But the US still supports the YPG under the Syrian Democratic Forces with military and economic aid. This inflamed the relations between Türkiye and the US.

At the same time, Türkiye has been hosting an enormous number of Syrian refugees without receiving much support internationally. Hosting these refugees has cost Türkiye greatly, both from an economic and security perspective, while also creating a refugee flow from Syria through Türkiye to Greece or Italy.

Since the bloody coup attempt in 2016, Türkiye's FP has also become more assertive and Russia-focused. Because there have been many problematic issues with the United States, and most of them seem unlikely to be resolved in the foreseeable future.

To name of them: Syrian crisis, allegations, the US President's use of the word genocide in the Presidential declarations dated April 24, 2022 and 2023, the failure to extradite FETO leader Fetullah Gülen, who is considered responsible for the 2016 coup attempt, the imposition of sanctions on Türkiye within the scope of the Combating America's Adversaries with Sanctions Act (CAATSA) due to the S-400s acquisition, Türkiye's exclusion from the F-35 project and the failure to return the 1.5 billion dollars paid within the scope of this project to Türkiye, Halkbank case, Priest Brunson crisis, tensions with the USA and NATO during Sweden's NATO membership process, the negative attitude of the USA towards the agreement signed by Türkiye with the elected government of Libya on Maritime Exclusive Economic Zone Sharing within the scope of "Blue Homeland" in the Eastern Mediterranean, the USA's signing of many military aid agreements with Greece in the Aegean, conducting military exercises and turning the Dedeağaç region into a US base.

Türkiye also had difficult relations with Russia, including the shooting down of a Russian warplane in 2015, Russia's support for the Syrian central government, and the bombing of Turkish soldiers in Idlib/Syria by Russian warplanes in February 2022. In addition, the Russia-Ukraine war, which started in 2022, has paved the way for new disagreements both between Türkiye and the Western bloc and between Türkiye and Russia.

During the JDP governments, Türkiye has experienced its most difficult foreign policy problems in the last decade. Essentially, the world has come to the end of the "peace period" experienced after 1990. As the US-led global hegemony shifts towards a multipolar world, new global players are challenging the US-led global hegemony and its constraints. Therefore, the termination of world order established post-1990 led to new instabilities and risks in international politics. While TFP became more assertive, multilateral and versatile in the changing world politics, it has been facing more challenging situations beyond Türkiye's capacity and will.

In summary, the new rulers gradually pursued an assertive foreign policy that was multilateral, multifaceted, religiously focused, and more Eastern-focused, particularly centered on the Middle East. TFP has been subjected to a deep diversification in terms of priorities, preferences, tools and discourses to be used for FP.

Conclusion

This article aims to analyze the century-old TFP through the main determinants/dynamics affecting the formation of TFP to extract key takeaways. The year 2023 was the anniversary of the centenary of the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, which rose from the ashes of the collapsed Ottoman Empire. TR's century-old foreign policy has been shaped and differentiated according to increasing or decreasing external threats, the will of governments, internal dynamics, alliance commitments and global security.

This analysis of Turkish foreign policy has covered the dynamics of a century-long period. Since the main principle of modern Türkiye's founders was to establish a stable and safe foreign environment to allow internal improvement, they sought to establish a

stable foreign environment in order to improve the country by all means. During the Cold War period, Türkiye more or less acted within the Western alliance by becoming a bulwark against the Soviet bloc. However, once its main threat, the Soviet Union, dissolved in 1991, Türkiye started to implement a multi-dimensional approach to foreign relations. Until 2002, however, no administration attempted to alter Türkiye's basic foreign policy principles so the general tenets of TFP remained intact without much alteration. With the JDP era, TFP has been subjected to deep diversification in terms of priorities, preferences, tools and discourses.

In reviewing the centenary of TFP, the foreign policy of the Republican period was based on Western-centered relations within the framework of the principles of equality, sovereignty, peace and stability. In the historical process, "concern for survival" forced the Ottoman Empire to maintain a policy of balance among the great powers in foreign policy, but this policy could not protect the state and the Empire collapsed at the end of the First World War. During the Republic period, the new state established, with the concern of maintaining its existence, aimed to live in peace with its neighbors as long as its national interests were not threatened. The global political change experienced during and after the Second World War dictated that Türkiye take part in the Western Bloc. Türkiye abandoned its policy of balance among the great powers and ensured its security by siding with one of the great powers, that is, through alliances. However, freed from the restrictions of the bipolar order after 1990, Türkiye has increasingly sought a multifaceted foreign policy.

Although there have been deviations from these policies from time to time, the existence of this basic line has been preserved until today. Geopolitical risks arising from Türkiye's geographical location in a region of the world where problems abound have formed and continue to constitute the main dynamic of TFP.

Although security concerns are the main dynamic in the formation of Turkish foreign policy, as seen in other countries in the world, from time to time the political approaches of the governments, the personalities, desires, ideologies and value judgments of the leaders in the administration also played an important role in the formation of foreign policy. Türkiye has adopted the principle of achieving its foreign policy goals by using diplomacy, one of its foreign policy tools. Although the diplomatic method was essential for foreign policy implementation during the Republic period, tools such as economic, cultural and historical proximity also played an important role in foreign policy. When national interests were under threat, military force was used when necessary, as seen in the Cyprus, Iraq and Syria crises and terrorist incidents.

However, since 2002, TFP has undergone slow but decisive and extensive changes. The JDP has gradually altered the traditional principles of TFP. Turkey's intense involvement in Middle Eastern affairs marked a significant deviation from Turkey's traditional policy of staying away from Middle Eastern affairs. (Çakır and Akdağ, 2016: 3). Thus, the JDP has faced criticism since the Arab Spring started in 2011. Therefore, Türkiye's recent efforts in foreign relations damaged perceptions of Türkiye as a model of Islam and secular democracy coexisting (Cîrlig, 2013:6). It is claimed that TDP, especially after 2007, turned from a Western orientation to a more Eastern-oriented foreign policy. This situation is defined as "axis shift". (Çakır and Akdağ, 2016: 4). Although many

intellectuals accept the change in the TFP's regional orientation, they also argue that Turkey's Western orientation has not been completely reversed during the JDP period due to the complexity of relations with the USA and the EU (Çakır and Akdağ, 2016: 4) as well as over dependence to the Western economic richness.

Having analyzed Türkiye's foreign policy since its republican foundation, it is possible to elaborate some basic principles for the future. World politics have changed drastically over the preceding century and will continue to change according to new dynamics. States will continue to be the main actors in the foreseeable future despite the weakening of their power and the emergence of new actors such as international organizations and non-state actors in international relations. Power struggles among nations will also still be a significant factor in international relations.

To correct this, Türkiye must adopt a foreign policy that bears in mind new realities and progress, yet without ignoring the limits to its capacity and resources, and its alliance commitments and basic foundational tenets.

Today, the conditions of the 1920s or 1930s no longer exist so Turkish foreign policy must reflect new realities, making it logical to implement a multi-directional, multi-purpose approach, utilizing soft power elements in foreign relations that draw on Türkiye's historical, cultural and religious background. However, Türkiye must implement a policy that is within its economic, military and political capacity by avoiding any adventurous actions that would jeopardize its security.

Türkiye should also take into account some basic facts in implementing foreign policy in the 21st century. First, despite major improvement in the last century, Türkiye is still a developing or emerging country, dependent on other countries for crucial energy supplies for 70 percent of its energy consumption. Furthermore, it imports most of this from countries with which it has some disputes. Second, as a regional power, Türkiye lacks the capacity to shape its surroundings, as seen in the Syrian crisis as its economic, technological and military capacity is insufficient to sustain an ambitious foreign policy and alter surrounding areas as desired. Third, Türkiye is situated in a very unstable region, where nationalist, ethnic, cultural, historical, religious/sectarian and economic competition and rivalry prevail, none which appear to be resolvable in the foreseeable future. Additionally, Türkiye has its own internal ethnic and sectarian problems that are susceptible to foreign interference so unless it can resolve these issues, Türkiye will remain vulnerable to foreign intrusion. Finally, major global powers are still focusing on Türkiye's neighborhood as it holds critical energy resources, carries major energy transfer routes, and has significant strategic value for global hegemony. In order to control, monitor or influence these regions, major powers utilize all methods, tactics, alliances or means of collaboration. Willingly or not, Türkiye is also part of this strategic game so must be very cautious while implementing any foreign policy that disregards major power interests or expectations.

In short, while taking into full account the motto "peace at home peace abroad", Türkiye must implement a comprehensive foreign policy that seeks to increase neighborhood stability, and resolve regional conflicts through mutual understanding without jeopardizing Turkish national security and interests. Although Türkiye can follow a multi-

purpose, multi-directional foreign policy, and draw on soft power dynamics, it must absolutely remain in the Western bloc and its security organizations.

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