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Of East or West? Turkey's United Nations General Assembly Voting Preferences on Arms Control, North-South Economic Issues and Human Rights

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Abdullah YUVACI ve Muhittin KAPLAN*

ABSTRACT

This article examines Turkey's United Nations General Assembly voting patterns from 2000 to 2010 across three issue areas, namely, "arms control and disarmament," "North-South economic issues" and "human rights." The article aims to enhance our understanding of whether Turkey's foreign policy preferences are similar to those of eastern or western countries on these issue areas. The research also analyses if any voting differences existed between the Democratic Left Party period (2000-02) and the Justice and Development Party period (2003-10). The research reveals that, to a large extent, Turkey acted with the European Union across all issue areas in the years 2000-10. However, the findings also point to significant differences between the DLP and JDP governments in terms of Turkey's General Assembly voting alignments on these issues.

Keywords: Turkish foreign policy identity; Exceptionalism; United Nations voting similarity; Justice and Development Party; Europeanisation

Doğu'da mı, Batı'da mı? Silah Kontrolü, Kuzey-Güney Ekonomi Meseleleri ve İnsan Hakları Alanlarında Türkiye'nin Birleşmiş Milletler Genel Kurulu Oy Tercihleri

ÖZET

Bu makale, Türkiye'nin Birleşmiş Milletler Genel Kurulu 2000-10 oylarını "silahların kontrolü ve silahsızlanma," "Kuzey-Güney ekonomik ilişkileri" ve "insan hakları" konu başlıkları altında ampirik olarak incelemektedir. Makalenin amacı Türkiye'nin incelenen konular için BM Genel Kurulu oylarının ve dış politika tercihlerinin doğu ülkelerine mi yoksa batı ülkelerine mi daha yakın olduğunu saptamaktır. Ayrıca, makale Türkiye'nin Demokratik Sol Parti dönemi (2000-02) BM oylarını Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi dönemi (2003-2010) BM oyları ile karşılaştırmaktadır. Genel olarak, araştırma 2000-10 yılları arasında yukarıda bahsedilen konu başlıkları için Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği ülkeleri ile hareket ettiğini göstermektedir. Ayrıca, Türkiye'nin BM oylarının DSP ve AK Parti dönemleri için önemli farklılıklar arz ettiğide araştırmanın sonuçları arasındadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Türk Dış Politika Kimliği, Birleşmiş Milletler Oylamaları, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Avrupalılaşma

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Introduction

Turkey is located at the crossroads of Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East and deeply attached to the eastern and the western worlds through political, cultural and economic links. Turkey's strong ties to the West and the East paved the way for intellectual and political debates on whether Turkey is an eastern or western country.¹ A recent line of literature suggests that the Turkish political elite tend to present the country in an "exceptional" manner, suggesting that Turkey is a unique country in terms of culture, geography and history and possesses both "western" and "eastern" elements of identity simultaneously. But, has this "exceptionality" been echoed in Turkey's foreign policy preferences? By quantitatively analysing Turkey's 2000-2010 average voting similarity rates in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly with western and eastern countries, this paper tests whether Turkey's foreign policy preferences reflect the presentation of the country as exceptional.

The data for this study are obtained from the official website of the United States (US) Department of State, which has been electronically publishing how each country votes on key UN issues since 2000. These votes are categorised along three dimensions, namely, "nuclear disarmament and arms control", "North-South economic issues" and "human rights", and then Turkey's 2000-10 average voting similarity with UN members on these issues is regressed against a set of political and economic explanatory variables and single and group country dummies that are assigned for eastern and western countries. In addition, assuming governmental changes influence voting in the General Assembly, two different set of regression analyses were conducted to distinguish the 2000-02 period, when a social democratic party (Democratic Left Party - DLP) served as a coalition leader in Turkey, from the 2003-10 period, when a centre-right conservative party (the Justice and Development Party - JDP) was in power.

Overall, the research reveals that Turkey's UN voting preferences were more akin to the European Union (EU) countries' than to non-EU countries' across all issue areas. Although one might expect that Turkey's presentation as an exceptional country would be reflected in Turkey's UN voting attitude, this study produces quantitative evidence that this was not the case. Turkey acted like a western country in the General Assembly, as its voting preferences bore commonalities with those of the West, not with the East. Moreover, Turkey's western voting attitude, especially on economic issues, was more prevalent under the JDP leadership, who added an Islamic taste to Turkey's "exceptionalist" discourse and thus actually stressed its differences with the West.²

The paper begins by briefly discussing how Turkish foreign policy identity is presented. Next, the data, methodology and the research questions are spelled out. Then, the results of the research are presented. The conclusion section summarises the study and makes recommendations for future research.

1 See Nicholas Danforth, "Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.7, No.3, p.83-95.

2 Lerna K. Yanık, "Constructing Turkish "Exceptionalism": Discourses of Liminality and Hybridity in Post-Cold War Turkish Foreign Policy", *Political Geography*, Vol.30, 2011, p.80-90.

“Exceptionalism” and Turkish Foreign Policy Identity

Turkey’s predecessor, the Ottoman Empire, was a multi-continental empire that ruled over territories in Europe, Middle East, Africa and the Caucasus. However, when the new Turkish Republic was established in the 1920s from the remnants of the Ottoman Empire, only three per cent of the new Republic’s land was in Europe, but Turkey has still achieved membership in western organisations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and even become an EU candidate. Turkey’s strengthening ties with Europe were perfectly in line with the state’s “westernisation” project, under which it has undertaken a series of cultural and political reforms and adopted a secular and democratic form of government. However, with its predominantly Islamic population, 97 per cent of its land lying in the Asian continent and the Ottoman legacy, Turkey also had an “eastern” dimension to its identity, which set the grounds for many to make various claims about Turkey’s place in the world. For example, Turkey was presented as “torn” and “westernistic” in the well-known conceptual works of political science.³ In fact, several European leaders such as Nicholas Sarkozy tried to present Turkey as “eastern” and claimed that Turkey’s values were incompatible with those of Europe for cultural reasons, and for that reason its “real place is in the Middle East, not in the European Union.”⁴

A number of theoretically informed works have recently taken attention to the process through which Turkey’s foreign policy identity is defined and presented by the Turkish political elite. Accordingly, Turkey’s geography and history may mean different things to different people, but the political elite present an “exceptionalist” foreign policy identity by interpreting and assigning meanings to Turkey’s geography and history in a way that defines Turkey as “unique” and both “western” and “eastern” simultaneously. Thus, this line of scholarship suggests that identity is not pre-given or fixed, but constantly constructed by political actors in response to changing political environments.⁵ The presentation of a country’s identity has policy consequences, as it may shape foreign policy as well

3 For the presentation of Turkey as a “torn” country, see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York, Simon&Schuster, 1996. For the term “Westernistic,” see Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal G, *Anticipating the Future*, London, Simon&Schuster, 1998.

4 “Sarkozy’den Birand’a Çarpıcı Açıklamalar”, *Cnntürk.com.*, 24 February 2011, <http://www.cnnturk.com/2011/turkiye/02/24/sarkozyden.biranda.carpici.aciklamalar/608058.0/index.html>, (Accessed on 11 January 2012).

5 See Bahar Rumelili, “Negotiating Europe: EU-Turkey Relations from an Identity Perspective”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.10, No.1, 2008, p.97-100; Meliha Altunışık, “Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East”, Special Issue on Turkish Foreign Policy, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Vol.40, 2009, p.169-192; Pınar Bilgin, “Securing Turkey through Western-Oriented Foreign Policy”, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Vol.40, 2009, p.105-125; Lerna K. Yanık, “The Metamorphosis of Metaphors of Vision: “Bridging” Turkey’s Location, Role and Identity After the End of the Cold War”, *Geopolitics*, Vol.14, 2009, p.531-549; Yanık, “Constructing Turkish”; Lerna K. Yanık, “Atlantik Paktı’ndan NATO’ya: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi’nde Türkiye’nin Konumu ve Uluslararası Rolü Tartışmalarından Bir Kesit”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol.9, No.34, 2012, p.29-50.

as how other nations may approach the country in question. For example, the founding fathers spent conscious efforts to present Turkey as a civilised western nation to secure an equal treatment and respect from the West.⁶

In the post-Cold War period, the Turkish political elite tried hard to create an exceptionalist foreign policy identity by emphasising Turkey's "unique" geography and history. Turkey was presented as being both eastern and western at the same time, which could help Turkey play a "bridge" role between the East (such as the newly independent Central Asian countries) and the West, thus still making Turkey "functionally" relevant to the West in this new geopolitical environment. Ismail Cem, who served as Foreign Minister of Turkey from 1997 to 2002, was especially inclined to the idea of a multicivilisational identity, but Turkey was still more western than eastern in his presentation, as his interpretation "highlighted common points with the West, both in terms of roots and values".⁷ However, things would somewhat change following the September 11 terrorist attacks and JDP's coming to power. The JDP leaders, while still presenting Turkey's identity in a hybrid manner, nevertheless defined it in "a less secular and more religious sense" and "highlighted Turkey's Islamic credentials, rather than its commonality with Europe"⁸ Such a construction implied that Turkey actually belongs to the Islamic civilisation.⁹

One should not quickly reach the conclusion that Turkey's foreign policy preferences reflect the political elite's imagination or representation of the country. This is largely because the political elite may use such representations for various reasons, including justifying their "foreign policy goals"¹⁰ and "Turkey's continued usefulness for Europe."¹¹ In fact, regardless how the political elite present Turkey's identity or who is in power, one might actually argue that Turkey in reality may not be so exceptional in terms of its foreign policy design in general and General Assembly preferences in particular, considering the fact that many countries in the world, at one point or another, were presented as multicultural or multicivilisational.¹² In fact, one may even argue that, instead of reflecting its "exceptionality", Turkey's General Assembly preferences might actually closely resemble those of the European countries. The Europeanization literature suggests that norms associated with the EU actually shape the foreign policy identity and preferences of its member states, "aspiring members" and even of "states that have no intention of joining."¹³ A number of quantitative analysis supports this claim, suggesting that the EU countries share a common outlook on issues of foreign policy.¹⁴ Such a common foreign policy outlook is formed through formal foreign

6 Bilgin, "Securing Turkey".

7 Yanık, "The Metamorphosis of Metaphors", p.540.

8 Ibid., p.542.

9 Altunışık, "Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy", p.190.

10 Yanık, "The Metamorphosis of Metaphors", p.533

11 Ibid., p.544.

12 Yanık, "Constructing Turkish", p.82.

13 Frank Schimmelfenning and Ulrich Sedelmeier, "Theorizing EU Enlargement: Research Focus, Hypotheses, and the State of Research", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.9, No.4, p.503.

14 See for examples, Ulf Jakobsson, "An International Actor Under Pressure: The Impact of the

policy coordination of and social interactions between the EU member, candidates and even potentially-member countries.¹⁵ In fact, Marciacq shows that Europeanization has greatly impacted how candidate and non-EU states such as Georgia vote in the General Assembly, although the Europeanization impact shows significant variances across non-member countries.¹⁶ There has also been evidence that the EU integration process has indeed significantly influenced Turkey's foreign policy from 2002 to 2009, even on issues of security policy.¹⁷ In short, although the Turkish political elite attempt to present an "exceptional" identity, there are good reasons for doubt that Turkey's exceptional presentation may not resonate itself when it comes to its foreign policy preferences in the General Assembly.

It is also important to examine how governmental changes influence countries' foreign policy preferences, as the literature suggests that foreign policy of a country may be subject to significant changes following power shifts in domestic politics. Long ago, Lipset and Rokkan argued in their "cleavage theory" that party ideologies structure political competition and are therefore the main determinants of how political parties respond to political issues.¹⁸ The idea that political party ideologies are important in shaping foreign policy is contrary to the well-established international theory of realism, which stresses international factors such as the distribution of international power rather than domestic politics as the determinant of foreign policy.¹⁹ However, a number of recent works have successfully applied cleavage theory to the issue of European integration, demonstrating that political party ideologies matter as political parties' approach to the issue of European integration is largely shaped by their ideological stance.²⁰ With regards to UN voting analysis, too, a number of works show that sig-

War on Terror and the Fifth Enlargement on EU Voting Cohesion at the UN General Assembly 2000-05", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.47, No.3, 2009, p.532-54; Madeleine Hosli, *et.al.*, "Voting Cohesion in the United Nations General Assembly: The Case of the European Union" Paper presented at the ECPR Fifth Pan-European Conference. Porto, Portugal, 2010. However, as discussed below, France and Britain partly share this common outlook, especially on security issues.

15 Meltem Müftüler-Baç and Yaprak Gürsoy, "Is There a Europeanization of Turkish Foreign Policy? An Addendum to the Literature on EU Countries", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.11, No.3, 2011, p.407. It should also be noted that the literature has yet to present conclusive evidence on Europeanization. For examples, see the following two works: Hosli *et.al.*, "Voting Cohesion in the United Nations"; Jakobsson, "An International Actor Under Pressure"; Florent Marciacq, "Europeanisation at Work in the Western Balkans and the Black Sea Region: Is there an All-European Way of Voting in the United Nations General Assembly?", *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, Vol.13, No.2, 2012, p.169-186.

16 Marciacq, "Europeanisation at Work."

17 Müftüler-Baç and Gürsoy, "Is there a Europeanization of Turkish Foreign Policy?"

18 Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives*, New York, Free Press, 1967.

19 Aylin Şeker Görener, "Dış Politikada Aktör-Yapı İlişkisi", Nejat Doğan and Mahir Nakip, *Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Türk Siyasal Partileri* (eds.), Ankara, Seçkin Yayın, 2006, p.61-74.

20 See Gary Marks, *et.al.*, "Party Competition and European Integration in the East and West: Different Structures, Same Causality", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.39, No.2, 2006, p.155-175; Gary Marks and Carole J. Wilson, "The Past in the Present", *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol.30, 2000, p.434; Gary Marks *et.al.*, "National Political Parties and European

nificant power shifts in governments are associated with changes in voting attitudes in the General Assembly, especially when this shift occurs between ideologically distinct political parties.²¹ In addition, extant research reveals that different political parties in Turkey formulate different foreign policy programs,²² and ideology has important impact how parties design foreign policy when in power.²³ Some works have even claimed that Turkey's traditional western orientation has been shifted toward the East by the ideologically-driven JDP government.²⁴ In short, one might expect that different political parties in power might express Turkish foreign policy preferences differently in the General Assembly.

The Research Questions and Hypotheses

Quantitative analyses of Turkish foreign policy on individual issue areas are very rare. In fact, there are very few works, whether quantitative or qualitative in nature, on how Turkey acts on specific issues.²⁵ This paper quantitatively examines whether Turkey's presentation as exceptional and hybrid is reflected in its foreign policy preferences as evidenced by its General Assembly voting. By doing so, it sheds some light onto the

Integration", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol.46, No.3, 2002, p.585-594.

- 21 See Abdullah Yuvacı and Muhittin Kaplan, "Testing the Axis Shift Claim: An Empirical Analysis of Turkey's Voting Alignment on Important Resolutions in the United Nations General Assembly during the Years 2000-2010", *Turkish Studies*, June, 2013, forthcoming; N. Potrafke, "Does Government Ideology Influence Political Alignment with the US?", *Review of International Organizations*, Vol.4, No.3, 2009, p.245-268; Joe D. Hagan, "Domestic Political Regime Changes and Third World Voting Realignment in the United Nations, 1846-84", *International Organization*, Vol.43, No.3, Summer 1989, p. 505-541; Axel Dreher and Nathan Jensen, "Country or Leader? Political Change and UN General Assembly Voting", *KOF-Arbeitspapiere Working Papers 217*, February 2009, Zurich.
- 22 Nejat Doğan, "Türk Siyasal Partilerinin Uluslararası İlişkilere Yaklaşımı, 1923-1980", Nejat Doğan and Mahir Nakip, *Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Türk Siyasal Partileri* (eds.), Ankara, Seçkin Yayın, 2006, p.117-154.
- 23 Cemal Altan, "DP, ANAP, AKP İktidarları ve Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri", Nejat Doğan and Mahir Nakip, *Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Türk Siyasal Partileri* (eds.), Ankara, Seçkin Yayın, 2006, p.275-295.
- 24 See Thomas L. Friedman, "Letter from Istanbul", *The New York Times*, 15 June 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/16/opinion/16friedman.html?_r=2, (Accessed on 18 January 2012); Soner Cagaptay, "Is Turkey Leaving the West?", *Foreign Affairs*, 26 October 2009, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65661/soner-cagaptay/is-turkey-leaving-the-west#> (Accessed on 13 January 2012); Soner Cagaptay, "Sultan of the Muslim World", *Foreign Affairs*, 15 November 2010, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67009/soner-cagaptay/sultan-of-the-muslim-world> (Accessed on 13 January 2012).
- 25 For some exceptions, see Berdal Aral, "Fifty Years On: Turkey's Voting Orientation at the UN General Assembly, 1948-1997", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.40, No.2, 2004, p.137-160; Mustafa Kibaroglu, "Turkey's Quest for Peaceful Nuclear Power", *The Nonproliferation Review*, Spring-Summer, 1997, p.33-44; Mustafa Kibaroglu, "Isn't it Time to Say Farewell to Nukes in Turkey?", *European Security*, Vol.14, No.4, 2005, p.443-57; Mehmet Babacan, "Whither an Axis Shift: A Perspective from Turkey's Foreign Trade", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.13, No.1, 2011, p.129-157; SETA, "Turkey in G-20: Toward a New Global Economic Order", 8 October, A Panel Discussion. <http://www.setav.org/public/HaberDetay.aspx?Dil=tr&hid=49350&q=turkey-in-g-20-toward-a-new-global-economic-order> (Accessed on 23 February 2012).

question of whether Turkey's foreign policy preferences resemble those of the West, East, or the both at the same time. To achieve this goal, the study revolves around two main hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Turkey casts its votes in the General Assembly in a unique manner, which reflects its "exceptional" identity as presented by the Turkish political elite.

Turkey has been presented as an exceptional country, but the question remains whether this "exceptionality" is reflected in or shapes Turkey's actual foreign policy preferences. Does Turkey cast its votes in a "unique" or "exceptional" manner in the General Assembly? Or, do its voting preferences mirror those of eastern countries or western countries, such as the preferences of the EU countries as the Europeanization literature would suggest? Exceptionality may come to light in several ways in the General Assembly. For example, the research might reveal that Turkey's voting behaviour might resemble neither that of the West nor the East, or might contain discernible commonalities with the West and the East at the same time. Then, this hypothesis may be rejected if the study reveals that Turkey votes heavily with either the eastern countries or the western countries such as the EU, as the Europeanization literature would expect.

Hypothesis 2: The JDP government will display different voting attitudes than the previous Democratic Left Party (DLP) government.

From 2000 to 2010, two different political parties with distinct ideologies controlled the government in Turkey. The Democratic Left Party (DLP), a social democratic party, won the 1999 general elections and then led a coalition government that lasted until November 2002. The JDP, a centre-right conservative party, won the November 2002 elections and its single party government has been in power since then. There might be differences in how Turkey's foreign policy preferences are expressed in the General Assembly between the JDP and the DLP governments. As discussed above, although still presenting Turkey as a multicivilisational country with having both eastern and western identity elements, the JDP leadership has nevertheless emphasized Turkey's commonalities with the East and differences with the West.²⁶ Especially considering the fact that political party ideologies might influence foreign policy significantly, as discussed previously, one might wonder whether such redefinition of the Turkish identity is reflected in General Assembly foreign policy preferences.

At this point, it might be useful to provide brief background information on the JDP and the DLP. The JDP's leading names, Abdullah Gül and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, were former members of the Islamist Welfare Party, which was known to be an anti-westernisation party that was later shut down by the Constitutional Court. However, there appears to be no consensus on what drives JDP's political agenda. As mentioned earlier, it has recently been claimed that the JDP has shifted Turkey's foreign policy orientation

26 Altunışık, "Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy", p.190.

from the West to the East, implying that the Turkish political elite pursued a western image and foreign policy before the JDP, but the JDP has ‘completely’ shifted Turkey’s orientation towards the East.²⁷ However, Dağı distinguishes the JDP from its predecessor Welfare, stating that the JDP “can best be described as a post-Islamist movement: keeping its ties with Islam in the social realm but abandoning it as a political program.”²⁸ Dağı notes that the JDP in reality seeks further integration “into the western world, particularly the EU.”²⁹

The DLP, on the other hand, is a social democratic party located on the left side of the spectrum. The DLP led a coalition government from 1999 to 2002. İsmail Cem, Foreign Minister of the DLP government, also emphasised exceptionality and claimed that Turkey was both eastern and western at the same time. He wanted to present Turkey as multicivilisational and tried to improve Turkey’s relations with neighbours including the Islamic countries.³⁰ However, Cem’s presentation of Turkish identity was different from that of the JDP leadership, who defined Turkey’s identity in more Islamic terms.³¹ Moreover, Cem, serving in a coalitional government, was not able to put his vision into practice “due to coalitional and bureaucratic politics.”³² In fact, the Nationalist Action Party, the DLP’s main coalition partner, had a nationalist and traditionalist agenda and was defining Turkey’s foreign policy through power politics lenses.³³

Data Description, UN Voting and Issue Areas

It is assumed in this paper that studying Turkey’s General Assembly voting may help us gain a better understanding of Turkish foreign policy identity, especially, as related to its western and eastern affiliation. General Assembly voting may be used to uncover which blocs (Europe, e.g.) states actually belong to and where their foreign policy preferences lie, as General Assembly votes are viewed as “operational indicators that express a nation’s goals and expectations and reflect its actual behaviour rather than its claims or pretensions.”³⁴ In fact, states’ voting positions on General Assembly votes have been extensively utilised to assess their foreign policy preferences and orientations.³⁵ As an evidence to the extent to which General Assembly votes reflect

27 See Friedman, “Letter from Istanbul”; Çağaptay, “Is Turkey Leaving the West?” and “Sultan of the Muslim World”.

28 İhsan Dağı, “Transformation of Islamic Political Identity in Turkey: Rethinking the West and Westernization”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.6, No.1, 2005, p.30.

29 Ibid., p.31.

30 Altunışık, “Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy,” p.185–7.

31 Ibid, p. 190.

32 Ibid, p.192.

33 Ibid.

34 Kul B Rai., “Foreign Policy and Voting in the UN General Assembly”, *International Organization*, Vol.26, 1972, p.589-594.

35 See Trong R. Chai, “Chinese Policy toward the Third World and the Superpowers in the UN General Assembly 1971-1997: A voting analysis,” *International Organization*, Vol.33, No.3, 1979, p.391-403; Robert Weiner, “Postcommunist Moldovan and Romanian Foreign Policy

states' foreign policy preferences, the literature shows that a significant relationship exists between international changes like the end of the Cold War³⁶ and domestic power transitions,³⁷ on the one hand, and how states cast their votes in the General Assembly, on the other. On a wider context, Turkey has an official political-military alliance with the West. However, this alliance does not necessarily mean Turkey's preferences on individual issue areas perfectly match with those of the US or the EU.³⁸ In fact, even though its formal alliance with the West dictates Turkey to cut off its relations with Iran, Turkey maintains its strong economic ties with Iran. Thus, UN General Assembly votes may be useful in analysing the policy preferences of Turkey and where these preferences in reality lay.

The literature examining states' UN General Assembly voting alignments is vast. Most of these studies break down states' votes across several issue areas that include arms control and disarmament, north-south economic relations, human rights, the Palestinian question and colonial issues.³⁹ This paper analyses Turkey's votes across three categories, namely, arms control and disarmament, north-south economic issues and human rights. This is because there are no resolutions related to colonial issues in the dataset that this paper utilises; and, although there are many resolutions on the Palestinian question, these resolutions are omitted because Turkey, along with many other Islamic countries, consistently takes a pro-Palestinian position whereas the US always takes a pro-Israeli position.⁴⁰

Thus, the research breaks down Turkey's General Assembly votes into three issue areas, namely, disarmament and arms control, north-south economic division and human rights, and analyses with whom Turkey's preferences were aligned on these issues from 2000 to 2010. The General Assembly passes hundreds of resolutions each year.

at the United Nations", Paper presented at the 2002 American Political Science Association Meeting, Boston, MA, 2002, p.1-35; Suzanne Graham, "South Africa's UN General Assembly Voting Record from 2003 to 2008", *Politikon*, Vol.38, No.3, 2011, p.409-432; Aral, "Fifty Years On."

36 Soo Yeon Kim and Bruce Russett, "The New Politics of Voting Alignments in the United Nations General Assembly", *International Organization*, Vol.50 No.4, 1996, p.629-652.

37 Hagan, "Domestic Political Regime Changes."

38 See Marciacq, "Europeanisation at Work."

39 Aral, "Fifty Years On"; Kim and Russett, "The New Politics of Voting Alignments"; Chai, "Chinese Policy toward the Third World"; Monti N. Datta, "The Decline of America's Soft Power in the United States", *International Studies Perspective*, Vol.10, 2009, p.265-284; Jakobsson, "An International Actor Under Pressure"; Adrian Wills, "New Zealand in the United Nations General Assembly: A Comparative Survey of Alignment", *Working Paper No.3*, Centre for Peace Studies, University of Auckland, New Zealand, <http://www.disarmsecure.org/New%20Zealand%20Voting%20at%20the%20UNGA.pdf> (Accessed on 12 February 2012).

40 See Aral, "Fifty Years On", for how Turkey's votes on the Israeli-Palestinian issues have changed over time. For a more detailed analysis of voting blocs on Israel see Steven Seligman, "Politics and Principle at the UN Human Rights Commission and Council (1992-2008)", *Israel Affairs*, Vol.17, No.4, 2011, p.520-541.

From these resolutions, the US Department of State⁴¹ selects approximately 10 to 20 resolutions every year to lobby other UN states to vote with US line. Called “important resolutions”, these votes by and large are representative of all UNGA roll call votes as they deal with diverse matters such as international security, international trade and development and human rights.⁴² The study focuses on these resolutions and includes all countries that held incessant UN membership from 2000 to 2010, except micro-states⁴³ and those countries that were absent more than 30 per cent of the total number of votes.⁴⁴ After filtering these out, the research analyses Turkey’s voting similarity with 127 countries on 21 arms control and disarmament resolutions, 12 on north-south economic issues and 51 on human rights.⁴⁵

Data and the Variables

Thus, this research quantitatively analyses Turkey’s voting similarity with a number of western and eastern countries from 2000 to 2010 on three issue areas (disarmament, North-South economic issues and human rights) for two periods (the 2000-02 DLP and 2003-10 JDP periods). The dependent variable is Turkey’s average voting similarity rate with the UN member in question. A state may participate in a General Assembly resolution in one of three ways (yes, no, or abstain) but may also be absent from voting. In quantitatively defining Turkey’s voting similarity rate, abstaining is coded as a no-vote⁴⁶ and absences as missing.⁴⁷ Thus, it is assumed that Turkey and another state had a similar/identical preference on a resolution when both states had a yes-yes, no-no, or no-abstain vote on that resolution. The dependent variable “average similarity rate” is constructed through dividing the number of times Turkey and another state agreed on an issue area by the total number of resolutions on that issue area from 2000 to 2010. For example, if Turkey and Country A had 30 voting agreements on human rights related issues out of the 51 human rights resolutions, then the average voting similarity rate of Turkey with this country on human rights is 30/51, or 59 per cent. OLS estimation methods are em-

41 US Department of State. “Reports”, <http://www.state.gov/p/io/rls/rpt/>, (Accessed on November-December 2011). As of 12 January 2012, the US Department of State website has no information on UN votes before 2000 and after 2010. Therefore, this analysis is limited to UNGA votes from 2000 to 2010.

42 “Important resolutions” are extensively utilised in the literature, as these resolutions tend to be more contentious and force states to make clear choices on various international issues. For a few examples, see T.Y. Wang, “U.S. Foreign Aid and UN Voting: An Analysis of Important Issues”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.43, No.1, 1999, p.199–210; Datta, “The Decline of America’s Soft Power”; Erik Voeten, “Resisting the Lonely Superpower: Responses of States in the United Nations to U.S. Dominance”, *The Journal of Politics*, Vol.66, No.3, 2004, p.729–754.

43 Dag Anckar, “Regime Choices in Microstates”, *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol.42, No.2, 2004, p.206–223.

44 See Kim and Russett, “The New Politics of Voting Alignments”, p.632.

45 See Appendix 1 for the descriptions of these issue areas and examples.

46 See Miguel Marin-Bosch, *Votes in the UN General Assembly*, The Hague, Kluwer Law International, 1998.

47 Voeten, “Resisting the Lonely Superpower”; Chai, “Chinese Policy toward the Third World”.

ployed in this paper due to the fact that the dependent variable is constructed as a continuous variable, as the most commonly preferred measurement of UN voting similarity in the literature.⁴⁸

Single and group country dummies are used as independent variables to distinguish the West from the East. The US, Russia, China and Iran serve as single country dummies; and, nuclear states, EU countries, non-EU OECD countries⁴⁹ and the Arab League are the group dummies. The US, the EU and the non-EU OECD countries represent the “West,” whereas Russia, China, Iran and the Arab League stand for the “East” in the model. The nuclear dummy excludes the US, Russia and China as these countries are included as single country dummies. France and Britain are EU members, but they are also in the nuclear club at the same time. This paper includes France and Britain into the nuclear dummy rather than the EU, since the literature suggests that their voting behaviours tend to be different from the average EU line.⁵⁰ Scholars attribute the deviant behavior of France and Britain to the fact that they actually are different from the rest of the EU countries in terms of their level of power, interests and position in the UN. Both have a permanent seat and thus veto power in the Security Council, possess nuclear weapons and “believe they have their own place in the world system.”⁵¹ For that reason, their voting cohesion with the remaining EU countries is particularly low on issues related to ‘high politics’ such as disarmament, international security and nuclear matters.⁵² For example, in 2002 France and Britain deviated from the EU line and voted with the US, another nuclear power, in six votes pertaining to nuclear weapons issues.⁵³ Disarmament, security and nuclear weapons constitute one of the three issue categories analyzed in this paper, it is therefore more appropriate to cover them under the nuclear dummy. The remaining developing countries serve as a reference category.

48 See Axel Dreher, Peter Nunnenkamp and Rainer Thiele, “Does US aid buy UN general assembly votes?”, *Public Choice*, Vol.136, 2008, p.139–16; Dreher and Jensen, “Country or Leader?”; Wang, “U.S. Foreign Aid,”; Datta, “The Decline of America’s Soft Power”; Graham, “South Africa’s UN General Assembly Voting”. Moreover, OLS coefficients are easy to interpret, and with spherical disturbances (twin assumptions of homoscedasticity and nonautocorrelation), they are also viewed as the best linear unbiased estimators (BLUE) with minimum variance in the class of all linear unbiased estimators. See Damodar Gujarati, *Basic Econometrics*, Third Edition, McGraw Hill, 1995, p.291.

49 Kim and Russett argue the east-west divide is replaced by the north-south divide in the post-Cold War UN. The non-EU OECD countries (also the US and EU) represent the North, thus assigned a dummy in the study.

50 Marciacq, “Europeanisation at Work”, p.175, Table 1. Laurent Beauguitte, “Multiscalar approaches of voting behaviour of European countries in the United Nations General Assembly”, Paper presented at the 5th ECPR General Conference, 10–12 September 2009, Potsdam, Germany; Paul Luif, *EU cohesion in the UN General Assembly*, ESSI Occasional Papers, No.49, European Union Institute for Security Studies (ESSI), 2003, p.1-75; Hosli, *et.al.*, “Voting Cohesion in the United Nations”.

51 Beauguitte, “Multiscalar approaches of voting behaviour”, p.8.

52 Hosli, *et.al.*, “Voting Cohesion in the United Nations”; Luif, “EU Cohesion in the UN”.

53 Luif, “EU Cohesion in the UN”, p.33.

Trade, GDP, and Democracy are used as control variables in the analyses.⁵⁴ In constructing the variable Trade, Turkey's bilateral trade volume with the country in question is divided by Turkey's GDP, which provides information regarding how significant the country in question is to the Turkish economy. The trade data are obtained from the Turkish Statistical Institute website.⁵⁵ The GDP variable is calculated through dividing each country's GDP by Turkey's GDP, which gives a ratio on the relative economic development of each country to Turkey, and the relevant data are drawn from the UN National Accounts Main Aggregates Database.⁵⁶ The variable Democracy⁵⁷ is derived from the Freedom House,⁵⁸ which rates each country's political and civil liberties on a 1-7 scale where one is most democratic and seven least democratic. For each country, political and civil liberty scores are added up and a new score that ranges from two (most democratic) to 14 (least democratic) is obtained. Since this is a cross-sectional analysis of time intervals, the average scores of the Trade, GDP and Democracy variables are calculated for the particular times in question and used in the analyses below.

Analyses

Table 1 and 2 below are designed to display the results of the OLS regression analyses that are conducted to test Turkey's UN voting similarities across three issue areas with western and eastern countries. Table 1 displays the regression results for the years 2000-10. Table 2, on the other hand, presents the results for the period 2000-02 and the period 2003-10.

54 Additional variables such foreign aid and military interstate disputes (MID) could also have been considered. However, the literature considers foreign aid only when analysing US voting similarity with other states (while this paper analyses Turkey's voting similarity with others), since it is the main donor in foreign aid (see, for example, Dreher *et al.* "Does US Aid Buy UN?"; Wang, "U.S. Foreign Aid."). Moreover, this paper excludes microstates, which, obviously, are more likely to be influenced by foreign aid. The Correlations of War MID data is available only until 2001, and its use is not appropriate in single country voting coincidence analysis due to low number of counts.

55 Turkish Statistical Institute, Foreign Trade Statistics. http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?alt_id=12 (Accessed on 15 March 2012).

56 United Nations Statistics Division, United Nations National Accounts Main Aggregates Database, <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/snaama/Introduction.asp>, (Accessed 12 April 2012).

57 Voeten, among others, suggests that democracy is a "determinant of state preferences" in UN voting. It is therefore crucial to control for democracy. See, Voeten, "Resisting the Lonely Superpower".

58 The Freedom House data is obtained from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/> This data is widely used in quantitative analysis. For some examples on the use and different coding techniques, see James Lebovic and Eric Voeten, "The Cost of Shame", *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2009, p.79-97; Wang, "U.S. Foreign Aid and UN Voting"; Kim and Russett, "The New Politics of Voting Alignments"; Wade M. Cole, "Institutionalizing shame", *Social Science Research*, 41, 2012, p.539-554; Voeten, "Resisting the Lonely Superpower"; Datta, "The Decline of America's Soft Power."

Table 1. Turkey's UNGA Voting Coincidence Rates on Arms Control/Disarmament, North-South Economic Issues and Human Rights, 2000-10

	Arms Control/ Disarmament	North-South Economic Issues	Human Rights
Trade	0.033 (0.027)	0.026 (0.023)	0.022 (0.019)
GDP	0.010 (0.006)*	0.011 (0.006)*	-0.001 (0.006)
Democracy	-0.016 (0.005)***	-0.010 (0.004)**	-0.030 (0.006)***
EU Members	0.090 (0.037)**	0.237 (0.033)***	0.081 (0.033)**
Non-EU OECD	-0.011 (0.047)	0.116 (0.041)***	0.080 (0.040)**
Arab League	-0.043 (0.033)	-0.133 (0.025)***	-0.027 (0.044)
Nuclear Powers	-0.303 (0.088)***	0.047 (0.047)	-0.098 (0.075)
Russia	-0.171 (0.093)*	0.025 (0.082)	-0.144 (0.075)*
Iran	-0.260 (0.035)***	-0.091 (0.032)***	-0.097 (0.041)**
USA	-0.271 (0.071)***	-0.172 (0.057)***	-0.129 (0.050)**
China	-0.290 (0.053)***	0.017 (0.049)	-0.170 (0.055)**
Constant	0.831 (0.041)***	0.481 (0.041)***	0.813 (0.050)***
<i>Diagnostics</i>			
N. Obs.	127	127	127
R^2	0.628	0.664	0.520
<i>RMSE</i>	0.106	0.117	0.150
<i>MEAN VIF</i>	1.600	1.610	1.610

Notes: Coefficients are reported. Values in parentheses are standard errors. (***), (**), (*) and (°) indicate that coefficients are significant at 1%, 5% and 10% levels respectively. Estimates are corrected for heteroscedasticity. R^2 is the square of the multiple correlation coefficient and *RMSE* is the root mean square of the error of equation. *MEAN VIF* is the mean value of Variance Inflation Factor, an indicator of multicollinearity.⁵⁹

59 The VIF is employed to detect multicollinearity. A variable is said to be highly collinear if the VIF value exceeds 10 (see Gujarati, *Basic Econometrics*, p. 339). The corresponding VIF values for the variables used in this paper are between 1.04 and 2.33, with a mean of 1.60. Thus, no multicollinearity exists among the variables.

Overall, the results presented in Table 1 suggest that, on average, Turkey's voting preferences across all issue areas were closely in line with those of the EU countries. When compared to the reference group, Turkey's voting similarity with the EU was nine per cent higher on disarmament and arms control, 24 per cent higher on north-south issues, and eight per cent higher on human rights. All the relevant coefficients are statistically significant at 0.05 or lower. While providing statistical evidence that Turkey acted with the European countries in the General Assembly, Table 1 finds no significant preference similarity between Turkey's votes, on the one hand, and Arab countries', Russia's, Iran's, the US', or China's votes, on the other hand. In fact, the coefficients for the non-EU countries are usually negative and significant, indicating that Turkey's voting coincident rates with the non-EU countries were actually lower than those with the reference group.

Thus, according to Table 1, the hypothesis that Turkey's exceptionality will be reflected in its General Assembly voting is not confirmed. Table 1 suggests that Turkey's foreign policy preferences were similar to the EU countries on all issues under examination. The nuclear dummy and the dummies assigned for the other nuclear countries (Russia, Iran, US and China) are negative and significant for arms control/disarmament resolutions, which is understandable because Turkey is a non-nuclear state and its preferences on these issues may therefore be different from those who possess nuclear weapons. With regards to the north-south division, the table reveals that Turkey acts with the North. The EU and the non-EU OECD coefficients are positive and significant, suggesting that Turkey, overall, acted with the OECD countries (except the US, as indicated by the US coefficient) rather than non-OECD members (developing world). However, it should be highlighted that the EU coefficient is significantly higher than the non-EU OECD coefficient, suggesting that Turkey was closer to the EU than to the non-EU OECD on economic issues. Finally, on human rights, too, Turkey's preferences were in line with those of the EU. Moreover, Turkey's human rights preferences were similar to those of democracies than non-democracies from 2000 to 2010.

Table 2. Turkey's UNGA Voting Coincidence Rates on Arms Control/Disarmament, North-South Economic Issues and Human Rights, 2000-02 and 2003-10

	Arms Control/ Disarmament		North-South Economic Issues		Human Rights	
	2000-02	2003-10	2000-02	2003-10	2000-02	2003-10
Trade	0.035 (0.031)	0.032 (0.026)	-0.005 (0.012)	0.047 (0.041)	0.019 (0.019)	0.024 (0.019)
GDP	0.011 (0.009)	0.004 (0.004)	-0.016 (0.004)**	0.028 (0.009)***	-0.007 (0.006)	0.001 (0.007)
Democracy	-0.024 (0.006)**	-0.009 (0.006)	0.001 (0.005)	-0.016 (0.006)***	-0.041 (0.007)**	-0.025 (0.006)***
EU Members	0.264 (0.052)***	-0.018 (0.035)	-0.111 (0.031)**	0.406 (0.053)***	0.057 (0.042)	0.099 (0.036)***
Non-EU OECD	0.001 (0.096)	-0.013 (0.031)	-0.084 (0.046)*	0.212 (0.071)***	0.035 (0.059)	0.107 (0.042)***
Arab League	0.038 (0.041)	-0.106 (0.039)***	0.075 (0.029)***	-0.236 (0.033)***	-0.125 (0.060)**	0.021 (0.055)
Nuclear Powers	-0.187 (0.091)**	-0.378 (0.103)***	0.013 (0.030)	0.062 (0.083)	-0.147 (0.080)*	-0.076 (0.077)
Russia	-0.098 (0.064)	-0.197 (0.095)**	0.083 (0.033)***	-0.039 (0.157)	-0.329 (0.051)***	-0.075 (0.082)
Iran	0.058 (0.035)*	-0.486 (0.038)***	0.073 (0.030)***	-0.215 (0.053)***	-0.120 (0.042)***	-0.087 (0.042)**
USA	-0.199 (0.106)*	-0.328 (0.068)***	-0.002 (0.044)	-0.231 (0.095)***	-0.270 (0.067)***	-0.058 (0.051)
China	-0.086 (0.041)**	-0.414 (0.056)***	0.070 (0.035)**	-0.030 (0.088)	-0.283 (0.048)***	-0.139 (0.059)**
Constant	0.706 (0.056)***	0.920 (0.043)***	0.427 (0.046)***	0.508 (0.059)***	1.000 (0.065)***	0.732 (0.052)***
<i>Diagnostics</i>						
N. Obs.	127	127	127	127	127	127
R^2	0.593	0.569	0.383	0.719	0.521	0.433
<i>RMSE</i>	0.168	0.101	0.119	0.183	0.195	0.160
<i>MEAN VIF</i>	1.540	1.610	1.540	1.610	1.540	1.610

Notes: Coefficients are reported. Values in parentheses are standard errors. (**), (*) and (.) indicate that coefficients are significant at 1%, 5% and 10% levels respectively. Estimates are corrected for heteroscedasticity. R^2 is the square of the multiple correlation coefficient; *RMSE* is the root mean square of the error of equation. *MEAN VIF* is the mean value of Variance Inflation Factor, an indicator of multicollinearity.

Table 2 distinguishes the JDP period (2003-10) from the DLP (2000-02) period, running two sets of analyses utilising the same dependent and independent variables.⁶⁰ It demonstrates that Turkey closely cooperated with the EU countries in the years 2000-02 on arms control/disarmament, as indicated by a high coefficient rate (0.26), with a significance level of 0.01. On the other hand, the coefficients for the non-EU countries are mostly insignificant for the same period. However, Turkey's voting similarity with the EU dropped sharply during the JDP tenure (2003-10) on arms control/disarmament. In fact, the corresponding coefficient turned negative and lost statistical meaning. Yet, this may hardly be interpreted as a change of axis, as a similar tendency was also observed during the JDP period for the non-EU countries, including the US, the Arab world and Russia. Thus, instead of Turkey changing its course from the West to the East, this finding suggests that Turkey became a more independent actor during the JDP era, at least as far as General Assembly arms control and disarmament issues were concerned.

Confirming the second hypothesis of the study, there are clearly observable differences between the DLP and JDP periods in terms of their attitudes toward the North-South matters. The GDP coefficient, while negative and significant for the years 2000-02, turns positive and retains its significance for the years 2003-10, implying an important policy change from the DLP to the JDP government. For the 2000-02 period, a one unit increase in GDP predicts a two per cent decrease in voting similarity on north-south issues; whereas a one-unit increase in GDP predicts a three per cent increase in voting similarity for the 2003-10 JDP period. This finding reveals that the JDP sided with the North (developed countries) on north-south issues. Also, while the EU and the non-EU OECD coefficients are significantly negative for the 2000-02 period, they are positively signed and significant at the 0.01 level for the years 2003-10. Moreover, the corresponding coefficients for the EU and the non-EU OECD indicate that Turkey was closer to the EU countries than to the non-EU OECD countries in the UN. The remaining country dummies are also consistent with the finding that while the DLP government acted with the South, the JDP government sided with the North, especially with the EU countries. This shift might be explained by the ideological position of the parties under examination. While the DLP is a social democrat party on the left, the JDP is a conservative party located on the right that emphasises market opening and liberalism. In fact, Turkey has become a "trading state" under the JDP, which, in cooperation with the business associations, has actively sought new markets to increase Turkey's trade relations with others,

60 The present article analyses the JDP period (2003-10) as a whole, since the literature suggests that UN voting changes when significant power transitions occur, such as between left and right governments. See Potrafke, "Does Government Ideology Influence Political Alignment"; Hagan, "Domestic Political Regime Changes". However, Öniş and Yılmaz suggest that there were "elements of continuity and change in terms of foreign policy behavior" within the JDP era. See Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.10, No.1, 2009, p.20. It is not the purpose of this article to detect variances within the JDP through UN voting analysis, but additional tests were nevertheless conducted to distinguish the 2003-06 and 2007-10 governments of the JDP, but no significant changes in voting between the JDP governments were observed. The 2003-06 and 2007-10 JDP coefficients are not reported and discussed here due to space limitations and scope of the study, but may be made available upon request.

especially with the developing countries located in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.⁶¹ Thus, under the JDP, Turkey's economic interests converged with those of the North, which also seeks a better market access to the developing world and advocates market opening and liberalisation.

On human rights resolutions, Table 2 shows that Turkey's votes were more akin to democracies than to non-democracies for the years both 2000-02 and 2003-10. The variable Democracy is highly significant for the both periods at the 0.01 level. Accordingly, a one-unit increase in the level of democracy of a country was associated with a four per cent increase in voting agreement of that country with Turkey in the 2000-02 period and a 2.5 per cent increase in the 2003-10 period, with other things being equal. The EU dummy is also highly statistically significant for the JDP 2003-10 period. The higher coefficient values on human rights might be explained by the "Europeanization" of Turkish foreign policy. In fact, since 1999, and especially during the JDP government, Turkey has been undertaking a number of democratisation reforms to meet with the EU conditions for membership, which greatly shape how Turkey deal with issues such as the Kurdish question⁶² and this may also be reflected in Turkey's foreign policy preferences on human rights.

In short, the results presented in Table 2 reject the first hypothesis that Turkey votes in a unique manner in the General Assembly. The research reveals quantitative evidence that Turkey's foreign policy preferences were in line with those of the EU countries in the 2000-10 period. These findings are nevertheless supportive of the second hypothesis that the JDP and the DLP displayed some differences in their voting behaviour. However, it should be noted that this difference doesn't support the claim that Turkey shifted its axis from the West to the East under the JDP. Contrary, Turkey became more "western" in its outlook under the JDP, especially on issues related to the North-South economic issues.

Conclusion

This paper is designed to enhance our understanding of Turkey's foreign policy identity by analysing whether Turkey's 2000-10 General Assembly voting preferences were similar to those of the West or the East on individual issue areas like arms control and disarmament, north-south economic issues and human rights. The findings of this research are straightforward. Overall, the research shows that Turkey's votes were more similar to the EU countries than to non-EU countries across all issue areas for the period 2000-10. This finding leads us to reject the first hypothesis of the study that Turkey votes in an exceptional manner in the General Assembly. The findings presented in Table 2 are nevertheless supportive of the second hypothesis that the JDP and the DLP displayed some differences in their voting. Overall, Turkey was more pro-EU on arms control and disarmament in the 2000-02 period than in the 2003-10 period, when the JDP took a more autonomous position on such resolutions. On north-south economic issues, Turkey experienced

61 Kemal Kirişçi and Neslihan Kaptanoğlu, "The Politics of Trade and Turkish Foreign Policy" *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.47, No.5, 2011, p.705-724.

62 Müftüler-Baç and Gürsoy, "Is There a Europeanization of Turkish Foreign Policy?"

a policy shift from the DLP to the JDP periods, as the DLP sided with the South and the JDP with the North, which may be explained by the JDP government's close cooperation with business groups in Turkey and its efforts to access to the developing country markets, which has probably brought Turkey's economic interests closer to those of the EU as well as non-EU OECD countries. However, it should be noted that Turkey's voting similarity on economic issues was closer to the EU than to the non-EU OECD countries. Thus, the JDP government narrowed the preference gap between Turkey and Europe on North-South economic issues. A similar trend is also observed on human rights issues, too, as Turkey was more likely to act with the EU on human rights issues during the JDP era.

In terms of Turkey's overall foreign policy identity, this research produces quantitative evidence that Turkey's foreign policy preferences were much more European, thus western, than eastern across all issue areas under scrutiny. This indicates that Turkey defines its preferences along EU lines and sees its foreign policy issues through European lenses. If Turkey's preferences are in line with those of the EU, what, then, might explain Turkish leaders' presentation of Turkey's identity as unique and hybrid? Why would the Turkish political elite spend efforts to present a country image with a dual identity? This exceptional presentation of the country, as mentioned earlier, may be explained by policy-makers' attempt of "legitimizing and justifying their policies, not only to themselves, but also to the masses."⁶³ This also helps the political elite to assign the country a "bridge" role between the West and the East and remain relevant in the post-Cold War environment. In short, exceptionality seems to serve as a tool for political leaders to seek their political objectives. For example, it would have been difficult for the JDP government to improve its ties with the Islamic countries and increase its presence in such organisations as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League if the JDP has not paid particular attention to the Islamic elements of the Turkish identity.

Turkey's European orientation in the General Assembly is in line with the Europeanization literature, which, as discussed earlier, suggests that the EU shapes the foreign policy preferences of the member, candidate and even the other nearby countries without any prospects of EU membership. As a country that has been knocking the doors of the EU and with a long history of westernisation, it may indeed be the case that the EU is serving as a role model for Turkey, at least on "low politics" issues such as human rights and economic matters. A future research might then analyse the degree to which the EU integration process has impacted Turkey's voting attitudes in the General Assembly. Moreover, as discussed previously in the paper, the EU cohesiveness is relatively low on "high politics" issues due to the divergent behaviour displayed by the Europe's nuclear and Security Council countries France and Britain. For that reason, one should be cautious in interpreting Turkey's voting similarity rates with the EU, since the EU variable in this paper excludes France and Britain, which are included into the nuclear countries variable instead. Therefore, a future research, relying on the General Assembly voting data, may further examine the limits and scope of Europeanization, not only for non-EU countries but even also for the existing EU members.

63 Yanik, "The Metamorphosis of Metaphors of Vision", p.533.

Quantitative analysis of this sort falls short of explaining the motivations of states' foreign policy engagements. Qualitative studies, supported by interviews with those who are involved in the formulation of Turkish foreign affairs, will undoubtedly greatly increase our understanding of Turkish foreign policymaking and identity. Moreover, a future study may qualitatively examine individual UN votes to understand Turkey's stance on individual issues areas. In short, the General Assembly stands as a good laboratory that deserves more attention by scholars of Turkish foreign policy.

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Summary

This paper analyses Turkey's foreign policy across three issue areas, namely, nuclear disarmament and arms control, north-south economic issues, and human rights to test whether Turkey casts its UN votes in an "exceptional" manner, as the Turkish political elite present an "exceptionalist" identity. Turkey's 2000-10 average UN General Assembly voting similarity with western and eastern countries on these issues is regressed against a set of political and economic explanatory variables and single and group country dummies. In addition, assuming governmental changes in a country influence how that country votes, two different set of regression analyses were conducted to distinguish the 2000-02 period, when a social democratic party (Democratic Left Party - DLP) served as a coalition leader in Turkey, from the 2003-10 period when a centre-right conservative party (the Justice and Development Party - JDP) was in power.

Overall, the research finds that Turkey's General Assembly votes were more similar to the EU countries than to non-EU countries across all issue areas. The research also shows that significant differences existed between the DLP (2000-02) and the JDP (2003-10) periods. Turkey was more pro-EU on arms control and disarmament during the 2000-02 period than was during the 2003-10 period. Under the JDP, Turkey took a more autonomous position on arms control/disarmament resolutions. On North-South economic issues, Turkey experienced a policy shift, as the DLP sided with the South and the JDP sided with the North, a shift that may be explained by the ideological position of the respective political parties. On issues related to human rights, Turkey acted with democracies more often than it did with non-democracies for both the 2000-02 and the 2003-10 periods. In short, in terms of Turkey's overall foreign policy identity, this research produces quantitative evidence that Turkey did not display any exceptionalist behavior in the General Assembly, as its preferences were more western than eastern during the 2000-10 term.

APPENDIX I. UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ISSUE AREAS EXAMINED IN THE STUDY

Arms Control and Disarmament Resolutions	Examples (Resolution Year - Number - Title)
These resolutions call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, strengthening the global non-proliferation regime, disarmament, refraining from deploying anti-ballistic missile defence systems and bringing transparency in arms transfers and technology.	2000 - A/Res/55/33N - Reducing Nuclear Danger
	2003 - A/Res/58/43 - Confidence Building Measures in the Regional and Subregional Context
	2006 - A/Res/61/89 - Towards an Arms Trade Treaty
	2009 - A/Res/64/69 - Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty
	2010 - A/Res/65/72 - United actions toward total elimination of nuclear weapons
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North-South Economic Issues	
Resolutions on North-South economic issues closely reflect the North-South division and include economic development, trade, economic sanctions and technology transfer issues.	2000 - A/Res/55/102 - Globalization and Human Rights
	2003 - A/Res/58/193 - Globalization and Its Impact on the Full Enjoyment of All Human Rights
	2006 - A/Res/61/186 - International Trade and Development
	2008 - A/Res/63/224 - Toward a New International Economic Order
	2009 - A/Res/64/197 - Agricultural Technology and Development
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Human Rights	
Resolutions related to human rights are put forward and supported by the developed world (e.g., the EU countries) to condemn non-democratic countries for their human rights violations and to spread their understanding of international democratic norms.	2000 - A/Res/55/115 - Human Rights in Iraq
	2004 - A/Res/59/221 - Situation of Human Rights in Iran
	2006 - A/Res/61/175 - Situation of Human Rights in Belarus
	2008 - A/Res/63/168 - Moratorium on the Use of the Death Penalty
	2010 - A/Res/65/240- Global Efforts for the Total Elimination of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

APPENDIX II. Descriptive Statistics, 2000-2010

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Arms Control/ Disarmament	127	0.736	0.165	0.000	1.000
North-South Economic Issues	127	0.469	0.194	0.111	0.833
Human Rights	127	0.621	0.207	0.257	0.968
Trade	127	0.295	0.669	0.000	4.596
GDP	127	1.456	2.061	0.030	9.405
Democracy	127	6.810	3.840	2.000	14.000
EU Members	127	0.173	0.380	0.000	1.000
Non-EU OECD	127	0.063	0.244	0.000	1.000
Arab League	127	0.118	0.324	0.000	1.000
Nuclear Powers	127	0.055	0.229	0.000	1.000