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Dear readers/followers,

The Republic of Turkey (Türkiye) celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary this year. A century ago, Turkey was established under very difficult conditions with an extraordinary leadership skill shown by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, a young Ottoman General, who made people believe in his course to reach independence. Turkish Independence War or the National Struggle is still an inspiration for many third world or developing countries. It should not be forgotten that Turkey was then under the attack of four major European powers: Britain, France, Italy, and Greece, yet Atatürk and his friends never lost their hope and continued to struggle for their freedom. Atatürk used both military and diplomatic skills to reach his aim. He defeated the Greek Army on the field and created deterrence for other invading powers. But at the same time, he used diplomatic skills to convince imperial powers to leave Anatolia and to accept the independence of Turkish nation. In the end, Atatürk and his friends established a new Republic and made bold steps to create a modern state with a predominantly Muslim population. That is why, Atatürk's greatness will always be remembered...

In order to commemorate Atatürk and his heroic friends, we decided to dedicate this issue to them and to publish a special edition on Turkish Politics and Turkish Foreign Policy. That is why, all articles within this issue will be related to Turkey. We are planning to publish other special editions as well in the future for commemorating great men in history or to discuss an important and contemporary phenomenon. In that sense, 2024 September issue for instance could be a special edition on U.S. politics and presidential elections.

Within this issue, there are 8 original articles and a book review. Articles and the book review are of 243 pages length, and there is effort in every letter of it. Since we encourage young academics to work harder and publish more, most of these articles are written by young

colleagues. However, there are also articles written by experienced and esteemed colleagues who spent many years in this field. I am sure these articles will reach the related audience and help improving things.

At the same time, we are trying to improve our visibility by applying to new indexes. After getting listed in some major European indexes, we are now waiting a positive result from *TRDizin*, an important Turkish academic index. Our aim is to get acceptance from the *ESCI*, *Scopus*, and *SSCI* (Social Sciences Citation Index) as well in the near future. We are confident of ourselves because we work solely for academic purposes and we do not engage in political or economic relations with states, governments, and political parties. I think this might overshadow our neutrality which is an absolute necessity in science.

Please enjoy our new special issue on Turkish Politics and Turkish Foreign Policy.

Assoc. Prof. Ozan ÖRMECİ  
*UPA Strategic Affairs* Owner/Editor-in-chief  
Istanbul, September 2023



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**İSTİHBARAT BAŞARISIZLIĞI VE İDEOLOJİK DIŞ POLİTİKA:  
TÜRKİYE’NİN ARAP BAHARI SÜRECİNDE BEŞAR ESAD’I DEVİRME  
POLİTİKASI**

Hasan Mesut ÖNDER<sup>1</sup>

Timuçin KODAMAN<sup>2</sup>

**Özet:** İstihbarat, devlet düzeyinde politika yapılırken, bir sorunun veya tehdidin karar verici tarafından anlaşılmasını sağlayan en önemli araçlardan bir tanesidir. Ancak literatür detaylı olarak incelendiğinde, istihbaratın çoğu zaman karar vericileri yeterince uyaramadığı ve başarısız olduğu görülmektedir. İstihbarat başarısızlığının birçok boyutunun bulunduğu ve her bir boyutunun başarısızlığa etki ettiği somut bir vaka olarak karşımızda durmaktadır. İstihbarat başarısızlığının analizden ve toplamadan kaynaklı nedenleri üzerinde birçok çalışma bulunmaktadır. Ancak ideolojik dış politika ile istihbarat başarısızlığı arasında nasıl bir ilişki olduğu ve bunların birbirini nasıl tetiklediğine dair yeterli düzeyde çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu çalışmada, ideolojik dış politikanın ve istihbarat başarısızlığının ne olduğu ve bu iki unsurun birbirini nasıl etkilediğinin çerçevesi çizilerek, bu bağlamda Türkiye’nin Arap Baharı sürecinde Suriye Devlet Başkanı Beşar Esad’ı devirme politikası incelenecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *İstihbarat başarısızlığı, İdeolojik dış politika, Türkiye’nin Suriye politikası, Beşar Esad, Ahmet Davutoğlu.*

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<sup>1</sup> Dr., Uluslararası İlişkiler.

Email: [hasanmesutonder@gmail.com](mailto:hasanmesutonder@gmail.com).

ORCID: 0000-0002-0175-634X.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Dr., Uluslararası İlişkiler, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi (SDÜ), Isparta, Türkiye.

Email: [timucinkodaman@sdu.edu.tr](mailto:timucinkodaman@sdu.edu.tr).

ORCID: 0000-0001-5559-983X.

**INTELLIGENCE FAILURE AND IDEOLOGICAL FOREIGN POLICY:  
TURKEY'S POLICY TO OVERTHROW BASHAR AL-ASSAD DURING THE ARAB  
SPRING**

**Abstract:** Intelligence is one of the most important tools that enable the decision-maker to understand the problem or threat while making policy at the state level. However, when the literature is examined in detail, it is seen that intelligence often fails to adequately warn decision-makers. It stands before us as a concrete case where intelligence failure has many dimensions and each dimension affects the failure. There are many studies on the causes of intelligence failure from analysis and collection. However, there are not enough studies on the relationship between the ideological foreign policy and intelligence failure and how they trigger each other. In this study, the framework of ideological foreign policy and intelligence failure and how these two factors affect each other will be outlined, and in this context, Turkey's policy of overthrowing Bashar al Assad during the Arab Spring will be examined.

**Keywords:** *Intelligence failure, Ideological foreign policy, Turkey's Syria policy, Bashar al-Assad, Ahmet Davutoğlu.*

## Giriş

Siyasi, ideolojik ve düşünsel bakış açılarının istihbarat başarısızlığına nasıl neden olduğuna dair önemli bir tarihsel birçok örnek bulunmaktadır. Bu örneklerden en önemlisi, Musa Peygamberin Kenan diyarına gönderdiği 12 casusun hikâyesidir. Anlatıya göre, Musa Peygamber, Kenan diyarına gönderdiği casuslardan, hedef ülkenin kalelerini, tarımını ve askeri gücünü gözlemlemelerini istemiş; fakat bu casuslardan 10 tanesi düşmanın çok güçlü olduğunu ve savaşı kazanamayacaklarını düşündükleri için, kendi inançları doğrultusunda “*istihbaratı çarpıtarak*” yanlış bilgiler sunmuşlardır.<sup>3</sup> Bu örnekten de anlaşılacağı üzere, bireyin gerçekliği algılama biçiminin, ideolojik önyargıların<sup>4</sup>, duygusal ihtiyaçlardan kaynaklanan bilişsel önyargıların ve düşmanın stratejik aldatma faaliyetleri gibi etkenlerin istihbarat başarısızlığına neden olduğu söylenebilir.<sup>5</sup>

Kavramsal olarak “*istihbarat başarısızlığı*”, karar vericinin karşı karşıya kaldığı bir tehdit veya sorunun kökeninin ne olduğuna, şimdi hangi duruma evirildiğine ve gelecekte nasıl seyir izleyeceğine dair kapsamlı, zamanında ve net istihbaratın üretilmemesi şeklinde değerlendirilebilir.<sup>6</sup> Siyasi karar verici; temel, cari ve tahmin istihbaratı bağlamında sorun, konu veya tehdide karşı neyin yapılacağına karar vermektedir. Bu bakımdan, siyasi kararın temel malzemesinin istihbarat olduğu ifade edilebilir. Fakat siyasi karar vericiler tehdidi doğru algılasalar bile, her zaman doğru politikayı inşa edemeyebilir veya siyasi öncelikleri ve ideolojik anlayışları doğrultusunda karar alabilirler. Politikanın tonunun, şiddetinin ve düzeyinin belirlenmesinde son kararın politika yapıcılara ait olduğunu söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda, var olan sorun veya tehdide karşı neyin, hangi araçla, nasıl yapılacağı kararının verilme süreçleri politika (siyaset) alanına dâhilken, sorunun ve tehdidin ne olduğuna yönelik cevap verme aşamasının ise istihbarat üretim sürecinin parçası olduğu söylenebilir.

Dış politika yapımında ulusal çıkarın ve güç dengelerinin temel belirleyici olduğunu<sup>7</sup>, ideolojilerin ise dış politikada etkisinin olmadığını savunan görüşler olduğu gibi, ideolojilerin dış politika inşa etme süreçlerinde başat faktör olduğunu ileri süren görüşler de

<sup>3</sup> Teh Yong Yuan (2019), “The Spies in Numbers 13 as a Research Process”, *Journal of Christian Ministry*, Cilt 8, Sayı: 1, ss. 1-18

<sup>4</sup> Robert Jervis (1968), “Hypotheses on Misperception”, *World Politics*, Cilt 20, Sayı: 3, ss. 454-479.

<sup>5</sup> Richards J. Heuer Jr. (1981), “Strategic Deception and Counterdeception: A Cognitive Process Approach”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Cilt 25, Sayı: 2, ss. 294-327.

<sup>6</sup> John A. Gentry (2008), “Intelligence Failure Reframed”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Cilt 123, Sayı: 2, ss. 247-270.

<sup>7</sup> Zhengyu Wu (2018), “Classical Geopolitics, Realism and the Balance of Power Theory”, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Cilt 41, Sayı: 6, ss. 786-823.

bulunmaktadır.<sup>8</sup> Bir hükümetin ideolojik dış politika izleyebilmesi için, iç politikada iktidarına karşı herhangi bir tehdit hissetmemesi, uluslararası alanda ise ülkeyi sınırlayan ittifakların ve koşulların olmaması gerektiği vurgulanmaktadır.<sup>9</sup> Bu iki şartın olması gerektiği, bu iki koşulun bir arada bulunmadığı durumlarda ise ülkelerin pragmatik ve dengeli bir dış politika izlediği ifade edilmektedir. Bu çalışmada, hükümetlerin ideolojik dış politika izleyebilmesi için üçüncü faktör olarak istihbarat başarısızlığının da eklenmesi gerektiği vurgulanmaktadır. Hükümet ve bürokrasi etkileşimi içerisinde alınan dış politika kararlarında, istihbarat bürokrasisi, karar vericiye karşı karşıya kaldığı problemin ne olduğu ve sorunun nasıl bir seyir izleyeceğine dair yüksek çözünürlüklü bir resim sunamadığında, karar vericilerin sorunu çözmek için ideolojik kestirmelere eğilim göstermesinin ihtimal dâhilinde olduğu söylenebilir. Çünkü karar vericilerin, belirsizlikle karşı karşıya kaldıklarında, düşünsel kalıplara göre hareket etme eğilimlerinin arttığı ileri sürülebilir. Bu çalışmada, hükümetlerin ideolojik dış politika izlemesi için istihbarat başarısızlığının üçüncü bir şart olarak var olması gerektiği iddia edilecektir.

İstihbarat başarısızlığı ile ilgili yapılan çalışmalarda; eksik haber toplamanın<sup>10</sup>, fazla bilginin<sup>11</sup>, düşman/hasım kaynaklı aldatma faaliyetlerinin<sup>12</sup> ve analiz süreçlerinde uzmanın bilişsel ön yargılarının istihbarat başarısızlığına etkisinin ne olduğu<sup>13</sup> ile birlikte bir başarısızlık etkeni olarak istihbaratın politikleşmesine dair de çalışmalar bulunmaktadır.<sup>14</sup> Ancak istihbarat başarısızlığının ideolojik dış politikaya nasıl neden olduğu, ideolojik dış politika yapmaya eğilimli müşterinin<sup>15</sup> de, istihbarat örgütünü politikleştirerek, istihbarat üretim ve politika yapım süreçlerinde nasıl içinden çıkılması zor bir kısır döngü oluşturduğuna dair herhangi bir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu çalışma, bu bağlamda iki ana soruyu tartışmaktadır: Birincisi, istihbarat başarısızlığının ideolojik dış politika yapımına nasıl etki ettiği, ikincisi ise ideolojik dış politika yapmaya eğilimli müşterinin istihbarat başarısızlığına nasıl neden olduğudur.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Massad (1999), "Ideology and Foreign Policy", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Cilt 29, Sayı: 1, ss. 93-95.

<sup>9</sup> Ramazan Kılınc (2016), "İdeoloji ve Dış Politika: Türkiye'de Kemalist (1930-1939) ve İslamcı (2011-2015) Dış Politikaların Karşılaştırmalı Bir Analizi", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Cilt 13, Sayı: 52, ss. 67-88.

<sup>10</sup> Benno Wasserman (1960), "The Failure of Intelligence Prediction", *Political Studies*, Cilt 8, Sayı: 2, ss. 156-169.

<sup>11</sup> Alex Young (2013), "Too Much Information Ineffective Intelligence Collection", *Harvard International Review*, Cilt 35, Sayı: 1, ss. 24-27.

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Marrin (2004), "Preventing Intelligence Failures by Learning from the Past", *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, Cilt 17, Sayı: 4, ss. 655-672.

<sup>13</sup> Martha Whitesmith (2020), *Cognitive Bias in Intelligence Analysis Testing the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses Method*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, ss. 184-189.

<sup>14</sup> Tom Lundborg (2022), "The politics of intelligence failures: power, rationality, and the intelligence process", *Intelligence and National Security*, Cilt 38, Sayı: 5, ss. 726-739.

<sup>15</sup> İstihbarat terminolojisinde "müşteri", istihbaratı kullanan siyasi karar vericiler anlamına gelmektedir.

Arap Baharı'nın Suriye'de başladığı 2011 yılının, Türkiye'nin Suriye politikasında ideolojik dış politika izlemeyi tercih ettiği ve Beşar Esad'ı iktidardan uzaklaştırıp, Suriye'de iktidarı yeniden tasarımamaya çalıştığı dönemin başlangıcı olduğu söylenebilir.<sup>16</sup> Bu süreçte Suriye'de ve Mısır'da Müslüman Kardeşler (İhvan) örgütünün iktidara gelmesi için harcanan çabanın, dönemin karar vericilerini ve istihbarat bürokrasisini ideolojik dış politika-istihbarat başarısızlığı sarmalına sıkıştırdığı söylenebilir. Bu bakımdan, bu araştırmada Türkiye'nin Esad'ı iktidardan uzaklaştırma politikası örnek vaka (*case study*) olarak ele alınmaktadır.

Anlamacı-yorumsamacı epistemolojiye dayalı olarak ve nitel yöntem izlenerek yapılan bu çalışmanın araştırma deseni, "gömülü teori"dir. Makalenin teorik kısmı olan ilk iki bölümde, makalelerden ve kitaplardan yararlanılmakta, son kısımda ise ağırlıklı olarak birincil kaynaklar olan dönemin siyasi aktörlerinin yazılı ve sözlü demeçleri incelenmektedir. Ayrıca, araştırma kapsamında, 2009-2012 yılları arasında Türkiye'nin Şam Büyükelçisi olan emekli diplomat Ömer Orhon ve 2015-2016 yılları arasında Suriye Muhalif ve Devrimci Güçler Ulusal Koalisyonu'nun Başkanlığı yapan Halid Hoca ile yarı-yapılandırılmış mülakatlar yapılmıştır. Büyükelçi Orhon'un röportaj için seçilme nedeni, Türkiye'nin Suriye dosyasını ve o dönemki karar alma süreçlerini içeriden bilen biri olmasıdır. Halid Hoca ile mülakat yapılmasının nedeni ise, Suriye ulusal muhalefetinin liderliğini yapması ve muhalefetin bütün dış ilişkilerini yürütmüş kişi olmasıdır. Üç bölümden oluşan bu makalede, ilk olarak istihbarat başarısızlığının temel dayanakları incelenmekte, ikinci kısımda ideolojik dış politika ve istihbarat başarısızlığı ilişkisi araştırılmakta, üçüncü bölümde ise elde edilen çerçeve bağlamında Türkiye'nin Esad'ı devirme politikası yorumlanmaktadır.

2011-2016 yılları arasında Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı'nın (MİT) yazdığı raporlara dair bilgilerin bulunmaması, bu makalenin temel sınırlılıklarından biridir. Ancak dönemin Başbakanı olan Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun Esad'ın kısa sürede devrileceği görüşünü beyan etmesi, MİT'in de bu minvalde düşündüğünü ve büyük ihtimalle bu doğrultuda raporlar yazdığını göstermektedir. Çünkü Türkiye gibi devlet geleneği oturmuş bir ülkede, üst düzey bir devlet görevlisinin Suriye Devlet Başkanı'nın iktidardaki günlerinin sayılı olduğunu ve iktidarını kaybedeceğini kamuoyuna açık bir ortamda söylenmesi için, elde bu görüşü destekleyen somut istihbaratın olması gerekmektedir. Bu bakımdan, araştırmada, MİT'in bu süreçteki rolünü tespit etmek için, siyasilerin söylemlerinin ve içeriğinin de analizi yapılmaktadır.

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<sup>16</sup> Pınar Akpınar (2016), "The limits of mediation in the Arab Spring: the case of Syria", *Third World Quarterly*, Cilt 37, Sayı: 12, ss. 2288-2303.

## 1. İstihbarat Başarısızlığının Temel Nedenleri

İstihbarat başarısızlığının organizasyon ve kurumsal kültürden<sup>17</sup> kaynaklı çeşitli nedenleri bulunmaktadır; ancak bu çalışmasının konusu olmaması nedeni ile daha çok üretim süreçlerinden kaynaklanan ve müşterinin talepleri ile bağlantılı istihbarat başarısızlığına odaklanılacaktır. İstihbarat başarısızlığı, ülkenin karşı karşıya kaldığı sorun, tehdit ve konu ile ilgili istihbarat servisinin, bugün ne olduğu ve gelecekte neler olabileceğine dair istihbarat üretememesi şeklinde tanımlanabilir. İstihbarat başarısızlığının üretim içi nedenleri olduğu gibi, müşterinin taleplerinden kaynaklanan nedenleri de bulunmaktadır. Üretim sürecinden kaynaklanan istihbarat başarısızlığı, toplama eksikliği veya fazlalığı, düşmanın aldatma faaliyetlerine maruz kalma ve analizcinin karşılaştığı bilişsel önyargılar şeklinde iken, istihbaratın politikleşmesinin de müşteri kaynaklı istihbarat başarısızlığı nedenlerinden biri olduğu söylenebilir.

### 1.1. Bilgi Toplama Sürecinden Kaynaklanan İstihbarat Başarısızlığı

#### 1.1.1. Bilgi Eksikliği veya Fazlalığı

Literatürde, istihbarat başarısızlığının birincil nedeninin bilgi toplama eksikliği olduğu değerlendirilmeleri bulunmaktadır.<sup>18</sup> Operasyonel istihbarat için bilgi eksikliğinin istihbarat başarısızlığına neden olduğu ve haberin unsurlarının tam olmaması, yani “5NİK” sorularına tam cevabın verilememesinin eyleme geçilebilir istihbarat üretmek için yeterli olmadığı söylenebilir. Örneğin, ne zaman, kimin ve nasıl yapacağı belli olmayan bir terör saldırısının engellenmesinin çok zor olduğu söylenebilir. Çünkü sadece terör eyleminin nerede yapılacağı sorusunun cevabı, eyleme geçilebilir nitelikte değildir.

Ancak stratejik düzeyde istihbarat üretirken, birbiri ile çelişen veya farklı hipotezlere işaret eden gereksiz fazla bilgi de istihbarat başarısızlığına neden olabilmektedir.<sup>19</sup> Örneğin, COVID-19 ile grip virüsünün insan vücudunda yarattığı semptomun benzer olduğu bilinmektedir. Boğaz ağrısı ve nefes darlığı gibi belirtilerin ortak olması, doktorun teşhis koyarken yanılmasına neden olabilmektedir. Bu bakımdan, eksik, fazla veya tam bilginin bulunması durumunda, esas olanın parçaları birleştirip, doğru kapsam ve bağlam doğrultusunda analiz yapmak olduğu söylenebilir.

<sup>17</sup> Philip H.J. Davies (2004), “Intelligence culture and intelligence failure in Britain and the United States”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Cilt 17, Sayı: 3, ss. 495-520.

<sup>18</sup> Richard K. Betts (1978), “Analysis, War, and Decision: Why Intelligence Failures Are Inevitable”, *World Politics*, Cilt 31, Sayı: 1, ss. 61-89.

<sup>19</sup> Daniel Irwin & David R. Mandel (2019), “Improving information evaluation for intelligence production”, *Intelligence and National Security*, Cilt 34, Sayı: 4, ss. 503-525.

### 1.1.2. Hasımın Stratejik Aldatma Faaliyetleri

İstihbarat örgütleri, sert hedef olarak tabir edilen terör örgütlerine ve devletlere yönelik faaliyet yürütürken, hedef devletin ve örgütlerin yanıltma faaliyetleri ile de karşı karşıya kalabilmektedirler.<sup>20</sup> Bu bakımdan, toplanan her bilginin güvenilir olmadığı ve birden çok kaynaktan doğrulanmadığı sürece elde edilen bilginin analiz havuzuna dâhil edilmemesi gerektiğinin vurgulanması gerekmektedir.

Sert hedefler, hasım istihbarat örgütlerinin haber toplama faaliyetlerini manipüle etmek, kanaatlerini değiştirmek veya istediği politik çizgiye çekmek için gerçekleri gizlemeye ve kurgulanmış bilgilerin elde edilmesini sağlamaya çalışmaktadırlar. Toplama faaliyetlerinin manipüle edilebilmesi için, hasım istihbarat servisinin haber toplama ağına, yani şebekesine dublaj/hulul elemanı aracılığı ile sızılmaktadır.<sup>21</sup> Burada temel amaç, hasım servisin bilgi toplama faaliyetlerini maksatlı ve kurgulanmış bilgiler paylaşarak manipüle etmek ve toplanan nihai bilgiyi de bir analizde kullanılamayacak derecede bozuk hale getirmektir. Örneğin, Türkiye'nin savunma sanayisi ile ilgili bilgi toplamak isteyen Yunan gizli servisinin bilgi toplama faaliyetlerinde kullandığı eleman şebekesine sızılarak yanlış bilgilerin verilmesi buna örnek olarak verilebilir. Bu sızma neticesinde, Yunan karar vericileri tedirgin etmek veya bazı konularda geri adım atmaları sağlanmak isteniyorsa, Türkiye'nin savunma sanayi projeleri ve silah kapasitesine yönelik bilgiler köpürtülerek, Yunan servisinin bu bilgileri elde etmesi sağlanabilir. Ülkenin genel politikası doğrultusunda dezenformasyonun içeriği, dozu ve bağlamı belirlenebilmektedir.

Somut örnek vermek gerekirse; İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Alman gizli servisinin Sovyetler Birliği liderliğini aldatma planı hazırlayarak, Hitler'in İngiltere'yi mağlup edene kadar Sovyetler'e saldırmayacağına ve Almanya Sovyetler Birliği'ne karşı savaş ilan etmeden önce ultimatoma vereceğine Stalin'i inandırdığı bilinmektedir.<sup>22</sup> Hasımın stratejik aldatma faaliyetlerinin etkili olması, tehdidi doğru ve ayrıntılı bir şekilde anlayacak kadar bilginin toplanmaması durumunda, -istihbarat sistemi ne kadar güçlü olursa olsun- yaklaşan tehdidin tespit edilmesi güçleşmektedir. Buna ek olarak, analiz sürecinde yapılan hataların da istihbarat başarısızlığına neden olduğu bilinmektedir.

<sup>20</sup> Joseph A. Maiolo (2013), "Deception and Intelligence Failure: Anglo-German Preparations for U-boat Warfare in the 1930s", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Cilt 22, Sayı: 4, ss. 55-76.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Cowden (2014), "OSS Double-Agent Operations in World War II", *Studies in Intelligence*, Cilt 58, Sayı: 2, ss. 35-45.

<sup>22</sup> Barton S. Whaley (1973), *Codeword Barbarossa*, Cambridge: MIT Press, s. 63.



## 1.2. Analiz Sürecinden Kaynaklı İstihbarat Başarısızlığı

### 1.2.1. Analizcinin Psikolojisi

İstihbarat üretim sürecinin en önemli parçası olan analizde insan faktörünün etkili olduğu, analizcinin bilişsel ve duygusal yapısının, inanç sisteminin, düşünme biçiminin ve kişilik yapısının da analiz sürecine etki ettiği değerlendirilmektedir. İstihbarat analistlerinin de akademisyenler gibi rasyonel düşünmeye çalıştığı ifade edilse de, inanç sistemlerinin, düşünce kodlarının, politik tercihlerinin ve bilişsel özelliklerinin etkisi ile değerlendirmelerde hata yapılabilmektedir.<sup>23</sup>

Politik Psikoloji disiplinde, bilişsel önyargılar ve düşünsel/duygusal motivasyonlu önyargılar olmak üzere iki temel bilgi işleme engeli olduğu ileri sürülmektedir. Bilişsel önyargılar, karmaşık ve belirsiz bir sorun ele alınırken, ideolojik faktörlerden, inançlardan, siyasi çıkarlar ve duygulardan ayrı olarak, analistin bilgiyi işlerken olayları aşırı genelleştirmesi veya basitleştirmesi şeklinde ele alınabilir. İnsan zihni, bir sorunu değerlendirirken, yeni bilgileri düşünce kodlarına ve bakış açlarına göre değerlendirmektedir.<sup>24</sup> Örneğin, İsrail istihbaratı, 1973 Yom Kippur Savaşı'nda, Mısır'ın Sina Çölü'ne yığınak yapmasına ve Suriye'nin sınıra asker yığmasına karşın, bu gelişmeleri bir saldırı hazırlığı olarak değerlendirmemiştir. Mısır Ordusu'nun İsrail Hava Kuvvetleri'ni etkisiz hale getirecek silah sistemlerine sahip olmadığı, bu nedenle Mısır Ordusu'nun hava üstünlüğü sağlamadan İsrail'e karşı bir saldırıya girişemeyeceği, Mısır Ordusu'nun askeri tatbikat nedeni ile teyakkuzda olduğu, Suriye'nin ise savunma amaçlı askeri hareketlilik içinde olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır.<sup>25</sup> Ancak İsrail istihbaratının bu değerlendirmeleri yanlış çıkmış ve Mısır ile Suriye 1973 yılında İsrail'e saldırmışlardır.

İsrail istihbaratının, Mısır'ın İsrail'i etkisizleştirecek hava gücüne sahip olmadan bir harekâta girişmeyeceği düşüncesinin önceki Arap-İsrail savaşlarından çıkarılmış dersler bağlamında İsrail istihbarat bürokrasisinde oluşmuş bir bilişsel önyargı olduğu söylenebilir. Bu örnekten de görüleceği üzere, analistlerin önceki inançlarının ve düşünce biçimlerinin yeni gelişmeleri değerlendirirken başat rol oynadığı söylenebilir. Bunun yanında, istihbarat analistlerinin kanıtların işaret ettiği olasılıklardan çok kendi değer yargılarına güvendikleri, yani olasılıklar

<sup>23</sup> Floyd Allport (1955), *Theories of Perception and the Concept of Structure*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, s. 382.

<sup>24</sup> Jack S. Levy (2003), "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy", içinde (editörler: David O. Sears & Leonie Huddy & Robert Jervis) *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, New York: Oxford University Press, ss. 253-284.

<sup>25</sup> Avi Shlaim (1976), "Failures in National Intelligence Estimates: The Case of the Yom Kippur War", *World Politics*, Cilt 28, Sayı: 3, ss. 348-380.

ele alınırken geçmiş pratiklerinin ve tecrübelerinin etkisinde kaldıkları, en önemlisi de görmeyi bekledikleri şeyi görme eğiliminde oldukları söylenebilir.

Bilişsel önyargılar, bilgi işlenirken öğrenilmiş modellerden veya eksik algılamalardan kaynaklanırken<sup>26</sup>, düşümsel/duygusal motivasyonlu önyargıların ise, kişinin korkuları, beklentileri, ihtiyaçları ve çıkarları bağlamında gerçekliği eğip bükmesi ile oluştuğu söylenebilir. Karar vericiler veya istihbarat analistleri öz saygıyı, diplomatik, siyasi, örgütsel veya kişisel çıkarı korumak için motive olabilmektedir. Örneğin, bir istihbarat analisti, yazdığı istihbarat raporu karar vericinin beklentisini karşılamadığında, terfi etme imkânının olmayacağı ve ödeneklerinin kesilebileceği kaygısı taşıyabilir ve bu kaygılar, var olan bilginin işleme biçimini etkileyebilir. Bu bakımdan, bilişsel önyargılar, kişinin görmeyi beklediği bilgiyi görmesi şeklinde değerlendirilebilirken, düşümsel/duygusal motivasyonlu önyargılar ise, karar vericinin politika tercihlerine ve duygusal beklentilerine göre görmek isteneni veya gerekenleri görmek şeklinde ele alınabilir.<sup>27</sup>

Duygusal/düşümsel motivasyonlu önyargılarda, istihbaratın çarpıtılmasının olasılık dahilinde olduğu ifade edilebilir. Yani analist durumu veya olayı doğru anlasa bile, politik tercihlere uyumlulaşmak veya müşterilerinin algılarını ve tercihlerini yönlendirmek için bilginin kasıtlı olarak bozulması söz konusu olabilir. Bir konu ile ilgili yargıya varıldığında, ulaşılan yargının doğruluğu analizci tarafından abartılabilir. Yargıya vardıldıktan sonra ise, analist, başarıya ulaşmak için tek seçeneğin kendi ulaştığı sonuç olduğuna inanmaya başladığında, yargısı ile çelişen bilgileri göz ardı etmeye ve gelen her bilginin kendi ulaştığı sonucu destekleyecek şekilde yorumlama eğilimi oluşabilmektedir.<sup>28</sup>

Örneğin, Suriye’de siyasi istikrar ve düzenin Esad yönetiminin tasfiyesi ile mümkün olduğuna inanan bir analist veya karar verici, Esad’ın iktidardan devrilmesinin mümkün olup olmadığına bakmadan, bu seçeneğe yatırım yapıldığında, politik tercihin mutlak doğru olduğu sanrısı oluşmaktadır. Politik tercih yapıldıktan sonra, karar verici, istihbarat örgütünü kendi politik tercihleri doğrultusunda, oluşan taktik bilgi boşluklarının doldurulmasında kullanmaya başlar ve bu durum istihbaratın siyasallaşma döngüsünü başlatır.

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<sup>26</sup> Kevin Arceneaux (2012), “Cognitive Biases and the Strength of Political Arguments”, *American Journal of Political Science*, Cilt 56, Sayı: 2, ss. 271-285.

<sup>27</sup> Robert Jervis (1989), “Perceiving and Coping with Threat”, içinde (editörler: Robert Jervis & Richard Ned Lebow & Janice Gross Stein) *Psychology and Deterrence*, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, ss.13-29.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Jervis (1968), “Hypotheses on Misperception”, ss. 455-456.

### 1.2.2. İstihbaratın Siyasallaşması

Olağanüstü siyasi kararların genellikle siyasi liderlerin çevresinde oluşan küçük gruplar tarafından alındığı söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda, liderin etrafında kümelenen istihbarat yöneticileri ve karar vericiler arasında bir tür “*grup düşüncesi*”nin (*Groupthink*) oluştuğu vurgulanabilir. Grup düşüncesinin ise, istihbaratın siyasallaşmasının en önemli nedenleri arasında olduğu ileri sürülebilir. Literatürde, grup düşüncesi, ülke açısından yüksek riskli kararlar alınırken oluşan stres ve sosyal baskının, istihbarat ve karar verme mekanizması içerisinde yer alan grupta uzlaşma arama motivasyonu ile oluşan uyumlu gruplar şeklinde değerlendirilmektedir.<sup>29</sup>

Grup düşüncesinde, normlar ve politika tercihi konusundaki uzlaşma grubun düşünsel bütünlüğünü korumakta, siyasal karar vericilerde ve istihbarat yöneticilerinde de riskli kararların sorumluluğunu tek başına almamanın vermiş olduğu psikolojik güvenliği sağlamaktadır. Grup düşüncesinde, normların yüceliği, oy birliği ve kararlarda kesin inanç söz konusudur. Grupta oluşan hâkim kanaate aykırı olan bilgileri göz ardı etme, kararların dar bir çerçevede tutulması, grup sınırlarından çıkmamak için farklı uzman görüşlerden yararlanmamak gibi durumların oluştuğu ifade edilmektedir. Ayrıca kısıtlı politika seçenekleri üzerine odaklanmak, politik tercih yapıldıktan sonra oluşabilecek risklere odaklanmamak, tercih edilmeyen politika seçeneğinde oluşan yeni fırsatları göz ardı etmek gibi durumların söz konusu olduğu da ileri sürülmektedir.<sup>30</sup> İstihbarat ve karar alma mekanizması içerisinde grup düşüncesi oluştuğunda, istihbaratın, politik tercihleri desteklemek ve grup düşüncesine uyumlulaşmak için siyasallaşmasının söz konusu olduğu söylenebilir.

Sağlıklı işleyen istihbarat karar alma mekanizmasında, istihbarat, liderlerin bilgiye dayalı değerlendirme yapma ve karar vermek için ihtiyaç duydukları analizleri sağlamaktadır. Bu bakımdan, istihbarat üretim sürecinde verilerin ve kanıtların işaret ettiği gerçekleri paylaşmak temel görev iken, pratikte politika yapımcıların tercihleri ve inançları da istihbarat üretim sürecini etkilemektedir. İstihbaratın politik tercihlerle uyumlu hale getirilme sürecinde müşteri olan politika yapımcıların, istihbarat taleplerinin ve gelen istihbarata yaptıkları geri bildirimlerin istihbaratın siyasallaşma sürecini başlattığı ifade edilmektedir. Politika yapımcıların ise, inançları ve ideolojik gündemleri bağlamında, gerçekliği kendi düşünce

<sup>29</sup> Irving Lester Janis (1972), *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, ss. 7-9.

<sup>30</sup> Marlene E. Turner & Anthony R. Pratkanis (1998), “Twenty-Five Years of Groupthink Theory and Research: Lessons from the Evaluation of a Theory”, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, Cilt 73, Sayı: 2-3, ss. 105-115.

kodlarına göre yeniden yapılandırmaya çalıştıkları ileri sürülebilir. Çünkü siyasi liderlerin siyasi varlıklarını devam ettirmek ve kamuoyu desteğini sürekli kılmak için siyasi ve ideolojik gündemlerini takip etmekte kendilerini zorunlu hissettikleri ifade edilebilir. Bu bakımdan, güçlü liderliğe ve ideolojik ajandaya sahip politikacıların olduğu ülkelerde, istihbaratın siyasallaşma olasılığının yüksek olduğu söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda, istihbarat başarısızlığı ile ideolojik dış politika arasında birbirini besleyen bir ilişkinin olduğu da belirtilebilir.

## 2. İdeolojik Dış Politika ve İstihbarat Başarısızlığı

### 2.1. İdeolojik Dış Politika

Bir ülkenin dış politikasının temel belirleyicilerinin ne olduğu ve hangi faktörler bağlamında dış politika yapıldığına dair çeşitli tartışmalar bulunmaktadır. Realist teoriye göre dış politikanın temel belirleyicisinin güç ve ulusal çıkar olduğu vurgulanırken<sup>31</sup>, uluslararası kurumların dış politikaya etkisi olduğunu<sup>32</sup>, ideolojinin ise dış politikanın belirleyicisi olmadığını savunan görüşler de bulunmaktadır.<sup>33</sup> İdeolojinin dış politika yapımında önemli bir belirleyici olduğunu ileri süren görüşlere göre, dış politika yapımında iç politikanın etkisine vurgu yapılmakta ve ülke içi ideolojik eğilimlerin dış siyaseti şekillendirdiği ileri sürülmektedir.<sup>34</sup> Ülkelerin ideolojik eğilimlerin de etkisi ile kendilerine rol biçtikleri ve bu normlar bağlamında dış siyaseti yürüttükleri görüşü de savunulanlar arasındadır.<sup>35</sup> Bütün bu görüşler ışığında, ideolojik dış politika, bir ülkenin çeşitli normlar ve inanç sistemi doğrultusunda yürüttüğü dış siyaset şeklinde tanımlanabilir. Buradaki temel belirleyici unsur, gerçekliğin ne olduğundan ziyade, ülke hükümetinin bir değer ve inanç sistemi bağlamında karar alıp uygulamasıdır.

Uluslararası sistemin anarşik yapısı<sup>36</sup> dikkate alındığında, bir devletin hangi şart ve koşullarda ideolojik dış politika izleyebileceği temel soru olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Uluslararası sistemde baskın olan gücün veya güçlerin ideolojik dış politika izleme imkânlarının orta büyüklükteki devletlerle kıyaslandığında daha kolay olduğu söylenebilir. Ancak orta büyüklükteki devletler de, küresel ve bölgesel katı dengelerin olmadığı ve güç boşluğunun

<sup>31</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz (2021), *Uluslararası Politika Teorisi*, Ankara: Phoenix Yayınevi, s. 72.

<sup>32</sup> Robert O. Keohane (1992), "Institutional Theory and the Realist Challenge after the Cold War", içinde (editör: David. A. Baldwin) *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, New York: Columbia University Press, ss. 3-25.

<sup>33</sup> Andrew Moravcsik (1999), "A New Statecraft? Supranational Entrepreneurs and International Cooperation", *International Organization*, Cilt 53 Sayı: 2, ss. 267-306.

<sup>34</sup> Richard N. Haass (2014), *Yeni Amerika - Dış Politika İçeride Başlar*, İstanbul: Tuti Kitap, s. 32.

<sup>35</sup> Naomi Bailin Wish (1980), "Foreign Policy Makers and Their National Role Conceptions", *International Studies Quarterly*, Cilt 24, Sayı: 4, ss. 532-554.

<sup>36</sup> Jonathan Havercroft & Alex Prichard (2017), "Anarchy and International Relations Theory: A Reconsideration", *Journal of International Political Theory*, Cilt 13, Sayı: 3, ss. 252-265.

oluştığı durumlarda ideolojik dış politika izleyebilmektedirler.<sup>37</sup> Bu bağlamda, bir ülkenin ideolojik dış politika izleyebilmesi için uygun uluslararası şartların olması ve ülkeyi sınırlayacak koşulların oluşmamış olması gerekmektedir.

İdeolojik dış politikanın izlenebilmesinin ikinci koşulunun ise, dış politikayı kurgulayan hükümetin iktidarının tehdit altında olmaması ve siyasi geleceğine yönelik bir saldırının olmaması olduğu ileri sürülebilir.<sup>38</sup> Yani iktidarı tehdit altında olan bir hükümetin daha dengeli ve itidalli bir dış politika izleyeceği söylenebilir. Ancak iktidar gücünü konsolide edebilmiş iktidarların, bürokrasi içerisinde veya siyasi muhalefetten bir dirençle karşılaşmazlarsa, ideolojik dış politika yapmaya eğilimli oldukları ileri sürülebilir.<sup>39</sup>

İdeolojik dış politika yapımının üçüncü nedeni olarak ise, dış politika kararları alınma sürecinde istihbarat örgütleri mevcut sorun veya tehditle ilgili resmi net olarak ortaya koyamadıklarında veya kanıt dayanmadan politikacıların görüşlerini desteklediklerinde, karar vericilerin ideolojik kalıplara göre karar verme eğiliminde olmaları olduğu söylenebilir.

## 2.2. İdeolojik Dış Politika ve İstihbarat Başarısızlığı İlişkisi

Dış politika yapım süreci, konuya ve tehdidin yapısına göre güvenlik bürokrasisinin ve istihbarat kuruluşunun sürece dâhil olup sorunu açıklamaya çalıştığı, Dışişleri Bakanlığı'nın var olan sorun ve tehdiye karşı neyin/nelerin yapılması gerektiğine dair politika seçeneklerini oluşturduğu, liderlerin ise bu aşamaların sonunda nihai politikayı belirlemesi şeklinde tanımlanabilir. Anlaşılabileceği üzere, dış politika yapım sürecinde birçok devlet kurumu ve Bakanlık girdi sağlamak ve politikanın son şeklinin verilmesinde rol oynamaktadır.

İstihbarat kurumları, dış politika yapım süreçlerine girdi sağlayarak, sorunun ve tehdidin kökeninin ne olduğu, günümüzde ne durumda olduğu ve gelecekte hangi şekle evrilebileceğini tespit etmeye çalışmaktadır. Dışişleri Bakanlığı ise, açıklanan bu sorun/tehdiye karşı hangi çözüm veya çözüm seçeneklerinin olduğunu değerlendirmek ve nihai karar vericiye bu seçeneklerden birini tercih etmesi konusunda destek sağlamaktadır. Bu noktada, istihbarat kuruluşları, liderlere, mevcut sorunun veya tehdidin ne olduğu ve gelecekte nasıl bir şekle alabileceğine dair net bir açıklama ve öngörü sunmadığında, karar

<sup>37</sup> Judith Goldstein & Robert O. Keohane (1993), "Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework", içinde (editörler: Judith Goldstein & Robert O. Keohane) *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, s. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita (2002), "Domestic Politics and International Relations", *International Studies Quarterly*, Cilt 46, Sayı: 1, ss. 1-9.

<sup>39</sup> Ramazan Kılınc, "İdeoloji ve Dış Politika: Türkiye'de Kemalist (1930-1939) ve İslamcı (2011-2015) Dış Politikaların Karşılaştırmalı Bir Analizi", s. 72.

vericiler, belirsizlik ortamında<sup>40</sup>, kendi ideolojik yargılarına, siyasi analizlerine ve danışman tavsiyelerine dayanarak karar alabilmektedir. İstihbarat örgütü siyasallaşıp, karar vericinin politik tercihlerine uyumlu sonuçlar ürettiğinde de, bunun ideolojik dış politika yapımına zemin hazırladığı söylenebilir.

Robert Jervis, liderlerin dış politika konularını ele alırken, bir teori, inanç, dünya görüşü ve ideoloji merceğinden sorunları ele aldığı, bu değer ve fikir örüntüleri ile çelişen bilgilerin reddedildiği ve bu modellere uyan bilgilerin seçildiğini ifade etmektedir. Bu bakımdan, liderlerin bir sorun veya konuyu algılama şekli ile düşünsel modeli arasında güçlü bir ilişkinin olduğu söylenebilir. Liderlerin ideolojik kodlarına ve düşünme alışkanlıklarına meydan okuyan, sistematik bir şekilde bu görüşlerin değişmesi ve dönüşmesi için analiz sunan bir istihbarat teşkilatının yokluğu, liderlerin zihinsel kısa yollar olarak tarif edilebilecek ideolojik kalıplara göre karar vermesine neden olabilir.<sup>41</sup> Bu bilgilerden hareketle, istihbarat başarısızlığının politika yapımcıların ideolojik dış politika yapımına zemin hazırladığı da söylenebilir.

Liderlerin ise, bir dış politikaya kesin karar verdikten sonra, istihbarat örgütünü genel çerçevesi belirlenmiş dış politikanın taktik resmini doldurmak için kullanma eğiliminde oldukları ifade edilebilir. Örneğin, Suriye’de çözümün Esad’ın gitmesi ile mümkün olacağına inanan bir karar verici, Esad’ın devrilmesinin mümkün olup olmadığını değerlendirmek yerine, bunun nasıl mümkün olabileceğine odaklanmakta ve istihbarat taleplerini bu hedef bağlamında yapabilmektedir. Karar verici elit arasında oluşan inanç ve ideolojik hedefler, tüm istihbarat taleplerini ve üretim süreçlerini etkilemektedir. Politikaya karar verildikten sonra yapılan taleplerin ise hipotetik sorulardan oluştuğu ve daha çok var olan politikayı doğrulamak için istihbarat örgütünden istifade edildiği söylenebilir. Türkiye’nin Arap Baharı sürecinde Esad’ı devirme politikası, istihbarat başarısızlığı ve ideolojik dış politika sarmalı bağlamında incelenebilecek bir örnek vaka olarak karşımızda durmaktadır.

### **3. Türkiye’nin Beşar Esad’ı Devirme Politikası**

Arap Baharı, 2011 yılının Mart ayında Suriye’nin Dera kentinde başladıktan sonra, Türkiye, gelişmeleri bir süre izlemiş ve Esad’ın göstericilere karşı sert tutum takınmaması ve toplumsal

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<sup>40</sup> Amos Tversky & Daniel Kahneman (1974), “Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases”, *American Association for the Advancement of Science*, Cilt 185, Sayı: 4157, ss. 1124-1131.

<sup>41</sup> Robert Jervis (1976), *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, ss. 143-154.

talepleri dikkate alması konusunda telkinlerini sürdürmüştür.<sup>42</sup> Göstericilere karşı Esad yönetiminin izlediği sert tutum neticesinde, 2011 yılının Ağustos ayında, dönemin Başbakanı Recep Tayyip Erdoğan bu durumu “*vahşet*” olarak nitelendirmiştir. Aynı dönemde, Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu da, Suriye ile ticari ilişkilerin askıya alındığını açıklamıştır.<sup>43</sup> Kasım ayında ise Türk hacılarını taşıyan otobüse Suriye askerleri tarafından ateş açılmıştır. 2012 yılında da bir Türk keşif uçağı Suriye hava sahasını ihlal ettiği gerekçesi ile Suriye güçleri tarafından düşürülmüştür.<sup>44</sup> 9 Ağustos 2011 tarihinde dönemin Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu ve Suriye Devlet Başkanı Beşar Esad arasında gerçekleştirilen görüşmede, Suriye’deki olayların barışçıl bir şekilde sonlandırılması ve toplumsal taleplerin dikkate alınması gerektiği hususu vurgulanmış ve 16 maddelik bir reform paketi sunulmuştur.

2009-2012 yılları arasında Türkiye’nin son Şam Büyükelçisi olan Ömer Önhon, Türkiye’nin Suriye krizi ortaya çıktığındaki tutumunu şöyle değerlendirmektedir: “*Suriye krizinin büyümesinin en fazla Türkiye’ye olumsuz etkileri olacağını öngörebiliyorduk. Dolayısıyla, bu krizin bir an önce sonlandırılmasından yanaydık. Esad’a, halkın beklentilerinin karşılanmasının hem krizi sona erdireceğini, hem de kendisini Arap dünyasında gayet iyi bir konuma yerleştireceğini ifade ediyorduk. Halkın beklentileri derken, ekonomik şartlarda iyileşme, halkın ülkenin siyasi yönetimine katılabilmesine imkân verilmesi, siyasi tutukuların serbest bırakılması gibi makul talepleri kastediyorduk. Esad bu önerilerimizi olumlu karşılıyor, telkinlere uyacağını söylüyor ve Suriyeli yetkililere bu doğrultuda talimatlar veriyordu; ama pratikte bu yönde adımları atmaktan kaçınıyordu. Sonra çok daha net anladık ki, Esad hiç ödün vermek istemiyordu, zira ödün vermeye başladığı takdirde gerisinin geleceğine inanıyordu. Yani, ‘yapar gibi yapıyor’, ama gerçekte, kendi bildiğinin dışında bir şey yapmıyordu. Hükümet önce Esad’ın reformlar yapma ve krize neden olan sebeplerde iyileşmeler sağlamak suretiyle, halkın sisteme dahlini de pekiştirerek iktidarını sürdürebilmesinden yanaydı. Ama zaman içinde, özellikle Ağustos 2011’den sonra, Esad’ın kendisini kandıracağı hissine kapıldı. Ahmet Davutoğlu’nun tabiriyle ‘kendi halkını öldürmekten vazgeçmeyen bir diktatörün’ değil, halkın yanında yer alma kararı verdi. Bundan sonra, Erdoğan hükümeti, açık bir şekilde muhaliflerin yanında durdu.*”<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *Anadolu Ajansı* (2012), “Halk ayaklanması "bir" sloganla başladı”, 14.03.2012, Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/halk-ayaklanmasi-bir-sloganla-basladi/377401>.

<sup>43</sup> *BBC News Türkçe* (2011), “Türkiye Suriye’ye yaptırım uygulamaya başlıyor”, 30.10.2011, Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: [https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2011/11/111130\\_turkey\\_syria](https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2011/11/111130_turkey_syria).

<sup>44</sup> *Vatan* (2012), “Suriye, Türk savaş uçağını düşürdü!”, 23.06.2012, Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.gazetevatan.com/gundem/suriye-turk-savas-ucagini-dusurdu-459720>.

<sup>45</sup> Emekli Büyükelçi Ömer Önhon ile 01.08.2023 tarihinde yapılan özel görüşme.

Bu görüşmenin ardından, Türkiye'nin Esad'ın gitmesi konusunda kesin bir karara vardığı söylenebilir. 9 Ağustos 2011 tarihinde yapılan ikili görüşmeden sonra Türkiye'nin Esad'ın gitmesi yönünde bir politika izlemeye başladığı ve bu politikanın işaretleri, yapılan sert söylemlerde de görülmektedir. Örneğin, Davutoğlu'nun Rus mevkidaşı Sergey Lavrov ile düzenlediği ortak basın toplantısında, Esad'ın “Gorbaçov değil, Miloseviç olmayı tercih ettiğini” belirterek, Esad'ı “Sırp kasabı” olarak da bilinen Miloseviç'e benzetmesi, Esad'ı tasfiye etme niyetinin siyasi söyleme de yansıdığını göstermektedir.<sup>46</sup> Bu kararın alınma sürecinde istihbaratın nasıl bir katkısının olduğu ve dönemin Türk hükümetinin ideolojik dış politikaya nasıl kaydıklarının ise ayrıca incelenmesi gerekmektedir.

### 3.1. Esad'ın Devrileceği Konusundaki İstihbarat Başarısızlığı

MİT'in Esad'ın devrilmesi kararı alınması sürecine nasıl bir katkıda bulunduğu dair ulaşılabilecek bir istihbarat raporu bulunmadığı için, bu kararın alınması sürecindeki rolünün anlaşılabilmesi için karar verici konumunda olan politika yapıcılarının açıklamalarının detaylı bir biçimde incelenmesi gerekmektedir. Bir politikacının yaptığı açıklamalarda yaptığı değerlendirmelerin yorum mu, temenni mi, yoksa bir kanıt veya istihbarata mı dayandığı belli ölçülerde tespit edilebilir. İstihbarat, politikaya genel şeklini vermez ancak politikanın tonunu, söylem ve eylemin dozunu belirleyebilir. Bir analogi ile anlatılacak olursa, istihbarata dayalı bir söylem veya politika, çaya atılmış şekere benzetilebilir. Çayın rengini değiştirmez, ancak tadını etkiler. Bu bakımdan, MİT'in Esad'ın devrilmesi kararının alınma sürecinde nasıl bir rol oynadığına dair bir çıkarım yapabilmek için, dönemin Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun açıklamalarını incelemek gerekiyor.

Dönemin Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu, gazeteci Aslı Aydıntaşbaş'a vermiş olduğu röportajda, Esad'ın probleminin annesi olduğunu, önce bizimle konuşup sonra da annesi ile konuştuğunu ve annesinin de Esad'a babasının Hama'da izlediği yöntemi hatırlattığını ifade etmiştir.<sup>47</sup> Bu röportajda, Esad'ın annesinin etkisinde olduğu ve annesinin nihai karar verici olduğu ifade edilmekte ve Esad'ın topluma karşı izlediği sert tutumun sorumlusunun annesi olduğu belirtilmektedir. Bu bilgileri Davutoğlu'nun açık kaynaklardan ve kendi gözlemleri ile derlemesinin mümkün olmadığı söylenebilir. Zira Suriye gibi kapalı bir devlette, lider üzerinde etkisi olan kişilerin tespit edilebilmesi için istihbari bilgiye ihtiyaç olduğu ifade

<sup>46</sup> Fikret Bila (2012), “Davutoğlu: Esad, Miloseviç olmayı tercih etti”, *Milliyet*, 26.01.2012, Erişim Tarihi: 22.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/yazarlar/fikret-bila/davutoglu-esad-milosevic-olmayi-tercih-etti-1493808>.

<sup>47</sup> Aslı Aydıntaşbaş (2013), “Esad'ın Problemi Annesi”, *Milliyet*, 25.05.2023, Erişim Tarihi: 22.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/yazarlar/asli-aydintasbas/esad-in-problemi-annesi-1713801>.



edilebilir. Davutoğlu'nun bu açıklamasında belirttiği bu değerlendirmelerin temel kaynağının da istihbarat raporları olduğu ileri sürülebilir. Davutoğlu'nun aynı röportajda ifade ettiği ikinci önemli husus ise, Suriye devlet sistemi ile ilgili yapmış olduğu analizdir. Davutoğlu, Suriye devlet sisteminin içerisinde Esad<sup>48</sup> ve anne tarafından olan Mahluf ailesinin<sup>49</sup> birinci halkayı oluşturduğunu, istihbarat, ordu ve hava kuvvetleri komutanlarının olduğu Nusayri grubunun ikinci halkayı oluşturduğunu, üçüncü halkanın ise Baas partisinden oluştuğunu ifade etmiştir. Bu ifadelerin de bir yorum veya açık bilgi olmaktan ziyade istihbarata dayalı bir değerlendirme olduğu söylenebilir. Ancak istihbarat raporlarının Suriye devlet sisteminin analizini yaparken Esad'ın annesine odaklandığı, örneğin İran'ın Suriye devlet sistemi içerisindeki uzantılarına yeterince ışık tutamadığı ve ayaklanma başladıktan sonra İran'ın Suriye rejimini ayakta tutmak için yaptığı girişimlere ve bu girişimlerin Suriye devleti içerisindeki planlayıcısı olan Muhammed Nasıf Hayırbek'e yeterince odaklanmadığı görülmektedir.<sup>50</sup>

Suriye Muhalif ve Devrimci Güçler Ulusal Koalisyonu eski Başkanı Halid Hoca, dönemin Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun Esad'ı ikna etmek için onunla üç kez görüştüğünü ve bir görüşmeye MİT Başkanı Hakan Fidan'ın da katıldığını belirtmektedir. Türkiye'nin Esad ile temaslarından sonra İran'ın Şam Büyükelçisinin Davutoğlu'nun önerileri konusunda Esad'dan bilgi aldığını, bazı zamanlarda ise o dönem Kudüs Gücü Komutanı olan Kasım Süleymani'nin Esad ile görüştüğünü ifade etmektedir. Ayrıca Dini Lider Ali Hamaney'in temsilcilerinin de Esad'ı ziyaret ettiğini ve yapılan bütün görüşmelerde İran tarafının Esad'a reform konusunda taviz vermemesini telkin ettiğini vurgulamaktadır.<sup>51</sup>

Halid Hoca, Suriye'de Arap Baharı başladıktan sonra MİT'in üst düzey isimleri ile yaptığı görüşmelerde, MİT yetkililerinin kendisine Esad'ın bir buçuk yıl içinde devrileceğini ifade ettiklerini belirtmektedir. Hoca, MİT yetkililerinin; Suriye Ordusu'nun üst düzey mensuplarının ordudan ayrılması, Batı'nın Suriye Halkı dostları grubuna verdiği destek, Özgür Suriye Ordusu'nun hızlı bir şekilde silahlanması ve Suriye'deki birçok şehrin Esad'ın

<sup>48</sup> *Milliyet* (2013), "Suriye'nin 40 yıllık hanedanlığı: Esadlar", 10.09.2013, Erişim Tarihi: 23.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/dunya/suriye-nin-40-yillik-hanedanligi-esadlar-1761305>.

<sup>49</sup> Suriye ekonomisinin Enisa Esad'ın yeğeni olan Rami Mahluf tarafından kontrol edildiği ileri sürülmektedir. Ayrıca Mahluf ailesinin içerisinde Suriye istihbaratında yer alan isimler de olduğu bilinmektedir. Bakınız; *Anadolu Ajansı* (2020), "Esad'ın oligark kuzeni Mahluf ile rejim arasındaki gerginlik sürüyor", 10.11.2020, Erişim Tarihi: 23.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/esedin-oligark-kuzeni-mahluf-ile-rejim-arasindaki-gerginlik-suruyor/2039238>.

<sup>50</sup> Mohammad Ataie (2015), "Mohammad Nassif: The Shadow Man of the Syria-Iran Axis", Syria Comment, 16.06.2015, Erişim Tarihi: 23.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.joshualandis.com/blog/mohammad-nassif-the-shadow-man-of-the-syria-iran-axis-by-mohammad-ataie/>.

<sup>51</sup> Suriye Muhalefeti ve Devrimci Güçler Ulusal Koalisyonu eski Başkanı Halid Hoca ile 27.07.2023 tarihinde yapılan özel görüşme.

kontrolünden çıkması gibi gelişmeleri Esad'ın bir buçuk yıl içerisinde devrileceğine dair gerekçe olarak gösterdiğini ifade etmektedir. Halid Hoca, ayrıca ABD'nin Esad'a karşı tutumunun net olmadığını ve İngiliz bir diplomatla yaptığı bir görüşmede de kendisine Esad'ın devrilmesinin mümkün olmadığını ve en kötü senaryoya göre bile 5 yıl daha iktidarını koruyacağını söylediğini belirtmektedir.<sup>52</sup>

Suriye iç savaşı başladığında, ABD ve Batı'nın Esad'ın gitmesi yönünde tavır belirlediği ve rejimin 2015 yılına kadar tek destekçisinin İran olduğu bilinmektedir. Rusya, 2015 yılı sonlarında fiilen Suriye'ye konuşlandıktan sonra ise, İran'ın Suriye rejimi içerisindeki gücü dengelenmiş ve İran'ın Golan Tepeleri'ndeki paramiliter varlığından rahatsızlık duyan İsrail'in kaygıları giderilmiştir. Rusya Devlet Başkanı Vladimir Putin'in de, Beşar Esad'a, Başkan kaldığı sürece onun da iktidarının devam edeceğini ifade ettiği belirtilmektedir.<sup>53</sup> Emekli Büyükelçi Ömer Önhon ise, Esad'ın iktidarda kalmasını şu şekilde değerlendirmektedir: *“2012-2013 döneminde Esad çok kan kaybetmişti ve iktidarını kaybetmesi çok yakın gözüküyordu. O noktada, hep Esad'ın yanında duran ama daha ziyade siyasi destek ve teçhizat desteği düzeyinde tutan Rusya, aslında hiçbir ülkenin beklemediği ölçüde, krize müdahalede bulundu. Rus Ordusu ve hava kuvveti sahaya indi. Bu gelişme, Esad'ı düşmekten kurtaran temel unsurdur. Sonraki aşamada gelen diğer oyun değiştirici, IŞİD'in sahneye çıkmasıdır. Suriyeli muhaliflerden bir kısmı bile, 'alternatif bunlarsa Esad'ı tercih ederiz' diyerek evlerine veya rejim saflarına geri döndüler. Suriye'ye cihatçı akını, korkunç toplu infaz görüntüleri, kafa kesmeler ve Avrupa'da patlayan bombalar da Batılı ülkelerde aynı hissi doğurdu. Önceliklerini IŞİD'i bitirmeye verdiler. Esad'la uğraşmayı bıraktılar.”*<sup>54</sup>

2011 yılında Suriye'de ayaklanma başladıktan sonra, İran Ulusal Güvenlik Sekreteri Said Celili'nin Suriye'yi ziyaret ettiği; Suriye'deki gösterilerin nasıl bastırılacağı tavsiyeleri vererek ve Esad'a geri adım atmaması gerektiği telkininde bulunarak, İran ve Rusya ile birlikte rejimini desteklemeyi vadeden bir demir perde planını Esad'a sunduğu iddia edilmektedir. Bu plan doğrultusunda, İran, Esad yönetimine danışmanlar ve özel eğitimli askerler göndermiş ve bunun yanında Hizbullah'ı da Suriye'de konuşlandırmıştır. Bu bağlamda, ayaklanma sürecinde Türkiye'nin siyasi telkinlerine karşı direniş gösterenin de, Esad'ın annesinden ziyade, Tümgeneral Muhammet Nasıf ve İran olduğu görülmektedir. Emekli Büyükelçi Önhon, İran'ın Suriye krizi başladıktan sonraki faaliyetleri ile ilgili şunları

<sup>52</sup> Halid Hoca ile 27.07.2023 tarihinde yapılan özel görüşme.

<sup>53</sup> Ömer Önhon (2022), *Büyükelçinin Gözünden Suriye*, İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, ss. 296-297.

<sup>54</sup> Emekli Büyükelçi Ömer Önhon ile 01.08.2023 tarihinde yapılan özel görüşme.

söylemektedir: “İran, krizden önce de Suriye’de etkiliydi. Bir dönem etkisini kaybetmeye başladı çünkü Esad Türkiye’nin yolunu tercih etmişti. Kriz, İran’a bir imkân sağladı. İran başından beri açık şekilde, sahada ve dışında Esad’ın yanında yer aldı. Bölgedeki uzantılarını da bu yola getirdi. Hizbullah ve Iraklı Şii silahlı gruplar en bilinen örnekleridir. İran bu suretle hem Şii kuşağının ve direniş cephesinin en önemli ülkelerinden olan Suriye’yi korumak ve menzilde tutmak, hem de ülkede etkinliğini geliştirmek istiyordu.”<sup>55</sup>

Suriye yönetimine karşı yapılan uluslararası baskı neticesinde, Esad, Türkiye ile iletişime geçerek baskının hafifletilmesi konusunda talepte bulunmuştur. İddialara göre, bunun üzerine Türkiye de bir plan önerisinde bulunarak, Esad’ın Başkanlık koltuğundan ayrılarak yerini Faruk Şara’ya bırakmasını ve Savunma Bakanlığına da Esad’ın kız kardeşinin eşi olan Asıf Şevket’in getirilmesini teklif etmiştir.<sup>56</sup> Bu gelişmeler karşısında, İran’ın ise, Türkiye’nin Suriye rejimi üzerindeki etkisini ve planın yürürlüğe konulmasını engellemek için Temmuz 2012 tarihinde Suriye milli güvenlik binasında toplantı halinde olan Suriye yöneticilerine karşı bombalı saldırı düzenlediği ileri sürülmektedir. Bu saldırıda Genelkurmay Başkan Yardımcısı Asıf Şevket, İçişleri Bakanı İbrahim El Şaar ve Hasan Türkmani gibi isimler ölmüştür. Esad’ın bu saldırıdan sonra İran’ın tam kontrolüne girdiği şeklinde değerlendirmeler mevcuttur.

Bütün bu gelişmeler neticesinde, dönemin Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu, vermiş olduğu bir demeçte, Suriye’de bütün alternatiflerin denendiğini ve Esad’ın kalan iktidar süresinin aylar ve haftalarla ifade edilmesi gerektiğini belirtmiştir.<sup>57</sup> Davutoğlu’nun Esad’a ömür biçme açıklamasının bir temenni veya istekten ziyade istihbarata dayalı olduğu iddia edilebilir. Zira süre vererek bir iktidarın yakında değişeceğinin ifade edilebilmesi için, mutlaka bunu destekleyen bir istihbaratın olması gerekmektedir. Esad’ı devirme kararı verilirken, Türk istihbarat bürokrasisinin bir istihbarat başarısızlığı ile karşı karşıya kalarak Esad’ın devrileceği sonucuna vardığı, dönemin politikacılarının da bu bağlamda Esad’a sürece biçecek derecede bu politikaya angaje olduğu görülmektedir. Ancak Türk istihbarat bürokrasisinin Esad’ın devrileceği yargısına varmasında, istihbaratın siyasallaşmasının mı, yoksa analiz veya toplama hatalarının mı etkili olduğunu tam olarak belirlemenin mümkün olmadığı söylenebilir. Ancak Esad’ın iktidarda kalma konusundaki istihbarat başarısızlığının

<sup>55</sup> Emekli Büyükelçi Ömer Önhon ile 01.08.2023 tarihinde yapılan özel görüşme.

<sup>56</sup> Bassam Barabandi & Tyler Jess Thompson (2014), “A Friend of My Father: Iran’s Manipulation of Bashar al-Assad”, Atlantic Council, 28.08.2014, Erişim Tarihi: 24.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/a-friend-of-my-father-iran-s-manipulation-of-bashar-al-assad/>.

<sup>57</sup> NTV (2012), “Davutoğlu Esad’a ömür biçti”, 24.08.2012, Erişim Tarihi: 24.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: [https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/davutoglu-esada-omur-bicti,Nsez\\_e7zmEO7uz5O9Pv6hw](https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/davutoglu-esada-omur-bicti,Nsez_e7zmEO7uz5O9Pv6hw).

politikacıların ideolojik dış politika yapımını hızlandırdığı söylenebilir. Dönemin Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu, bir röportajında, Arap Baharı'nın kazananının olmadığı, bu sürecinin mühendisliğini yapmadıkları ve aslında herkesin bu süreçte başarısız olduğunu belirtmiştir.<sup>58</sup> Bu açıklamalardan da görüleceği üzere, istihbarat başarısızlığının Türkiye'nin Suriye politikasını ideolojik zemine oturttuğunu ve ideolojik dış politikanın da istihbarat başarısızlığını sürekli olarak tetiklediği söylenebilir.

### 3.2. İdeolojik Dış Politika İstihbarat Başarısızlığı Sarmalının Oluşması

Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AK Parti) döneminin ilk Dışişleri Bakanı olarak görev yapan deneyimli diplomat Yaşar Yakış, bir açıklamasında, Arap Baharı sürecinde Tunus'ta başlayıp Libya, Mısır ve Körfez ülkelerine, oradan da Suriye'ye sıçrayan sokak olaylarının halk desteğine sahip Müslüman Kardeşler örgütünü iktidara taşıyacağını, bu hareketlerin de Türkiye'yi örnek alacakları kanaatinin oluştuğunu ifade etmektedir.<sup>59</sup> Suriye'deki olaylar bu bağlamda okunduğunda, Suriye'de olası bir iktidar değişikliğinin Türkiye'nin bölgedeki lider ülke pozisyonunu daha da güçlendireceği ve “*model ülke*” olacağı<sup>60</sup> değerlendirmesinin yapılmış olma ihtimalinin yüksek olduğu söylenebilir. Bundan dolayı, Esad'ı devirme kararının bu perspektif içerisinde alındığı söylenebilir.

Nitekim bir TBMM oturumunda yaptığı konuşmada, Davutoğlu, Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu'daki değişim dalgasını yöneteceğini, bu dalganın öncüsü olacaklarını ve Türkiye'nin bölgesel düzenin öncüsü olduğunu vurgulamıştır. Bütün açıklamalardan da görüleceği üzere, Türkiye'nin bir model ülke olarak Arap Baharı sonrasında iktidara gelen iktidarlara öncülük yaparak, bölgesel “*başat güç*” olmayı hedeflediği söylenebilir. Türkiye, Suriye'de Esad'ı devirmeyi hedeflerken, İran ve Rusya ise rejimi koruma ve ayakta tutuma politikasını sürdürmüş, ABD de oluşan güç boşluğunu Kürt gruplar PKK/PYD/YPG'nin doldurmasını sağlamıştır. Nitekim Arap Baharı başladıktan sonra Suriye görev gücünde yer alan eski CIA görevlisi Douglas Laux, 2012 yılında Esad'ı devirmek için CIA'in 50 ayrıntılı plan hazırladığını, ancak dönemin ABD Başkanı Barack Obama tarafından bu planların

<sup>58</sup> İbrahim Hamidi (2023), “Erdoğan friend-turned-rival Davutoğlu talks Turkey's post-election Future”, *Al Majalla*, 21.07.2023, Erişim Tarihi: 25.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://en.majalla.com/node/295866/politics/erdo%C4%9Fan-friend-turned-rival-davuto%C4%9Flu-talks-turkeys-post-election-future>.

<sup>59</sup> Nursun Erel (2022), “AKP'nin eski Dışişleri Bakanı Yaşar Yakış'tan özel değerlendirmeler”, *Muhalif*, 16.08.2022, Erişim Tarihi: 25.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.muhalif.com.tr/makale/akpnin-eski-disisleri-bakani-yasar-yakistan-ozel-degerlendirmeler-1565>.

<sup>60</sup> Tarık Oğuzlu (2011), “Ortadoğu'da Demokratikleşme ve Türkiye Model Olabilir mi Tartışması: ‘Evet, Ama!’”, *Ortadoğu Analiz*, Cilt 3, Sayı: 27, ss. 73-79.

uygulamaya geçirilmesi için izin verilmediğini belirtmektedir.<sup>61</sup> Amerikan yönetiminin Esad'ın iktidarda kalmasına yönelik hassasiyetini vurgulayan diğer bir açıklama ise, YPG'nin ana bileşenini oluşturduğu Suriye Demokratik Güçleri (SDG) eski sözcüsü Talal Silo'nun, “*ABD Suriye Demokratik Güçleri'ne silah verdiğinde, bu silahların Esad rejimine karşı kullanılmayacağına dair taahhütname imzalatılarak teslim ediyordu*” ifadesidir.<sup>62</sup>

2011-2016 yılları arasındaki Esad'ı devirme politikası, Türk istihbaratının, PKK/PYD/YPG terör örgütünün güç kazandığını öngörme ve geçici sığınmacı akınının Türkiye'nin siyasi ve ekonomik hayatına nasıl etki edebileceğine dair değerlendirme yapma konusunda başarısız olmasına neden olmuştur. Geline tabloda, ABD, PKK/PYD/YPG'yi devletleştirme gayretlerine devam ederek, bu gruplara binlerce tır silah sağlamış ve IŞİD yok edildikten sonra da siyasi desteğini sürdürmüştür. Türkiye'de bulunan geçici sığınmacıların ise ülke ekonomisine ve sosyal yaşamına menfi etkisi tartışılmakta, ayrıca gelinen noktada Suriye rejimi ile yeniden ilişkilerin tesis edilmesi için çeşitli girişimler yapılmaktadır.

## Sonuç

İstihbarat teşkilatlarının, devletlerin belirsizliği gidermek, risk ve tehditleri anlamak ve somut zararları da başlangıç aşamasında tespit etmek için devletlerin yatırım yaparak oluşturmuş oldukları en önemli devlet organlarından biri olduğu söylenebilir. Bu bakımdan, istihbarat teşkilatlarının, politikacılarla angajman ilişkisinden uzakta, kanıtların işaret ettiği gerçekleri politika yapıcılara iletmek ile yükümlü oldukları ifade edilebilir. Ancak politika yapıcılar ve istihbarat kuruluşları arasındaki ilişkinin pratikte farklı olduğu, müşteri konumunda olan politika yapıcılarının yönlendirici taleplerinin istihbarat üretim sürecini etkilediği ve nihayetinde istihbarat başarısızlığına neden olduğu ileri sürülebilir. Siyaset yapıcı ve istihbarat kuruluşu arasındaki ilişki, istihbaratın kalitesini doğrudan etkilemektedir. İstihbarat teşkilatı açısından, bu ilişkinin, karar vericilerin ihtiyacını anlayacak kadar yakın, politikleşmeyecek kadar uzak durma şeklinde olması gerektiği söylenebilir.

Bir tehdit/sorun/konu ile ilgili karar vericilere yüksek çözünürlüklü resmin sunulamaması durumu, istihbarat başarısızlığı olarak adlandırılabilir. İstihbarat başarısızlığı, toplama eksikliğinden, gereksiz bilgi fazlalığından, analizcinin psikolojisinden, grup düşüncesinden ve istihbaratın siyasallaşmasından kaynaklanabilmektedir. Üretim sürecinde, bu kısımlarda yapılan

<sup>61</sup> *Hürriyet* (2016), “Obama, CIA'nin Esad'ı devirme planlarını reddetti”, 06.04.2016, Erişim Tarihi: 26.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/obama-cianin-esadi-devirme-planlarini-reddetti-40082228>.

<sup>62</sup> Hasan Mesut Önder (2018), “SDG Eski Sözcüsü Talal Silo: YPG'ye talimat Kandil'den gelir”, *Karar Gazetesi*, 28.11.2018, Erişim Tarihi: 27.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.karar.com/sdg-eski-sozcusu-talal-silo-ypgye-talimat-kandilden-gelir-1043705>.

hataların sonucunda istihbarat başarısızlığı ortaya çıkmaktadır. Başarısız bir istihbarat ürünündeki belirsizlik ve bilgi boşlukları, karar vericileri, ideolojik gündemlerine göre karar vermeye itebilmektedir. Bu bakımdan, istihbarat başarısızlığının ideolojik dış politikaya neden olabileceği değerlendirilmektedir. İstihbarat başarısızlığının diğer bir boyutu ise, bir bilgi ve kanıt olmadan karar vericiyi memnun etmek için politik tercihleri işaret etmesidir. Bu durumda da, istihbarat ve karar alma mekanizmasında grup düşüncesi oluşmakta ve grup düşüncesi, ideolojik dış politikanın oluşumuna zemin hazırlamaktadır.

İdeolojik dış politika, bir ülkenin karar vericilerinin değer yargılarına, inançlarına ve siyasi gündemlerine göre karar alma eğiliminin olması şeklinde tanımlanabilir. Bu bakımdan, bir ülkenin ideolojik dış politika izleyebilmesi için, içeride hükümetin iktidarına karşı bir tehdidin olmaması, dışarıda ise ülkeyi uluslararası ortamda sınırlayan ittifaklar ve baskılarla karşılaşmıyor olması gerekmektedir. Üçüncü neden olarak ise, karar vericilerin ülkenin karşı karşıya olduğu sorunun doğasını anlamasını sağlayacak istihbaratın olmaması veya yeterli kanıt olmadan istihbaratın politik tercihleri desteklemek adına siyasallaşması gibi hususlar değerlendirilmektedir. İlk bulgu olarak istihbarat başarısızlığının ideolojik dış politikaya neden olduğu söylenebilir. İdeolojik dış politika izleyen bir yönetimin, istihbarat teşkilatını ideolojik çerçeve ile çelişen hususlarda çalıştırmayacağı düşünüldüğünde, ideolojik dış politikanın da istihbarat başarısızlığını beslediği ileri sürülebilir. İdeolojik dış politika izleyen hükümetlerin, istihbarat taleplerinin hipotetik sorulardan oluştuğu ve daha çok belirlenen politikayı desteklemek için istihbarat örgütünden istifade edildiği söylenebilir. Varsayımların sınanmaya çalışıldığı, ideolojilerin ve inançların politikanın ana omurgasını oluşturduğu istihbarat-karar ilişkisinde, istihbarat başarısızlığının çıkma olasılığının yüksek olduğu ifade edilebilir. Bu bakımdan, çalışmanın ikinci bulgusu, ideolojik dış politikanın istihbarat başarısızlığına neden olduğu şeklindedir.

İstihbarat başarısızlığı ve ideolojik dış politika perspektifinden Türkiye'nin Esad'ı devirme politikası incelendiğinde, Türkiye'nin Suriye devlet elitlerinin güç kapasitesini, bölgesel ve küresel ilişkiler ağını yanlış okuduğu söylenebilir. Dönemin Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoğlu, Esad'ın annesinin telkinlerine uyduğunu ve bundan dolayı göstericilere sert davrandığını söylerken, İran'ın Suriye'deki varlığı, rejim üzerinde kurmuş olduğu mutlak kontrol ve Rusya'nın sürece askeri olarak dâhil olma olasılığı göz ardı edilmiştir. Davutoğlu'nun bu analizlerinin, bir siyasetçinin siyasi değerlendirmeleri olmaktan öte somut istihbarat raporlarına dayalı bir analiz olduğu söylenebilir. Bu bakımdan, Türk istihbarat bürokrasisinin, Esad'ın güç kapasitesi, ilişkiler ağı ve rejimin ömrü konusunda yaptıkları

değerlendirmede başarısız oldukları söylenebilir. Bu istihbarat başarısızlığının dönemin karar vericilerinin ideolojik dış politika izlemesine neden olduğu ve Esad'ı tasfiye etmeyi birincil öncelik haline getirerek ideolojik dış politika-istihbarat başarısızlığı sarmalının oluşmasına zemin hazırladığı da ifade edilebilir.

Dönemin ABD yönetiminin bütün sert söylemlerine rağmen Esad'ı devirmek gibi bir önceliklerinin olmadığı dikkate alındığında, denilebilir ki, Türkiye, tek boyutlu ideolojik bir dış politika ile Esad'ı devirme hedefine angaje olarak Suriye meselesinin yaratacağı diğer riskleri göz ardı etmiştir. Esad'ı devirme takıntısı, Suriye'nin kuzeyinde PKK/PYD/YPG terör örgütüne güç kazandırmış ve milyonlarca Suriyeli sığınmacının Türkiye'ye akın etmesine neden olmuştur. Yani ideolojik dış politikadaki ısrarın, Türk istihbaratının Suriye meselesinin ülkemizin ulusal güvenliğine yaratacağı etkileri net olarak görmesini engellemiş olduğu söylenebilir. 2016 yılından sonraki dönemde ise, Türkiye'nin süreç içerisinde ideolojik dış politika izlemeyi terk ettiği ve Suriye'nin kuzeyinde güç kazanan IŞİD ve Türkiye'nin ulusal güvenliğini kırk yıldır tehdit eden PKK/PYD/YPG tehdidini birinci öncelik haline getirdiği görülmektedir.

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**MOMENTARY PARTNERS:****THE LIMITATIONS OF THE GREEK-TURKISH DISASTER DIPLOMACY IN 2023**Dr. Nikolaos STELGIAS<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** In February 2023, major earthquakes struck the southern part of Türkiye, while significant tensions in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean dominated the Greek-Turkish relations. A few weeks later, dozens of civilians were killed when a train overturned in Tempe, Greece. Greece was among the first countries to aid Türkiye after the earthquakes and Türkiye reciprocated by expressing its condolences to Greece for the great train accident. Thus, 24 years after the 1999 earthquakes in Greece and Türkiye, which triggered the first wave of disaster diplomacy between the two countries, a new opportunity for dialogue and cooperation emerged in 2023. This paper intends to review two waves of Greek-Turkish disaster diplomacy in 1999 and 2023 with the aim of establishing their correspondence to the theory of disaster diplomacy. It also intends to compare two waves and point out similarities and differences. Moreover, the paper intends to argue that disaster itself does not lead to new diplomatic initiatives. As it is evident in the case of Greek-Turkish relations after the two waves of disaster diplomacy, cooperation can help build trust and goodwill between countries. Nevertheless, if disaster diplomacy does not develop into something more than a tactical diplomatic move and if the countries do not rush to instrumentalize the brief window of opportunity offered by the disasters, then the accumulated problems are expected to overshadow the attempts of building a long-lasting cooperation once again.

**Keywords:** *Türkiye, Greece, Disaster diplomacy, Dialogue, Cooperation.*

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<sup>1</sup> Historian, researcher, writer, and journalist, senior researcher in Institute of Studies for Politics and Democracy.

Email: [stelgias@gmail.com](mailto:stelgias@gmail.com).

ORCID: 0000-0003-0010-4697.

**ANLIK ORTAKLAR:****2023'TE TÜRK-YUNAN FELAKET DİPLOMASİSİNİN SINIRLARI**

**Öz:** Ege ve Doğu Akdeniz'deki önemli gerilimlerin Türk-Yunan ilişkilerine damgasını vurduğu bir dönemde, Şubat 2023'te, Türkiye'nin güneyinde büyük depremler meydana geldi. Büyük depremlerden birkaç hafta sonra, Yunanistan'ın Tempe kentinde bir trenin devrilmesi sonucunda ise onlarca sivil hayatını kaybetti. Yunanistan, depremlerin ardından Türkiye'ye yardım eden ilk ülkeler arasında yer aldı. Türkiye de, büyük tren kazası nedeniyle Yunanistan'a başsağlığı dileyerek Atina'nın jestine karşılık verdi. Böylece, iki ülke arasında ilk afet diplomasisi dalgasını tetikleyen 1999 Yunanistan ve Türkiye depremlerinden 24 yıl sonra, 2023'te yeni bir diyalog ve iş birliği fırsatı ortaya çıkmış oldu. 1999 ve 2023'teki iki farklı Türk-Yunan afet diplomasisi dalgasını incelemeyi amaçlayan bu makale, bu süreçlerin afet diplomasisi teorisine uygunluklarını tespit etmeyi amaçlıyor. Ayrıca, iki dalgayı karşılaştırmayı ve benzerlik ve farklılıklara işaret etmeyi hedefliyor. Dahası, makale, felâketin kendisinin yeni diplomatik girişimlere yol açmadığı tezini desteklemeyi amaçlıyor. İki afet diplomasisi dalgasından sonra Türk-Yunan ilişkilerinde görüldüğü üzere, afet diplomasisi taktiksel bir diplomatik hamleden daha fazlasına dönüşmezse ve ülkeler afetlerin sunduğu kısa fırsat penceresini enstrümantalize etmekte acele etmezlerse, biriken sorunların bir kez daha uzun süreli bir iş birliği kurma girişimlerini gölgelemesi beklenebilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Türkiye, Yunanistan, Afet diplomasisi, Diyalog, İş birliği.*

## Introduction

In May 2022, the Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis officially visited the United States (U.S.) and addressed the U.S. Congress. In his speech, Mitsotakis referred to the problems his country faces in its relations with Türkiye: *“I ask you, esteemed members of Congress, not to forget an open wound that has caused Hellenism unending pain over the past 48 years. I am referring to the invasion and subsequent division of Cyprus. This issue must be resolved under international law and in line with the relevant decisions of the United Nations Security Council. The same is true for all other regional disputes. We will not accept open acts of aggression that violate our sovereignty and territorial rights. These include overflights over Greek islands, which must stop immediately.”*<sup>2</sup>

Mitsotakis’ criticism and Greece’s plea to the U.S. to prevent the sale of new military hardware to Türkiye frustrated Ankara. Regarding Mitsotakis’ statements, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, *“We were supposed to have a 'strategic council meeting' this year. For me, Mitsotakis no longer exists as a person. (From now on) I will never agree to meet with him.”*<sup>3</sup>

A few months after these statements, on February 6, 2023, and the period following, strong earthquakes hit southern Türkiye, while significant tensions darkened Greek-Turkish relations in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean. On February 28, 2023, following the deadly earthquakes in Türkiye, dozens of civilians were killed when a train overturned in Tempe, Greece. Greece was one of the first countries to support Türkiye after the earthquakes. Türkiye reciprocated by offering condolences to Greece for the great tragedy. Thus, the criticisms of the Greek Prime Minister and the Turkish President have been stifled by a new wave of disaster diplomacy in Greek-Turkish relations. Once again, after the first wave of disaster diplomacy triggered by the earthquakes of 1999, Greece and Türkiye put their differences aside and acted as good neighbors to one another.

In this paper, I intend to discuss whether a disaster can cause a long-lasting positive shift in the diplomacy objectives of two opposing countries. To put it simply, could Greece and Türkiye ride the disaster diplomacy wave and work on their accumulated differences? For this, I will

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<sup>2</sup> Office of the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic (2022), “Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis’ Address to the Joint Session of the US Congress”, 17.05.2022, Date of Accession: 15.05.2023 from <https://www.primeminister.gr/en/2022/05/17/29339>.

<sup>3</sup> *Cumhuriyet* (2022), “Erdogan: Artık benim için Miçotakis diye birisi yok”, 24.05.2022, Date of Accession: 15.05.2023 from <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/siyaset/erdogan-artik-benim-icin-micotakis-diye-birisi-yok-1939068>.

first review the existing literature discussing the theory of disaster diplomacy and examine whether the two waves of Greek-Turkish catastrophe diplomacy align with the theoretical framework. Namely, I aim to examine whether key elements of disaster diplomacy such as the pre-existing foundations of diplomatic understanding and dialogue, the willingness of the parties to participate in disaster diplomacy, and the factors that make it possible, are present in the 1999 and 2023 waves of disaster diplomacy. Moreover, the paper aims to compare two waves of disaster diplomacy, locate similarities and differences, and argue that even though disaster alone cannot cause a substantial positive change in the diplomatic relations of quarreling neighbors, it can nevertheless serve as the basis of fruitful dialogue.

### 1. The Theory of Disaster Diplomacy

“*Disaster diplomacy*” is a term used to describe the use of disasters to improve relations between countries.<sup>4</sup> The available literature discussing disaster diplomacy offers a theoretical framework for understanding how disasters can be used to promote cooperation in diplomatic relations. As scholars have argued, a disaster can encourage diplomatic collaboration ties and facilitate the resolution of existing problems. Kelman underlines that “*disaster diplomacy investigates how and why disaster-related activities do and do not influence conflict and cooperation*”.<sup>5</sup> Disaster-related activities in trade, resource management, sports, and culture, as well as domestic and non-domestic politics, can influence diplomacy.<sup>6</sup> Natural disasters, resource shortages, major sporting events, and cultural shifts often have cross-border impacts that affect international relations. A severe drought in one country, for example, can strain shared water resources and escalate tensions with neighboring states. On the other hand, countries coming together to provide disaster relief after events such as tsunamis or earthquakes can bring nations closer together diplomatically. Major sporting events, such as the Olympics or the World Cup, require international cooperation and are sometimes used by host countries to improve their global image and relations. Cultural changes, such as the rise of social media, have allowed for more direct diplomatic communication between citizens,

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<sup>4</sup> Ilan Kelman (2007), “Hurricane Katrina Disaster Diplomacy”, *Disasters*, Vol. 31, no: 3, pp. 288-309; Jean-Christophe Gaillard & Elsa Clavé & Ilan Kelman (2008), “Wave of peace? Tsunami disaster diplomacy in Aceh, Indonesia”, *Geoforum*, Vol. 39, no: 1, pp. 511-526; Ilan Kelman (2012), *Disaster Diplomacy: How Disasters Affect Peace and Conflict*, Oxon: Routledge, pp. 18-52.

<sup>5</sup> Ilan Kelman (2018), “Disaster Diplomacy”, in *The Encyclopedia of Diplomacy*, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, pp. 1-6.

<sup>6</sup> Ilan Kelman (2014), “Does Disaster Diplomacy Improve Inter-State Relations?”, *E-International Relations*, 04.11.2014, Date of Accession: 17.05.2023 from <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/11/04/does-disaster-diplomacy-improve-inter-state-relations/>.



while exposing internal problems to outside scrutiny. Domestic insecurity caused by natural disasters, resource conflicts, or economic conditions can limit or shift a country's foreign policy priorities as leaders prioritize domestic issues first. Finally, while diplomats strive to maintain stable international relations, events driven by nature, resources, domestic politics, sports, culture, and other factors within or outside a country's borders often have a significant impact on diplomatic relations.

In addition, major disasters often provide an opportunity for nations to unite in a common cause. Setting aside differences and prejudices to work together on disaster relief and recovery efforts can help foster international goodwill and understanding. For example, in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, many countries, including the U.S., India, and Japan, worked with Indonesia despite previous grievances or rivalries. The common goal of providing life-saving aid and rebuilding communities in need allowed the diplomacy of these nations to overcome any tensions at the time. More recently, in the shadow of the conflict in Ukraine, relations between Türkiye and its neighbors have thawed somewhat as both countries have provided humanitarian aid and participated in mediation efforts. While geopolitical differences remain, working together in times of crisis has opened the door to dialogue. When people are in need, political leaders often realize that providing disaster relief transcends politics and can even help heal old wounds. Putting aside prejudices to participate in joint rescue, relief, and reconstruction efforts often brings out the best in people and nations. Overcoming disasters together can overcome diplomatic hurdles and foster understanding between adversaries when it matters most, thanks to open communication and successful cooperation.<sup>7</sup>

Scientists' interest in disaster diplomacy peaked after the Second World War.<sup>8</sup> In the mid-1950s came one of the first studies focusing on the U.S.-Mexico cross-border cooperation to deal with natural disasters.<sup>9</sup> *The Rio Grande Flood: A Comparative Study of Border Communities in Disaster*<sup>10</sup> study was the first of its kind. Following in the same vein, 20 years

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<sup>7</sup> Ilan Kelman & Theo Koukis (2000), "Introduction", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 14, no: 1, pp. 214-214.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel Fiott (2018), "Humanitarian Diplomacy", in *The Encyclopedia of Diplomacy*, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., pp. 1-10.

<sup>9</sup> Stavros Mavrogenis & Ilan Kelman (2013), "Perceptions of Greece-Türkiye Disaster Diplomacy: Europeanization and the Underdog Culture", *Balkanistica*, Vol. 26, pp. 73-104.

<sup>10</sup> Roy A. Clifford (1956), *The Rio Grande Flood: A Comparative Study of Border Communities in Disaster*, Washington: National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council.

later, Quarantelli and Dynes investigated whether catastrophic disasters resulted in post-disaster community conflict.<sup>11</sup> In 1976, Glantz examined catastrophe politics concurrently and from a global standpoint. His book, based on the Sahelian drought, discusses how disasters affect politics.<sup>12</sup>

Kelman was one of the first scientists to deal thoroughly and multidimensionally with disaster diplomacy in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Kelman and Mavrogenis' study was one of the first analytical studies to use the term disaster diplomacy.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, researchers like Gaillard and Clavé, concentrating mainly on disaster-related activities affecting diplomacy, sought to address how and why disaster-related actions do and do not generate diplomatic advantages.<sup>14</sup> Olson and Gawronski, on their part, authored a study that offers a historical review, primarily from the U.S. viewpoint, of the literature discussing politics and disaster.<sup>15</sup> Likewise, Platt detailed how disasters have been dealt with within the context of democracy, again from the U.S. perspective.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, Nel and Righarts summarized existing references indicating a long history of disasters affecting warfare in a larger geographical and international context.<sup>17</sup> Olson and Drury also provided quantitative data from the long history of disaster-conflict studies.<sup>18</sup>

According to the existing literature, there are two schools of thought on disaster diplomacy.<sup>19</sup> Advocates of disaster diplomacy argue that it can foster cooperation and communication between countries. They point to examples such as the U.S. and Cuba working together after Hurricane Sandy or India and Pakistan working together after the 2005 Kashmir earthquake.

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<sup>11</sup> Russell R. Dynes & E. L. Quarantelli (1975), *Community Conflict: Its Absence and Its Presence in Natural Disasters*, University of Delaware Disaster Research Center.

<sup>12</sup> Michael H. Glantz (1976), *The Politics of Natural Disaster: The Case of the Sahel Drought*, Praeger.

<sup>13</sup> Stavros Mavrogenis & Ilan Kelman (2013), "Perceptions of Greece-Türkiye Disaster Diplomacy: Europeanization and the Underdog Culture".

<sup>14</sup> Jean-Christophe Gaillard & Elsa Clavé & Ilan Kelman (2008), "Wave of peace? Tsunami disaster diplomacy in Aceh, Indonesia", pp. 511-526.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Stuart Olson & Vincent T. Gawronski (2010), "From Disaster Event to Political Crisis: A '5C+ A' Framework for Analysis", *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 11, no: 3, pp. 205-221.

<sup>16</sup> Rutherford H. Platt (2012), *Disasters and Democracy: The Politics of Extreme Natural Events*, Island Press.

<sup>17</sup> Philip Nel & Marjolein Righarts (2008), "Natural Disasters and the Risk of Violent Civil Conflict", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 52, no: 1, pp. 159-185.

<sup>18</sup> Richard Stuart Olson & A. Cooper Drury (1997), "Un-Therapeutic Communities: A Cross-National Analysis of Post-Disaster Political Unrest", *International Journal of Mass Emergencies & Disasters*, Vol. 15, no: 2, pp. 221-238; A. Cooper Drury & Richard Stuart Olson (1998), "Disasters and Political Unrest: An Empirical Investigation", *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, Vol. 6, no: 3, pp. 153-161.

<sup>19</sup> Eugene S. Yim et al. (2009), "Disaster Diplomacy: Current Controversies and Future Prospects", *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, Vol. 24, no: 4, pp. 291-293.

On the other hand, critics of disaster diplomacy argue that it politicizes disaster response and contradicts the humanitarian principle of impartiality. They point to examples such as the U.S. using disaster relief to promote its interests in the Philippines after the Typhoon Haiyan. The literature on disaster diplomacy suggests that it can be active and passive. In some cases, countries may deliberately use disaster diplomacy to improve relations. In other cases, disaster diplomacy may occur more passively, as countries cooperate in responding to a disaster without necessarily intending to strengthen ties.<sup>20</sup>

Scholars evaluate the case studies by concentrating on three key elements. These three points will serve as the foundation for our examination of the two waves of Greek-Turkish disaster diplomacy later in our paper. First, the theory of disaster diplomacy argues that to engage in disaster-related activities, there must be a pre-existing basis that could result in the strengthening of diplomatic ties. An interaction framework such as continuing negotiations, official or informal cultural linkages or trade ties, must exist before the disaster in order to facilitate diplomacy immediately after it.<sup>21</sup> On this basis and for a limited period, the disaster opens a window of opportunity for disaster-related activities to influence conflict and cooperation. As Comfort mentions that, “*disaster -or threat of disaster- provides opportunities for enhancing collaboration among states, but the properties and mechanisms for adaptation must either exist or be developed for effective results.*”<sup>22</sup>

Second, the sides must lean on this pre-existing basis to facilitate diplomacy. Kelman underlines that “*disaster diplomacy could emerge if the parties with power decide it should be pursued*”.<sup>23</sup> Disasters can be an opportunity to improve relations between countries, but this is the case only on some occasions. Several factors, such as the lack of interest in improving ties or the focusing on other priorities, can prevent governments from taking advantage of these opportunities.<sup>24</sup>

Third, factors such as geographical proximity, who offers the help, and with what intent may influence disaster diplomacy.<sup>25</sup> In other words, disaster diplomacy can take many shapes, serve

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<sup>20</sup> Ilan Kelman (2012), *Disaster Diplomacy: How Disasters Affect Peace and Conflict*, p. 96.

<sup>21</sup> Ilan Kelman (2014), “Does Disaster Diplomacy Improve Inter-State Relations?”.

<sup>22</sup> Louise K. Comfort (2000), “Disaster: Agent of Diplomacy or Change in International Affairs?”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 14, no: 1, p. 31.

<sup>23</sup> Ilan Kelman (2018), “Disaster Diplomacy”.

<sup>24</sup> Ilan Kelman (2006), “Acting on Disaster Diplomacy”, *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 59, no: 2, pp. 215-240.

<sup>25</sup> Ilan Kelman & Theo Koukis (2000), “Introduction”.

many purposes, and have various results. Factors that add to the success of disaster diplomacy may be the involvement of both governments and non-governmental organizations in the delivery of aid, the efficient and rapid delivery of assistance to the affected people, and the fostering of scientific cooperation. Moreover, particular emphasis should be applied to the fact that the aid offered aims at healing wounds rather than cultivating diplomacy. Also, as Kelman proposes, disaster diplomacy must not be imposed. Aid should be offered spontaneously and with no hint of coercion. Otherwise, the disaster diplomacy attempts may easily collapse. Similarly, if the help offer is later used as a diplomatic weapon, the entire initiative is likely to fail. Furthermore, no matter how successful the disaster diplomacy actions might be, relying solely on them offers little hope for long-term diplomatic solutions. In addition, raising excessive expectations that cannot be met in a fair amount of time is a surefire way to failure. In these situations, disasters frequently exacerbate the tense relationships between opposing parties.

Finally, it is essential to emphasize that disaster diplomacy has a transient impact. It resembles a wave, which the “*surfers*” of diplomacy are asked to ride, and it lasts only a few days to several months. Even when parties strive for disaster diplomacy, it only sometimes works. Sometimes, disaster-related actions have aggravated conflicts or had no effect. The disaster-related steps could also be “*a distraction from more pertinent issues*”.<sup>26</sup> Disaster diplomacy is appealing because it is a quick remedy for resolving conflict. However, as the literature emphasizes, it is naïve to assume that decades or centuries of differences could be suddenly eliminated just because a town was devastated by a tornado or a big earthquake stroke a region.

## **2. The Greek-Turkish Disaster Diplomacy in 1999**

The relationship between Greece and Türkiye has a long history of mistrust and conflict. The territorial dispute over the Aegean Sea and the Cyprus Problem are only two of the persistent disputes between the neighbors. Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the continuous hostility between the two countries climaxed with the “*Imia/Kardak crisis*” standoff in 1996.<sup>27</sup> The severe earthquakes that struck Türkiye on August 17, 1999, and then Greece a few weeks later, on September 7, 1999, brought the two countries together as they rushed to send rescue teams

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<sup>26</sup> Ilan Kelman (2006), “Acting on Disaster Diplomacy”.

<sup>27</sup> Fuat Aksu (2001), “Turkish-Greek Relations: From Conflict to Détente, the Last Decade”, *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, Vol. 6, pp. 167-201.

and provide humanitarian aid to each other. Although short-lived, the Greek-Turkish reconciliation after the 1999 earthquakes marked a crucial turning point in their relationship.

The literature has thoroughly studied the first wave of disaster diplomacy in Greek-Turkish relations. Aydın<sup>28</sup>, Economides<sup>29</sup>, Evin<sup>30</sup>, Gundogdu<sup>31</sup>, Heraclides<sup>32</sup>, Kuşku<sup>33</sup>, Öniş and Yılmaz<sup>34</sup>, Rumelili<sup>35</sup>, and Vathakou<sup>36</sup> are scholars who have analyzed how both Greece and Türkiye moved quickly to help and support one another. Following the 1999 earthquakes, Greece and Türkiye had launched a series of confidence-building measures, including opening more border posts, signing agreements in the fields of culture and education, and establishing a direct communication line. They had also collaborated in trade, tourism, energy, as well as combating organized crime and terrorism. Articles from that period make mention of how the earthquakes pushed the peoples of both countries towards a more heart-felt friendship. As the Greek President told the Turkish relief workers at the time “*Greeks will always remember you with profound feelings of friendship*”.<sup>37</sup> The positive shift in common opinions was accompanied by growing cooperation that included visits from military personnel, the revival of a business cooperation council, journalists publishing each other’s columns in their newspapers, and Greece dropping its opposition to Türkiye’s European Union (EU) membership bid. Moreover, the political leaderships of the two countries continued on the same path of dialogue and cooperation.

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<sup>28</sup> Mustafa Aydın (2004), “Contemporary Turkish-Greek Relations: Constraints and Opportunities”, in (eds. by Mustafa Aydın & Kostas Ifantis) *Turkish-Greek Relations*, Routledge, pp. 41-72.

<sup>29</sup> Spyros Economides (2005), “The Europeanisation of Greek Foreign Policy”, *West European Politics*, Vol. 28, no: 2, pp. 471-491.

<sup>30</sup> Ahmet O. Evin (2005), “The Future of Greek-Turkish Relations”, *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol. 5, no: 3, pp. 395-404.

<sup>31</sup> Ayten Gundogdu (2001), “Identities in Question: Greek-Turkish Relations in a Period of Transformation”, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 5, no: 1, March 2001.

<sup>32</sup> Alexis Heraclides (2002), “Greek-Turkish Relations from Discord to Détente: A Preliminary Evaluation”, *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 1, no: 3, pp. 17-32.

<sup>33</sup> Eda Kuşku (2008), “The Shadow of Past Rivalry: Limits of Post-1999 Dynamism in Greco-Turkish Relations”, *Caucasian Review of International Affairs (CRIA)*, Vol. 2, no: 3.

<sup>34</sup> Ziya Öniş & Şuhnaz Yılmaz (2008), “Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: Rhetoric or Reality?”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 123, no: 1, pp. 123-149.

<sup>35</sup> Bahar Rumelili (2003), “Liminality and Perpetuation of Conflicts: Turkish-Greek Relations in the Context of Community-Building by the EU”, *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, no: 2, pp. 213-248.

<sup>36</sup> Eugenia Vathakou (2007), “The Emergence of a Greek-Turkish Cooperation System as the Result of a ‘Butterfly Effect’”, *Etudes Helléniques/Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 15, no: 1, pp. 107-132; Eugenia Vathakou (2009), “Greek–Turkish Peace Processes as Autopoietic Systems”, *Türkiye ’s Accession to the European Union: An Unusual Candidacy*, pp. 133-146.

<sup>37</sup> Stephen Kinzer (1999), “Earthquakes Help Warm Greek-Turkish Relations”, *The New York Times*, 13.09.1999, Date of Accession: 20.05.2023 from <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/09/13/world/earthquakes-help-warm-greek-turkish-relations.html>.

As it is obvious from the above, all three main elements necessary for a country to engage in disaster-related actions were present in the first wave of Greek-Turkish disaster diplomacy. First, there was a pre-existing basis for further diplomacy development, second, the parties were determined to invest in disaster diplomacy and third, other important factors were also present. As Aksu mentions, diplomatic dialogue between the two countries in fact began two months before the earthquake.<sup>38</sup> Prior to that, Türkiye was taking early steps toward the EU integration process, whilst the Greek foreign policy was on the Europeanization track. These developments, according to Mavrogenis and Kelman, facilitated the disaster diplomacy.<sup>39</sup> As for the reconciling effect that the deteriorating situation in the Balkans had on Greece's and Türkiye's relations, Ker-Lindsay states that "*although the two countries may have had their respective sympathies for the Serbs and Albanians, they soon realized that the conflict posed a severe security threat to them both.*"<sup>40</sup> In a similar spirit, Aksu emphasizes that the disintegration of Yugoslavia at the end of the Cold War mainly contributed to the collapse of a stable regional environment.<sup>41</sup> As the Cold War ended, Greece and Türkiye felt abandoned by their Western allies and experienced similar isolation.

Furthermore, the political elites of the two countries appeared determined to invest in disaster diplomacy.<sup>42</sup> More particularly, the Foreign Ministers of the two countries (Ismail Cem and George Papandreou), who were the protagonists of the 1999 disaster diplomacy, made the strategic decision to exploit the existing basis for dialogue and cooperation and invest in disaster diplomacy. Also, the Social Democrats who led the two nations in 1999 undoubtedly helped unite the neighbors. Moreover, as Ganapati, Emel, Kelman, and Koukis pointed out, in 1999, both in Ankara and Athens, there was "*a realization and acceptance that neighbors should come to each other's help in times of disaster*".<sup>43</sup>

In addition to the above, other important factors were also present in 1999. Namely, beyond the official governments, the civil societies likewise took part in the disaster diplomacy.

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<sup>38</sup> Fuat Aksu (2001), "Turkish-Greek Relations: From Conflict to Détente, the Last Decade".

<sup>39</sup> Stavros Mavrogenis & Ilan Kelman (2013), "Perceptions of Greece-Türkiye Disaster Diplomacy: Europeanization and the Underdog Culture".

<sup>40</sup> James Ker-Lindsay (2007), *Crisis and Conciliation: A Year of Rapprochement between Greece and Türkiye*, London & New York: I.B. Tauris, p. 40.

<sup>41</sup> Fuat Aksu (2001), "Turkish-Greek Relations: From Conflict to Détente, the Last Decade".

<sup>42</sup> James Ker-Lindsay (2007), *Crisis and Conciliation: A Year of Rapprochement between Greece and Türkiye*, pp. 119-120.

<sup>43</sup> Theodore Koukis & Ilan Kelman & N. Emel Ganapati (2016), "Greece-Türkiye Disaster Diplomacy from Disaster Risk Reduction", *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, Vol. 17, August 2016, pp. 24-32.

Another positive factor was mutuality. When Türkiye supported Greece following the September earthquake, the donor-recipient nature of the aid relationship changed to one of mutual help. This development enabled the “*tit-for-tat*” disaster diplomacy strategy.<sup>44</sup>

Although the 1999 disaster-related activities were crucial to bring two countries closer, nevertheless, the first wave of disaster diplomacy was short-lived. Significant problems in Greek-Turkish relations reignited in the 2000s and especially in the 2010s.<sup>45</sup> Academics support that Greek and Turkish governments had introduced disaster diplomacy into their bilateral relations without clear goals or a new diplomatic agenda. In this vein, key factors, such as establishing informal communication channels and academic involvement in bilateral discussions, were not addressed. The 1999 disaster diplomacy has been criticized for overemphasizing earthquakes as the primary cause for the dialogue and cooperation developed between two neighbors. This understanding needs to be corrected because the dialogue and cooperation predated the earthquakes themselves.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, the 1999 experience supports Kelman’s view that long-standing disagreements cannot be resolved quickly based solely on societies’ response and cooperation in the face of catastrophic events. Also, Reinhardt and Lutmar stress that disasters and conflicts should be seen as intertwined processes/cycles, not discrete events.<sup>47</sup> Responding to disasters and conflict resolution needs a strategic approach, meaningful dialogue, and the intent of seeking common ground, not just crisis response. Moreover, as the literature shows, the exclusive focus on disaster impacts may ultimately overshadow diplomatic goals. Therefore, while collaborative disaster response can remind rival societies of their shared humanity, lasting relationships require the gradual building of a common understanding through reasonable faith efforts on all sides over a period of time.

### 3. The Second Wave in 2023

During the 2010s, Greece and Türkiye’s relations followed in the same vein of hostility and mistrust. Nevertheless, two neighbors kept the dialogue alive and struggled to establish a solid

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<sup>44</sup> Stavros Mavrogenis & Ilan Kelman (2013), “Perceptions of Greece-Türkiye Disaster Diplomacy: Europeanization and the Underdog Culture”.

<sup>45</sup> Theodore Koukis & Ilan Kelman & N. Emel Ganapati (2016), “Greece-Türkiye Disaster Diplomacy from Disaster Risk Reduction”.

<sup>46</sup> James Ker-Lindsay (2007), *Crisis and Conciliation: A Year of Rapprochement between Greece and Türkiye*, p. 118.

<sup>47</sup> Gina Yannitell Reinhardt & Carmela Lutmar (2022), “Disaster diplomacy: The intricate links between disaster and conflict”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 59, no: 1, pp. 3-11.

and fruitful partnership. Political upheavals, economic recessions, and geopolitical developments characterized this decade and led to deteriorating relations between the two countries.<sup>48</sup>

One of the most persistent quarrels in Greek-Turkish relations which further deteriorated during this period was the territorial dispute over the Aegean Sea.<sup>49</sup> Specifically, according to the “*Mavi Vatan*” (Blue Homeland) doctrine, Greek islands too close to the Turkish coast should not be granted an exclusive economic zone. The Greeks on the other hand have serious doubts about this doctrine. Tensions have also risen over energy development and the discovery of gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>50</sup> Conflicting claims and unilateral drilling initiatives were followed by Türkiye’s decision to send drilling vessels to the Eastern Mediterranean. The refugee crisis<sup>51</sup>, the confrontation between the Turkish and Greek navies, and Greece’s failure to extradite Turkish coup plotters who fled to Greece in 2016<sup>52</sup>, all contributed to the worsening of relations between the two neighbors. Also, the Crans-Montana Summit in 2017 failed to find a solution due to disagreements over the details of the federal formula, leaving the Cyprus issue unresolved.

The 2017 Crans-Montana Summit was touted as a historic opportunity to finally resolve the Cyprus Problem or the Cyprus Dispute after decades of conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. However, after 10 days of intense negotiations, the talks failed to produce a result. A number of factors contributed to this failure. A major sticking point was disagreement over security guarantees: Türkiye wanted to keep a military presence on the island to protect Northern Cyprus, while Greece wanted Turkish troops to leave completely. There were also territorial disagreements, with the two sides unable to agree on how much land would be returned to Greek Cypriot control following reunification. Another contentious issue was power sharing, with disagreements persisting over governance and the rotation of the presidency between a Greek and a Turkish leader. While both parties appeared willing to

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<sup>48</sup> Ioannis N. Grigoriadis (2022), “Between Escalation and Détente: Greek-Turkish Relations in the Aftermath of the Eastern Mediterranean Crisis”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 23, no: 5, pp. 802-820.

<sup>49</sup> Andreas Stergiou (2022), *The Greek-Turkish Maritime Dispute: Resisting the Future*, Springer Nature.

<sup>50</sup> Ioannis N. Grigoriadis (2020), “The Eastern Mediterranean as an Emerging Crisis Zone: Greece and Cyprus in a Volatile Regional Environment”, *Eastern Mediterranean in Uncharted Waters: Perspectives on Emerging Geopolitical Realities*, 02.12.2020, pp. 25-30.

<sup>51</sup> Dionysios Stivas (2023), “Greece’s Response to the European Refugee Crisis: A Tale of Two Securitizations”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 28, no: 1, pp. 49-72.

<sup>52</sup> Adamantia Rachovitsa (2016), “On the Sidelines of the Failed Coup d’État in Türkiye: Can Greece Extradite the Eight Turkish Military Officers to Türkiye”, *European Human Rights Law Review*, Vol. 6, pp. 645-655.



continue negotiating, they were unable to reach an agreement on their core demands. The summit in Crans-Montana was the latest in a long line of diplomatic failures to unite Cyprus under a power-sharing federation. Negotiations remain stalled in the absence of compromise on issues such as security, territory, and governance. After the summit's failure, the negotiation process in Cyprus remained in deadlock. In addition to the above, Turkish Foreign Policy underwent a significant transformation in the 2010s<sup>53</sup>, with Ankara concentrating on expanding its influence in the countries situated on the former territories of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>54</sup> This led to a militarization of Turkish Foreign Policy<sup>55</sup>, focusing on the Balkans, Caucasus, Middle East, and Africa.<sup>56</sup> In contrast, Greece moved towards closer relations with the West and its allies in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>57</sup>

Despite their disagreements on various issues and different approaches in the field of foreign policy, in early 2023, two neighbors put aside their differences. At the heart of this development were the 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye and the train crash in Greece that claimed the lives of thousands of people. Despite the varying size and scope of the disasters that struck the two countries, the tragedies of February 2023 reopened the way for disaster diplomacy. The political actors leading the disaster diplomacy between Greece and Türkiye in 2023 were the same political figures who bore a sizeable share of responsibility for the rising tension in Greek-Turkish relations in the previous period. Nevertheless, immediately after the first earthquake, Türkiye's President, and Greece's Prime Minister, along with their Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Defense restarted the dialogue.<sup>58</sup>

Greece was among the first countries to assist Türkiye after the devastating earthquakes in February 2023. Soon after the first earthquake, the Greek government offered to send search and rescue teams, medical personnel, and supplies. A Greek rescue team arrived in Türkiye on

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<sup>53</sup> Ayşe Ömür Atmaca & Zerrin Torun (2022), "Geopolitical Visions in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, no: 1, pp. 114-137.

<sup>54</sup> Knud Erik Jørgensen (2023), "Diverging or Converging? European and Turkish Foreign Policy", in (eds. by Siret Hürsoy) *Turkey's Quest for the EU Membership Towards 2023*, Ege University Press, pp. 95-114.

<sup>55</sup> Hakan Mehmetcik & Arda Can Çelik (2022), "The Militarization of Turkish Foreign Policy", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, no: 1, pp. 24-41.

<sup>56</sup> Knud Erik Jørgensen (2023), "Diverging or Converging? European and Turkish Foreign Policy".

<sup>57</sup> Charalambos Tsardanidis (2019), "Greece's Changing Role in the Eastern Mediterranean", in *The New Geopolitics of the Eastern Mediterranean: Trilateral Partnerships and Regional Security*, Re-imagining the Eastern Mediterranean Series: PCC Report: 3, Nicosia: PRIO Cyprus Centre.

<sup>58</sup> Ezgi Akin (2023), "Turkey and Greece maintain post-disaster diplomacy after train crash", *Al-Monitor*, 01.03.2023, Date of Accession: 17.05.2023 from <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/03/turkey-and-greece-maintain-post-disaster-diplomacy-after-train-crash>.

February 7, and they were joined by additional Greek personnel in the days that followed. The Greek government provided financial assistance to Türkiye and worked with the Turkish government to coordinate relief efforts.<sup>59</sup> A campaign to supply Türkiye’s citizens with necessities and offer support also began at the same time in Greece and Cyprus by grassroots groups.<sup>60</sup> The Greek Foreign Minister hurried to southeast Türkiye and toured the earthquake-devastated Turkish cities with his Turkish counterpart, demonstrating his country’s willingness to put aside political differences in the face of humanitarian need.<sup>61</sup> Responding to his Greek counterpart’s statement, the Turkish Foreign Minister referred to the first wave of 1999 disaster diplomacy and added that, “*We do not need to wait for another earthquake or disaster to improve our relations. We will try to resolve our differences sincerely through dialogue.*”<sup>62</sup> Just weeks after this remark, Greece was too struck by tragedy, a head-on train collision in the Tempe region on February 28, 2023. The deadliest crash in Greek history claimed at least 57 lives. Türkiye was one of the first countries to offer its condolences and support, sending a team of experts to help with the rescue and recovery efforts.<sup>63</sup>

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes and train crash in 2023, Greece and Türkiye made several positive moves toward normalizing their relations. The two countries supported each other’s candidacies for international organizations<sup>64</sup> and Türkiye congratulated Greece on

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<sup>59</sup> *In.gr* (2023), “Σεισμός Τουρκία: Οι 21 πυροσβέστες της ΕΜΑΚ που μεταβαίνουν στην Τουρκία για βοήθεια [Earthquake Türkiye: The 21 firefighters of the ΕΜΑΚ going to Türkiye to help]”, 06.02.2023, Date of Accession: 20.05.2023 from <https://www.in.gr/2023/02/06/greece/seismos-tourkia-oi-21-pyrovvestes-tis-emak-pou-metavainoun-stin-tourkia-gia-voitheia/>.

<sup>60</sup> The Press Project (2023), “Συλλογή ειδών πρώτης ανάγκης για τους σεισμόπληκτους σε Τουρκία και Συρία [Collection of essentials for the earthquake victims in Türkiye and Syria]”, 07.02.2023, Date of Accession: 21.05.2023 from <https://thepressproject.gr/syllogi-eidon-protis-anagkis-gia-tous-seismopliktous-se-tourkia-kai-syria-deite-pos-boreite-na-voithisete/>.

<sup>61</sup> *Naftemporiki* (2023), “Δηλώσεις Δένδια-Τσαβούσογλου: «Να μην περιμένουμε ένα σεισμό για να βελτιώσουμε τις σχέσεις μας» [Dendias-Cavusoglu statements: ‘We should not wait for an earthquake to improve our relations’]”, 12.02.2023, Date of Accession: 22.05.2023 from <https://www.naftemporiki.gr/politics/1438383/tsavoysogloy-oi-scheseis-kalis-geitonias-fainontai-se-tetoies-dyskoles-meres/>.

<sup>62</sup> *Posta* (2023), “Çavuşoğlu ve Dendias Hatay’da: ‘İlişkileri düzeltmek için bir depreme daha ihtiyaç yok ’ [Cavusoglu and Dendias in Hatay: ‘We don’t need another earthquake to restore relations’]”, 12.02.2023, Date of Accession: 21.05.2023 from <https://www.posta.com.tr/gundem/cavusoglu-ve-dendias-hatayda-2609700>.

<sup>63</sup> *TRT Haber* (2023), “Türkiye’den Yunanistan’daki tren kazasında ölenler için taziye mesajı [Condolences from Türkiye for the victims of the train crash in Greece]”, 01.03.2023, Date of Accession: 22.05.2023 from <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/Turkiyeden-yunanistandaki-tren-kazasinda-olenler-icin-taziye-mesaji-749772.html>.

<sup>64</sup> *Naftemporiki* (2023), “Η Άγκυρα ψηφίζει την Ελλάδα για το Συμβούλιο Ασφαλείας του ΟΗΕ [Ankara votes for Greece for the UN Security Council]”, 20.03.2023, Date of Accession: 22.05.2023 from <https://www.naftemporiki.gr/politics/1452259/i-agkyra-psifizei-tin-ellada-gia-to-symvolyio-asfaleias-toy-oie/>.

the anniversary of its independence.<sup>65</sup> Meetings between the two countries' envoys became more frequent and there were reports that they were considering various measures to improve relations. Additionally, the spirit of goodwill spilled over to the Greek and Turkish societies. This was widely reflected in both traditional media and social media which were flooded by positive coverage and messages of sympathy. Also, a widespread sense of solidarity between the neighboring peoples and the development of a more positive view for one another, was noted in the aftermath of the catastrophes.

To sum up, the 2023 wave of disaster diplomacy between Greece and Türkiye had all the necessary ingredients to successfully use disaster-related activities for diplomatic purposes. First, two countries already had a solid foundation for diplomacy and engagement. While tensions had existed in the past, leaders on both sides had recently become more open to dialogue and greater cooperation. This meant that they were able to capitalize on newly formed diplomatic ties when disaster struck. Second, political elites in both countries were eager to invest political capital in substantive disaster diplomacy. Rather than simply sending symbolic aid, leaders saw joint relief efforts as an opportunity to foster deeper partnerships. They devoted significant resources and attention to coordinated planning and implementation of aid distribution, infrastructure reconstruction, and long-term reconstruction projects. Third, civil societies in both countries actively participated in disaster-related activities, ranging from fundraising to volunteering in disaster-affected areas abroad. This civic engagement gave the diplomatic outreach a sense of authenticity, rather than appearing to be a government publicity stunt. The post-disaster activities had all the necessary elements to produce a significant improvement in diplomatic relations between the two nations: the foundations for diplomacy were already in place, the political will to focus on joint disaster relief, and the genuine participation of civil society.

#### **4. The Parallels of the Two Waves of Greek-Turkish Disaster Diplomacy**

Although the disasters that struck Greece and Türkiye in February 2023 were not comparable in size or magnitude, their effects on Greek-Turkish relations were notable. As in 1999, so in 2023, the solidarity of the two neighboring countries paved the way for the reactivation of diplomatic dialogue. Disaster diplomacy's first and second waves in Greek-Turkish relations

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<sup>65</sup> *Naftemporiki* (2023), "Τσαβούσογλου: Ευχετήρια επιστολή στον Ν. Δένδια για την 25η Μαρτίου [Cavusoglu: Congratulatory letter to N. Dendias on March 25]", 25.03.2023, Date of Accession: 23.05.2023 from <https://www.naftemporiki.gr/politics/1454245/tsavoysogloy-eychetiria-epistoli-ston-n-dendia-gia-tin-25i-martioy/>.

have several parallels. One of the most noteworthy is that significant geopolitical changes contributed to both waves. In 1999, the collapse of the communist bloc and Yugoslavia changed the security environment in the region and caused Türkiye and Greece to search for synergies in diplomacy, such as strengthening relations between them and with Western allies. In this vein, when the catastrophes stroke, both countries were ready to improve their relations. Similarly, in 2022, the Ukrainian crisis affected the regional balances.

Although Erdoğan's administration refrained from penalizing Moscow or blockading its airspace, the divergence between Turkish and Russian national interests—which were already strained because of recent conflicts in Syria, Libya, and the Nagorno-Karabakh region—increased due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Above all, the invasion of Ukraine was and continues to be severely detrimental to the Turkish economy.<sup>66</sup> The Ukrainian crisis has also had an impact on Greek foreign policy. Marghélis notes that Greece was one of the first countries to deliver weapons to Ukraine and that it has used particularly harsh language towards Moscow. This deviation from Greece's traditional stance of adhering to EU and NATO policies while maintaining working relations with Russia suggests that Greece is seeking to take advantage of the situation in Ukraine to strengthen its position in the emerging regional security structure.<sup>67</sup>

Moreover, the war in Ukraine has increased uncertainty in the global energy market and sped up Western efforts to find alternative energy sources.<sup>68</sup> With the discovery of significant natural gas and oil reserves in recent years, the Eastern Mediterranean has emerged as a potential new energy source for Europe. While political disputes over maritime borders and drilling rights have slowed development, the region holds great promise as an energy producer. The option of transporting natural gas from the Eastern Mediterranean to Europe via Türkiye remains viable in mid-2023. For this route to be successful, cooperation between historical rivals is needed. Cyprus, Greece, Israel, and Egypt have all lobbied for the proposed EastMed pipeline to bypass Türkiye and go directly to Greece. A pipeline through Türkiye, where infrastructure already exists, may be more cost effective. If political relations improve, an agreement could be reached for Mediterranean gas to reach Europe via this transit route.

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<sup>66</sup> Lionel Segantini (2022), "Engaging Türkiye In The Eastern Mediterranean During A Time of Crisis", *ME Insights*, Vol. 13, no: 3, pp. 1-4.

<sup>67</sup> Aris Marghélis (2022), "War in Ukraine: what are the stakes for Greece?", Fondation Méditerranéenne d'Études Stratégiques, 21.07.2022, Date of Accession: 25.05.2023 from <https://fmes-france.org/war-in-ukraine-what-are-the-stakes-for-greece/>.

<sup>68</sup> Elena Schislyaeva et al. (2022), "The EU - Russia - Türkiye Energy Triangle: Legal and Economic Conditions of Gas Transportation via the TurkStream Pipeline", *Transportation Research Procedia*, Vol. 63, pp. 1984-1990.

Türkiye would benefit from transit fees. Gas exports could also help ease tensions over disputed drilling rights. Regardless of past animosities, the parties may decide that mutually beneficial energy cooperation serves their long-term interests. As Europe seeks to reduce its energy dependence on Russia, the Eastern Mediterranean's ability to provide a stable supply could encourage diplomatic solutions. Developing the region's gas reserves would contribute to Europe's energy security while improving the region's economic prospects.

The Greek-Turkish dialogue in early 2023 was also motivated by the Greek financial crisis and the Turkish economic unrest. In the decade of 2010, the Greek financial crisis led to a loss of confidence in the Greek economy while by 2017, a severe economic crisis also hit neighboring Türkiye. Within this framework, both countries were motivated to prioritize dialogue over costly tensions to create peaceful conditions for upcoming elections.

Another important parallel is that the 2023 wave of disaster diplomacy in Greek-Turkish relations was built on the same foundation as the first wave in 1999. In both cases, the two countries political leaders made a strategic decision to cooperate in the aftermath of the disasters. For instance, in 2023, the personalities of the Turkish President and Foreign Minister, as well as those of the Greek Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, undoubtedly played a significant role in this development. All four political figures were deeply involved in the peak of tension in Greek-Turkish relations before the significant disasters. However, they also strove to build bilateral contacts during the previous era. For example, in 2004, despite opposition at home, the President of Türkiye supported the reunification of Cyprus. In addition, the Greek Prime Minister's party backed Türkiye's European aspirations. Personal relationships and the shared experience of working together to respond to disasters helped create a foundation of trust and cooperation that was essential for the success of the second wave of disaster diplomacy.

Furthermore, the 2023 and 1999 waves of Greek-Turkish disaster diplomacy, are a constructive example of how proximity, government intervention, civil society involvement, and mutuality were all crucial factors in turning the calamity into a catalyst for positive dialogue on both sides of the Aegean. For instance, in 2023 the proximity factor made it easy for Greek rescuers to be among the first international responders to arrive in Türkiye's earthquake-affected regions. The Greek government played a crucial role in coordinating this effort, and Turkish officials quickly reciprocated with their support after the significant train accident in Tempe. This cooperation was broader than the governmental level. Ordinary people from Greece and Cyprus also actively participated in the aid effort by organizing campaigns to bring supplies to

Türkiye. The second wave of Greek-Turkish disaster diplomacy was a shining example of mutuality. Türkiye reciprocated Greek assistance by offering support and solidarity for the Greek people after the deadly train accident in Tempe.

### **Conclusion: A Short Wave for Athens and Türkiye to Seize**

On May 8, 2023, only a few days before the presidential and parliamentary elections in Türkiye, the Turkish Foreign Minister whilst referring to the improving climate in Greek-Turkish relations after the major earthquakes in his country and the train accident in Greece noted that: “[Greece] may want to maintain the positive atmosphere, but unless we solve the problems that have been going on for years, it is impossible for this positive atmosphere to last.”<sup>69</sup> The Greek Prime Minister’s speech, which came a few days after the one made by the Turkish diplomat, gave little cause for optimism for the immediate resolution of the significant issues in Greek-Turkish relations: “I hope the new Turkish government will reconsider how it deals with the entire West, not just Greece, Europe, NATO, and the US. We will continue to have a clear foreign policy because I must be pragmatic. This means we will continue strengthening our deterrent and defensive capabilities. I wish I didn't have to spend much over 2 % of my GDP on defense. But unfortunately, we are in a dangerous neighborhood where a country considerably larger than ours is acting violently. That's unfortunate. We don't have to wait for a catastrophe. But creating an environment of trust and goodwill is challenging when the Turkish government constantly warns that it will invade our islands.”<sup>70</sup> Similarly, the Greek Prime Minister criticized Ankara when developments on another open front, the Cyprus problem, were unfavorable. During this period, the Cyprus issue remained at a standstill, with the parties involved sticking to their positions.

Although it has not been long since the great catastrophes in Türkiye and Greece, the new wave of disaster diplomacy lends validity to the phenomenon’s theoretical underpinnings. The exchange of accusations, despite the warm mood that reigned following the 2023 tragedies, indicates that the new wave of disaster diplomacy in Greek-Turkish relations is no exception. The Greek-Turkish case study shows that the effects of disaster diplomacy are ephemeral. The

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<sup>69</sup> *Yeni Şafak* (2023), “Bakan Çavuşoğlu Yunanistan’ın ikili ilişkileri pozitif yönde devam ettirmek istediğini belirtti: Sorunları çözmeden mümkün değil”, 05.05.2023, Date of Accession 25.05.2023 from <https://www.yenisafak.com/secim/bakan-cavusoglu-yunanistanin-ikili-iliskileri-pozitif-yonde-devam-ettirmek-istedigini-belirtti-sorunlari-cozmeden-mumkun-degil-4528928>.

<sup>70</sup> *Naftemporiki* (2023), “Κ. Μητσοτάκης: Θα τείνω χείρα φιλίας στον νέο ηγέτη της Τουρκίας, αλλά δεν είμαι αφελής [Mr Mitsotakis: I will extend a hand of friendship to Türkiye’s new leader, but I am not naive]”, 12.05.2023, Date of Accession: 28.05.2023 from <https://www.naftemporiki.gr/politics/1470477/k-mitsotakis-tha-teino-cheira-filias-ston-neo-igeti-tis-toyrkias-alla-den-eimai-afelis/>.

latest disaster diplomacy sparked the dialogue, as in the case of the first wave. However, this approach only had a temporary impact. Just a few weeks after the initial cooperation, the main issues in Greek-Turkish relations were again at the forefront. Similarly, the activation of the unofficial communication channels and the disaster risk response and management measures were soon dropped.

This paper argues that after a devastating event, disaster diplomacy proposes cooperation between adversarial nations aiming at improving relations. However, long-standing disagreements and conflicts cannot be quickly resolved solely through collaborative disaster response. While catastrophes may temporarily shift priorities and encourage goodwill gestures, underlying animosity remains. Disasters may momentarily change people's priorities and inspire charitable deeds, but does not necessarily inspire new diplomatic engagement.

To break from the previous aggressive diplomatic pattern, long-term diplomacy requires that fundamental issues be settled through deep deliberation and creative solutions, not tactical diplomatic maneuvers. Years of opposing interests, priorities, and beliefs led to tensions between Greece and Türkiye. Even though helping one another following recent earthquakes and accidents was an example of constructive cooperation, this cannot erase the persistent differences plaguing the two countries' relationship. Lasting diplomacy requires addressing fundamental differences through extended negotiations and new strategies. The tensions between Greece and Türkiye developed over decades due to conflicting interests, values, and priorities too complex to solve only via disaster-related acts. Furthermore, as seen in Greek-Turkish relations in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, concentrating solely on disaster repercussions may overshadow diplomatic objectives.

After a major disaster, countries often have a brief window of opportunity to improve their relations. This is because disasters can create a sense of common purpose and cooperation. However, this window of opportunity is often fleeting, and therefore countries need to rush to instrumentalize it. One way to do this is to use the compartmentalization method. This involves breaking down more significant problems into smaller, more manageable ones. By focusing on specific issues, countries can progress without getting bogged down in more critical, more intractable problems. For example, scientists from two countries at odds over a territorial dispute could collaborate on research to mitigate the effects of a disaster or prevent future tragedies. The parties involved can progress on specific problems by using the compartmentalization method. This can help improve countries' relations and lay the foundation for lasting peace.

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## APPROCHE DES PRINCIPAUX PARTIS POLITIQUES SUR LA QUESTION KURDE EN TURQUIE

Ozan ÖRMECİ<sup>1</sup>

**Résumé :** Il ne fait aucun doute que « le problème kurde », « le conflit turco-kurde » ou « la question kurde » est l'un des principaux problèmes politiques à résoudre dans la politique turque. En raison du problème kurde, le terrorisme du PKK a causé la mort de plus de 40 000 citoyens en Turquie depuis les années 1980. En tant que pays orienté vers l'Occident, s'efforçant de préserver et de renforcer son système démocratique, la Turquie a mis en œuvre diverses politiques dans le but de contrer la menace terroriste posée par le PKK, y compris des mesures antiterroristes sévères, la politisation du problème en permettant aux partis politiques pro-kurdes d'entrer au parlement turc ainsi que des pourparlers de paix avec les terroristes. Cependant, ces efforts n'ont pas mis fin au terrorisme du PKK jusqu'à présent. Au contraire, en raison de la guerre civile en Syrie, des organisations dérivées du PKK telles que le PYD et les YPG ont gagné du terrain en Syrie et ont obtenu le soutien politique, économique et militaire des pays occidentaux. En ce sens, la question kurde est encore très critique pour l'avenir du régime en Turquie. Cet article vise à analyser l'approche des principaux partis politiques turcs face à la question kurde en analysant leurs programmes et bulletins électoraux.

**Mots clés :** *La question kurde, l'AKP, CHP, MHP, Les Kurdes en Turquie.*

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<sup>1</sup> Professeur associé au département de sciences politiques et relations internationales (anglais) à l'Université Aydın d'Istanbul, Istanbul, Türkiye.  
Email : [ozanormeci@aydin.edu.tr](mailto:ozanormeci@aydin.edu.tr) / [ozanormeci@gmail.com](mailto:ozanormeci@gmail.com).  
ORCID : 0000-0001-8850-6089.

## MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES' APPROACH TO KURDISH QUESTION IN TÜRKİYE

**Abstract:** There is no question that the “Kurdish Problem”, “Turkish-Kurdish Conflict”, or the “Kurdish Question” is one of the main political problems to be resolved in Turkish politics. Due to Kurdish problem, PKK terrorism caused the death of more than 40.000 citizens in Türkiye since the 1980s. As a Western-oriented country trying to preserve and develop its democratic regime, Türkiye has tried many different policies to prevent PKK terrorism including harsh anti-terror measures, politicization of the problem via allowing pro-Kurdish political parties to enter into the Turkish parliament as well as peace talks with the terrorists. However, these efforts did not put an end to PKK terrorism so far. On the contrary, due to the civil war in Syria, PKK offshoot organizations such as the PYD and the YPG gained large ground in Syria and took Western countries' political, economic, and military support. In that sense, Kurdish Question is still very critical for the future of the regime in Türkiye. This article aims to analyze main Turkish political parties' approach to Kurdish Question by analyzing their programs and election bulletins.

**Keywords:** *Kurdish Question, AK Parti, CHP, MHP, Kurds in Türkiye.*

## Introduction

La question kurde est la principale source de problèmes dans la politique démocratique de Türkiye depuis le début des années 1980. La question kurde a non seulement engendré l'émergence d'une organisation terroriste violente connue sous le nom de PKK, dont les activités terroristes ont entraîné le décès de plus de 40 000 citoyens en Turquie, mais elle a également perturbé la stabilité de la vie démocratique au sein du pays.

La République de la Turquie a jusqu'à présent essayé de nombreuses méthodes différentes pour mettre fin au terrorisme du PKK et améliorer sa démocratie sans les effets négatifs du conflit armé entre l'État et certains groupes de personnes. Au début, la Turquie aborda la question exclusivement sous l'angle de la sécurité et s'efforça de résoudre le problème au moyen de mesures sévères. Cependant, elle adopta par la suite des stratégies plus démocratiques et variées. En conséquence, les partis politiques et les députés pro-kurdes ont commencé à entrer au parlement turc et à défendre démocratiquement leur cause depuis les années 1990. Devant l'échec des initiatives parlementaires à produire des résultats concrets, la Turquie a également entamé des pourparlers de paix directs (négociations) avec l'organisation terroriste (PKK) dans les années 2010 dans le cadre de son processus de solution (*çözüm süreci*). Cependant, ces efforts ont également échoué en raison des attaques du PKK contre l'État en 2015. Ainsi, le problème n'est toujours pas résolu et à la table.

Dans cet article, je vais analyser l'approche des principaux partis politiques turcs sur la question kurde en analysant leurs documents officiels tels que les programmes des partis et les bulletins électoraux. Cependant, pour ce faire, je vais d'abord expliquer le statut juridique des Kurdes en Turquie ainsi que la courte histoire de la question kurde.

### 1. Brève histoire de la question kurde

Les Kurdes constituent près de 19 % de la population de Türkiye selon World Factbook.<sup>2</sup> Ergun Özbudun, dans son livre de 2004, a donné un chiffre de 10 à 15 % comme estimation pour décrire les Kurdes, la seule grande minorité linguistique de la Turquie.<sup>3</sup> Metin Heper, d'autre part, dans son livre de 2007 fait référence à deux sondages d'opinion fiables réalisés en 2006 et 2007, qui estimaient la population kurde en Turquie à environ 13,2 % et 15,6 %

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<sup>2</sup> The World Factbook, "Turkey (Türkiye)", Date d'adhésion : 04.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/turkey-turkiye/#people-and-society>.

<sup>3</sup> Ergun Özbudun (2000), *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*, London : Lynne Rienner Publishers, p. 143.



respectivement.<sup>4</sup> C'est pourquoi, nous pouvons affirmer avec confiance que les Kurdes sont le plus grand groupe ethnique de la Turquie après les Turcs.

Le traité de Lausanne de 1923 est le principal document international officiel qui a créé l'ordre existant en Turquie. La troisième section du Traité de Lausanne régleme les droits des minorités avec les articles de 37 à 45. Cependant, ces réglementations sont spécifiées pour les minorités non musulmanes. En ce sens, il n'y a aucune référence aux minorités musulmanes. La seule référence aux minorités musulmanes, y compris les Kurdes, est l'article 39, qui stipule que « *Nonobstant l'existence de la langue officielle, des facilités appropriées seront données aux ressortissants turcs de langue autre que le turc, pour l'usage oral de leur langue devant les tribunaux.* ».<sup>5</sup> Brièvement résumé comme le « *droit du traducteur* », cet article n'a pas été mis en œuvre par la République de la Turquie jusqu'à présent. Cependant, en dehors de cette question, les politiques mises en œuvre par la République de la Turquie envers les Kurdes ne sont pas contraires au Traité de Lausanne puisqu'il n'y a pas de droit spécifique accordé aux Kurdes dans ce traité de paix.

Expert du traité de Lausanne et du nationalisme kémaliste, Baskın Oran affirme que bien que le régime kémaliste ait été de nature laïque, afin d'intégrer les minorités musulmanes, y compris les Kurdes, les Laz et les Bosniaques, à la nouvelle nation « *turque* », il voulait prendre avantage de l'utilisation de l'islam.<sup>6</sup> Un autre exemple de ceci est l'attitude négative du régime kémaliste envers les Gagaouzes, une communauté chrétienne orthodoxe turque qui a été rejetée pour obtenir un passeport turc contrairement aux Bosniaques musulmans, dont l'immigration en Turquie a été acceptée par l'État dans les années 1930.<sup>7</sup> Oran souligne également que le régime de Lausanne a aidé la Turquie à conserver le « *système du millet* » ottoman et que seuls les groupes non musulmans tels que les Arméniens, les Juifs et les Grecs étaient considérés comme minoritaires.<sup>8</sup> De plus, dans l'un de mes articles de recherche, en examinant le travail de Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Afet İnan, *Vatandaş İçin Medeni Bilgiler* (1930), j'ai conclu que le nationalisme kémaliste n'a pas seulement embrassé la turcité comme une identité civique pour

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<sup>4</sup> Metin Hepar (2007), *The State and the Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation*, Houndsmill, Basingstone, Hampshire, U.K. : Macmillan/Palgrave, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Société des Nations – Recueil des Traités (1924), No. 701. *EMPIRE BRITANNIQUE, FRANCE, ITALIE, JAPON, GRECE, & TURQUIE. Traité de Paix, signé à Lausanne le 24 juillet 1923*, Date d'adhésion : 04.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/ion/volume%2028/v28.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Baskın Oran (1990), *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği Resmi İdeoloji Dışı Bir İnceleme*, İstanbul : Bilgi Yayınevi. p. 159.

<sup>7</sup> Metin Hepar (2007), *The State and the Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation*, p. 223.

<sup>8</sup> Baskın Oran (2000), *Türkiye'de Azınlıklar: Kavramlar, Lozan, İç Mevzuat, İçtihat, Uygulama*, İstanbul : TESEV Yayınları, pp. 47-48.

toutes les personnes vivant en Turquie, mais qu'il contenait certaines caractéristiques ethniques également.<sup>9</sup>

La constitution actuelle de la Turquie (constitution de 1982) régit la citoyenneté avec l'article 66. Selon cet article, tous les citoyens de la Turquie sont considérés comme turcs.<sup>10</sup> Tout comme le traité de Lausanne, la constitution turque ne contient aucune référence explicite aux Kurdes. Cependant, avec l'article 10 de la constitution, la République de la Turquie affirme que tous les peuples sont égaux devant la loi, quels que soient leur langue, leur race, leur couleur, leur sexe, leur idéologie politique, leurs convictions philosophiques, leur religion ou leur secte.<sup>11</sup> Cela pourrait être interprété comme des droits de citoyenneté égaux accordés à tous sous le toit de l'identité turque sans aucun droit de groupe particulier. Cette approche était très progressiste dans les années 1930, mais malgré le développement des droits collectifs au sein des démocraties occidentales durant la seconde moitié du XXe siècle, elle est demeurée en retard à bien des égards selon certains observateurs. C'est pourquoi, la soi-disant question kurde ou le problème kurde est devenu un sujet largement évoqué en Turquie à partir des années 1970.

Les premiers travaux écrits par İsmail Beşikçi à la fin des années 1960 ont ensuite été développés par les travaux d'universitaires occidentaux. En particulier, l'*Agha, Shaikh, and State* de l'universitaire néerlandais Martin Van Bruinessen en 1978 a changé les stéréotypes existants et a présenté la réalité de l'identité kurde après de longues années d'études de terrain réalisées dans quatre pays : la Turquie, la Syrie, l'Irak et l'Iran.<sup>12</sup> À partir des années 1980, de nombreux universitaires occidentaux ont commencé à faire des recherches sur ce sujet dans une perspective critique. Ainsi, des œuvres telles que *The Kurds in Turkey: A Political Dilemma* de Michael M. Gunter, *The PKK: A Report on Separatist Violence in Turkey 1973–1992* d'İsmet İmset et *A Modern History of the Kurds* de David McDowell a rendu le sujet très populaire et familier pour le public occidental.<sup>13</sup>

Bien qu'il y ait eu de nombreuses rébellions kurdes au cours de l'histoire républicaine (entre 1920 et 1938 seulement, ce pays a fait face à 17 rébellions kurdes, dont trois, celles de 1925,

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<sup>9</sup> Ozan Örmeci (2015), « Turkey's Kurdish Question Revisited », *American Academic & Scholarly Research Journal*, Vol. 7, No : 3, mai 2015, pp. 126-128.

<sup>10</sup> L'article turc original est le suivant : "Türk Devletine vatandaşlık bağı ile bağlı olan herkes Türktür". Voir ; T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Mevzuat Bilgi Sistemi, "Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası", Date d'adhésion : 04.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.5.2709.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> *idem*.

<sup>12</sup> Martin Van Bruinessen (1992), *Agha, Shaikh, and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*, New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd.

<sup>13</sup> Erik-Jan Zürcher (2004), *Turkey A Modern History*, New York : I.B. Tauris, p. 379.

1930 et 1937, étant majeures<sup>14</sup>), le problème kurde est devenu connu de tous en Turquie avec les attentats de 1984 perpétrés par l'organisation terroriste indépendantiste kurde PKK (Parti travailliste du Kurdistan/*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê*), un groupe de résistance armée pro-kurde créé par Abdullah Öcalan dans les années 1970 avec le nom « *Apocular* » d'abord. Rebaptisé tardivement PKK, le groupe terroriste marxiste-léniniste a trouvé un terrain confortable pour prospérer au début des années 1980 en raison des immenses pressions et cruautés organisées par le régime militaire après le coup d'État militaire du 12 septembre 1980. Le célèbre journaliste Hasan Cemal a tenté d'expliquer la naissance du PKK dans la prison de Diyarbakır comme une réaction aux attitudes indignes des soldats envers les prisonniers kurdes dans son livre de 2011, *Kürtler*.<sup>15</sup> Jusqu'à la capture du chef du PKK Abdullah Öcalan en 1999, le terrorisme du PKK a provoqué une quasi-guerre civile en Turquie dans les années 1980 et 1990.

Avec la capture d'Öcalan, une nouvelle ère a commencé dans la politique turque. Bien qu'Öcalan ait été condamné à mort, l'État n'a pas mis en œuvre cette décision et a ensuite aboli la peine de mort dans le cadre des réformes entreprises lors du processus d'intégration de la Turquie dans l'Union européenne.<sup>16</sup> Entre-temps, à partir du début des années 1990, des partis politiques et des politiciens pro-kurdes ont commencé à entrer au parlement en Turquie. Les politiciens pro-kurdes sont entrés au parlement turc pour la première fois en 1991 grâce à l'alliance électorale du HEP (Parti travailliste populaire), le parti pro-kurde, avec le SHP (Parti populiste social-démocrate), le parti social-démocrate. Grâce à cette stratégie, les politiciens pro-kurdes ont pu franchir le seuil électoral de 10 % et ont obtenu 21 sièges à la Grande Assemblée nationale turque.<sup>17</sup> Cependant, lorsque des députés du HEP, dont Leyla Zana et Hatip Dicle, ont décidé de prêter leur serment national au parlement en langue kurde, une crise politique a éclaté et les événements ont conduit à la fermeture du parti en 1993. En raison du seuil électoral de 10 %, les politiciens pro-kurdes sont finalement revenus au parlement en 2007. Cette fois, dans le cadre du bloc électoral « Un millier de candidats d'espoir » (*Bin Umut Adayları*) avec d'autres petits partis de gauche, des députés pro-kurdes ont été élus dans des villes à forte densité de population kurde en le sud-est de l'Anatolie. Avec cette stratégie, 22 députés pro-kurdes ont été élus. La même stratégie a également été adoptée lors des élections

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<sup>14</sup> Metin Heper (2007), *The State and the Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation*, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Hasan Cemal (2011), *Kürtler*, İstanbul: Doğan Kitap.

<sup>16</sup> Mehmet Ali Birand (2012), "Öcalan'ı neden idam etmemiştik, hatırlar mısınız?", *Hürriyet*, 13.11.2012, Date d'adhésion : 04.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ocalani-neden-idam-etmemistik-hatirlar-misiniz-21911576>.

<sup>17</sup> Ozan Örmeci (2015), « Turkey's Kurdish Question Revisited », p. 125.

de 2011 - cette fois le nom de la coalition électorale était « Bloc travail, démocratie et liberté » (*Emek, Demokrasi ve Özgürlük Bloku*) - et a permis à 35 députés pro-kurdes d'entrer au parlement. Depuis les élections de juin 2015, le principal parti politique pro-kurde HDP (Parti démocratique populaire) peut entrer au parlement en dépassant le seuil électorale de 10 %. Le parti a obtenu 80 sièges aux élections de juin 2015 (13,40 %), 59 sièges aux élections de novembre 2015 (10,99 %), 67 sièges aux élections de 2018 (12,01 %) et 65 sièges aux élections de 2023 (aux élections de 2023, le seuil électorale a été abaissé à 7 % et le parti a obtenu 8,91 % du total des voix).

Outre les méthodes démocratiques parlementaires, la République de la Turquie a également entamé des pourparlers directs avec le PKK et un processus de solution à partir de 2009. En 2009, l'Agence nationale de renseignement turque (MİT) a entamé des pourparlers avec le PKK à Oslo, en Norvège, pour ordonner au PKK de cesser le feu et de déposer les armes. Afin de saboter le processus, des sources inconnues ont publié les enregistrements sonores du sous-secrétaire du MİT, Hakan Fidan. En 2013, le PKK a déclaré son retrait du sol turc afin de soutenir le processus de solution. En 2014, le parlement turc a ratifié une loi pour mettre fin définitivement au terrorisme. La loi a été entérinée par le président de l'époque, Abdullah Gül, et a pris effet immédiatement. Afin d'expliquer la nécessité de ce processus pour renforcer la démocratie turque, le Premier ministre de l'époque, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, et son gouvernement ont créé un comité spécial appelé « *Délégation des sages* » (*Akil İnsanlar Heyeti*)<sup>18</sup>. Composé d'intellectuels, de politiciens et d'artistes connus et respectés, le groupe visait à créer un soutien populaire pour le processus de solution ou le processus d'ouverture (*açılım süreci*). Cependant, en raison des réactions brutales des nationalistes<sup>19</sup> et kémalistes ainsi que des attaques du PKK contre les forces de police turques en juillet 2015 à Ceylanpınar, Şanlıurfa, le gouvernement Erdoğan a dû annuler le processus.

Ainsi, en août 2023, la question kurde persiste sans afficher de développement ni de progrès significatifs. En fait, en raison de la guerre civile en cours en Syrie, la question kurde est

<sup>18</sup> Certaines personnalités notables de ce comité étaient l'acteur Kadir İnanır, le comédien Yılmaz Erdoğan, les actrices Hülya Koçyiğit et Lale Mansur, le musicien Orhan Gencebay, les universitaires Beril Dedeoğlu, Deniz Ülke Arıboğan, Fuat Keyman, Doğu Ergil, Vedat Bilgin et Baskın Oran, les journalistes Ali Bayramoğlu, Fehmi Kuru, Kürşat Bumin, Nihal Bengisu Karaca, Abdurrahman Dilipak, Avni Özgürel et Oral Çalışlar, et les intellectuels Mehmet Uçum, Mithat Sancar et Murat Belge. Voir ; *TRT Haber* (2013), « Akil insanların tam listesi », 03.04.2013, Date d'adhésion : 04.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/akil-insanlarin-tam-listesi-80941.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Par exemple, un nom influent au sein de l'AKP pendant cette période, l'ancien vice-Premier ministre Yalçın Akdoğan a écrit que le nationaliste turc MHP (Parti d'action nationaliste) a agi en conformité avec les groupes pro-kurdes pour critiquer et nuire au processus de solution. Voir ; Yalçın Akdoğan (2010), *İnsanı Yaşat Ki Devlet Yaşasın: Demokratik Açılım Sürecinde Yaşananlar*, İstanbul : Meydan Yayınları, pp. 522-525.

devenue un problème régional englobant les frontières turques. Pendant la guerre civile en Syrie depuis 2011, des groupes dérivés du PKK, dont le PYD (Parti de l'Union démocratique) et les YPG (Unités de défense du peuple), ont acquis un contrôle étendu sur le territoire du pays. De plus, ces groupes ont reçu une aide considérable des pays occidentaux dont les États-Unis, la France, le Royaume-Uni, etc. en raison de leur résistance contre les activités terroristes de l'État islamique (IS/ISIS). Bien que l'État islamique ait été vaincu par les opérations militaires menées par les Forces armées turques, les pays occidentaux soutiennent toujours ces groupes pro-kurdes liés au terrorisme.

Ayant ces informations de base, nous pouvons passer à l'analyse de l'approche des principaux partis politiques turcs sur la question kurde.

## **2. Approche des principaux partis politiques sur la question kurde en Turquie**

Dans cette partie, je vais analyser les principaux (importants) partis politiques turcs représentés au parlement en termes d'approche de la question kurde.

### **2.1. L'AKP**

L'AKP (Le Parti de la justice et du développement) est un parti islamoconservateur qui a été établi en 2001 et qui reste en pouvoir en Turquie depuis novembre 2002. Le leader du parti est Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, le président de la Turquie depuis 2014. L'AKP est le seul parti politique en Turquie qui s'adresse à toutes les régions géographiques et recueille les votes de tous les segments de la société. Depuis 2002, l'AKP n'a jamais perdu une élection ; au contraire, ils ont remporté 7 élections générales (2002, 2007, 2011, 2015 juin, 2015 novembre, 2018, 2023), 3 élections présidentielles (2014, 2018, 2023), 4 élections locales (2004, 2009, 2014, 2019) et 3 référendums (2007, 2010, 2017) - un total de 17 victoires électorales sans interruption. C'est pourquoi, nous pouvons clairement conclure que l'AKP est le parti politique le plus titré de l'histoire politique turque jusqu'à présent.

Le programme du parti de L'AKP est nommé « *Programme de développement et de démocratisation* ». Dans le cadre du deuxième chapitre du programme - Droits fondamentaux et principes politiques -, il existe un sous-chapitre spécifique intitulé « *Est et Sud-Est* », qui concerne les Kurdes en Turquie. Dans ce sous-chapitre, le parti déclare qu'il considère les différences culturelles dans les zones peuplées kurdes comme une richesse de la Turquie et bien qu'il prône une seule langue officielle et éducative (c'est-à-dire le turc), il vise à libérer l'usage

et l'enseignement d'autres langues ethniques dont la langue Kurde.<sup>20</sup> Le parti considère également le problème kurde ou la question du terrorisme comme une réalité et déclare vouloir éradiquer ce problème dans les limites d'un État unitaire et de l'intégrité territoriale du pays.<sup>21</sup> Le programme du parti souligne que -malgré le terrorisme soutenu par l'étranger- le problème est un problème intérieur de la Turquie et qu'il peut être résolu puisque le peuple kurde soutient l'État et continue de défendre la structure de l'État unitaire.<sup>22</sup> En ce sens, le parti défend la suppression des procédures d'état d'urgence dans la région et l'attitude tolérante de l'État envers les Kurdes.<sup>23</sup> Le programme du parti mentionne également que la région où vivent principalement les Kurdes est sous-développée et que les différences régionales ne sont pas traitées jusqu'à présent.<sup>24</sup> En ce sens, le programme révèle que la principale cause du terrorisme est le manque de services, le chômage, la pauvreté et la pression de l'État et, dans un cercle vicieux, cette situation renforce le terrorisme.<sup>25</sup> Le parti propose un État démocratique au lieu d'un État bureaucratique et le libre-échange dans la région pour le développement comme remède au terrorisme.<sup>26</sup>

Pour conclure, nous pouvons résumer l'approche du parti à la question kurde comme un libéralisme centré sur l'État qui offre des droits économiques et culturels aux kurdes au lieu de droits politiques (de groupe) ou d'options telles que le fédéralisme et l'autonomie. La charte du parti (*tüzük*) renforce également cette approche en faisant référence aux droits des individus à vivre comme ils le souhaitent et à penser, mais sans mentionner les droits d'un groupe particulier.<sup>27</sup>

## 2.2. CHP

Le CHP (Parti républicain du peuple), semblable au PRI (Parti révolutionnaire institutionnel) mexicain et au Congrès national indien (INC), est un parti fondateur de l'État fondé en 1923 par le père fondateur de la Turquie, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Longtemps resté au pouvoir et agissant en tant que parti de la bureaucratie et de l'État à l'époque du parti unique, le CHP a commencé à se transformer en un parti social-démocrate à partir des années 1960 en raison de

<sup>20</sup> AK Parti (2002), « Kalkınma ve Demokratikleşme Programı », Date d'adhésion : 07.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://www.akpartikdzeregli.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/parti-programi.pdf>, p. 28.

<sup>21</sup> *idem.*

<sup>22</sup> *idem.*

<sup>23</sup> *idem.*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>24</sup> *idem.*, p. 29.

<sup>25</sup> *idem.*

<sup>26</sup> *idem.*, pp. 29.30.

<sup>27</sup> AK Parti (2023), « Tüzük », janvier 2023, Date d'adhésion : 07.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://www.akparti.org.tr/media/asbklfdx/ak-parti-tuzuk.pdf>, p. 25.

ses échecs aux élections démocratiques contre les partis populistes de droite. Dans les années 2000, après avoir assuré l'unification de tous les grands partis de gauche, le CHP a commencé à critiquer le gouvernement de l'AKP sous l'angle du mode de vie moderne, de la laïcité et des droits des femmes sous la direction de Deniz Baykal. Le parti de ces années-là apparaissait comme un parti bourgeois laïc proche de l'armée turque qui tente de protéger la laïcité plus que la démocratie. Après que Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu a pris la direction du parti en 2010, le parti est devenu moins strict sur les pratiques radicales de la laïcité ainsi que sur le rôle de l'armée dans la vie politique. Si cette nouvelle stratégie a permis au CHP d'augmenter légèrement ses votes et de faire de gros progrès notamment dans les grandes villes comme dans le cas des élections locales de 2019, cela n'a pas suffi à changer le tableau d'ensemble et le règne de l'AKP s'est poursuivi.

Tout comme l'AKP, le CHP soutient que les diverses identités ethniques et cultures constituent des atouts pour la Turquie, et le parti promeut le pluralisme culturel.<sup>28</sup> Le parti met en avant que les identités ethniques constituent une source de fierté pour chaque individu.<sup>29</sup> En ce sens, le parti propose l'intégration au lieu de l'assimilation pour le problème kurde et propose de libérer librement l'usage du kurde et des autres langues ethniques dans tous les établissements d'enseignement privés.<sup>30</sup> Comme c'est déjà le cas dans le pays, on peut dire que le parti n'offre rien de nouveau. Le parti propose également des mesures sévères pour lutter contre le terrorisme, mais souligne la nécessité de séparer le peuple kurde des terroristes et l'approche fondée sur les droits de l'homme mise en œuvre par l'État.<sup>31</sup> Le CHP promet également de faire des investissements dirigés par l'État et des incitations pour les investissements privés dans la région du sud-est comme solution au sous-développement et à la lutte contre le terrorisme.<sup>32</sup>

Pour conclure, on peut dire qu'à l'instar de l'AKP, le CHP ne propose pas non plus de changement significatif dans la structure juridique et politique actuelle de la Turquie et ne promet que des ouvertures culturelles et une amélioration économique. Cela montre que ces deux parties continuent d'être des acteurs du statu quo. Il est également intéressant de noter qu'en tant que parti de gauche, le CHP n'a plus aucun attrait démocratique pour les Kurdes et les autres groupes ethniques.

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<sup>28</sup> CHP, « Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Programı », Date d'adhésion : 07.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://chp.azureedge.net/1d48b01630ef43d9b2edf45d55842cae.pdf>, p. 46.

<sup>29</sup> *idem.*

<sup>30</sup> *idem.*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>31</sup> *idem.*, p. 113.

<sup>32</sup> *idem.*, pp. 287-288.

### 2.3. MHP

Le MHP (Parti d'action nationaliste) est un parti d'extrême droite et ultranationaliste qui défend l'identité turque et les idéaux nationalistes turcs. Le parti a été fondé par Alparslan Türkeş en 1969. Türkeş était un ancien colonel qui a été la figure de proue du coup d'État militaire du 27 mai 1960 dans le pays. Le parti avait au début des idéaux ultranationalistes et une attitude anti-islamique sous l'influence de Hüseyin Nihal Atsız, un important intellectuel panturc, mais a ensuite adopté une stratégie de synthèse turco-islamique pour embrasser les cercles conservateurs et défendre les causes turques dans le monde arabe et islamique. Le parti n'a jamais remporté de grand succès aux élections, mais a conservé son influence dans la bureaucratie de la sécurité grâce aux relations étroites de Türkeş avec l'armée et les États-Unis pendant les conditions de la guerre froide.

Le MHP est devenu deux fois un petit partenaire de coalition dans les années 1970 avec le Parti de la justice (AP) de Süleyman Demirel et Türkeş a été vice-Premier ministre pour augmenter la dose d'anticommunisme et de nationalisme turc. Après la mort de Türkeş, Devlet Bahçeli est devenu le nouveau président du parti. Issu d'une formation universitaire, Bahçeli dans ses premières années a transformé le parti en un parti de droite plus modéré. Le parti a soutenu le CHP de Deniz Baykal contre Erdoğan et l'AKP dans les années 2000 afin de protéger le régime laïc et unitaire et pour empêcher le processus de solution envers les kurdes. Cependant, dans les années à venir, le parti se repositionne près de l'AKP et devient partenaire de l'Alliance populaire d'Erdoğan (*Cumhur İttifakı*). Le parti continue de garder son alliance avec l'AKP et de soutenir le régime d'Erdoğan bien que sa dose de nationalisme soit plus élevée par rapport au gouvernement. En attendant, le parti propose des mesures plus dures pour lutter contre le terrorisme du PKK.

Le nouveau programme du parti du MHP a été déclaré en 2009 sous le nom de « Vers l'avenir » (*Geleceğe Doğru*). Dans le programme du parti, il n'y a aucune mention des Kurdes. En ce sens, le parti identifie clairement la question comme un problème de terrorisme, et non comme une lutte démocratique. Le MHP considère la lutte contre le terrorisme comme une question de survie (*bekâ*) et propose une approche psychologique et sociologique du problème en plus de mesures sévères.<sup>33</sup> Le parti déclare également clairement qu'il considérerait les personnes qui font l'éloge du terrorisme et des terroristes ainsi que les personnes qui tentent de présenter les

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<sup>33</sup> MHP (2009), « Parti Programı: Geleceğe Doğru », Date d'adhésion : 07.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : [https://www.mhp.org.tr/usr\\_img/mhp2007/kitaplar/mhp\\_parti\\_programi\\_2009\\_opt.pdf](https://www.mhp.org.tr/usr_img/mhp2007/kitaplar/mhp_parti_programi_2009_opt.pdf), p. 121.



revendications terroristes comme des droits du peuple comme des terroristes également.<sup>34</sup> Le parti soutient également le haut prestige de l'armée turque et le développement de l'industrie de la défense nationale.<sup>35</sup>

Pour conclure, conformément à son idéologie d'extrême droite, le MHP ne tolère même pas la liberté d'opinion sur cette question et n'accepte pas l'existence des Kurdes en tant que groupe ethnique distinct dans le pays. Cela pourrait être considéré comme très dur, mais le MHP n'a déjà jamais été un acteur politique dominant en termes de performances électorales et a toujours préféré agir en tant que parti pour protéger l'État.

#### 2.4. İYİ Parti

İYİ Parti (le Bon Parti) est un tout nouveau parti politique de droite. Il a été créé en 2017 avec des personnes qui ont démissionné du MHP sous la direction de Meral Akşener, ancienne ministre de l'Intérieur de la Turquie. Bien que le parti soit né d'un désaccord personnel et d'une course à la direction entre Devlet Bahçeli et Meral Akşener, en fait, au cours des années, il s'est distingué du MHP en se concentrant davantage sur la laïcité et en critiquant le régime d'Erdoğan de manière plus dure. La base du parti est également très différente de celle du MHP et İYİ Parti recueille davantage les votes des nationalistes turcs vivant dans les grandes villes et des kémalistes / atatürkistes. En ce sens, bien que la fusion du parti avec le MHP soit toujours envisageable dans un avenir proche ou lointain, son identité n'est pas artificielle et elle pointe le clivage laïque-conservateur au sein des nationalistes turcs. Aux élections de 2018 et de 2023, le parti a obtenu près de 10 % des voix, ce qui montre son potentiel. Cependant, l'approbation par le parti des candidats du CHP aux élections locales ainsi que son alliance avec le CHP - Nation Alliance (*Millet İttifakı*)- lors de l'élection présidentielle de 2023 pose une stratégie politique qui n'a pas encore atteint le résultat escompté d'obtenir le pouvoir.

Semblable au programme du parti MHP, le programme du İYİ Parti ne fait aucune référence spécifique aux Kurdes. Cependant, dans le cadre du chapitre sur la sécurité intérieure et extérieure, le programme du parti mentionne le « *problème Est-Sud-Est* ». Au sein de ce sous-chapitre, le parti promet de faire de la lutte contre le terrorisme une priorité et n'offre aucune méthode de compromis au PKK et aux autres organisations terroristes.<sup>36</sup> Mais en attendant, le

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<sup>34</sup> *idem.*, p. 122.

<sup>35</sup> *idem.*, p. 124.

<sup>36</sup> İYİ Parti, « İYİ Parti Programı », Date d'adhésion : 07.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://iyiparti.org.tr/storage/img/doc/iyi-parti-guncel-parti-program.pdf>, p. 34.

parti prône des projets juridiques, politiques, économiques, sociaux et culturels pour intégrer les gens et affaiblir la cause des organisations terroristes.<sup>37</sup>

Pour résumer, de manière concomitante avec le MHP, İYİ Parti ne traite pas la question kurde comme un problème en soi, mais la considère plutôt comme étant liée au terrorisme.

## 2.5. HDP

Le HDP (Parti démocratique des peuples) est le parti politique pro-kurde le plus influent de ces dernières années. Il a été créé en 2012 dans le prolongement des anciens partis politiques pro-kurdes. Le parti a pu augmenter considérablement les votes pro-kurdes au cours des années et est devenu le premier parti politique pro-kurde à ne pas avoir peur du seuil électoral de 10 %. Le HDP a acquis 13,12 % aux élections de juin 2015, 10,75 % aux élections de novembre 2015, 11,70 aux élections de 2018 et 8,8 % aux élections de 2023. Bien que les voix du HDP aient diminué lors de cette dernière élection, le seuil électoral a été abaissé aussi à 7 %. De plus, il ne faut pas oublier que le président populaire et charismatique du parti, Selahattin Demirtaş, est emprisonné depuis 2016, un facteur qui a pu avoir une influence sur la perte de voix.

Le HDP, étant un parti politique pro-kurde, a accordé plus d'espace à la question kurde dans son programme. Le parti soutient ouvertement le modèle d'autonomie démocratique pour le nouveau système de gouvernance de la Turquie afin d'approfondir la démocratie turque et de satisfaire les demandes du peuple kurde.<sup>38</sup> Le parti s'oppose à l'assimilation ainsi qu'au rejetisme, et préconise l'adoption de méthodes pacifiques et démocratiques pour parvenir à une résolution de la question kurde.<sup>39</sup> En ce sens, le parti soutient le processus de solution et maintient la thèse de l'autodétermination des Kurdes.<sup>40</sup> Le HDP considère tous les autres partis politiques comme des « *partis du système* » et essaie de se distinguer des autres par son insistance sur de nouvelles idées telles que l'autonomie des Kurdes, les droits des LGBT, etc.<sup>41</sup>

Pour conclure, il convient de souligner que le HDP demeure le seul parti politique d'influence au sein du pays qui présente une solution politique alternative à la question kurde existante, en dehors du cadre du régime en vigueur. Le HDP démontre un engagement sincère envers l'autonomie dans la résolution des problèmes, sans considérer cette approche comme étant en contradiction avec les principes démocratiques ou constitutionnels.

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<sup>37</sup> *idem*.

<sup>38</sup> Halkların Demokratik Partisi, « Parti Programı », Date d'adhésion : 07.08.2023, Adresse d'accès : <https://hdp.org.tr/tr/parti-programi/8/>.

<sup>39</sup> *idem*.

<sup>40</sup> *idem*.

<sup>41</sup> *idem*.

## 2.6. Comparaison

Si nous devons faire une comparaison entre cinq partis politiques influents, nous pouvons dire que les deux plus grands partis (l'AKP et CHP) offrent des droits culturels et économiques aux Kurdes alors que le MHP et le Parti İYİ considèrent la question uniquement sous l'angle de la sécurité et se concentrent sur les méthodes antiterroristes. Le HDP, d'autre part, est le seul parti politique qui a un véritable agenda politique sur la question et il offre l'autonomie comme nouveau modèle de gouvernance pour les zones peuplées kurdes.

C'est pourquoi, à mon avis, étant donné que les autres partis politiques sont presque les mêmes sur cette question, l'approche originale et unique du HDP sur le problème pourrait bénéficier du soutien des Kurdes et des gauchistes turcs à moyen ou long terme. C'est parce que les gens en ont assez des événements terroristes et des mesures militaristes. De plus, les problèmes économiques de la Turquie n'offrent pas non plus une base confortable à l'État pour maintenir son système car il est dû aux réactions des gens.

D'autre part, les problèmes juridiques du HDP persistent et le parti pourrait être fermé dans un avenir proche via une décision de justice prise par la Cour constitutionnelle. C'est pourquoi, le mouvement politique kurde est entré dans les élections législatives de 2023 sous la bannière du YSP (Parti des Verts et de l'Avenir de la Gauche). Mais quel que soit le nom, les cas antérieurs de fermeture de partis montrent que le mouvement politique kurde continuera à lutter.

## Conclusion

En conclusion, cet article a cherché à résumer le statut juridique des Kurdes à la lumière du Traité de Lausanne et de la constitution actuelle de la Turquie. En outre, il s'est penché sur l'approche adoptée par les cinq partis politiques les plus influents en ce qui concerne la question kurde, tout en analysant leurs programmes respectifs. L'auteur a conclu que seul le HDP pro-kurde offre une solution politique au problème sur la base de l'autonomie, alors que l'AKP et le CHP sont similaires l'un à l'autre en raison de leur approche relativement adoucie autorisant les droits culturels pour les Kurdes bien qu'ils rejettent tous les deux les droits de groupe. D'un autre côté, le MHP et İYİ Parti aussi se ressemblent également puisqu'ils perçoivent la question comme une lutte antiterroriste et ne mentionnent pas les Kurdes.

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## TRADING STATE OR MACHIAVELLIAN STATE? RE-EVALUATING THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY UNDER ERDOĞAN

Oğuzhan GÖKSEL<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** In 2009, Kemal Kirişçi penned one of the most widely cited articles on the interplay between economic factors and Turkish Foreign Policy – at a time when Turkey was still experiencing the early years of the AK Parti (Justice and Development Party) rule. Kirişçi adopted the concept of “trading state” – originally developed by Richard Rosecrance – and argued that Turkey’s consolidating democratization, rising trade with neighbors and soft power diplomacy could fully transform Turkey into a trading state that would base its foreign economic policy on a peace-seeking, pro-democratic, and free-trade oriented vision. The main research question I tackle with in this article is that if we prepare a report card on the foreign policy performance of the AK Parti, could we realistically evaluate contemporary Turkey as a trading state? As Turkey moved away from a supposedly democratizing polity in the 2000s to an increasingly illiberal regime with by 2023, the Turkish foreign economic policy strategy has assumed a “Machiavellian character”. It will be argued that the vision of the AK Parti administration is not shaped by a liberal outlook, but by a nationalist and party-based understanding of economic benefits. As the AK Parti’s rule has proved durable over the years, we have seen an economic understanding of foreign policy making but not in ways envisaged by Liberal scholars such as Rosecrance and Kirişçi, and instead in the Neo-Realist – Machiavellian – ways illiberal polities (e.g. China) commonly formulate foreign economic policy.

**Keywords:** *Political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy, Trading state, Democratic backsliding, Machiavellian theory of foreign economic policy, Regime survival strategy.*

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<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor of Political Economy and Political Science; Marmara University, Faculty of Economics, Department of Economics (English), Göztepe Campus, Kadıköy, Istanbul, Turkey.  
Email: [oguzhan.goksel@marmara.edu.tr](mailto:oguzhan.goksel@marmara.edu.tr).

## **TİCARET DEVLETİ Mİ, MAKYAVELİST DEVLET Mİ? ERDOĞAN DÖNEMİ TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASI'NIN EKONOMİ POLİTİĞİNİN YENİDEN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ**

**Öz:** 2009 yılında Türkiye’de AK Parti (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) iktidarının ilk yıllarının yaşandığı bir dönemde, ekonomik faktörler ile Türk Dış Politikası arasındaki etkileşim üzerine en çok alıntı yapılan makalelerden birini Kemal Kirişçi kaleme aldı. Kirişçi, aslen Richard Rosecrance tarafından geliştirilen “ticaret devleti” kavramını benimseyerek; Türkiye’nin demokratikleşme sürecinin, komşu ülkelerle artan ticaretinin ve yumuşak güç diplomasisinin zamanla Türkiye’yi dış ekonomik politikasını liberal ilkelere dayandıran bir ticaret devletine dönüştürebileceğini savundu. Bu makalede ele aldığım temel araştırma sorusu şudur: Eğer AK Parti’nin dış politika performansı hakkında kapsamlı bir karne hazırlarsak, günümüz Türkiye’sini gerçekten de Rosecrance ve Kirişçi’nin öngördüğü türden bir ticaret devleti olarak değerlendirebilir miyiz? Türkiye, 2000’li yıllar boyunca sözde demokratikleşen bir yönetimden 2023’te otokratik birçok yön barındıran “melez bir rejime” dönüşürken, Türk dış ekonomi politikası stratejisi de “Makyavelist bir nitelik” kazandı. AK Parti’nin iktidarı yıllar içinde kalıcı oldu ve ekonomik faydaları merkeze alan bir dış politika anlayışını sürdürdü, ancak Rosecrance ve Kirişçi gibi Liberal uzmanların öngördüğünden ziyade Neo-Realist – Makyavelist – tarzda yapılan ve Çin benzeri diğer illiberal rejimlerin uyguladığına benzer bir dış ekonomi politikası ortaya çıktı.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Türk Dış Politikası’nın ekonomi politiği, Ticaret devleti, Demokratik erozyon, Makyavelist dış ekonomi politikası teorisi, Siyasi rejimin hayatta kalma stratejisi.*

## Introduction

Perhaps due to Turkey's exceptional geopolitical location and the important role it generally plays in global affairs, the political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy has received a considerable amount of academic attention over the course of the years. The position of Turkey at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East has always been acknowledged in terms of determining the country's foreign policy strategy. The early scholarly literature often placed an emphasis on the Cold War dynamics as well as the economic effect of Western allies, notably NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) through initiatives such as the Marshall Plan, on Turkey's foreign policy making process.<sup>2</sup> However, contemporary research<sup>3</sup> has expanded beyond purely geopolitical outlooks to integrate more nuanced theoretical frameworks such as Social Constructivism, Neo-Liberal Institutionalism, and Political Economy studies with a greater focus put on what might be termed Turkey's "*foreign economic policy*".<sup>4</sup>

The interaction between Turkey's crucial economic objectives and the choices Turkish governments make about foreign policy has been a prevalent topic across the available research. Studies have shed light on the ways in which economic factors such as trade alliances, energy security, and investment flows influence Turkey's diplomatic activities.<sup>5</sup> One line of inquiry in this regard is the concept of "*economic statecraft*" which discusses how Turkey uses its economic power to achieve foreign policy goals such as growing its

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Mustafa Aydın (2000), "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns and Conjunctures during the Cold War", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 36 (1), pp. 103-139.

<sup>3</sup> H. Tarık Oğuzlu (2020), "Turkish Foreign Policy in a Changing World Order", *All Azimuth*, 9 (1), pp. 127-139; Emel Parlar Dal (2018), *Middle Powers in Global Governance: The Rise of Turkey*, London: Palgrave Macmillan; R. Barış Tekin & Beyza Ç. Tekin (2015), *The Limits, Dilemmas, and Paradoxes of Turkish Foreign Policy: A Political Economy Perspective*, London: LSEE Papers on South Eastern Europe; Mustafa Kutlay & Ziya Öniş (2021/a), "Turkish Foreign Policy in a Post-Western Order: Strategic Autonomy or New Forms of Dependence?", *International Affairs*, 97 (4), pp. 1084-1104; Svante E. Cornell (2012), "What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy?", *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2012, pp. 13-24; Elvan Özdemir & Zehra Vildan Serin (2016), "Trading State and Reflections of Foreign Policy: Evidence from Turkish Foreign Policy", *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 38, pp. 468-475; Esen Kirdiş (2015), "The Role of Foreign Policy in Constructing the Party Identity of the Turkish Justice and Development Party (AK Parti)", *Turkish Studies*, 16 (2), pp. 178-194.

<sup>4</sup> A government's strategy regarding its economic ties with other nations is commonly referred to as its "*foreign economic policy*". Foreign economic policy covers a wide variety of courses of action that a nation takes in order to advance its economic interests on the global political economic arena. It includes managing the said country's trade and investments with other countries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and regional and international organizations. For more details on the conceptualization of foreign economic policy and its application to Turkey, see; Altay Atlı (2011), "Business Associations and Turkey's Foreign Economic Policy: From the 'Özal Model' to the AK Parti Period", *Boğaziçi Journal*, 25 (2), pp. 171-188.

<sup>5</sup> Mustafa Kutlay (2011), "Economy as the 'Practical Hand' of 'New Turkish Foreign Policy': A Political Economy Explanation", *Insight Turkey*, 13 (1), pp. 67-88; Andreas Stergiou & Christos Kollias (2022), "The Political Economy of Turkish Foreign Policy", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 24 (1), pp. 42-59; Kemal Kirişçi & Neslihan Kaptanoğlu (2011), "The Politics of Trade and Turkish Foreign Policy", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 47 (5), pp. 705-724.



regional influence, enhancing its so-called “*soft power*” and/or gathering support for certain policies.<sup>6</sup> In recent years, researchers have also been increasingly interested in Turkey’s pursuit of energy security and how that affects its complex relationships with countries such as Greece, Russia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, and Iran as well as the EU (European Union).<sup>7</sup>

Another essential component of the political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy is the country’s extensive network of commercial ties and collaborations. This line of inquiry investigates how economic relationships affect Turkey’s EU accession process, the state of the Customs Union Agreement, and Turkey’s fluctuating diplomatic relations with the EU.<sup>8</sup> Since the early 2000s, Turkey’s attempts to broaden its economic partners beyond the West – via cultivating relationships with nations across the non-Western world – have also received attention within the existing literature.<sup>9</sup> Turkey’s growing engagement in international aid and development assistance is also a notable topic that is beginning to surface in recent research. Researchers investigate how Turkey’s humanitarian assistance and development programs link with the country’s larger goals in terms of its foreign policy.<sup>10</sup> Others criticize the possible use of assistance as a weapon for political gain, while it is also suggested that it may be used as a tool to increase Turkey’s soft power and boost its position as a regional actor or “*middle power*”.<sup>11</sup>

The scholarly literature on the political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy has seen tremendous development over the years, which reflects the dynamic character of Turkey’s engagement in the affairs of its surrounding regions and the world in general. Though the aforementioned literature is rapidly growing, and that we will touch upon some of the

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<sup>6</sup> Emel Parlar Dal (2020), *Turkey’s Political Economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, London: Palgrave Macmillan; Altay Atlı (2011), “Business Associations and Turkey’s Foreign Economic Policy: From the ‘Özal Model’ to the AK Parti Period”; Michelangelo Guida & Oğuzhan Göksel (2018), “Re-Evaluating the Sources and Fragility of Turkey’s Soft Power After the Arab Uprisings”, in (eds. by Hüseyin Işıksal & Oğuzhan Göksel) *Turkey’s Relations with the Middle East: Political Encounters after the Arab Spring*, London: Springer, pp. 151-168.

<sup>7</sup> Mustafa Kutlay (2009), “A Political Economy Approach to the Expansion of Turkish-Greek Relations: Interdependence or Not?”, *Perceptions*, 14 (1), pp. 91-119; Mert Bilgin (2015), “Turkey’s Energy Strategy: Synchronizing Geopolitics and Foreign Policy with Energy Security”, *Insight Turkey*, 17 (2), pp. 67-81; Pınar İpek (2017), “Oil and Intra-State Conflict in Iraq and Syria: Sub-State Actors and Challenges for Turkey’s Energy Security”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 17 (3), pp. 406-419.

<sup>8</sup> Çiğdem Nas (2018), “Turkey-EU Customs Union: Its Modernization and Potential for Turkey-EU Relations”, *Insight Turkey*, 20 (3), pp. 43-60.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Chigozie Enwere & Mesut Yılmaz (2014), “Turkey’s Strategic Economic Relations with Africa: Trends and Challenges”, *Journal of Economics and Political Economy*, 1 (2), pp. 216-230.

<sup>10</sup> Kerim Can Kavaklı (2018), “Domestic Politics and the Motives of Emerging Donors: Evidence from Turkish Foreign Aid”, *Political Research Quarterly*, 71 (3), pp. 614-627.

<sup>11</sup> Hüseyin Zengin & Abdurrahman Korkmaz (2019), “Determinants of Turkey’s Foreign Aid Behavior”, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 60, pp. 109-135.

prominent arguments in the following section of the article, one particular study<sup>12</sup> of distinguished scholar Kemal Kirişçi demands special attention in the context of this article. In 2009, Kirişçi penned one of the most widely cited<sup>13</sup> articles on the interplay between economic factors and Turkish Foreign Policy – at a time when the country was still experiencing the early years of the now fully-consolidated<sup>14</sup> hegemony of the AK Parti (Justice and Development Party) and its longstanding leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Kirişçi put forward a number of bold claims that were valid in light of the available economic data in the late 2000s as can be seen in Table I and Table II of his work.<sup>15</sup>

According to Kirişçi, the AK Parti’s “*liberal foreign policy vision*” throughout the 2000s constituted a radical departure from the then mainstream Turkish Foreign Policy that traditionally was based on a “*hard power*”<sup>16</sup> centric approach towards neighbors such as Greece, Iran, Syria, Iraq, and Armenia. The AK Parti administration of then Prime Minister Erdoğan – and other key policy-makers of the period such as former President Abdullah Gül and former Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu – attempted to foster positive diplomatic relations with each and every neighbor including building bridges with those historically hostile ones (i.e. Armenia, Greece, and occasionally Syria as was the case during the 1990s). Alongside these diplomatic overtures, trade volume between Turkey and its neighbors significantly increased from 2002 onwards.<sup>17</sup>

Throughout the 2000s, the AK Parti’s soft power oriented diplomacy was also accompanied by unprecedented political reforms (e.g. the peace and reconciliation initiatives entitled the “*Kurdish and Alevi openings*” towards Turkey’s notable minorities) that raised the hopes of

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<sup>12</sup> Kemal Kirişçi (2009), “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State”, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 40, pp. 29-57.

<sup>13</sup> Google Scholar indicates that the said article has been cited by 679 other works (as of 8<sup>th</sup> August 2023).

<sup>14</sup> As of the writing of this article, the AK Parti had just won yet another major victory in the 2023 election as Erdoğan guaranteed another term as president while the AK Parti-led coalition (the People’s Alliance) acquired parliamentary majority. Barring any unexpected developments, President Erdoğan and his party are expected to rule until 2028 – which constitutes an uninterrupted rule of the same leader and political movement for more than a quarter century from 2002 onwards. The length and durability of the AK Parti’s hegemony is unprecedented in the post-1950 democratic period of the Republic of Turkey. The AK Parti rule is envisaged to match the long one-party regime of the CHP (Republican People’s Party) from 1923 to 1950 during the formative presidential tenures of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and İsmet İnönü.

<sup>15</sup> See; Kemal Kirişçi (2009), “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State”, pp. 48-49.

<sup>16</sup> Hard power refers to the use of coercive means in order to exercise influence over other countries. It includes the use of military force, economic sanctions, and other types of direct pressure in order to mold the conduct of other governments or players operating on the global stage. For a hard power focused examination of the political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy, see; Sabri Ciftci (2023), “Military Might: A Domestic Economy Explanation of Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Turkish Studies* (Online), Date of Accession: 05.08.2023 from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14683849.2023.2196020?journalCode=ftur20>.

<sup>17</sup> Kemal Kirişçi (2009), “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State”, p. 48.

numerous observers for democratization in the country.<sup>18</sup> In this conjuncture, Kirişçi applied the concept of “*trading state*” – originally developed by Richard Rosecrance<sup>19</sup> – to the political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy under the AK Parti administration. He supposed that Turkey’s consolidating democratization, rising trade with neighbors and with various regional and major powers, and soft power diplomacy strategy would all combine to create a positive feedback loop with each other – which could in time fully transform Turkey into a trading state that would base its foreign economic policy on a peace-seeking, pro-democratic and free-trade oriented vision long espoused by the Neo-Liberal Intuitionist school of IR (International Relations).<sup>20</sup>

The main research question I tackle with in this article is that if we prepare a report card on the foreign policy performance of the AK Parti from 2002 to 2023, could we realistically evaluate contemporary Turkey as a trading state in the manner described by Rosecrance and Kirişçi? The workings of Turkish politics, economy, and foreign policy under the rule of the AK Parti has radically changed since the early 2010s. As Turkey moved away from a supposedly democratizing liberal/pluralist polity in the 2000s to an increasingly illiberal regime with various autocratic features (e.g. restrictions of the freedom of press and social media) by 2023, the Turkish foreign economic policy strategy has assumed a “*Machiavellian character*” in the form of utilizing trade relations to bolster the political survival of the AK Parti administration.<sup>21</sup> It will be argued that – just as envisaged by the trading state approach – though Turkish Foreign Policy decision-making process is still primarily driven by economic factors, the vision of the AK Parti administration is not shaped by a liberal outlook concerned with human development, democratization, and peaceful diplomacy, but by a nationalist and party-based understanding of economic benefits. As such, it should be clear that liberalism or advanced democratic standards are not prerequisites for a government to evaluate foreign policy making primarily through the lens of economic drivers. As the AK Parti’s rule has

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<sup>18</sup> Kemal Kirişçi (2009), “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State”; Mesut Özcan (2017), “Turkish Foreign Policy under the AK Party”, *Insight Turkey*, 19 (2), pp. 9-19; Alexandros Zachariades (2018), “Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Parti Era”, *E-International Relations*, 21.03.2018; Alper Coşkun & Sinan Ülgen (2022), *Political Change and Turkey’s Foreign Policy*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

<sup>19</sup> Richard Rosecrance (1986), *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*, New York: Basic Books.

<sup>20</sup> Kemal Kirişçi (2009), “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State”; Richard Rosecrance (1986), *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*.

<sup>21</sup> Özlem Tür & Ahmet K. Han (2016), “A Framework for Understanding the Changing Turkish Foreign Policy of the 2000s”, in (eds. by Özden Zeynep Oktav) *Turkey in the 21st Century: Quest for a New Foreign Policy*, New York: Routledge, pp. 10-16; Sinan Ülgen (2022) “Change and Continuity in Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development*, 20, pp. 220-229.

proved durable and the party began to impose its vision on every aspect of Turkey's social, economic, and political life, we have seen an economistic understanding of foreign policy making but not in ways envisaged by Liberal scholars of IR such as Rosecrance and Kirişçi, and instead more in the Neo-Realist<sup>22</sup> – Machiavellian – ways illiberal polities (e.g. hybrid and authoritarian regimes) formulate foreign economic policy.

In the following first section, the article will examine the evolution and main contributions of the growing scholarly literature on the political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy in the centennial anniversary of the Republic in 2023. This will help us better appreciate the aforementioned work of Kirişçi as a breakthrough and important milestone within the discourse on the subject. As such, in the second section, the concept of trading state as defined by its progenitor Rosecrance and applied to Turkey by Kirişçi will be discussed in detail. In the penultimate third section, recent developments in Turkish domestic politics and foreign economic policy will be studied in light of the concept of trading state and it will be argued that a more accurate definition of contemporary Turkish foreign economic policy is what can be termed a “*Machiavellian state*”.

### **1. The Literature on the Political Economy of the AK Parti's Foreign Policy at a Glance**

For the research purposes of this article, it is essential to provide a brief review of the existing literature on the political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy under the AK Parti. In the centennial anniversary of the Republic in 2023, this would help us identify the main contours of the valuable research conducted on this field. Our comprehension of the political economics underlying Turkey's foreign policy has been greatly advanced by the contributions of a number of research studies. These well-known works have received widespread citations within the context of the academic discourse as a result of their extensive analysis and theoretical insights. In the following section, I will highlight some of the most notable arguments presented by this literature on the foreign economic policy of Turkey from the early years of the AK Parti rule in the 2000s to the contemporary period in the late 2010s and early 2020s.

One of the most common arguments that can be found in academic writing is that as the country adopted an export-oriented industrialization model in the 1980s – during the tenure of Turgut Özal – and its exports rapidly increased, Turkey's trade relations have begun to

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<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Markus Fischer (1995), “Machiavelli's Theory of Foreign Politics”, *Security Studies*, 5 (2), pp. 248-279; Daniel W. Drezner (2009), “Machiavelli Revisited”, *The National Interest*, 100, pp. 66-70.

considerably impact its foreign policy.<sup>23</sup> Scholars believe that economic factors such as trade alliances, energy security, and foreign direct investment (e.g. from Gulf countries such as Qatar) play a significant influence in determining the nature of present-day Turkey's diplomatic relationships.<sup>24</sup> Turkey's alignments with other nations and areas are naturally informed by Turkey's pursuit of economic advantages such as access to more energy resources or new markets.

The historical origins of the AK Parti's ever-rising attention to foreign economic policy are often traced to the Özal era from 1983 to 1993 – which was shaped by his liberal outlook in domestic and global affairs. It is not surprising; therefore, that the so-called Özal era was also the time Turkish political economy and foreign policy has begun to be studied in light of the insights of Neo-Liberal IR approaches. The idea behind Neo-Liberal Institutionalism is that international institutions and economic interdependencies have an effect on the decisions that governments make regarding their foreign policy. In this context, Neo-Liberal leaning IR scholars have investigated how Turkey's participation in regional organizations such as the EU, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and energy transit projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline reflects the country's ambition to use economic cooperation for diplomatic benefits.<sup>25</sup>

Additionally, academics have investigated how Turkey's internal economic problems influence the country's foreign policy decisions. It is generally agreed that Turkey's legitimacy as a globally influential middle power depends on how stable its economy is in a given time period.<sup>26</sup> The capacity of the government to carry out certain measures related to foreign policy may be hindered by factors like as economic downturns, inflation, currency volatility, and public debt. From this point of view, the dynamic relationship that exists between domestic economic realities and international diplomatic agendas is emphasized. In the research that has been conducted, Turkey's delicate balancing act between its Western allies, most notably NATO and the EU, and its growing partnerships with non-Western

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<sup>23</sup> See, for example, R. Barış Tekin & Beyza Ç. Tekin (2015), *The Limits, Dilemmas, and Paradoxes of Turkish Foreign Policy: A Political Economy Perspective*, pp. 13-14; Kemal Kirişçi & Neslihan Kaptanoğlu (2011), "The Politics of Trade and Turkish Foreign Policy".

<sup>24</sup> Elvan Özdemir & Zehra Vildan Serin (2016), "Trading State and Reflections of Foreign Policy: Evidence from Turkish Foreign Policy".

<sup>25</sup> Andreas Stergiou & Christos Kollias (2022), "The Political Economy of Turkish Foreign Policy"; Mesut Özcan (2017), "Turkish Foreign Policy under the AK Party"; Elvan Özdemir & Zehra Vildan Serin (2016), "Trading State and Reflections of Foreign Policy: Evidence from Turkish Foreign Policy".

<sup>26</sup> Mustafa Kutlay & Ziya Öniş (2021/b), "Understanding Oscillations in Turkish Foreign Policy: Pathways to Unusual Middle Power", *Third World Quarterly*, 42 (12), pp. 3051-3069; Emel Parlar Dal (2018), *Middle Powers in Global Governance: The Rise of Turkey*.

powers like Russia and China has been examined.<sup>27</sup> Scholars have debated the ways in which economic and political factors influence Turkey's participation with both sides, looking at the incentives and restrictions that are connected with each alignment.<sup>28</sup>

The political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy has experienced substantial shifts and fluctuations during the administration of President Erdoğan and his AK Parti, reflecting the impact of both domestic and international forces. The overall attitude that Turkey takes toward international affairs has been influenced by Erdoğan's personalist and populist leadership style, which is characterized by his vocal desire to increase Turkey's regional and global influence via the utilization of a more aggressive foreign policy.<sup>29</sup> From the time the AK Parti first came to power in 2002, the Erdoğan administration placed a high priority on economic development as a foundational component of its approach to foreign policy. The early years of the AK Parti's rule in the 2000s were characterized by structural economic reforms and liberalization policies that attempted to attract foreign investment through establishing the image of "*a stable and prosperous Turkey*".<sup>30</sup>

Economic factors were often considered during diplomatic negotiations of the 2000s as Turkey made use of the economic clout it had in order to strengthen its relations with Syria, Iran, Iraq, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Russia.<sup>31</sup> Erdoğan advocated an interventionist foreign policy agenda with the goal of reasserting Turkey's dominance not just in the Middle East, but also farther afield in the Caucasus, Balkans, and North Africa. This included using economic participation as a tool in the service of achieving political and strategic objectives. The goal of Turkey's efforts was to strengthen its position as a prominent player in regional discussions by capitalizing on its economic and diplomatic resources and assuming the role of a mediator in existing issues such as the Arab-Israeli Conflict, the regime building process in Baghdad, the struggle over the autonomy of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Northern Iraq, and Iran's nuclear program negotiations.<sup>32</sup> This way of thinking culminated in

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<sup>27</sup> Mustafa Kutlay & Ziya Öniş (2021/b), "Understanding Oscillations in Turkish Foreign Policy: Pathways to Unusual Middle Power".

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*; Alper Coşkun & Sinan Ülgen (2022), *Political Change and Turkey's Foreign Policy*; Alexandros Zachariades (2018), "Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Parti Era".

<sup>29</sup> *Anadolu Ajansı* (2022), "Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan 'Türkiye Yüzyılı' Vizyonunu Açıkladı", 28.10.2022, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/politika/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-turkiye-yuzyili-vizyonunu-acikladi/2723379#>.

<sup>30</sup> Mustafa Kutlay & Ziya Öniş (2021/b), "Understanding Oscillations in Turkish Foreign Policy: Pathways to Unusual Middle Power", pp. 3053-3056.

<sup>31</sup> Andreas Stergiou & Christos Kollias (2022), "The Political Economy of Turkish Foreign Policy".

<sup>32</sup> Mustafa Kutlay & Ziya Öniş (2021/b), "Understanding Oscillations in Turkish Foreign Policy: Pathways to Unusual Middle Power", p. 3054.

the policy of “*zero problems with neighbors*”, the primary objective of which was to establish robust economic and political connections with the nations that were located nearby Turkey.

As Erdoğan continued to win elections and consolidate his stronghold over the AK Parti and Turkish politics as a whole, the AK Parti’s foreign policy acquired an increasingly assertive and audacious character. The Erdoğan administration made a concerted effort to broaden the scope of Turkey’s economic alliances beyond its usual Western allies, with the goal of cultivating deeper connections with nations located in Central Asia, Africa, the broader Middle East, and East Asia.<sup>33</sup> As seen by Turkey’s deepening involvement with Middle Eastern and North African nations such as Qatar and Sudan in recent years, economic diplomacy evolved under the AK Parti rule into a tool that could potentially be used to increase Turkey’s power, open up new markets, and guarantee access to energy resources.<sup>34</sup> Because of its strategic position at the intersection of energy corridors leading to and from the Caspian area, the Middle East, and Europe, Turkey has emerged as a central figure in the geopolitics of the energy sector. The AK Parti administration has actively promoted infrastructure projects such as pipelines and trade ports in order to improve the country’s capacity for energy transit and to expand its political economic relations with nations (i.e. Russia and Azerbaijan) that produce energy.

Both Turkey’s political economy and its foreign policy have been radically influenced as a consequence of the onset of the war in Syria in 2011 and the dramatic refugee crisis that followed. The manner in which Turkey responded to the Syrian Civil War, including aiding for a number of opposition organizations, had an effect on the country’s ties with global powers such as Russia and the United States (U.S.). In addition, Turkish economy has been increasingly stretched as a result of housing millions of Syrian refugees, which impacted both the internal and international dimensions of Turkey’s choices on its foreign policy. Tensions have built up in Turkey’s relationships with its traditional Western allies over the course of time, most notably the U.S. and a number of European nations such as Germany and France.<sup>35</sup>

Within the scholarly literature, one of the most widely debated features of the AK Parti foreign policy has been the consistent attempt of Ankara to walk a tight rope between its

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<sup>33</sup> Sinan Ülgen (2022) “Change and Continuity in Turkish Foreign Policy”, pp. 223-226.

<sup>34</sup> Özgür Pala & Khalid Al-Jaber (2022), *Turkish-Qatari Relations: From Past to Present in a Turbulent Geopolitical Landscape*, Maryland: Lexington Books.

<sup>35</sup> Oğuzhan Göksel (2019) “Foreign Policy Making in the Age of Populism: The Uses of Anti-Westernism in Turkish Politics”, *New Middle Eastern Studies*, 9 (1), pp. 13-35.

engagement with Western countries and its pursuit of greater connections with non-Western powers such as Iran, Russia, and China.<sup>36</sup> In the process of looking at other sources of investment, technological transfer, and political backing, Turkey has also been influenced by economic concerns which played a crucial part in the adjustments that took place within the AK Parti's foreign economic policy. Starting in particular from the mid-2010s onwards, Turkey has struggled with a plethora of severe economic problems such as very high inflation, a seemingly out-of-control devaluation of national currency, and a growing public debt.<sup>37</sup> Because Turkey's reputation as a regional and global player is tied to the nation's economic stability as noted in the aforementioned literature, these socio-economic problems interact with the country's choices about its foreign policy. As such, the AK Parti administration's goals for foreign policy have become intricately intertwined with its initiatives to alleviate economic problems and to entice investment from abroad – a subject that we will focus in the third section of this article.

In a nutshell, the above scholarly literature on the political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy under the AK Parti has a wide variety of viewpoints and methodologies, and these publications provide a cross-section of such views and techniques. They all contribute, individually and together, to our comprehension of the ways in which economic considerations play a key role in contemporary Turkey's diplomatic choices, regional alliances, and global participation. The arguments range from economic interests and institutional dynamics to energy geopolitics and identity narratives. The political economy of Turkish Foreign Policy under President Erdoğan and his AK Parti administration has been defined by a multidimensional approach that combines economic development, regional influence, energy geopolitics, and strategic diversification of relationships. The convergence of economics and diplomacy in Turkey's international engagements will surely be shaped by the shifting geopolitical environment as well as the country's efforts to pursue an assertive foreign policy. As Turkey continues to negotiate the altering regional and international dynamics, continued study will be essential in order to untangle the multiple components of Turkey's economically driven foreign policy.

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<sup>36</sup> Mustafa Kutlay & Ziya Öniş (2021/b), "Understanding Oscillations in Turkish Foreign Policy: Pathways to Unusual Middle Power"; Andreas Stergiou & Christos Kollias (2022), "The Political Economy of Turkish Foreign Policy"; Alexandros Zachariades (2018), "Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Parti Era"; Emel Parlar Dal (2020), *Turkey's Political Economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

<sup>37</sup> Özgür Orhangazi & A. Erinç Yeldan (2021), "The Re-Making of the Turkish Crisis", *Development and Change*, 52 (3), pp. 460-503; Ziya Öniş (2019), "Turkey under the Challenge of State Capitalism: The Political Economy of the Late AK Parti Era", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 19 (2), pp. 201-225.



## 2. The Concept of “Turkish Trading State” as a Breakthrough and Warning

Within the aforementioned literature, Kirişçi’s work has been a ground-breaking one due to the influence of many of its arguments within the scholarly and public discourse on the AK Parti’s foreign policy. According to Kirişçi, the formulation of Turkish Foreign Policy during the 2000s had progressively been influenced by economic factors such as export markets, investment prospects, tourism, and energy resources.<sup>38</sup> The intersection between foreign policy and domestic affairs had expanded beyond considerations of democratization, identity, and civil society engagement, encompassing employment and income creation as well. One potential measure of this phenomenon lies in the responsiveness of Turkish financial markets to a diverse range of foreign policy matters (e.g. fluctuating relations with EU countries and various diplomatic crises with the U.S. and Russia).<sup>39</sup>

Kirişçi believes that the rising importance of foreign trade within Turkish economy necessitated a systematic study of the interaction between the field of economics and the domain of foreign policy.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, he applies the concept of the “*trading state*” – originally proposed by Rosecrance – to the case of Turkish foreign economic policy. According to Rosecrance, a paradigm shift occurred in the realm of global trade in the 1980s – wherein a new global trading system now widely referred to as “*neo-liberalism*” gradually supplanted the traditional framework characterized by a dominance of military-political and territorial considerations.<sup>41</sup>

Rosecrance echoes other well-known scholars of Neo-Liberal Institutionalism such as Joseph Nye<sup>42</sup> and argues that all states have two distinct options in attempting to reach their foreign policy goals: first approach is predicated upon fostering collaboration and engaging in peaceful communication with other nations via building strong economic ties, deep cultural exchange, and spreading diplomatic influence – all beings tools of soft power.<sup>43</sup> Second approach, however, places great emphasis on military capacities, territorial control, and hard power dynamics within the realm of global affairs – arguing that only through ultimatums and other forms of coercion a country could possibly see its foreign policy aims fulfilled.

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<sup>38</sup> Kemal Kirişçi (2009), “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State”, *New Perspectives on Turkey*.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Richard Rosecrance (1986), *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*, pp. 27-42.

<sup>42</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr. (2004), *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York: Public Affairs.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*; Richard Rosecrance (1986), *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*.

According to Rosecrance, the modern global trading landscape is not advantageous for jingoist non-democratic nations who rely on hard power as their primary strategy and that the political-economic supremacy of the supposedly soft power oriented liberal democratic U.S. over hard power preferring totalitarian Soviet Union could be seen as a validation of his thesis.<sup>44</sup>

The belief that a country's economic might and its ability to participate in international commerce plays a vital role in determining its level of global influence is at the heart of the concept of trading state. In contrast to Neo-Realist IR perspectives, which have always focused on military superiority, Rosecrance contends that successful trading states draw significant power not just from their domestic economic resources, but also from their capacity to manage economic interdependence with other countries. According to Rosecrance, trading states have made the formation of trade agreements, the growth of economic alliances, and the construction of economic infrastructure a top priority.<sup>45</sup> They are able to participate in global marketplaces, get access to resources and contribute to the expansion of the economy as a result.

In addition, the notion of the trading state highlights the connection of economic development, democratization, and diplomatic strategy. When a state is economically powerful and possesses a stable democratic regime, it supposedly has more tools at its disposal to achieve its foreign policy goals via relaying a reliable/positive global image.<sup>46</sup> Trading states have the ability to change the conduct of other countries without resorting to conventional kinds of coercion. This is accomplished through granting trade incentives, investments, and economic support. The idea of the trading state is still very pertinent in the modern context of global economy. The growing interconnectedness of economies, which has been made possible by technical advances and globalization, has led to an increase in the significance of economic concerns in the context of international politics. States are not only vying with one another for military supremacy, but also for economic influence and access to various markets.

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<sup>44</sup> Richard Rosecrance (1986), *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*, p. 13.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

The EU, for example, is an excellent illustration of a state collective that engages in commerce and that could be classified as a “*trading [supra]-state*”.<sup>47</sup> Due to the harmonization of the economies of the EU’s member states and the establishment of democratization and free-trade as prerequisites for membership, the EU as a whole is now able to exert a significant amount of economic and cultural weight on the international scene. The EU is able to harness its economic power to promote its ideals, regulatory standards, and regional stability by using its Customs Union and other trade agreements.

Rosecrance’s conceptualization helped establish a sophisticated understanding of the power dynamics that are at play in the constantly shifting terrain of international politics. Despite the fact that Rosecrance’s trading state provides a novel and insightful point of view, however, it is not without its restrictions. Critics contend that concentrating simply on economic power ignores the intricate interaction of other elements including cultural impact, ideological concerns, and moral issues.<sup>48</sup> In addition, the idea does not sufficiently acknowledge the fact that illiberal polities (i.e. totalitarian, authoritarian, and hybrid regimes) may also harness trade relations as an invaluable source to acquire regional and/or global political power via developing systematic foreign economic policy strategies.

Taking the above summary of Rosecrance’s trading state as a basis; Kirişçi suggests that the “*zero-problem with neighbors*” foreign policy of the AK Parti in the 2000s can be viewed as a tangible embodiment of “*typical trading state behavior*”.<sup>49</sup> According to Kirişçi, the integration of the Turkey into the global economy from the early 1980s onwards is a significant factor driving Turkey’s transition into a trading state. That is the case because as the share of foreign trade within Turkey’s GDP (Gross Domestic Product) increased since 1980, a need emerged to foster more positive diplomatic relations with the outside world.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, the zero-problem policy implemented by the AK Parti government towards countries in Turkey’s vicinity might be interpreted via an economic lens, alongside the desire to discover fresh avenues for exporting goods.

According to Kirişçi, the foundation of the so-called “*Turkish trading state*” can be traced back to the 1980s – the tenure of Özal as he undertook democratization, supervise the

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<sup>47</sup> Richard N. Rosecrance (1993), “Trading States in a New Concert of Europe”, in (eds. by Helga Haftendorn) *America and Europe in an Era of Change*, London: Routledge, pp. 127-145.

<sup>48</sup> René Zentner (1987), “A Review of The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World”, *The Journal of Energy and Development*, 13 (1), pp. 154-156; Elvan Özdemir & Zehra Vildan Serin (2016), “Trading State and Reflections of Foreign Policy: Evidence from Turkish Foreign Policy”.

<sup>49</sup> Kemal Kirişçi (2009), “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State”, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, p. 42.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-48.

consolidation of a free-market economy alongside ambitious diplomatic endeavors to expand Turkey's trade volume via partnerships with European, Middle Eastern, and Central Asian economies.<sup>51</sup> However, after Özal's death in 1993, Kirişçi believes that the liberal trajectory of Turkey was subsequently disrupted when the Kemalist/nationalist elite within the country's military and judiciary launched a series of interventions (e.g. the 28<sup>th</sup> February 1997 military intervention) to take control and push the country's foreign policy towards a hard power oriented direction via resorting to ultimatums against Greece and Syria in various crises in the mid to late-1990s.<sup>52</sup> Kirişçi suggests that the AK Parti's electoral victories in 2002 and 2007 up-ended the Kemalist direction and placed the country once again on the path to being a liberal trading state with Ankara launching peaceful dialogue initiatives to all the countries in its vicinity in the Balkans, Middle East, and the Caucasus in the 2000s.<sup>53</sup> Kirişçi implies that the AK Parti's democratization initiatives (e.g. the Kurdish opening) and its trading state oriented foreign economic policy is responsible for the country's high economic growth rates, successful attraction of foreign direct investment, rising soft power, and a rapid expansion of foreign trade volume.<sup>54</sup>

Nevertheless, and despite the aforementioned support for the vision of the AK Parti in the 2000s, Kirişçi also offers astute warnings for the long-term future of the Turkish trading state: *“Over the last few years, the trading state has made a conspicuous comeback. However, the Turkish trading state is far from being consolidated and faces a set of challenges. These challenges have to do with both domestic and external factors. The world economy is going through a major crisis, and it is not yet certain whether the principles of free trade will continue to prevail. Since the end of World War II, free trade has served interdependence and relative peace well. However, this does not mean that trade cannot be a source of conflict and a weakening of Rosecrance's trading state... If the AK Parti fails to ensure reforms and stability, there is no guarantee that the state and its allies once steeped in the military-political and territorial system could not make a comeback and disturb the balance that favors the trading state... What happens in Syria, Iraq, Iran and the Caucasus is still not clear. Will they become trading states, or will they remain Third World states*

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

*immersed in nationalism, which Rosecrance has seen as having few prospects of transformation?”<sup>55</sup>*

The above passage that warns the reader of the potential challenges for the sustainability of the Turkish trading state has proven most foresightful over the course of the AK Parti rule. Since the early 2010s, a combination of domestic, regional, and global developments has largely – if not completely – eroded the trading state qualifications of Turkey. As such, I believe that Kirişçi’s concluding argument including his aforementioned warnings add a significant relevance to his work as a guide to understand the decline and downfall of the Turkish trading state in our present day. The following third section of this article will study in detail the factors that have led to this – by no means inevitable – predicament for Turkish foreign economic policy.

It is clear that what Rosecrance conceptualizes – and Kirişçi interprets – is an entirely liberal democratic understanding of global politics and economy based on the theoretical insights of Neo-Liberal Institutionalism. Accordingly, democratization and all of its key features (e.g. regular free and fair elections, minority rights, and freedoms of expression, media, and association) are complementary to the consolidation of a free-market capitalist economy in a given country. It is assumed that consolidation of a democratic regime and the presence of a free-market would pressure incumbent administrations – regardless of their specific ideologies and leader idiosyncrasies – to adhere to the way in which so-called trading states play the game of IR. Namely that foreign policy behavior of governments would have to prioritize soft power over hard power, acknowledge the driving force of economic factors such as bilateral trade, and would work to actively avoid diplomatic crises with countries while attempting to deepen economic interdependency and dialogue.

Rosecrance’s – and by extension Kirişçi’s – trading state seems to place an unfounded value on the necessity of democratization for a country to fully realize its foreign economic policy potential. In this context, the emergence of China as an economic superpower in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century proves that a non-democratic regime can effectively position itself as a leading participant in international commerce and harness its web of trade partnerships across Africa, Latin America, Eurasia, and the Middle East to carry itself to the top of the power pyramid within the global political economic system.<sup>56</sup> Indeed the economic clout that China

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>56</sup> For more details, see; Shuxiu Zhang (2016), *Chinese Economic Diplomacy: Decision-Making Actors and Processes*, London and New York: Routledge.

accumulated over the years has offered Beijing a significant amount of diplomatic influence, enabling it to impact talks on global trade policy, regional development, and international institutions.

The regime in Beijing is far and away from any standard of democracy, yet it clearly possesses a utilitarian grasp of the significance of trade in global affairs. The case of China reveals a simple but notable gap in the liberal conceptualization of trading state, namely that foreign economic policy is a particularly valuable arrow in the quiver of ambitious illiberal regimes seeking more power as well as regime survival. Thus, China and many other illiberal regimes may completely ignore the supposed value of democratization domestically and globally for their image, and yet they may still appreciate trade-oriented soft power just as any democratic regime would. As such, I suggest terming the former category of illiberal polities “*Machiavellian states*” to distinguish them from the latter category trading states that are democratic. Neither Rosecrance nor Kirişçi discussed how an illiberal polity can behave like a trading state yet may either lack some basic principles of a liberal democratic regime or even – as in the case of China – be an entirely non-democratic entity.

In the following third section of this article, I will discuss how contemporary Turkey led by the AK Parti administration can no longer be qualified as a trading state in the manner that this notion is defined by Rosecrance and Kirişçi, but it can very well be seen as a typical example of a so-called Machiavellian state that prioritizes foreign economic policy for regime survival and acquiring more influence as a middle power.

### **3. The Machiavellian State: A Critical Appraisal of the AK Parti’s Foreign Economic Policy**

#### **3.1. Turkish Trading State in Decline: Democratic Backsliding**

The early years of the AK Parti rule in Turkey was hailed by observers as a potentially transformative period for democratic change in a nation that had a long history of being subject to repeated military coups.<sup>57</sup> As the party and its leader Erdoğan increased their hold on power through successive electoral victories throughout the 2010s, however, worries about the weakening of existing checks and balances began to surface. A combination of factors, including the dominance of the party in both the administrative and legislative branches as well as the weakening of the independence of judiciary, led to President Recep

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<sup>57</sup> H. Tarık Oğuzlu (2020), “Turkish Foreign Policy in a Changing World Order”, p. 134; Svante E. Cornell (2012), “What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy?”, p. 18.

Tayyip Erdoğan holding a disproportionate amount of authority.<sup>58</sup> The President was given even more power as a result of constitutional amendments in 2010 and 2017, which led to a trend towards what can be termed an illiberal “*super-presidential*” or “*hyper-presidential*” system.

The separation of powers within the judicial system is essential to the functioning of any democratic society. However, during the administration of the AK Parti, there has been a considerable increase in the amount of governmental pressure placed on the Turkish court. Concerns have been made over the politicization of the court and the use of emergency powers to target those who are seen as being opposed to the government as a result of the purges that followed the Gezi Park protests in 2013, pro-Kurdish protests in 2015, and the failed coup attempt in 2016.<sup>59</sup> The credibility of the legal system has been harmed and trust in the legitimacy of the judicial process has been shaken as a result of the weakening of due process and the rule of law.

A robust and independent media environment that promotes free speech is one of the hallmarks of a democracy. The AK Parti’s more than 20-years long rule in Turkey, on the other hand, has been detrimental to the freedom of the press. Concerns have been expressed over the silencing of dissident voices as a result of the government’s crackdown on critical media outlets, the detention of journalists, and the shutdown of various opposition publications and television stations over the years.<sup>60</sup> As a consequence, press freedom has decreased and the general public’s access to information that is not prejudiced has become more difficult. Similar political pressures and restrictions have also been applied – to a lesser extent – to popular social media outlets such as Twitter.

The intensification of ever-present identity politics in Turkey over the course of AK Parti hegemony is a fundamental issue that has impacted significantly to the country’s democratic regression. Polarization in society has risen as a result of the frequent adoption of controversial ultra-conservative and ultra-nationalist narratives by the AK Parti as a means of

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<sup>58</sup> Alexandros Zachariades (2018), “Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Parti Era”; Berk Esen & Sebnem Gumuscu (2016), “Rising Competitive Authoritarianism in Turkey”, *Third World Quarterly*, 37 (9), pp. 1581-1606.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*; Oğuzhan Göksel (2019) “Foreign Policy Making in the Age of Populism: The Uses of Anti-Westernism in Turkish Politics”, pp. 21-22.

<sup>60</sup> Defne Över (2021), “Democratic Backsliding and the Media: The Convergence of News Narratives in Turkey”, *Media, Culture & Society*, 43 (2), pp. 343-358.

consolidating its support base among the Turkish right-wing constituents.<sup>61</sup> There has been a widening of the ideological rifts that previously existed between secularists and conservatives, making meaningful political conversation among the broader Turkish society much more difficult to establish on important topics.

### 3.2. Turkish Trading State in Decline: Economic Deterioration

The aforementioned democratic backsliding – seen in particular from the early 2010s onwards – has also been accompanied by an increasingly intense economic crisis that began in late 2010s and has continued as of 2023. In spite of the fact that it got off to a very positive start in the first decade of the AK Parti rule (2002-2013), the Turkish economy soon started to face severe difficulties. The fast increase of credit and debt was one of the most important factors.<sup>62</sup> This expansion has supported over-consumption and investment kept the GDP growth rates relatively stable, but has it also contributed to developing severe imbalances in the economy.<sup>63</sup> In addition, dependence on short-term borrowing in foreign currency and the extreme fall in value of the Turkish lira have highlighted weaknesses in the financial system.<sup>64</sup>

The rapid decline in value of the Turkish lira resulted in imported items becoming costlier which led to an increase in overall consumer costs. This had significant repercussions for inflation. A high rate of inflation has lowered average purchasing power and naturally people's standards of living, which has undermined domestic and international faith in the administration of the economy.<sup>65</sup> The loss of trust among investors is a major effect that has arisen as a direct result of the ongoing economic crisis in Turkey. Skepticism on the part of international investors has been fueled in part by political worries, a lack of openness in economic decision-making and worries over the independence of the central bank. Concerns have been expressed over the government's capacity to successfully handle the crisis due to what has been seen as a lack of commitment to conventional macro-economic strategies.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ozan Aşık (2022), "Ideology, Polarization, and News Culture: The Secular-Islamist Tension in Turkish Journalism", *The International Journal of Press/Politics* [Online]. Date of Accession: 15.05.2023 from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/19401612221132716>.

<sup>62</sup> See, for more details; Ümit Akçay & Ali Rıza Güngen (2019), *The Making of Turkey's 2018-2019 Economic Crisis*, Berlin: Institute for International Political Economy Berlin Working Paper.

<sup>63</sup> OECD (2023), "Türkiye Economic Snapshot", June 2023, Date of Accession: 04.07.2023 from <https://www.oecd.org/economy/turkiye-economic-snapshot/>.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Beril Akman (2023), "Turkey's Early-2023 GDP Growth to Slow as Economic Woes Mount", *Bloomberg*, 31.05.2023.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*; OECD (2023), "Türkiye Economic Snapshot"; Ümit Akçay & Ali Rıza Güngen (2019), *The Making of Turkey's 2018-2019 Economic Crisis*.



### 3.3. Turkish Trading State in Decline: Populist Foreign Policy

As the country's democratic standards eroded and an increasingly desperate struggle with an economic crisis began, a populist and anti-Western/ultra-nationalist foreign policy have come in effect in the late 2010s.<sup>67</sup> The term “*populist foreign policy*” refers to policies that place an emphasis on domestic political benefit, often by taking forceful and aggressive stands on international problems and that strive to generate popular support inside the country. Under the leadership of the AK Parti, it can be argued that populism has been integrated into Turkey's foreign policy for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the intensification of an economic crisis from the mid-2010s might have pushed the party to resort to assertive foreign policy rhetoric to derive alternative social sources of regime legitimization in the absence of democratization and widespread economic benefits for voters. Secondly, the party's continued success in the elections of 2018 and 2023 may be attributed, at least in part, to its capacity to capitalize on the nationalist feelings of the general public – a factor reinforced by the “*People's Alliance*” coalition with the MHP (Nationalist Action Party). This nationalist voter base provided by the People's Alliance offers the AK Parti administration considerable incentives to take populist postures – e.g. anti-EU and anti-U.S. discourses – in foreign concerns in order to boost its popularity at home and among the Turkish diaspora abroad.<sup>68</sup> Thirdly, the strongman image of President Erdoğan may have helped enable the framing of choices on foreign policy as bold measures, which appeals to the Turkish right-wing voters' preference a charismatic leader.<sup>69</sup>

Nationalist impulses and pragmatic economic concerns coexist uneasily within the AK Parti's populist approach to foreign policy. A degree of collaboration and compromise with other countries is surely necessary for effective foreign policy despite the fact that populism often calls for more aggressive stances. Hidden behind the façade of President Erdoğan's frequently used aggressive foreign policy discourses<sup>70</sup> voiced during political demonstrations

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<sup>67</sup> For more details on the workings of anti-Westernism and ultra-nationalism in the formation of a populist Turkish Foreign Policy under the AK Parti in recent years, see; Alper Kaliber & Esra Kaliber (2019), “From De-Europeanisation to Anti-Western Populism: Turkish Foreign Policy in Flux”, *The International Spectator*, 54 (4), pp. 1-16; Mehmet Arısan (2022), “Populism, Victimhood and Turkish Foreign Policy under AK Parti Rule”, *Turkish Studies*, 23 (5), pp. 681-700; Burak Bilgehan Özpek & Nebahat Tanriverdi Yasar (2018), “Populism and Foreign Policy in Turkey under the AK Parti Rule”, *Turkish Studies*, 19 (2), pp. 198-216.

<sup>68</sup> Oğuzhan Göksel (2019) “Foreign Policy Making in the Age of Populism: The Uses of Anti-Westernism in Turkish Politics”.

<sup>69</sup> H. Bahadır Türk (2017), “A Glance at the Constitutive Elements of the Leader-Centered Perspective in Turkish Politics”, *Turkish Studies*, 18 (4), pp. 601-623.

<sup>70</sup> *Euronews* (2018), “Erdoğan'dan Batı'ya: Cehenneme Kadar Yolunuz Var”, 08.04.2018, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://tr.euronews.com/2018/04/08/erdogan-dan-bat-ya-cehenneme-kadar-yolunuz-var>.

in front of large crowds, the AK Parti administration has actually preserved its dedication to conduct Turkish Foreign Policy on the basis of economic benefits as the share of foreign trade within Turkey's GDP continued to rise over the years (see **Table 1**). The increasingly strong economic ties between Turkey and a number of notable countries such as Russia, Qatar, and Azerbaijan in recent years can all be analyzed through the prism of the aforementioned desperate economic situation the AK Parti administration has found itself from the 2010s onwards (see **Table 2**). In return for Turkey providing invaluable political favors for the regimes of Russia, Qatar, and Azerbaijan during their serious crises (i.e. the ongoing Ukraine-Russia War, the Qatar-Saudi Crisis of 2017-2021, and the Second Karabakh War), the AK Parti administration has deepened its economic partnership with these countries – as will be discussed in detail below.

#### **3.4. The AK Parti's Foreign Economic Policy towards Russia, Qatar, and Azerbaijan**

There are a number of geopolitical and economic factors that have contributed to Turkey's move toward deeper commercial connections with Russia in recent years. The energy sector collaboration between Turkey and Russia has been one of the most crucial parts of Turkey's economic ties with Russia. This partnership is shown by the development of the Turk-Stream Pipeline, which delivers natural gas from Russia to Turkey and then on to Europe. The project has significantly improved Turkey's position as a center for energy distribution in the region; however, Turkey's increasing dependency on Russian energy resources also puts the country at risk of future geopolitical dangers. Despite such potential risks, the recent travails of Turkish economy leave very little room for maneuver in the AK Parti's foreign economic policy towards Russia. The tourist industry is an additional component of Turkey's economic ties with Russia. The number of Russian visitors to Turkey's seaside resorts is large and their spending helps to contribute to the country's overall earnings from tourism.<sup>71</sup>

Concerns have been voiced by Turkey's NATO members in recent years over Turkey's purchase of military equipment manufactured in Russia. One example of this has been the installation of Russia's S-400 air defense system in Turkish territory. Tensions rose between the U.S. and Turkey as a direct result of this decision, which indicates Turkey's determined pursuit of deep economic ties with Moscow despite opposition from its Western partners. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has ratcheted up the level of geopolitical friction between Russia

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<sup>71</sup> N. A. Budarina & I. R. Ibragimov (2020), "Russia and Turkey: New Trends and Prospects at the Present Stage", *Rudn Journal of Economics*, 28 (3), pp. 440-449.

and Western nations within NATO. Turkey has found itself in a precarious position as it strives to maintain a balanced approach between its Western partners and its engagement with Russia.

Turkey's business ties with Russia have been negatively impacted as a result of the economic sanctions placed on Russia by Western nations as a reaction to its invasion of Ukraine. The energy and financial sectors of Russia have been the targets of Western sanctions and these restrictions generated difficulties for Turkish enterprises who are involved in trade with Russia.<sup>72</sup> Even while Turkey and Russia's economic relationship has been tested as a result of the conflict in Ukraine, the conflict has also opened up chances for diplomatic and mediating efforts. Because of its role as a player in the area, Turkey is now in a position to participate in efforts to de-escalate tensions and find peaceful solutions to issues. This diplomatic engagement has the potential to have beneficial repercussions for both the economic stability of the area and, by extension, for the economic links that exist between Turkey and Russia.

The AK Parti administration has been one of the few NATO member regimes that still possess strong diplomatic and economic partnerships with Russia. Ankara has been able to reap the benefits of breaking Russia's economic and diplomatic isolation via obtaining discounted natural gas and oil deals from Moscow – which stands out as a notable result of the AK Parti's Machiavellian foreign economic policy.<sup>73</sup> Turkey's insistence on preserving its economic cooperation with Moscow – in the face of the U.S. pressure on Ankara – can be seen as testament to the continuing influence of an economic benefit oriented pragmatist vision in the AK Parti's Turkish Foreign Policy (see **Table 2**).

The AK Parti administration has been responsible for a significant expansion of Turkey's economic ties with Qatar over the last decade (see **Table 2**). This expansion has been driven by the countries' shared strategic goals, economic partnerships, and diplomatic alignment within the broader Middle East and North Africa region. During the 2017-2021 dispute between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, Turkey stood out for the substantial diplomatic and military assistance it offered to Qatar. The AK Parti administration has criticized the embargo placed

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<sup>72</sup> Elizabeth Hagedorn (2023), "US Targets Firms in UAE, Turkey over Russia Sanctions Evasion", *Al-Monitor*, 12.04.2023, Date of Accession: 20.07.2023 from <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/04/us-targets-firms-uae-turkey-over-russia-sanctions-evasion>.

<sup>73</sup> Gubad Ibadoghlu (2022), "Who Stands to Gain from Closer Relations between Russia and Turkey?", *London School of Economics*, 21.09.2022, Date of Accession: 20.07.2023 from <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2022/09/21/who-stands-to-gain-from-closer-relations-between-russia-and-turkey/>.

on Qatar and has voiced its sympathy with the government of Qatar.<sup>74</sup> In the aftermath of the crisis, Turkey expanded its food shipments to Qatar, which assisted in mitigating the negative effects of the economic embargo that was imposed on Qatar's supply lines.<sup>75</sup> Additionally, Turkey was granted permission to create a military facility in Qatar in accordance with the terms of a defense pact that both nations had signed in 2014. Throughout the crisis, Turkey maintained its military cooperation with Qatar, which included continuing its participation in joint military exercises and training programs. Turkey also tried to play a role in the mediation process by promising to foster communication between the Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar governments.

The AK Parti administration seems to have reaped the benefits of its overwhelming support to Qatar with substantial economic benefits that have proven key to the survival of the AK Parti's hegemony in Turkey. Significant investments made by Qatar in Turkey's financial markets and real estate market have served as a priceless source of economic assistance for the AK Parti administration as the Turkish economy struggled with extremely high inflation and the mass exodus of Western investors from its stock market.<sup>76</sup> Notably, Qatar's participation in the development of major infrastructure projects in Turkey – such as the new airport in Istanbul – illustrates Qatari commitment to consolidating the political economic alliance between two governments.<sup>77</sup> Additionally, Turkey and Qatar have been working together on commercial ventures in an effort to strengthen their economic connections. Turkey's attempts to diversify its energy sources and lessen its dependence on a single supplier are also aligned with Qatar's standing as a large exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and the strategic relevance of this facet of their alliance is shown by collaborative energy projects and negotiations on LNG imports.<sup>78</sup>

Turkey and Azerbaijan have close linguistic, cultural, and ethnic links – the common heritage of the Turkic peoples – which have contributed to the development of a natural sense of friendship between the two nations. Apart from their century-long friendship that can be

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<sup>74</sup> Nesibe Hicret Battaloglu (2023), "Reflecting on the Turkey-Qatar Partnership, Fifty Years Later", *Gulf International Forum*, 22.05.2023.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*; *Zawya Gulf Times* (2023), "Qatar, Turkiye to Bolster Relations in All Fields", 19.07.2023, Date of Accession: 22.07.2023 from <https://www.zawya.com/en/world/middle-east/qatar-turkiye-to-bolster-relations-in-all-fields-rflabd94>.

<sup>76</sup> Ali Bakir (2019) "The Evolution of Turkey—Qatar Relations Amid a Growing Gulf Divide", in (eds. by Andreas Krieg) *Divided Gulf*, New York: Springer, pp. 197-215.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*; *Zawya Gulf Times* (2023).

<sup>78</sup> Nesibe Hicret Battaloglu (2023), "Reflecting on the Turkey-Qatar Partnership, Fifty Years Later".

traced to the early 1920s<sup>79</sup>, Ankara and Baku possess a comprehensive economic and military alliance that proved essential for determining the outcome of Azerbaijan's decisive victory over Armenia in the Second Karabakh War in 2020. Throughout the duration of the armed conflict, Turkey provided unwavering political and diplomatic support for Azerbaijan's stance.

The AK Parti administration has voiced its disapproval of Armenia's continued occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and has highlighted the need of maintaining Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.<sup>80</sup> Azerbaijan also received significant amount of military aid from Turkey. Azerbaijan successfully launched strikes against critical positions in the Armenian military using Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2 drones – targeting numerous tanks, armored vehicles, and other military installations. The use of drones had been reported by military experts to have made huge impact on the battlefield and helped tip the scales of power in favor of Azerbaijan.<sup>81</sup> Reportedly, the Turkish Armed Forces also provided Azerbaijani soldiers with military training as well as advising technical assistance during the war.<sup>82</sup>

Following the Second Karabakh War, there has been a significant increase in the amount of commerce that takes place between Turkey and Azerbaijan across a variety of industries such as agriculture, construction, defense, IT, and finance.<sup>83</sup> The economic foundations of Turkey-Azerbaijan alliance, rooted in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railways, have become stronger as a result of recent efforts to improve transportation and communication (see **Table 2**). Moreover, numerous pro-AK Parti Turkish companies in various sectors have supposedly received lucrative contracts in the recently-liberated Karabakh territories by the Baku regime – which could possibly be interpreted as yet another outcome of the AK Parti's Machiavellian foreign economic policy.<sup>84</sup>

The three cases briefly discussed above reveal the nature of the AK Parti's foreign economic policy making. While the pro-democratic liberal outlook of the trading state of the 2000s has

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<sup>79</sup> Oğuzhan Göksel (2022) "I Contorni di Una Relazione Speciale: L'Alleanza Turchia-Azerbaijan dalla Rivoluzione del 1917 Alla Guerra del Karabakh del 2020", *CeSPI*, pp. 146-168.

<sup>80</sup> Murteza Hasanoglu & Asim Memmedov & Bahtiyar Maharramov (2020), "İkinci Karabağ Savaşı Sonrası Azerbaycan - Türkiye İlişkileri", *Uluslararası Yönetim Akademisi Dergisi*, 3 (3), p. 526

<sup>81</sup> Jack Davies (2020) "Unmanned Aerial Systems in Nagorno-Karabakh: A Paradigm Shift in Warfare?", Human Security Centre, 24.11.2020.

<sup>82</sup> Murteza Hasanoglu & Asim Memmedov & Bahtiyar Maharramov (2020), "İkinci Karabağ Savaşı Sonrası Azerbaycan - Türkiye İlişkileri".

<sup>83</sup> Yigit Yildiz & Deniz Lizge Oksuz & Ege Ozyegin (2021), "Turkey and Azerbaijan Sign Preferential Trade Agreement", *Mondaq*, 23.03.2021.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*; Mustafa Sönmez (2020) "Turkey Eyes Economic Gains in Backing Azerbaijan against Armenia", *Al-Monitor*, 07.10.2020.

been abandoned, a calculating perspective of foreign economic policy – akin to that of illiberal polities such as China – has become apparent. **Table 1** shows that the overall share of Turkey’s foreign trade volume as percentage of its GDP has dramatically increased from % 42 in 2007 – representative of the early years of the AK Parti rule – to % 68 by the end of 2022 at our present time. This clearly highlights the lingering influence of economic benefits as a key driver of the AK Parti’s foreign economic policy as well as also playing a limiting role on the impact of populism on the making of AK Parti’s overall foreign policy.

**Table 1.** Share of Foreign Trade within the Turkish Economy (in USD)

	2007	2022
<b>GDP</b>	657 Billion \$	906 Billion \$
<b>Total Export</b>	107 Billion \$	254 Billion \$
<b>Total Import</b>	170 Billion \$	363 Billion \$
<b>Overall Trade</b>	277 Billion \$	617 Billion \$
<b>Overall Trade as Percentage of GDP</b>	% 42	% 68

**Source:** World Bank<sup>85</sup> and Turkish Statistical Institute<sup>86</sup> (as of 10 August 2023).

**Table 2.** Foreign Trade between Turkey and Azerbaijan, Russia and Qatar (in USD)

	2007		2022	
	Export	Import	Export	Import
Russia	4,7 Billion \$	23,5 Billion \$	9,3 Billion \$	58,8 Billion \$
Qatar <sup>87</sup>	n/a	n/a	1,5 Billion \$	700 Million \$
Azerbaijan	1 Billion \$	330 Million \$	2,5 Billion \$	837 Million \$

**Source:** Turkish Statistical Institute<sup>88</sup> (as of 10 August 2023).

<sup>85</sup> World Bank, Date of Accession: 10.08.2023 from [www.worldbank.org.tr](http://www.worldbank.org.tr).

<sup>86</sup> TÜİK, Date of Accession: 10.08.2023 from [www.tuik.gov.tr](http://www.tuik.gov.tr).

<sup>87</sup> The Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) does not provide information on the volume of foreign trade between Turkey and Qatar in 2007, but we can safely assume that it was small enough to be negligible at that time.

<sup>88</sup> TÜİK, Date of Accession: 10.08.2023 from [www.tuik.gov.tr](http://www.tuik.gov.tr).

### 3.5. Workings of Machiavellian Foreign Economic Policy in Turkey and Beyond

The political theory of Machiavelli – long espoused by various Realist and Neo-Realist approaches of IR – is well-known for placing a strong emphasis on the role of self-interest above all else in the decision-making process. In the framework of a country's international economic policy, a Machiavellian strategy would certainly put a nation's – or more specifically, the ruling elite's – political economic interests ahead of all other moral, diplomatic, and legal considerations.<sup>89</sup> Calculating the costs and advantages of various economic agreements with other countries and organizations in a utilitarian way would be a method that would be consistent with a Machiavellian strategy. If a policy can be shown to result in material benefits, it would be followed even if doing so requires participating in contentious talks, taking advantage of weaknesses or crisis moments of other nations or engaging in trade practices that are too aggressive.<sup>90</sup>

Machiavellianism, as a philosophy of foreign economic policy, would advocate for leaders to be adaptable and pragmatic in their strategies for achieving their objectives. This may include altering alliances and trading partners in international economic policy in order to maximize economic benefits, even if it means laying aside ideological or ethical concerns. In spite of the fact that certain features of Machiavellian philosophy are applicable to present economic and foreign policy, it is essential to emphasize that contemporary international relations and economic realities are more complicated than the historical environment in which Machiavelli wrote his works. The practice of contemporary diplomacy often calls for striking a careful balance between economic reasons, ethical issues and international collaboration.

In today's integrated and interdependent global economy, the application of Machiavellian principles to foreign economic policy would need a serious evaluation in order to determine whether or not it is appropriate to pursue. Nevertheless, the adoption of Machiavellian forms of foreign economic policy is common among illiberal regimes that do not have to pay lip service to democratization, human rights, and international law on a discursive level.<sup>91</sup> When it comes to matters of foreign economic policy, illiberal regimes choose approaches that are congruent with the control-maintaining techniques they pursue. These governments put their own interests and the stability of their countries ahead of all else, and they often use

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<sup>89</sup> For more details on the Machiavellian theory of foreign policy, see; Markus Fischer (1995), "Machiavelli's Theory of Foreign Politics"; Daniel W. Drezner (2009), "Machiavelli Revisited".

<sup>90</sup> Markus Fischer (1995), "Machiavelli's Theory of Foreign Politics".

<sup>91</sup> For more details, see; Shuxiu Zhang (2016), *Chinese Economic Diplomacy: Decision-Making Actors and Processes*.

economic instruments to consolidate power, quell opposition, and assure the durability of their rule.

It is possible for illiberal governments to acquire political influence over other nations by offering economic incentives, helping, or investing in such nations. On the global scale, this may be beneficial to them in terms of helping them form alliances and garnering diplomatic support. Some illiberal governments such as China, Iran, and Russia are known to supply other nations with foreign aid and assistance; however, this support often comes with political conditions attached.<sup>92</sup> This enables them to build connections with receiving states and to exercise influence over those governments.

Illiberal regimes may try to create economic ties with other nations by building commercial links and obtaining investments in order to make themselves less vulnerable to pressure from other sources. This may also offer a source of cash and resources that the regime can utilize to preserve its hold on power, which is a potential benefit for regime survival. It is possible for illiberal governments to have a selective engagement with the global economy, with the primary emphasis being on economic cooperation that is beneficial to the stability of the system. This might mean building economic connections with nations that are sympathetic to the cause or trade partners that are less likely to raise concerns about human rights.<sup>93</sup>

In light of the above theoretical insights provided by the theory of Machiavellian foreign economic policy, we can surely identify the AK Parti's approach as a case that fits the expectations of the proponents of the perspective. It is surely not a coincidence that the three countries – Azerbaijan, Qatar, and Russia – that have become the closest economic partners of the AK Parti administration in recent years are all authoritarian regimes that do not raise concerns about democratic erosion in Turkey. Moreover, all three are resource-rich regimes that could offer Turkey lucrative trade deals, business contracts, and cash injections to mitigate the negative effects caused by the exodus of Western investors from the Turkish economy in the last decade.

Financial support from these countries has the potential to strengthen the power basis of the AK Parti regime and create job opportunities, both of which could potentially diminish the economy-oriented criticisms of the AK Parti by opposition parties such as the CHP (Republican People's Party), İYİ Parti (Good Party), and the YSP (Party of the Greens and the Left Future). In addition, partnerships with these governments and other illiberal polities

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<sup>92</sup> Daniel W. Drezner (2009), "Machiavelli Revisited".

<sup>93</sup> Markus Fischer (1995), "Machiavelli's Theory of Foreign Politics".



such as Saudi Arabia and China provide the AK Parti administration with a degree of flexibility as these regimes commonly avoid transparency in their dealings. Hence, political opposition in Turkey is not able to access the intricacies of such deals – potentially taking away significant trump cards from their election campaigns. Economic partnerships with democratic governments of the West (e.g. the U.S. and Germany) or East Asia (e.g. Japan and South Korea) could not possibly provide the political economic benefits the AK Parti derives from its Machiavellian foreign economic policy. Democratic governments tend to be much more sensitive towards democratic backsliding in Turkey and that often raises tensions between them and Ankara in recent years as discussed above.

### **Conclusion**

The workings of Turkish politics, economy and foreign policy under the rule of the AK Parti has radically changed since the early 2010s. As Turkey moved away from a supposedly democratizing liberal/pluralist polity in the 2000s to an increasingly illiberal regime by 2023, the Turkish foreign economic policy strategy has assumed a Machiavellian character in the form of utilizing trade relations to bolster the political survival of the AK Parti administration. As the country's democratic standards eroded and a desperate struggle with an economic crisis began, a populist foreign policy has come in effect in the late 2010s. However, hidden behind the façade frequently used aggressive foreign policy discourses, the AK Parti administration has actually preserved its dedication to conduct Turkish Foreign Policy on the basis of economic benefits.

The increasingly strong economic ties between Turkey and a number of notable partners such as Russia, Qatar, and Azerbaijan in recent years can all be analyzed through the prism of the desperate economic situation of Turkey. In return for providing invaluable political favors for the regimes of Russia, Qatar, and Azerbaijan during their serious crises (i.e. the ongoing Ukraine-Russia War, the Qatar-Saudi Crisis of 2017-2021, and the Second Karabakh War), the AK Parti administration has deepened its economic partnership with these countries and sought to their financial assistance as a panacea for many of the ills currently besetting Turkish political economy. As the AK Parti-led “*People's Alliance*” coalition managed to obtain yet another victory in the 2023 presidential and parliamentary elections, it is possible to claim that its foreign economic policy has been a resounding success from the point of view of regime survival – albeit the benefits of this trajectory for the long-term future of Turkish society is highly debatable.

Via studying the case of Turkey under the rule of the AK Parti, it has been argued that liberalism or advanced democratic standards are not prerequisites for a government to evaluate foreign policy making primarily through the lens of economic drivers. As the AK Parti's rule has proved durable, we have seen an economistic understanding of foreign policy making but not in ways envisaged by Liberal scholars of IR such as Rosecrance and Kirişçi, and instead more in the Machiavellian ways illiberal polities (e.g. hybrid and authoritarian regimes) formulate foreign economic policy. Thus, it has been suggested that contemporary Turkish foreign economic policy constitutes a Machiavellian state<sup>94</sup> rather than a liberal trading state.

Surely Turkey's domestic developments driven by the AK Parti's political and economic decisions cannot be the only factor leading to the transition of Turkish Foreign Policy from a trading state to a Machiavellian state and that there have been regional and global drivers affecting this process. Moreover, Turkey may not prove to be the only country experiencing the so-called Machiavellian transformation in the coming years. The COVID-19 crisis has had long-lasting effects on the dynamics of international commerce as many countries such as Turkey have been forced into adopting various protectionist trade measures. Businesses and governments alike have been faced with difficult challenges as a result of interruptions to supply chains, adjustments in consumer behavior, and changes in global trade regulations. As the globe begins to emerge from the crisis, the lessons learnt will influence the remaking of trade patterns, placing an emphasis on adaptation, flexibility, and a commitment to resilience in the context of a quickly changing global environment. Similar global crises (e.g. those that may emerge due to Global Climate Change) may affect the future of trading state in Turkey and elsewhere.

The rising geopolitical competition between the China-Russia alliance and the U.S.-led NATO-EU bloc in recent crises (e.g. the Taiwan dispute and the ongoing war in Ukraine) may be seen as the beginning of a second Cold War in our age. The partnership between China and Russia, which promotes an alternative model to that of Western liberal democracy, threatens the international order that is controlled by the West, therefore causing ideological tension that is reminiscent of the time of the Cold War. Another similarity between the two periods is the competitiveness on the economic front as has been evident in the case of anti-

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<sup>94</sup> In this context, a similar Machiavellian illiberal state to Turkey could be China. Yet, it is important to note that Turkey under the AK Parti 2023 is a hybrid regime which has a complex mixture of democratic and autocratic features whereas China under the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) is a fully authoritarian regime if not a totalitarian one.

Russia economic sanctions. The geopolitical rivalry between the two rival blocs could create a bi-polar global political and economic system that is not conducive to the liberal vision of Rosecrance and Kirişçi as such a conjuncture would push countries towards protectionist economic blocs.

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**THE GLOBAL SUCCESS STORY OF JAPAN’S SOFT POWER:  
DEBATING ‘COOL JAPAN’ AS A MODEL FOR TURKISH SOFT POWER  
PROJECTION**

Natavan HUSEYNOVA<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** There is an ever-growing scholarly literature on various aspects of the soft power of Turkey as this subject has been among the most popular and widely studied aspects of Turkish Foreign Policy in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Yet, comparative works examining the effectiveness of Turkish soft power versus other notable soft powers are still relatively hard to find. Moreover, there is an even more notable gap in the literature in terms of discussing what exactly enables the strategies of “established soft powers” (e.g. U.S., UK, France, Germany, and Japan) to be more successful than that of Turkey, and to discuss what Turkish policy-makers could possibly learn from these tried and tested methods. In the centennial anniversary of the Republic of Turkey in 2023, the time may have come for the Turkish intelligentsia and government to acknowledge the notable rise of Turkish soft power since the 1990s, but also re-think of the ways in which the current vision could be substantially improved in light of valuable lessons drawn from global soft power success stories such as Japan. In this article, I will argue that the case of Japan proves that soft power is not just a natural outcome of a country’s vast hard power reserves (e.g. economic power in the manner of Gross Domestic Product), but is a phenomenon that could be “designed” – to a large extent – by a government. Furthermore, Japan’s various successful policies such as the ‘Cool Japan’ program and Tokyo’s systematic cultural and economic diplomacy offers valuable blueprints for Turkish soft power to be re-designed in our time.

**Keywords:** *Japanese soft power, Cultural diplomacy, Cool Japan, Turkish soft power, Turkish Foreign Policy.*

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<sup>1</sup> Postgraduate Researcher, Marmara University, Faculty of Political Science, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Göztepe Campus, Kadıköy, Istanbul – Turkey.  
Email: [natavan19988@gmail.com](mailto:natavan19988@gmail.com).

## JAPONYA'NIN YUMUŞAK GÜCÜNÜN KÜRESEL BAŞARI ÖYKÜSÜ: TÜRKİYE'NİN YUMUŞAK GÜÇ STRATEJİSİ İÇİN BİR MODEL OLARAK 'COOL JAPONYA'YI TARTIŞMAK

**Öz:** İçinde bulunduğumuz erken 21. yüzyılda Türk dış politikasının en popüler ve en çok çalışılan yönlerinden biri Türkiye'nin yumuşak gücünün çeşitli yönleri olduğu için, doğal olarak konu üzerine sürekli genişlemekte olan kapsamlı bir akademik literatür oluşmuştur. Buna rağmen, Türkiye'nin yumuşak gücünü dünyanın diğer hatırı sayılı yumuşak güçleriyle kıyaslamalı olarak ele alan çalışmalar bulmak halen nispeten zordur. Dahası, “büyük yumuşak güçlerin” (örneğin ABD, Birleşik Krallık, Fransa, Almanya ve Japonya) stratejilerinin bu alanda Türkiye'ninkinden daha başarılı olmasını tam olarak neyin mümkün kıldığını tartışmak açısından mevcut literatürde dikkate değer bir boşluk bulunmaktadır. 2023 yılında Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin yüzüncü yıl dönümünde, Türkiye aydınları ve hükümetinin 1990'lardan bu yana ülkenin yumuşak gücünün yükselişini kabul etmeleri, ancak aynı zamanda da mevcut yumuşak güç vizyonunun daha da geliştirilebileceği yolları yeniden düşünme zamanı gelmiş olabilir. Bu bağlamda, Türkiye'ye rehberlik yapmak açısından Japonya gibi küresel yumuşak güç başarı öykülerinden çıkarılacak derslerin değeri ve önemi büyük olacaktır. Bu makalede, Japonya örneğinden yola çıkarak yumuşak gücün yalnızca bir ülkenin geniş “sert güç” rezervlerinin (örneğin Gayri Safi Yurtiçi Hasıla üzerinden ölçülen ekonomik güç) doğal bir sonucu olmadığını, aynı zamanda da – büyük ölçüde bir hükümet tarafından – “tasarlanmış” bir olgu olduğunu iddia edeceğim. Ayrıca Japonya'nın ‘Cool Japonya’ programı ve Tokyo'nun sistematik kültürel ve ekonomik diplomasisi gibi çeşitli başarılı politikalarının günümüzde Türk yumuşak gücünün yeniden tasarlanması için değerli planlar sunduğunu ve bu anlamda Türkiye için çıkarabilecek dersleri tartışacağım.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Japonya'nın yumuşak gücü, Kültürel diplomasi, Cool Japonya, Türkiye'nin yumuşak gücü, Türk dış politikası.*

## Introduction

Power has historically been connected with a country's quantity and quality of military force as well as its economic development level in inter-related fields of International Relations (IR), Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), and International Political Economy (IPE). Yet, the understanding of the concept – and measure – of power has developed throughout the course of history, leading to the conception of “*soft power*” to encapsulate the transformative evolution of global politics and economy from the end of the Second World War onwards. Joseph Nye, distinguished scholar and one of the leading thinkers of Neo-Liberal IR theory at our time, introduced the idea of “*soft power*” in the final decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> Since then, soft power has become an essential component in comprehending global political and economic affairs, and a key tool by which governments attempt to exercise their influence on the international arena.

Nye notably distinguished “*soft power*” from the more conventional concept of “*hard power*” which refers to the use of coercion or force in order to accomplish one's aims.<sup>3</sup> He described soft power as the capacity to influence the conduct of another country's behavior through the use of attraction and persuasion rather than through the use of force. The conclusion of the Cold War in 1991, a time defined by changing power relations and the need for a sophisticated understanding of international influence, served as the background for the development and popularization of Nye's soft power.

The introduction of soft power heralded the beginning of a fundamental paradigm change in the scholarly literature on IR. The ideas presented in Nye's numerous conceptual and empirical works on the subject have inspired more scholarly investigation and discussion over the decades, which have ultimately led to the concept's continued refinement and growth. By investigating the implications of soft power within the larger framework of international relations, notable experts such as Robert Keohane, Giulio Gallarotti, Niall Ferguson, and Susan Strange – as well as many critics – of the concept have made significant

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<sup>2</sup> The term “*soft power*” was first introduced by Joseph Nye in his 1990 book entitled *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*. See, for more details; Joseph S. Nye (1990), *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, New York: Basic Books; Joseph S. Nye (2002), “Hard and Soft Power in a Global Information Age”, in (eds. by M. Leonard) *Re-Ordering the World*, London: Foreign Policy Centre, pp. 2-10; Joseph S. Nye (2004), *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York: Public Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph S. Nye (2002), “Hard and Soft Power in a Global Information Age”.

contributions to our understanding of the nature of global politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century across the globe.<sup>4</sup>

The application of Nye's conceptual framework to the foreign policy, economy, and politics of many countries has led to a huge explosion of empirical studies on soft power in the last three decades. There is an ever-growing scholarly literature on various aspects of the soft power of Turkey as this subject has been among the most popular and widely studied aspects of Turkish Foreign Policy in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>5</sup> Yet, comparative works examining the effectiveness of Turkish soft power versus other notable soft powers are still relatively hard to find.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, there is an even more notable gap in the literature in terms of discussing what exactly enables the strategies of "established soft powers" (e.g. U.S., UK, France, Germany, and Japan) to be more successful than that of Turkey, and to discuss what Turkish policy-makers could possibly learn from these tried and tested methods.<sup>7</sup>

In the centennial anniversary of the Republic of Turkey in 2023, the time may have come for the Turkish intelligentsia and government to acknowledge the notable rise of Turkish soft power since the 1990s, but also re-think of the ways in which the current vision could be

<sup>4</sup> G. M. Gallarotti (2011), "Soft Power: What it is, Why it's Important, and the Conditions for its Effective Use", *Journal of Political Power*, 4 (1), pp. 25-47; Pınar Bilgin & Berican Eliş (2008), "Hard Power, Soft Power: Toward a More Realistic Power Analysis", *Insight Turkey*, 10 (2), pp. 5-20; Robert O. Keohane & Joseph S. Nye (1998), "Power and Interdependence in the Information Age", *Foreign Affairs*, 77 (5), pp. 81-94; Susan Strange (1996), *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Niall Ferguson (2004), "A World without Power", *Foreign Policy*, 143, pp. 32-39.

<sup>5</sup> For some notable examples of this literature, Meliha Benli Altunışık (2008), "The Possibilities and Limits of Turkey's Soft Power in the Middle East", *Insight Turkey*, 10 (2), pp. 41-54; Tarık Oğuzlu (2007), "Soft Power in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 61 (1), pp. 81-97; Emel Parlar Dal & Emre Erşen (2014), "Reassessing the 'Turkish Model' in the Post-Cold War Era: A Role Theory Perspective", *Turkish Studies*, 15 (2), pp. 258-282; Kemal Kirişçi (2011), "Turkey's 'Demonstrative Effect' and the Transformation of the Middle East", *Insight Turkey*, 13 (2), pp. 33-55; Tarık Oğuzlu (2013), "The Gezi Park Protests and Its Impact on Turkey's Soft-Power Abroad", *Ortadoğu Analiz*, 5 (55), pp. 10-15; Ziya Öniş (2011), "Multiple Faces of the New Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique", *Insight Turkey*, 13 (1), pp. 47-65; G. Özkan & M. T. Demirtepe (2012), "Transformation of a Development Aid Agency: TİKA in a Changing Domestic and International Setting", *Turkish Studies*, 13 (4), pp. 647-664; Yohanan Benhaim & Kerem Öktem (2015), "The Rise and Fall of Turkey's Soft Power Discourse: Discourse in Foreign Policy under Davutoğlu and Erdoğan", *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, 21, pp. 1-25; Zafer Yörük & Pantelis Vatikiotis (2013), "Soft Power or Illusion of Hegemony: The Case of the Turkish Soap Opera 'Colonialism'", *International Journal of Communication*, 7, pp. 2361-2385; Michelangelo Guida & Oğuzhan Göksel (2018), "Re-Evaluating the Sources and Fragility of Turkey's Soft Power After the Arab Uprisings", in (eds. by Hüseyin Işıksal & Oğuzhan Göksel) *Turkey's Relations with the Middle East: Political Encounters after the Arab Spring*, London: Springer, pp. 151-168.

<sup>6</sup> Albeit it is important to note that there are original studies in this regard. See, for example, Nesibe Hicret Soy (2016), *A Comparison of Turkey and Iran's Soft Power in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries*, Doha: Qatar University; Meliha Benli Altunışık (2017), "Turkey's Soft Power in a Comparative Context: The South Caucasus and the Middle East", in (eds. by Mehran Kamrava) *The Great Game in West Asia: Iran, Turkey and the South Caucasus*, London: Hurst Publishers; Mehmet Ali Koçakoğlu (2021), "Belt And Road Initiative and Turkey China Relationships Through Soft Power Concept", *Opus*, 18 (39), pp. 750-776.

<sup>7</sup> One valuable recent publication in this context is the following: Yaprak Gürsoy (2023), "Reconsidering Britain's Soft Power: Lessons from the Perceptions of the Turkish Political Elite", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 36 (1), pp. 35-53.

substantially improved in light of valuable lessons drawn from global soft power success stories such as Japan. It is essential to keep in mind that the concept of soft power may evolve over time as a result of shifting geopolitical dynamics, shifting cultural norms, and changing global events such as wars and economic crises. The nations that possess the greatest degree of soft power may also vary as this is ultimately dependent on the subjective viewpoints of various specialists. Despite this, several think-tanks and research institutions throughout the world have attempted to put forward comprehensive objective studies to measure the levels of soft power possessed by all the nations on the planet, and they have been publishing yearly rankings as a result of these efforts. Global indexes created by Brand Finance<sup>8</sup>, ISSF (Indian Strategic Studies Forum)<sup>9</sup>, Monocle<sup>10</sup>, and Portland<sup>11</sup> are regarded as the most authoritative among the academic community because of how extensively they are used and how well they are organized.<sup>12</sup>

Regardless of which of the above indexes is preferred, Japan has been consistently ranked as a top-10 –if not top-5– soft power within the globe since the early 2000s. Various advantages contribute to Japan’s worldwide influence, allowing Tokyo to possess an undisputedly strong influence among the leading top soft powers of the world such as the U.S. and Germany. Traditional Japanese arts, literature, and food in addition to modern pop culture all contribute to Japan’s rich cultural legacy, which is varied and fascinating for many observers around the world. Indeed, traditional aspects of Japanese culture like tea ceremonies, martial arts, and calligraphy and also modern phenomena such as anime, manga, and J-pop music, have a large following around the globe. These cultural exports not only strike a chord with audiences, but also cultivate an interest in and admiration for the inventiveness and beauty of historical and contemporary Japan.

The widespread perception of Japan as a global leader in technical innovation contributes to the country’s soft power as its cutting-edge capabilities and modernity are shown by its advancements in robotics, sophisticated manufacturing, and high-speed transportation systems. The simple fact that Japan has one of the largest economies in the world surely helps

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<sup>8</sup> Brand Finance, Date of Accession: 09.08.2023 from <https://brandfinance.com/>.

<sup>9</sup> See, for their most recent report: ISSF (2022), *World Soft Power Index 2022*, Date of Accession: 09.08.2023 from [https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/905bb114-a609-4bd0-a33b-dabe335781b0/downloads/ISSF\\_s%20World%20Soft%20Power%20Index%202022.pdf?ver=1660547924817](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/905bb114-a609-4bd0-a33b-dabe335781b0/downloads/ISSF_s%20World%20Soft%20Power%20Index%202022.pdf?ver=1660547924817).

<sup>10</sup> Monocle, Date of Accession: 09.08.2023 from <https://monocle.com/all/affairs/soft-power/>.

<sup>11</sup> See, for their most recent report: Portland, *The Soft Power 30: A Global Ranking of Soft Power*, Date of Accession: 09.08.2023 from [https://portland-communications.com/pdf/The-Soft-Power\\_30.pdf](https://portland-communications.com/pdf/The-Soft-Power_30.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Kiyomet Yavuzaslan & Murat Cetin (2016), “Soft Power Concept and Soft Power Indexes”, in (eds. by Mehmet Huseyin Bilgin & Hakan Danis & Ender Demir & Ugur Can) *Business Challenges in the Changing Economic Landscape Volume 1*, London: Springer, pp. 395-409.

to strengthen its position as a top soft power.<sup>13</sup> Its economic prowess, which is characterized by sectors like as car manufacture and electronics manufacturing, inspires respect and trust among the public opinion of other countries.<sup>14</sup> Thus, Japan is able to effectively participate in economic diplomacy and advance international cooperation as a result of its formidable economic standing.

Positive reverberations may be felt all over the world as a result of Japan's dedication to global disaster relief and humanitarian help. Its prompt reaction to natural catastrophes within and beyond the country, as demonstrated during the tragic earthquake and tsunami that struck Tohoku in 2011 or the most recent 2023 earthquakes in Turkey, demonstrates that Japan is both a role model in this area as well as being eager to help aid other countries in a time of need.<sup>15</sup> This and Japan's post-Second World War pacifist foreign policy outlook have contributed to the strengthening of Japan's reputation as a caring and responsible leader that is unlike militarily active global powers such as the U.S., Russia, and Britain. Japan's persistently high soft power rankings may be largely attributed to the country's well-planned strategy for the cultivation of all of its aforementioned soft power aspects. Cultural diplomacy, international collaboration, and the cultivation of favorable worldwide attitudes are all seen as valuable by the nation's intellectuals and government officials.<sup>16</sup>

In this article, I will argue that the case of Japan proves that soft power is not just a natural outcome of a country's vast hard power reserves (e.g. economic power in the manner of Gross Domestic Product), but is a phenomenon that could be "*designed*" – to a large extent – by a government. Furthermore, Japan's various successful policies such as the "*Cool Japan*" program and Tokyo's systematic cultural and economic diplomacy offers valuable blueprints for Turkish soft power to be re-designed in our time.

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<sup>13</sup> The Japanese economy made a miraculous recovery from the adverse effects of the Second World War the two atomic bombs to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, rising to become the third largest economy of the world in terms of nominal GDP after the two super-powers – the U.S. and Soviet Union – by 1968. From 1990 to 2009, Japan was the second largest economy – only surpassed by China in 2010. As of the end of 2022, Japan's GDP remains around 4,95 trillion \$ and ranked third in the globe ahead of Germany. For more details, see; The World Bank (2023), "GDP (current US\$) – Japan", Date of Accession: 10.08.2023 from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=JP>.

<sup>14</sup> Katja Valaskivi (2013), "A Brand New future? Cool Japan and the Social Imaginary of the Branded Nation", *Japan Forum*, 25 (4), pp. 485-504.

<sup>15</sup> Dilara Aslan Özer (2023), "Türkiye, Japan to overcome earthquake difficulties together", *Daily Sabah*, 17.02.2023, Date of Accession: 10.08.2023 from <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/turkiye-japan-to-overcome-earthquake-difficulties-together/news>.

<sup>16</sup> Takeshi Matsui (2014), "Nation Branding through Stigmatized Popular Culture: The 'Cool Japan': Craze among Central Ministries in Japan", *Hitotsubashi Journal of Commerce and Management*, 48 (1), pp. 81-97; Maiko Ichihara (2018), *Japan's International Democracy Assistance as Soft Power: Neoclassical Realist Analysis*, London: Routledge.

The following first section of the article will begin with a theoretical discussion of the invaluable contributions and potential shortcomings of soft power – as seen in the broader scholarly literature. The second section will provide a brief assessment of the main themes and arguments of the empirical literature on the soft power of Japan. The third and fourth sections constitute the “*heart of the article*”. While the former section studies the rise of Japanese soft power and attempt to uncover the main lessons that could be learned from the experience of Japan, the latter compares and contrasts the soft power visions of Japan and Turkey. The relevance and potential insights of the case of Japanese soft power success for Turkish soft power is the focus of this penultimate section of the article before the concluding remarks.

### **1. The Contributions and Shortcomings of the Concept of Soft Power**

A key tenet of the theory of soft power is the belief that the collective attractiveness of a country – its cultural influence, social values, policies, and institutions – can possibly influence the choices and actions of other countries.<sup>17</sup> This attraction may be attributed to a nation’s political system, economic prosperity, technical innovation, and the worldwide reach of its cultural goods such as movies, music, and literature. Culture, political ideals, and foreign policy strategy –according to Nye– are the three most important factors that contribute to a country’s overall level of soft power. Accordingly, it is possible for a country’s culture, which includes its language, arts, and customs, to have a substantial impact in luring people to move there for instance. In addition, a country that respects politically desirable and globally popular ideals that are appealing to people all over the world, such as democracy, human rights, and social justice, may supposedly earn appreciation and respect from the rest of the world.<sup>18</sup> The concept of soft power places an emphasis on the role that public diplomacy plays in cultivating goodwill among policy-makers and opinion-shapers in other countries. Public diplomacy encompasses a variety of activities, including cultural exchanges and educational programs, which are used by governments, non-governmental organizations, and commercial institutions to foster beneficial connections between nations and to influence public opinion.

Despite its popularity, the concept of soft power is not without its drawbacks and criticisms. Hard power capabilities, for example, are generally seen as the foundational basis –or

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<sup>17</sup> Joseph S. Nye (1990), *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*; Joseph S. Nye (2004), *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*.

<sup>18</sup> Robert O. Keohane & Joseph S. Nye (1998), “Power and Interdependence in the Information Age”.



precondition– for effective soft power, which leads some to suggest that soft power is founded on hard power capabilities and that the two types of power are actually much more deeply connected than Nye anticipated.<sup>19</sup> The stability and safety that are essential for the successful implementation of soft power programs are believed to be provided by a nation’s military might, economic size, and geopolitical influence. If there is not a rock-solid foundation of hard power, then attempts to use soft power would be seen as empty or fake, which would reduce their efficacy.

The effectiveness of a country’s use of soft power is contingent on the culture, values, and principles of that nation having broad appeal. However, it has been suggested that there is no consideration given to cultural relativism or ethnocentrism within the framework of Nye and his followers.<sup>20</sup> Something that resonates in one cultural setting may not do so in another because of differences in aesthetic preferences and levels of social authority. The imposition of a certain cultural viewpoint might result in misunderstandings and even reaction, which ultimately reduces the effectiveness of the impact that was intended. Moreover, the proliferation of the internet and other digital communication platforms has resulted in a considerable expansion of the reach and influence of soft power. Because nations may now establish rapid connections with audiences all around the world, they are better able to successfully represent their culture, values, and policies. This digital ecosystem, however, also presents issues in the form of a lack of control over narratives and the spread of false information.

Soft power is a lot more difficult to define and assess than more conventional forms of power, such as hard power, which can be evaluated based on a country’s military might or economic performance. Due to the absence of tangible measures, performing an accurate assessment of the influence that soft power initiatives have may be rather difficult. As a consequence of this, decision-makers may have a difficult time properly allocating resources and making well-informed choices on the distribution of soft power efforts.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the results of attempts to use soft power are often unexpected and variable. Cultural exchanges, educational programs, and public diplomacy campaigns all have the intention of fostering healthy connections on a global scale; nevertheless, it may be difficult to anticipate

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<sup>19</sup> Ernest J. Wilson (2008), “Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616, pp. 110-124; Michelangelo Guida & Oğuzhan Göksel (2018), “Re-Evaluating the Sources and Fragility of Turkey’s Soft Power After the Arab Uprisings”.

<sup>20</sup> Pınar Bilgin & Berican Eliş (2008), “Hard Power, Soft Power: Toward a More Realistic Power Analysis”; Susan Strange (1996), *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*.

<sup>21</sup> Ernest J. Wilson (2008), “Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power”, pp. 118-120.

the effects of these activities. It is difficult to determine with absolute certainty how successful endeavors to exert soft power will be since the reception of these efforts is dependent on a myriad of circumstances, some of which include internal politics, historical background, and current events.

It is vital to conduct an in-depth analysis of the idea of soft power's limits and critiques, despite the fact that it presents a fresh method to comprehending the nature of international influence. In the complicated arena of global politics, soft power has a number of significant hurdles – ranging from the difficulties one encounters when attempting to influence authoritarian governments to the difficulties we encounter when attempting to objectively measure its effect. When these limitations are acknowledged, policymakers and academics are able to devise more nuanced methods that take into account both the potential advantages and the inherent constraints of using soft power as a weapon in the conduct of international affairs.<sup>22</sup> To be able to create methods to global diplomacy that are both successful and ethical in a world that is always changing, it is essential to have a solid knowledge of the constraints that soft power imposes.

The validity and value of the aforementioned critiques of soft power have helped ensure the refinement of its framework by novel research and the idea of soft power has arguably brought about a revolution in the area of IR and FPA. The concept of soft power may be traced back to the altering diplomatic environment that emerged in the aftermath of the Cold War, and its scholarly contributions have contributed to a more sophisticated understanding of how governments wield influence in a multifaceted world. The major arguments in favor of soft power focus on the allure of a nation's culture, values, and policies, in addition to its part in public diplomacy, its limits, and its connection to hard power. The idea of soft power in our age still remains an essential tool for governments that are attempting to traverse the complexities of international diplomacy, despite the fact that the digital age is continuing to transform both communication and international politics.

## **2. A Brief Assessment of the Literature on the Soft Power of Japan**

The effective combination of Japan's cultural, economic, and diplomatic assets as a tool for exerting influence on the world stage –in the form of one of the top powers in global rankings– is the reason why Japanese soft power has received a significant amount of attention in academic writing. One of the most common lines of inquiry in the literature is on

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<sup>22</sup> Kiyomet Yavuzaslan & Murat Cetin (2016), "Soft Power Concept and Soft Power Indexes".

the unique allure of Japan's culture which embraces not just traditional arts, but also current pop culture and technological progress.<sup>23</sup> Elements of Japan's culture that have been passed down through the generations such as its tea ceremonies, calligraphy, and architecture continue to hold a fascination for people all over the world. Additionally, the government-sponsored phenomenon known as "*Cool Japan*" highlights the appeal of Japanese animation, manga, J-pop music, and video games in other parts of the world.<sup>24</sup> Not only do these cultural exports fascinate audiences, but they also promote a respect for the values and creativity of Japanese society.

Within the incumbent literature, scholars also place a lot of emphasis on the role that cultural diplomacy plays in the formation of Japan's soft power. The Japanese government's initiatives to foster cultural interchange, education in other languages, and creative partnerships are all put forward as factors that contribute to a more favorable image of the country.<sup>25</sup> For example, the notable Japan Foundation promotes international cultural exchange by funding language study and other cultural activities all around the globe. This helps to ensure that people from different cultures can communicate with one another via the hosting of Japanese society. By using this strategy to soft power, Japan is able to fortify its worldwide links while simultaneously strengthening its image as a nation that is culturally diverse and welcoming to outsiders.

The contributions that Japan has made to overseas development, disaster relief, and humanitarian help resound as key assets in Japan's soft power arsenal. Scholars believe that Japan's readiness to aid other nations during times of crisis is evidence of the nation's

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<sup>23</sup> Yasushi Watanabe & David L. McConnell (2008), *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, New York: M. E. Sharpe; Ryoko Nakano & Yujie Zhu (2020), "Heritage as Soft Power: Japan and China in International Politics", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 26 (7), pp. 869-881; Sven Saaler (2022), "Japan's Soft Power and the 'History Problem'", in (eds. by Lothar Wigger & Marie Dirnberger) *Remembrance – Responsibility – Reconciliation: Challenges for Education in Germany and Japan*, London: Springer, pp. 45-66; William Spencer Armour (2011), "Learning Japanese by Reading 'Manga': The Rise of 'Soft Power Pedagogy'", *RELC Journal*, 42 (2), pp. 125-140; Stephanie Christine Winkler (2019), "'Soft Power is Such a Benign Animal': Narrative Power and the Reification of Concepts in Japan", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 32 (4), pp. 483-501.

<sup>24</sup> Koichi Iwabuchi (2015), "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange'", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 21 (4), pp. 419-432; Michal Daliot-Bul (2009), "Japan Brand Strategy: The Taming of 'Cool Japan' and the Challenges of Cultural Planning in a Postmodern Age", *Social Science Japan Journal*, 12 (2), pp. 247-266; Elizabeth Agyeiwaah & Wantanee Suntikul & Li Yee Shan Carmen (2019), "'Cool Japan': Anime, Soft Power and Hong Kong Generation Y Travel to Japan", *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 15 (2), pp. 127-148.

<sup>25</sup> Alexander Bukh (2014), "Revisiting Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: A Critique of the Agent-Level Approach to Japan's Soft Power", *Asian Perspective*, 38 (3), pp. 461-485; Peng Er Lam (2007), "Japan's Quest for 'Soft Power': Attraction and Limitation", *East Asia*, 24, pp. 349-363; Yee-Kuang Heng (2010), "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who is the Softest of Them All? Evaluating Japanese and Chinese Strategies in the 'Soft' Power Competition Era", *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 10, pp. 275-304.

compassion and commitment to maintaining global stability.<sup>26</sup> The importance that Japan places on traditional values like harmony, respect, and discipline is also commonly evaluated to be a factor that contributes to the country's soft power in more traditional value-oriented societies such as those in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia.<sup>27</sup> These principles, which are strongly ingrained in Japanese culture, inspire respect and act as a counterpoint to the more forceful power projection techniques used by other countries. The capability of Japan to combine modernity with time-honored traditions strikes a chord with viewers all around the world, showing the country as one that takes a novel approach to addressing issues that affect the whole world.<sup>28</sup> As cornerstones of Japan's soft power, economic dominance and technical innovation are often cited by academics.<sup>29</sup> The dependability and feeling of modernity that may be attributed to Japan is in large part due to the country's innovative strides in the fields of robotics, the automobile sector, and high-speed rail networks.

On the other hand, the academic literature recognizes that Japan's projection of soft power is not without its difficulties and constraints. The historical baggage that Japan carries with it, notably the war crimes committed during the Second World War, continues to throw a shadow over its attempts to use soft power in its region in particular. There is still widespread skepticism over the sincerity of its apologies and the efforts it is making toward reconciliation, which adversely affects its image in countries that historically suffered Japanese occupation such as Taiwan, South Korea, North Korea, China, Philippines, and Vietnam.<sup>30</sup> The difficulty of the Japanese language may also be evaluated as a barrier to a more profound comprehension of Japanese literature, media, and conversation, despite the

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<sup>26</sup> Yee-Kuang Heng (2014), "Beyond 'Kawaii' Pop Culture: Japan's Normative Soft Power as Global Trouble-Shooter", *The Pacific Review*, 27 (2), pp. 169-192; Thomas U. Berger (2010), "Japan in Asia: A Hard Case for Soft Power", *Orbis*, 54 (4), pp. 565-582.

<sup>27</sup> Taku Tamaki (2019), "Repackaging National Identity: Cool Japan and the Resilience of Japanese Identity Narratives", *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 27 (1), pp. 108-126; Shin-Wha Lee (2011), "The Theory and Reality of Soft Power: Practical Approaches in East Asia", in (eds. by Sook Jong Lee & Jan Melissen) *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia*, New York: Springer, pp. 11-32.

<sup>28</sup> Taku Tamaki (2019), "Repackaging National Identity: Cool Japan and the Resilience of Japanese Identity Narratives"; Thomas U. Berger (2010), "Japan in Asia: A Hard Case for Soft Power".

<sup>29</sup> Alexander Bukh (2014), "Revisiting Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: A Critique of the Agent-Level Approach to Japan's Soft Power"; Peng Er Lam (2007), "Japan's Quest for 'Soft Power': Attraction and Limitation"; Yasushi Watanabe & David L. McConnell (2008), *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*.

<sup>30</sup> Sven Saaler (2022), "Japan's Soft Power and the 'History Problem'"; Jing Sun (2012), *Japan and China as Charm Rivals: Soft Power in Regional Diplomacy*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press; Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin (2012), "Geopolitics and Soft Power: Japan's Cultural Policy and Cultural Diplomacy in Asia", *Asia-Pacific Review*, 19 (1), pp. 37-61.

widespread esteem with which Japan's culture is held internationally.<sup>31</sup> Because of language obstacles, the full diffusion of Japanese culture and ideas may be hampered.

There is a possibility that Japan's surrounding nations could interpret Japan's soft power activities in a different way owing to past rivalries and territorial conflicts. As a consequence of this, its cultural initiatives may be perceived via a geopolitical lens, which reduce the efficacy of such initiatives. Some academics believe that the breadth and depth of Japan's influence may also be constrained by the country's supposed over-reliance on popular culture as its principal instrument of soft power.<sup>32</sup> Despite the fact that anime and manga are very popular, it is possible that they do not always depict the full extent of Japan's cultural variety and history – instead these cultural products may simplify and reduce Japanese culture to stereotypes.

To sum-up, though it is beyond the scope of this study to provide an extensive reading of the broad literature on Japan's soft power, it should be noted that there is a consensus within scholars about the efficacy of many of the dimensions of Japanese soft power – albeit they also suggest improvements as mentioned above. Japan's soft power assets range from its cultural attractiveness and cultural diplomacy to Japan's economic strength and humanitarian initiatives. The capacity of the country to traverse hurdles such as language barrier while exploiting its assets highlights the complexity and dynamism of current international relations. By gaining an understanding of the primary ideas that are presented in this body of research, one may get insights into the ways in which Japan's soft power continues to develop and how it shapes its position in the global arena. The following section will get into more detail to the workings of Japanese soft power strategy.

### **3. The Rise and Consolidation of Japanese Soft Power “by Design”**

#### **3.1. Insights of the “Cool Japan” Initiative**

In the early 2000s, the Japanese government made a concerted effort to establish a comprehensive soft power strategy and this effort started to take form from that time to our

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<sup>31</sup> Peng Er Lam (2007), “Japan's Quest for ‘Soft Power’: Attraction and Limitation”; Yee-Kuang Heng (2010), “Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who is the Softest of Them All? Evaluating Japanese and Chinese Strategies in the ‘Soft’ Power Competition Era”.

<sup>32</sup> Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin (2008), “Contesting Soft Power: Japanese Popular Culture in East and Southeast Asia”, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 8, pp. 73-101; Koichi Iwabuchi (2015), “Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of ‘International Cultural Exchange’”, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 21 (4), pp. 419-432; Christian John Reynolds (2012), “The Soft Power of Food: A Diplomacy of Hamburgers and Sushi?”, *Food Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 1 (2), pp. 47-60.

present. The beginning of what is later termed the “Cool Japan” (クールジャパン in Japanese) campaign in the year 2005 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was a significant step in the right direction. In 2010, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) established the “Cool Japan Office” in an attempt to officially systematize the earlier attempts of various intellectuals and advisors for a coherent soft power vision. This project signified a turning point in Japan’s conscious strategy for using its cultural and creative assets for worldwide impact which had previously been non-systematic and spontaneous – hitherto left in the hands and care of Japanese individuals and civil society initiatives. The government of Japan launched the “Cool Japan” campaign as a reaction to the growing spontaneous interest shown throughout the world in Japanese pop culture, fashion and entertainment.<sup>33</sup> The title “Cool Japan” was chosen by the aforementioned “Cool Japan Office” to capture the attractiveness of Japanese cultural exports such as anime, manga, video games, fashion, and food. The Japanese government acknowledged that not just inside Japan, but also among audiences in other parts of the world, notably in other Asian nations, Europe, and the Americas, these aspects had earned a great amount of appeal.<sup>34</sup> The purpose of the government plan was to strategically promote and export these cultural treasures in order to improve Japan’s influence in the global community. It featured several measures to encourage the development of industries connected to pop culture, technology, and traditional arts, seeking to expand their reach on a worldwide scale. In November 2013, the government and Dentsu (Japan’s largest advertising agency) established Organization for Overseas Development (the Cool Japan Fund) and the Cool Japan strategy has been under the jurisdiction of the Cool Japan Fund ever since.

The Cool Japan campaign, which was aware of the significance of digital platforms, made systematic use of the internet and social media to broadcast Japanese material, so ensuring it

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<sup>33</sup> For more details, see Koichi Iwabuchi (2015), “Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of ‘International Cultural Exchange’”; Yasushi Watanabe & David L. McConnell (2008), *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*; Peng Er Lam (2007), “Japan’s Quest for ‘Soft Power’: Attraction and Limitation”; Elizabeth Agyeiwaah & Wantanee Suntikul & Li Yee Shan Carmen (2019), “‘Cool Japan’: Anime, Soft Power and Hong Kong Generation Y Travel to Japan”; Yee-Kuang Heng (2014), “Beyond ‘Kawaii’ Pop Culture: Japan’s Normative Soft Power as Global Trouble-Shooter”; Takeshi Matsui (2014), “Nation Branding through Stigmatized Popular Culture: The ‘Cool Japan’: Craze among Central Ministries in Japan”; Katja Valaskivi (2013), “A Brand New future? Cool Japan and the Social Imaginary of the Branded Nation”.

<sup>34</sup> Yee-Kuang Heng (2014), “Beyond ‘Kawaii’ Pop Culture: Japan’s Normative Soft Power as Global Trouble-Shooter”; Yasushi Watanabe & David L. McConnell (2008), *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*.

to be available to audiences all over the world and encouraging direct participation.<sup>35</sup> The Japanese government clearly understands that increasing its internet connectedness is essential to expanding the scope of its soft power influence. The Japanese government encouraged the export of creative works such as anime, manga, movies, music, and other creative endeavors by providing huge amounts of financial assistance, incentives, and platforms.<sup>36</sup>

Anime, movies, manga, J-pop, and video games have been the pillars around which the so-called Cool Japan cultural export program centered on, because the advisors to the Japanese government believed that these products are able to transcend any geographical and cultural boundaries that may exist between Japan and the rest of the world.<sup>37</sup> Governmental support as part of the Cool Japan program included financial support for cultural events and partnerships between Japanese and international artists, as well as sponsorship for international film festivals.<sup>38</sup> Events, exhibits, and performances that highlight traditional as well as modern Japanese art were arranged all over the globe by Japanese embassies and cultural institutes in order to promote mutual understanding and relationships between people.<sup>39</sup> These kinds of programs foster discussion between different cultures, help dismantle prejudices, and advance cultural appreciation, all of which have contributed to a strengthening of Japan's impact as a global soft power.

Anime, manga, and video games that originate in Japan have made their way into marketplaces all over the world, becoming part of a new "*global mainstream culture*" in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century that truly transcends both language and physical barriers. Anime series such as "*Naruto*", "*One Piece*", "*Dragon Ball*", "*Death Note*", and "*Attack on Titan*" have gathered devoted fan bases all around the world, which has contributed to a greater knowledge and love of Japanese culture. Indeed characters like Pikachu from Pokémon and Sailor Moon have crossed national boundaries and become household names, so establishing a worldwide subculture that is enjoyed by peoples of many countries. In a similar vein, the

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<sup>35</sup> Elizabeth Agyeiwaah & Wantanee Suntikul & Li Yee Shan Carmen (2019), "'Cool Japan': Anime, Soft Power and Hong Kong Generation Y Travel to Japan", pp. 128-135.

<sup>36</sup> Takeshi Matsui (2014), "Nation Branding through Stigmatized Popular Culture: The 'Cool Japan': Craze among Central Ministries in Japan", pp. 82-88.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>38</sup> For more details, see; Elizabeth Agyeiwaah & Wantanee Suntikul & Li Yee Shan Carmen (2019), "'Cool Japan': Anime, Soft Power and Hong Kong Generation Y Travel to Japan".

<sup>39</sup> Kadosh Otmazgin (2012), "Geopolitics and Soft Power: Japan's Cultural Policy and Cultural Diplomacy in Asia"; Koichi Iwabuchi (2015), "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange'"; Ryoko Nakano & Yujie Zhu (2020), "Heritage as Soft Power: Japan and China in International Politics".

success of Japanese filmmakers like Hayao Miyazaki and the works Studio Ghibli has brought the country's cinema to the attention of audiences all over the world. Not only have movies like as "*Spirited Away*" and "*My Neighbor Totoro*" received positive reviews from film critics, but they have also helped people become familiar with the distinctive creative and narrative style of Japan.<sup>40</sup> The Cool Japan initiative of Tokyo has played a driving role in building upon the already existing critical success of Japanese authentic products and spreading their influence even more via financial backing as well as government-sponsored events worldwide.<sup>41</sup>

Supporting the worldwide distribution and localization of Japanese entertainment material is one of the cornerstones of the Cool Japan program since 2012.<sup>42</sup> The provision of financial support and other resources by the Tokyo government makes it much easier for films, manga, and anime to be translated into other languages and distributed to a wider audience. This approach not only expands Japan's cultural sphere of influence, but also provides financial benefits for the country in the form of higher sales and new licensing agreements. Additionally, the Japanese government is responsible for organizing events and festivals devoted to Japanese popular culture. These events and festivals include Anime Expo and Japan Expo, both of which are hosted in different nations. The purpose of these events is to provide a stage upon which enthusiasts, creators, and artists may come together to celebrate their mutual affection for Japanese entertainment. They also contribute to the formation of multinational fan communities, which further magnify the cultural influence of Japanese popular culture around the world.

Japan's soft power strategy is heavily dependent on the country's technical breakthroughs, particularly in the fields of robotics and electronics. The already-established image of Japan as a technology leader by the early 2000s with globally recognized brands – Sony, Toyota, Honda, Nintendo and Panasonic – has provided a useful stepping stone for the Japanese government to apply the Cool Japan program on this area as well. Via supporting the innovation drive of these brands with various incentives and subsidies as well as using the Foreign Ministry to build partnerships with the governments of developing countries (e.g.

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<sup>40</sup> Thomas U. Berger (2010), "Japan in Asia: A Hard Case for Soft Power", pp. 565-569.

<sup>41</sup> Yee-Kuang Heng (2014), "Beyond 'Kawaii' Pop Culture: Japan's Normative Soft Power as Global Trouble-Shooter"; Shin-Wha Lee (2011), "The Theory and Reality of Soft Power: Practical Approaches in East Asia"; Jing Sun (2012), *Japan and China as Charm Rivals: Soft Power in Regional Diplomacy*; Takeshi Matsui (2014), "Nation Branding through Stigmatized Popular Culture: The 'Cool Japan': Craze among Central Ministries in Japan".

<sup>42</sup> Koichi Iwabuchi (2015), "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange'", pp. 426-430.



Turkey), the Japanese government has played a seminal role in consolidating an image of excellence for Japanese machinery and technology.<sup>43</sup> In addition, Japan's developments in robotics have attracted the attention of people all around the world, with humanoid robots like ASIMO – another public relations campaign backed by Cool Japan – becoming iconic icons of the nation's devotion to pushing the frontiers of technological innovation.<sup>44</sup>

Culinary diplomacy, often known as “*gastro-diplomacy*”, is the practice of using food as a tool to develop cultural links and improve mutual understanding between groups of people from different backgrounds. The culinary traditions of Japan, “*sushi*” in particular, have won over the imaginations and palates of people all over the globe. In light of this fact, the government of Japan has made strategic use of culinary diplomacy in an effort to deepen its connections with the rest of the world. As such, the Cool Japan program has also included the Japanese government to get involved in the dissemination of its rich culinary legacy by offering cooking lessons, participating in culinary exchange programs and working together with chefs from other countries in numerous worldwide events.<sup>45</sup> As a result of Japan's so-called “*Sushi Diplomacy*”, the nation's culinary impact has been further thanks to the proliferation of Japanese restaurants as well as the increasing popularity of television and social media cooking programs that have focused on Japanese food in the last decade.<sup>46</sup>

In this context, one of the most important initiatives is the preservation of the “*Washoku*” culinary heritage, which UNESCO designated as a component of the Intangible Cultural Heritage system in 2013. This acknowledgment boosted the stature and authenticity of Japanese food on the stage of the worldwide culinary community. Since then, the government has been promoting *Washoku* by holding workshops, seminars, and other culinary events. These events provide venues for foreign chefs and food aficionados to learn and enjoy traditional techniques and ingredients used in Japanese cuisine. In addition, the Japanese government has encouraged the globalization of Japanese culinary skills by facilitating

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<sup>43</sup> Daliot-Bul (2009), “Japan Brand Strategy: The Taming of ‘Cool Japan’ and the Challenges of Cultural Planning in a Postmodern Age”; Taku Tamaki (2019), “Repackaging National Identity: Cool Japan and the Resilience of Japanese Identity Narratives”.

<sup>44</sup> Timothy N. Hornyak (2006), *Loving the Machine: The Art and Science of Japanese Robots*, Tokyo: Kodansha International.

<sup>45</sup> Gabriella Lukacs (2010), “Iron Chef around the World: Japanese Food Television, Soft Power, and Cultural Globalization”, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13 (4), pp. 409-426; Felice Farina (2018), “Japan's Gastrodiplomacy as Soft Power: Global Washoku and National Food Security”, *Journal of Contemporary Eastern Asia*, 17 (1), pp. 153-146.

<sup>46</sup> Gabriella Lukacs (2010), “Iron Chef around the World: Japanese Food Television, Soft Power, and Cultural Globalization”.

collaborations between Japanese restaurants and local enterprises in a variety of countries throughout the globe.

The Cool Japan's secondary objective was to increase awareness of Japanese language and cultural studies courses offered at educational institutions located all over the globe.<sup>47</sup> The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program evolved into a venue for cross-cultural communication when it extended invitations to participants from other countries to teach English in Japan. By participating in this program, individuals from other countries are given the opportunity to become fully integrated into Japanese society, acquire Japanese language skills, and discuss their own cultural traditions, so fostering a two-way exchange of information and experiences. The Japanese government has shown its dedication to the promotion of cultural interaction as well as language learning via the creation of the Japan Foundation as well as Japan Information and Cultural Centers in a number of different nations. Programs for language acquisition and cultural exchange are made possible thanks to the work of these organizations, which also serve to build bridges between individuals of many origins.

In addition to modern pop culture, the government of Japan places a high importance on preserving and promoting traditional arts and crafts. These time-honored customs not only serve as an important component of Japan's soft power strategy, but also serve as a reflection of the country's extensive cultural history. Because of their complexity and emphasis on the present moment, traditional Japanese arts such as tea ceremonies, *ikebana* (flower arrangement), calligraphy, and origami have fascinated audiences all over the globe. The "Living National Treasures" program is one of the many initiatives of Cool Japan that honors master craftsmen and artists who have attained a remarkable level of proficiency in many forms of traditional art. The government guarantees the continuation of these ancient techniques and presents them to audiences all over the world by providing financial assistance to the artists and presenting their work in public exhibits and events.<sup>48</sup>

To sum-up, recognizing the potential for Japan's cultural exports to improve foreign relationships and perceptions was one of the motivations behind Japan's decision to launch the Cool Japan. This marked an intentional change in Japan's approach to soft power. It is essential to highlight that although the Cool Japan campaign was a big step, the notion of soft

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<sup>47</sup> Koichi Iwabuchi (2015), "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange'", pp. 420-424.

<sup>48</sup> Ryoko Nakano & Yujie Zhu (2020), "Heritage as Soft Power: Japan and China in International Politics".

power had been present in Japan's foreign involvement for decades. However, it was during this era that a more systematic and concentrated strategy arose. The methodical approach Japan has used to increase its soft power may serve as a model for other countries who want to increase their influence via cultural allure and diplomatic efforts. Cool Japan is founded on the promotion of popular culture exports, gastronomic diplomacy, technical leadership, and global connectedness. Even if there are still obstacles to overcome, Japan's efforts to build its soft power provide an invaluable guide on how to leverage cultural diversity, innovation, and cross-cultural engagement in order to project a global legacy.

The aforementioned success of Cool Japan strategy notwithstanding, it is important to acknowledge the specific conjuncture in which the Japanese government and its various agencies and partners (Dentsu) felt the need to develop and heavily invest in this project. It has been noted that Japan was in a way pressured towards soft power as a result of its declining hard power capacity in the form of the longstanding economic stagnation the country began to face since a series of financial crises from 1991 to 1997, triggering what is now widely termed the "*Lost Decade(s)*".<sup>49</sup> Hence, we can perhaps understand the Cool Japan more an urgent necessity. Moreover, Cool Japan has received various criticisms such as its alleged tendency to place a higher priority on the export of culturally "*cool*" features that are marketable outside, while often ignoring parts of Japanese culture that are more traditional and have less to do with commercialism.<sup>50</sup> The argument put out by detractors is that adopting such a strategy might result in a watering down of the genuineness of Japanese society, so producing an artificial image of Japan that is wholly predicated temporary and superficial cultural trends.

The economic viability of the Cool Japan approach has also been called into question. Accordingly, popular cultural exports have the potential to create cash in the near term, however it is unlikely that they will be a reliable source of income for the sustainable growth of Japanese economy in the long run.<sup>51</sup> An unhealthy dependence on these patterns may result in unstable income sources. Furthermore, despite the fact that large firms and government efforts are involved in the Cool Japan approach, there is not always support from the grassroots level. Some observers maintain that genuine cultural impact originates from the bottom up, in the form of individual artists and innovators as well as grassroots

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<sup>49</sup> Yasushi Watanabe & David L. McConnell (2008), *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, pp. 191-206.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195-201.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

community efforts.<sup>52</sup> As such, in order for the Cool Japan strategy to gain more success than it already has, it may be necessary for the Japanese policy-makers to take into account the above criticisms and attempt to work on an approach that is all-encompassing, more inclusive and sustainable while still accurately representing the breadth and depth of Japanese cultural traditions.

### 3.2. Japanese Cultural & Economic Diplomacy in East Asia

The use of Japan's soft power diplomacy has become an increasingly important instrument for the country in terms of molding its ties both within East Asia and on the international arena. In spite of the fact that historical conflicts and mutual antipathy with neighbors (e.g. North Korea, South Korea, and China) continue to exist, Japanese governments have generally been aware of the significance of soft power in the process of cultivating amicable ties with its neighbors.<sup>53</sup> Japan's approach to soft power diplomacy in East Asia centers heavily on the country's economic and cultural "*deep relationships*" with its neighbors. Investments, trade ties, and financial support for economic growth all contribute to Japan's outsized economic impact in East Asian affairs.

Trade accords such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) highlight Japan's commitment to free trade and economic integration in the region – Tokyo attempting to play the role of Germany or France in the formation of the European Economic Community and the EU. Through its participation in these accords, Japan is able to strengthen its economic influence, which in turn envisages collaboration and projects a favorable image in the area. Japan participates in regional projects in order to solve difficulties that are shared by other nations and to foster cooperative efforts. Economic integration and diplomatic conversation are both encouraged through events and gatherings such as the Japan-China-Republic of Korea Trilateral Summit and the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP). By participating in these forums, Japan aims to have the opportunity to resolve historical and political disputes while simultaneously strengthening its relations to the area.

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<sup>52</sup> Daliot-Bul (2009), "Japan Brand Strategy: The Taming of 'Cool Japan' and the Challenges of Cultural Planning in a Postmodern Age".

<sup>53</sup> Kadosh Otmazgin (2012), "Geopolitics and Soft Power: Japan's Cultural Policy and Cultural Diplomacy in Asia"; Thomas U. Berger (2010), "Japan in Asia: A Hard Case for Soft Power"; Jing Sun (2012), *Japan and China as Charm Rivals: Soft Power in Regional Diplomacy*; Sven Saaler (2022), "Japan's Soft Power and the 'History Problem'".

The importance of Japan's economic diplomacy in assisting East Asia's economic growth via the formation of trade relationships, investments, and the provision of development aid cannot be overstated. The participation of Japan in various trade agreements such as the CPTPP has helped to the region's progress toward economic integration.<sup>54</sup> The nations of East Asia would be able to access wider markets, diversify their economies and entice foreign investment as a result of the accords that have been reached. The economic expansion of various East Asian and South-East Asian economies (e.g. Philippines, Taiwan, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia) in the last decade has been significantly aided by Japan's help in the form of financial investments as well as the construction of various types of physical infrastructure.<sup>55</sup> The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has been engaged in a wide variety of projects, ranging from transportation networks to environmental protection. These initiatives have helped to maintain economic stability and have lessened the development gap between different parts of the area.

The investments in education made by Japan have also contributed to the promotion of peace throughout the region. Young leaders from East Asia have been able to study in Japan thanks to scholarships, exchange programs, and academic alliances. These initiatives have helped to promote cross-cultural understanding and contributed to the development of a network of persons devoted to peaceful relations. The Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) program is one example of a Tokyo-supported initiative that helps to enable educational and economic exchanges, which in turn contributes to the stability of the area and fosters cooperation.<sup>56</sup> Direct relationships between East Asian countries have been fostered by cultural diplomacy, which has enabled individuals to engage with Japan's cultural history outside the confines of political narratives. These interactions have brought a more human dimension to the connections between the parties and helped inhabitants of East Asian countries with a contentious historical past develop more empathy and comprehension for one another.

The diplomatic efforts made by Japan to face its wartime past have also been critical to the improvement of ties in the region. It has been proved that Japan is committed to reconciliation with its neighbors via the offering of official apologies, the admission of past

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<sup>54</sup> Y. Abe & D. Collins (2019), "The CPTPP and Digital Trade: Embracing E-Commerce Opportunities for SMEs in Canada and Japan", *Transnational Dispute Management*, December.

<sup>55</sup> Raymond Yamamoto (2020), "China's Development Assistance in Southeast Asia: A Threat to Japanese Interests?", *Asian Survey*, 60 (2), pp. 323-346.

<sup>56</sup> Elizabeth Agyeiwaah & Wantanee Suntikul & Li Yee Shan Carmen (2019), "'Cool Japan': Anime, Soft Power and Hong Kong Generation Y Travel to Japan".

wrongs, and the visiting of monuments of the victims of war crimes committed by Japanese forces before and during the Second World War in countries such as South Korea and Taiwan.<sup>57</sup> These initiatives have led to a more open discourse about the past, which has reduced historical animosities and created a framework for collaboration. While obstacles still persist, this has arguably created a helpful foundation for cooperation in the long term.

The scope of Japan's soft power diplomacy goes far beyond East Asia, and it includes a plan for global involvement that highlights the country's contributions in the areas of culture, technology, and global challenges. The scope of Japan's soft power includes worldwide programs that tackle important concerns like climate change, disaster assistance, and international development. Both the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Cool Earth Partnership are prime examples of Japan's dedication to international collaboration.<sup>58</sup> By taking an active role in these projects, Japan could be able to strengthen its image as a responsible member of the global community and foster greater international cooperation throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Japan has been an active participant in a variety of regional forums and organizations, including the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). These forums provide chances for diplomatic conversation and problem-solving, enabling nations to debate difficulties that they face in common, express their points of view, and build confidence among one another in the process.

Japan's soft power diplomacy has made significant contributions to the political stability, economic growth, and overall peace in the East Asia area. Japan has contributed to the healing of historical wounds and the development of a deeper level of empathic understanding among countries via its promotion of cultural exchange, efforts toward historical reconciliation, and educational programs. Cooperation on the economic front, investments, and aid to developing nations of the region has also contributed to increased economic growth and stability.<sup>59</sup> At the same time, measures taken at the regional level and diplomatic efforts have created venues for debate and the consolidation of confidence. Despite the continued existence of obstacles (e.g. the Senkaku Islands dispute between Tokyo and Beijing or the Liancourt Rocks dispute between Tokyo and Seoul), it is clear that Japan is

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<sup>57</sup> Stephanie Christine Winkler (2019), "Soft Power is Such a Benign Animal": Narrative Power and the Reification of Concepts in Japan"; Sven Saaler (2022), "Japan's Soft Power and the 'History Problem'".

<sup>58</sup> Yee-Kuang Heng (2014), "Beyond 'Kawaii' Pop Culture: Japan's Normative Soft Power as Global Trouble-Shooter", pp. 172-187

<sup>59</sup> Raymond Yamamoto (2020), "China's Development Assistance in Southeast Asia: A Threat to Japanese Interests?"; Y. Abe & D. Collins (2019), "The CPTPP and Digital Trade: Embracing E-Commerce Opportunities for SMEs in Canada and Japan".

dedicated to use its soft power to bring about constructive change in East Asia. Japan's soft power diplomacy could be anticipated to play a continuing role in maintaining an atmosphere of peace, economic advancement and political stability as the area continues to evolve, eventually contributing to the shared well-being and prosperity of East Asian countries.

A few important questions will remain at the center of debates over the future of the region: How will the ongoing rise of China as a super-power affect China-Japan relations and peace in East Asia? Could the increasingly positive relationships between Japan and its key neighbors such as South Korea lead to an EU-like regional economic/cultural/political union? And what about the potential for war between China and the U.S. over a military conflict in Taiwan? Despite all of its aforementioned successes, these will be tough challenges for Japanese soft power alone to resolve.

#### **4. The Many Lessons of Japan for Turkish Soft Power Design and Projection**

The aforementioned success that Japan has had in using its soft power may provide other developed and developing nations with useful lessons on how to increase their global influence, strengthen diplomatic ties in their respective regions and develop more cross-cultural understanding. Japan has been able to have a long-lasting effect on the international scene as a result of the above combination of its cultural exports, technical innovation, economic development aid, and diplomatic activities. When other countries study Japan's soft power programs, those nations have the opportunity to adapt and apply the lessons they learn to their own distinct cultural, economic, and diplomatic settings. As such, countries may learn from Japan's example and improve their own soft power plans to build a more integrated and peaceful world by capitalizing on their cultural strengths, embracing innovation and promoting international collaboration.

Japan's global soft power success has been significantly shaped by the country's cultural exports (e.g. anime, manga, film and food) via a systematic, well-thought, and government-financed Cool Japan vision. The exports that the Cool Japan built its plans upon are more than just a source of amusement as they have been deliberately chosen to symbolize the identity, values, and creative spirit of Japanese society in its traditional era as well as ultra-modern and high-tech present. Utilizing one's own cultural strengths and high potential goods –that already have some degree of popularity– to have an effect on a global scale is definitely a key lesson that other nations may take away from Japan's soft power model.

In this context, wannabe or rising soft power nations should make it a top priority to highlight different aspects of their cultures in order to create an authentic and original appeal for a broad audience of all ages, values and nations. The cultural products that Japan exports have proven to have widespread appeal that cuts across language and cultural divides throughout the world. The narrative abilities of Japan's animation and manga industries have captivated worldwide audiences' hearts and forged profound bonds. The power of narratives is something that other nations may focus to harness in order to successfully express their ideals and points of view. Countries wishing to emulate Japan should learn the key lesson of working to package their cultural offerings in ways that appeal to a wide variety of audiences and use these skills to attract tourists with social media campaigns in our age – just as Japan had done with the rising internet platforms of the early 2000s at the inception of Cool Japan.<sup>60</sup>

The technical advancements that Japan has made from robots to electronics are evidence of the country's dedication to innovation and prosperity. Japan's method of technology-driven soft power is an example for other nations to follow since it demonstrates their strengths while simultaneously tackling issues on a global scale. Countries wishing to follow in the footsteps of Japan must place an emphasis on finding technological solutions to real-world problems (e.g. earthquakes) in order to demonstrate their capacity to have a constructive effect on issues that affect the whole globe. In this field, Japan has led global programs such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Other countries should invest in increasing their ability to create partnerships with other countries in order to solve common problems. This aspect of Japanese soft power will be more and more valuable in the coming decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the adverse effects of global climate change (e.g. increased average temperature levels, so-called climate refugees and struggles over water and food resources) may put the futures of various countries around the world in jeopardy.<sup>61</sup>

The success of Japan's diplomatic initiatives, such as aforementioned cultural exchange programs, economic alliances (e.g. with the US, Taiwan and South Korea),<sup>62</sup> and participation in aid and human development enhancement throughout the Asia-Pacific region have all contributed to the country's rapid rise and consolidation of soft power since the early

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<sup>60</sup> Koichi Iwabuchi (2015), "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange'"; Katja Valaskivi (2013), "A Brand New future? Cool Japan and the Social Imaginary of the Branded Nation".

<sup>61</sup> Yasuko Kameyama (2017), *Climate Change Policy in Japan*, London and New York: Routledge.

<sup>62</sup> Glenn D. Hook & Julie Gilson & Christopher W. Hughes & Hugo Dobson (2012), *Japan's International Relations: Politics, Economics and Security*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 104-125, 215-230.



1990s. The above ways in which Japan builds connections and promotes mutual understanding may serve as a model for other nations to follow. Strong people-to-people relationships have been established as a result of Japan's engagement in cultural exchange programs. Initiatives that allow for direct public participation and the exchange of experiences should be given priority in all nations wishing to emulate Japan. The engagement of Japan in economic partnerships and trade agreements in its region has made it easier for other countries in East Asia to work together and jointly advance their economies. By fostering economic integration and prosperity, other nations around world also have the opportunity to increase their level of "soft power" which could help them become regional powers in their respective areas.

To improve Turkey's worldwide image, foster cultural diversity and fortify international ties, the Turkish government may learn a great deal from Japan's approach to soft power. The government of Turkey may take a page out of Japan's playbook by capitalizing on its own unique cultural history in order to attract the attention of the world community and promote intercultural understanding. Turkey is home to a diverse and extensive collection of historical and cultural artifacts. It is important for the government of Turkey to offer an accurate portrayal of its culture. They should steer clear of clichés and generalizations in order to project an image that is real and approachable.

It is possible for Turkey to cultivate its cultural outputs such as movies, television series, and works of literature with an eye on worldwide audiences, putting an emphasis on global issues that are relevant across national borders. The aforementioned Cool Japan program provides all the blueprints of a successful cultural export strategy in this regard and the Turkish government under the longstanding command of the Justice and Development Party (AK Parti) may develop a similar systematic financial backing program by identifying the already successful and popular products of Turkish society and then channeling serious amount of investments via ministerial budgets.

The formation of a committee of intellectuals and advisers to provide effective advice on the fields of traditional arts, cinema and TV, music, cuisine, food products (e.g. standardization and globalization of Turkish cheese types such as "Ezine" or "Tulum" with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture), and sports may be a very promising on the long road to turn Turkish soft power into a global success story in the second century of the Republic. It is widely known that Turkish soap operas, known as "dizis" in Turkey, have seen an explosion in

popularity throughout the Middle East, Eurasia, and the Balkans in recent years.<sup>63</sup> These programs often reflect topics that viewers can relate to such as love, chivalry, family, and the dynamics of society and they do so because of cultural commonalities. A systematic promotion of Turkish cultural products with government support could significantly boost Turkey's already existing success story in this regard.

In a manner that is analogous to Japan's preservation of traditional arts, Turkey may emphasize its own traditional arts such as Turkish calligraphy, pottery, and music in order to highlight the cultural richness of the nation and develop links with audiences all over the world. The historical and archaeological landmarks of Turkey, such as the Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque, add to the country's cultural attractiveness, attracting tourism, and creating knowledge of other cultures. The innovative technology work done by Japan and its combination of their promotion of traditional arts has been of critical importance in the formation of its soft power impact. The manner in which Japan uses modern technology as a tool to display success, encourage innovation, and solve global concerns is an example that Turkey may profitably study. Through the promotion of government programs such as President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's so-called "*Turkey 2023 Vision*" which attempts to position the nation as a hub for the development of technical capabilities, Turkey intends to support the growth of its technology and innovation industries.<sup>64</sup> Turkey also hopes to demonstrate its potential in a variety of industries, including military, aerospace, and renewable energy by increasing its spending on research and development. Arguably these recent initiatives are evidence that Turkish policy-makers have already taken inspiration from Japan's soft power strategy.

The recent national car manufacture project of the AK Parti administration may be a start, but much more systematic effort on the field of technology and industry are required to produce globally attractive output – which could significantly boost Turkey's ailing economic and human development in recent years.<sup>65</sup> Turkey has the opportunity to concentrate on technology innovation that solves global concerns such as healthcare solutions, alternative forms of energy, and effective water management. Turkey's image as a soft power may be improved if it makes positive contributions to the well-being of the global community.

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<sup>63</sup> Zafer Yörük & Pantelis Vatikiotis (2013), "Soft Power or Illusion of Hegemony: The Case of the Turkish Soap Opera 'Colonialism'".

<sup>64</sup> *Business Turkey* (2021), "2023 Vision of the Republic of Turkey", 20.08.2021, Date of Accession: 10.08.2023 from <https://businesssturkeytoday.com/2023-vision-of-the-republic-of-turkey.html>.

<sup>65</sup> Ümit Akçay & Ali Rıza Güngen (2019), *The Making of Turkey's 2018-2019 Economic Crisis*, Berlin: Institute for International Political Economy Berlin Working Paper.

Turkey could also build its own technological hubs and research centers to draw worldwide attention and encourage partnerships that emphasize its competence. This can be done by modeling several Turkish cities on the basis of Japan's tech-centric cities such as Tokyo and Osaka.

Turkey has the potential to actively participate in economic partnerships that encourage international trade and investment, positioning itself as a dependable partner in the process of global economic integration – in a manner that is comparable to Japan's engagement in trade accords. Through its participation in regional forums and initiatives like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), Turkey is potentially able to contribute to the maintenance of regional political economic stability through engaging in mutual conversation, the settlement of conflicts, and cooperative endeavors. Because of its strategic geopolitical position, Turkey plays an important role in economic interactions between Europe and Asia. Initiatives such as the “*Economic Cooperation Organization*” encourage economic cooperation among member nations. This strengthens Turkey's image as an important economic partner – a factor that could further be boosted with a systematic strategy of soft power.

Similar to Japan, Turkey has an extensive cultural past that spans several centuries. It is possible to contribute to a one-of-a-kind soft power strategy by accepting, promoting, and embracing modernity at the same time as its traditions. Turkey can create a narrative that appeals to a broad variety of consumers and promote an image of a vibrant country by celebrating its past triumphs while also showing its present accomplishments – yet avoidance of populist political propaganda is a must for this initiative to work as the Turkish society is already suffering a significant level of ideological polarization and uniting narratives are necessary in this context.<sup>66</sup> Turkey has the opportunity to cultivate a worldwide network of persons who have an affinity for Turkish culture and language if it makes further investments in currently existing education programs that promote Turkish language and culture.

The cultural exchange programs and regional collaboration efforts that are part of Japan's diplomatic activities include events like the Japan-China-Republic of Korea Trilateral Summit. Its participation in regional forums such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum demonstrates its dedication to promoting political stability and economic

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<sup>66</sup> Ozan Aşık (2022), “Ideology, Polarization, and News Culture: The Secular-Islamist Tension in Turkish Journalism”, *The International Journal of Press/Politics* [Online], Date of Accession: 10.08.2023 from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/19401612221132716>.

cooperation in the area. Through programs such as the “*Turkish Cultural Centers*” that encourage traditional arts and crafts, Turkey is able to exhibit its rich historical and cultural legacy. The dedication of Turkey to commemorating its history is shown by the country’s dedication to preserving Ottoman buildings and traditional music. A systematic study of Turkey’s strengths in the cultural realm and valuable investments in this sector by governmental agencies could help consolidate Turkey’s considerable soft power resources.

To sum-up, the soft power methods that Turkey and Japan have adopted reflect their unique capabilities and approaches to building international connections and expanding their worldwide influence. Japan capitalizes primarily on its technical superiority, cultural exports, and diplomatic activities, while Turkey can be argued to mostly capitalize on its cultural wealth and geopolitical importance – though the latter’s soft power strategy needs refinement and systematization to be as effective as Japan in maximizing Turkey’s potential. Both nations strive to maintain their rich cultural traditions while also integrating contemporary values and practices into their societies. Turkey is making concerted efforts to improve its soft power capabilities, notably in the areas of technology and diplomacy. On the other hand, Japan is already in a leadership position in the field of soft power due to its well-established cultural exports and technical innovation. Turkish soft power, in a way, resembles the state of Japanese soft power before the 2000s – definitely on the rise and already achieving success but mostly most on the shoulders of successful individuals and civil society initiatives in a non-systematic form.

### **Concluding Remarks**

As the Republic is about to enter its second century, 2023 is the right time for a revision of Turkey’s soft power strategy in light of insights obtained from more established soft powers such as Japan. This article has argued that one of the main conceptual implications of the case of Japanese soft power is that Japan’s global success story now stands out as evidence of the effectiveness of systematic government intervention in forming a coherent, systematic and visionary soft power plan. The “*Cool Japan*” campaign, which came into effect in 2005, has proven to be a turning point in Japan’s conscious strategy for using its cultural and creative assets for worldwide impact. This strategy had previously been non-systematic and spontaneous – hitherto left in the hands and care of Japanese individuals and civil society initiatives. It is possible that the Japanese methodical approach to soft power may teach the Turkish government a great deal about how to strengthen Turkey’s international connections, promote cultural variety, and enhance Turkey’s image across the globe. The AK Parti

government may wish to develop a similar systematic financial backing program by determining the already successful and well-liked products of Turkish society and then channeling significant amounts of investments through the budgets of its ministers.

In addition to the Cool Japan program, Japan's pacifist and often apologetic soft power diplomacy has made substantial contributions to the political stability, economic progress, and overall peace-building process in the East Asia region. Through the encouragement of cultural interchange, efforts toward historical reconciliation, and the implementation of educational programs, Japan has led the process of mending historical wounds and the growth of a higher degree of empathetic understanding among East Asian nations (i.e. Japan, Taiwan, South Korea in particular). The increasing economic prosperity and stability in the area has also been contributed to by improved economic cooperation on the economic front, as well as Japanese investments and help to emerging economies of the region such as Taiwan, Vietnam, and Indonesia. It is evident that Japan intends to make use of its soft power in order to bring about positive change in East Asia in the manner of the EU in European politics – Japan in this example perhaps attempting to play the role of Germany to the French role of South Korea. This is the case even if Japan continues to face challenges in its relationships with major neighbors like South Korea and Taiwan.

To position itself as a trustworthy partner in the process of global economic integration, Turkey has to actively participate in economic partnerships that foster international trade and investment. In this way, Turkey's involvement in trade accords may be compared to Japan's involvement in the same kind of agreements. Turkey is in a position to potentially contribute to the maintenance of regional political and economic stability through the engagement in mutual conversation, the settlement of conflicts and cooperative endeavors as a result of its participation in regional forums and initiatives such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Organization of Turkic States (OTS). Perhaps Ankara could indeed benefit from adopting a Japanese-style pacifist, economic, and cultural exchange oriented diplomatic vision towards the Middle East and North Africa where some of the countries (e.g. Syria and Egypt) may harbor resentment for Turkey's historical occupying role in the form of the Ottoman Empire – somewhat similar to the perception of Japan as an imperial power by other East Asians until the end of the Second World War. Arguably, one of the key lessons of Japanese way of cultural and economic diplomacy is that carrots could be way more effective than stick in assuming a leading role in regional affairs.

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**TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY PRACTICES AGAINST IRREGULAR MIGRATION  
IN THE AEGEAN SEA AND ITS IMPACTS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY IN  
THE CONTEXT OF NORMATIVE THEORY**

Tuba TAŞLICALI KOÇ<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** In today's world, important developments are taking place in the agenda of international politics and scholars are trying to understand and explain these developments in the context of certain theories. In this study, by examining how the Normative Theory is perceived by scholars of International Relations discipline and by using the ethical questions of the Normative Theory, Türkiye's foreign policy practices towards irregular migration incidents in the Aegean Sea and the effects of these practices on international security are examined. In this context, the main factors that play a role in the development process of the Normative Theory are explained in the introduction part while having been briefly examined the basic questions that fall into the field of study in the context of the development process and the arguments of the Normative Theory in the first chapter. In the second chapter, legal aspects of irregular immigration are defined. As the main subject of the article is the effects of Turkish Foreign Policy practices on the problem of irregular immigrants in the Aegean Sea on international security, the third chapter analyzes the foreign policy practices of Türkiye in terms of Normative Theory.

**Keywords:** *Normative Theory, Irregular migration, Turkish Foreign Policy, Aegean Sea, International security.*

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<sup>1</sup> Dr., Independent Researcher.  
Email: [ttaşlıcali@yahoo.com](mailto:ttaşlıcali@yahoo.com).  
ORCID: [0000-0002-6311-9960](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6311-9960).

## EGE DENİZİ'NDEKİ DÜZENSİZ GÖÇ KARŞISINDA UYGULANAN TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASI PRATİKLERİ VE BUNUN NORMATİF TEORİ BAĞLAMINDA ULUSLARARASI GÜVENLİĞİ ETKİLERİ

**Öz:** Günümüz dünyasında uluslararası siyaset gündeminde her geçen gün önemli gelişmeler yaşanmakta ve bilim insanları söz konusu gelişmeleri belirli teoriler bağlamında anlamaya ve açıklamaya çalışmaktadırlar. Bu çalışmada, Uluslararası İlişkiler bilim alanında Normatif Teori'nin bilim insanları tarafından nasıl algılandığı irdelenerek ve Normatif Teori düzleminin etik soruları kullanılarak Türkiye'nin Ege Denizi'ndeki düzensiz göç olaylarına yönelik sergilediği dış politik pratikler ile bu pratiklerin uluslararası güvenliğe etkileri incelenmiştir. Bu bağlamda, çalışma içerisinde giriş bölümünde Normatif Teori'nin gelişim sürecinde rol oynayan temel etmenler açıklanmıştır. Birinci bölümde, Normatif Teori'nin gelişim süreci bağlamında çalışma alanına giren temel sorular ve teorinin savları kısaca incelenmiştir. İkinci bölümde, düzensiz göçün hukuki boyutları açıklanmıştır. Üçüncü bölümde ise, makalenin asıl çalışma konusu olan Ege Denizi'ndeki düzensiz göçmen sorununa yönelik Türk dış politikası pratiklerinin uluslararası güvenliğe etkileri yorumlanarak, Normatif Teori açısından analizi sağlanmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Normatif Teori, Düzensiz göç, Ege Denizi, Türk Dış Politikası, Uluslararası güvenlik.*

## Introduction

After 1945, Realism, which claimed to explain the world with more rational concepts, became the dominant theory in the International Relations discipline. Realism, with the argument of the aggression and power-seeking of states is due to the imperfect human material that establishes them, sees the real cause of war not as famine, which is a product of human conditions, but as sin, which is a product of human nature. In addition, Realism explains International Relations on the basis of states' pursuit of their interests defined by power.

While accepting that actors such as non-international organizations, economic initiatives, non-governmental organizations, and individuals can be effective in some situations and can act independently of the state, Realism defines the main actor in the international system as the state. Because, according to Realism, it is the state that enables all these organs to operate, regulates them and determines the conditions under which they can act. The realist theory, which claims that states act rationally in the decision-making processes in foreign policy, and that, therefore, in a system where the balance of power is established, assumes that states will not prefer to enter into conflict and additionally argues that peace can be established by balancing the power.

However, this understanding of peace, which is based on the balance of power of the realist theory, has destroyed the trust for the theory in the international system, where people were tired of living under the nuclear threat during the Cold War and experienced the “*irregularities*” in the new world order. This situation has increased the need and tendency towards peace initiatives.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the extent of human rights violations and international sensitivity caused the international civil human rights movement and provided a new field of action for Normative Theory in this context.

This led to an understanding that rights were no longer considered only as a safeguard against state activities, but also as legitimate demands for the state to meet human needs.<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact, in the new world order that emerged after the Cold War, the individual was elevated to a stronger status by being given certain rights not only from being a citizen of a certain state,

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<sup>2</sup> Azime Telli (2013), “Normatif Teori ve İnsancıl Müdahale”, in (eds. by Hasret Çomak & Caner Sancaktar) *Uluslararası İlişkilerde Teorik Tartışmalar*, İstanbul: Beta Yayıncılık, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Norman P. Barry (2012), *Modern Siyaset Teorisi*, Ankara: Liberte Yayıncılık, p. 383.

but also from being an individual. The most important result of this change was the birth of Normative Theory.<sup>4</sup>

The significant increase in the number of states that have ratified six basic human rights treaties since the 1990s, widespread support for the goals of the human rights regime, observation of human rights violations, and the provision of training and consultancy services related to human rights have enabled Normative Theory to find a place for itself in the discipline of International Relations. Also, Bakan emphasizes that Normative Theory has been neglected for years, but thanks to post-positivist and reflectivist theoretical approaches, it has found a place for itself in the International Relations discipline today.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, the view was put forward by normative theorists that the efforts to prevent and reduce conflicts should be combined with measures to reduce human rights violations and also the chaos and uncertainty of the era placed Normative Theory in a position to be considered in decision-making processes. Frost, one of the leading names of Normative Theory, emphasizes that it is time for the scholars that are trying to shape the International Relations discipline, to change in favor of normative values by using the phrase “*it is high time that ... International Relations theorists be required to spell out and defend their normative positions*”.<sup>6</sup>

In this context, contrary to realist theory, Normative Theory prioritizes the ethical dimension of International Relations and as Seven states, “*normative tradition in political philosophy from Plato to Rawls keep looking for a transcendental foundation from which to evaluate (and better) our societies*”.<sup>7</sup> On this basis, the theory is an approach that tries to overcome the problems of understanding and interpretation in the International Relations discipline.<sup>8</sup> In our opinion, Normative Theory differs from other theories by reconciling the discipline with current problems and examining it from different perspectives. In this process, Normative Theory makes significant contributions to the International Relations discipline not only by developing an understanding that is not only a pile of philosophical propositions, but also seeking solutions on current international problems.

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<sup>4</sup> Chris Brown & Kirsten Ainley (2007), *Uluslararası İlişkileri Anlamak*, İstanbul: Yayınodası Yayıncılık, p. 195.

<sup>5</sup> Zerrin Ayşe Bakan (2008), “Normative Theory in IR: Frost’s Constitutive Approach”, *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, Vol. 63, no: 1, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Mervyn Frost (1994), “The Role of Normative Theory in IR”, *Millennium*, Vol. 23, no: 1, p. 118.

<sup>7</sup> Gülşen Seven (2017), *Reflections on the Relationship between Political Theory and Political Practice: Assessing Realist Challenge to Liberal-Normative Political Theory*, Ph.D. Dissertation, İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, Ankara, Türkiye, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Atila Eralp (2000), *Devlet, Sistem ve Kimlik*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, p. 185.

Therefore, Normative Theory is mainly concerned with the world of philosophy and ethics.<sup>9</sup> For this reason, values are at the heart of the studies with Normative Theory and in a sense, it is possible to discuss politics on moral grounds.<sup>10</sup> In this way, moral elements are brought forward and a moral dimension is given to the interests. In this respect, interests are explained within the framework of a general value. In other words, normativism emphasizes value and differs significantly from other IR theories because it uses relative clauses.

On the other hand, it is not possible to test the propositions of normativism and to verify or falsify with empirical data.<sup>11</sup> Normativism adopts value-laden propositions as opposed to positivist propositions. Positivist propositions, on the other hand, are associated with the real world and their verification or falsification is provided by the method of testing the facts. For this reason, positivist propositions differ from normative propositions because they are free of value and practices based on factual propositions related to nature and informing in positivist approaches differ from the values that form the basis of Normative Theory. In other words, normative propositions are relative and cannot be tested because they vary from person to person.

In this respect, the Normative Theory, which basically deals with the ethical aspects of the relations between the individual, society, the state, and the international community, aims to find practical answers to current international problems and they are not philosophical interpretations. In this context, according to Arı, “*Normative Theory questions many concepts such as war, peace, foreign intervention, exploitation, human rights, dependency, independence, foreign aid, the right of nations to self-determination on the basis of ethical values*”.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, Normative Theory is not about what is experienced, but about what should or should be lived, and therefore it tends to determine “*good*” or “*bad*” about “*things*”.

In the light of what has been discussed above, in terms of Normative Theory, it is expected that the international society, which is in such evolution and development in today’s world, will prevent wars and crimes against humanity will come to an end.<sup>13</sup> In addition, in

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<sup>9</sup> Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, Bursa: MKM Yayıncılık. p. 102.

<sup>10</sup> Zerrin Ayşe Bakan (2002), “Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri Arasında Normatif Teorinin Yeri ve Kapsamı”, *Avrasya Dosyası*, Summer 2002, Vol. 8, no: 2, p. 430.

<sup>11</sup> Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, p. 51.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>13</sup> Thorsten Thiel (2020), “The Normative Order of International Politics: Critique and Legitimacy”, in (eds. by Matthias C. Kettemann) *Navigating Normative Orders: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Campus Verlag: Frankfurt/M., p. 28.



Normative Theory, it is necessary for all humanity to benefit from the resources on earth in a fair way, and wars should not even be a problem for the international community. However, the fact that the sharing of natural resources continues in favor of relatively wealthy individuals causes competition over resources and brings more conflict. As a matter of fact, many hot conflict environments in the post-Cold War period show that humanity has not yet completed its expected evolution mentioned in the Normative Theory ideals.

In the international environment where these developments took place, the conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, and the whole of the Middle East caused the people of the region to seek a safer living space. The people living in the region in this search felt the need to live in relatively wealthy countries where the conflict environment is less experienced and tried to settle in these countries, albeit illegally, by various means. The sea routes, where the borders are relatively difficult to protect, have been a method preferred by the people of the region in question. As a matter of fact, the Aegean Sea between Türkiye and Greece has been used as the new route for those who aim to become refugees in the EU.<sup>14</sup> These irregular migrants in distress, which constitute the main subject of our study, are saved by Türkiye in accordance with the principle of respect for international law norms and the right to life.

### **1. Fundamental Questions in Normative Theory and the “Right to Life”**

While accepting that the theory-building process, scientific explanation, and even politics as a field are not far from normative choices, normative approaches have focused on some of the international concerns.<sup>15</sup> There are fundamental questions in the Normative Theory, which examines many concepts depending on the ethical and value dimensions, especially in the occasions of war and peace. The preventability of war, the phenomenon of legitimate war, “*what can be done to keep the peace?*”, the place of exploitation in moral rules, whether developed countries have responsibilities towards underdeveloped countries, the universality of human rights, and, accordingly, the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention are the main problematics of Normative Theory.<sup>16</sup>

In Normative Theory, global normative problems such as global justice, human rights, humanitarian intervention, democratic peace, environmental justice, climate change are

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<sup>14</sup> Cem Öksüz (2015), “Ege Denizindeki Mülteciler”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, 14.08.2015, Date of Accession: 01.07.2023 from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/pg/foto-galeri/ege-denizinde-kacak-gocmenler>.

<sup>15</sup> Azime Telli (2013), “Normatif Teori ve İnsancıl Müdahale”, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup> Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, p. 52.

analyzed by considering values, while those who adopt empirical theories prefer to make comparative analyzes by carefully choosing the models they will use.<sup>17</sup>

It is possible to see the politically oriented features of normative approaches in the debates around the concepts of war and peace, international justice, and human rights. As a matter of fact, according to Hugo Grotius, in order for the war to be justified, it is not enough for both sides to have the sovereign power in their hands, the war in question must have been waged on behalf of the state and must have been notified to the other one.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, normative theories examine the phenomenon of “*just war*”. Normative approaches, while focusing on current international problems, do not get lost in their rich philosophical bases and try to offer solutions. With this aspect, it has a problem-solving understanding of the discipline.<sup>19</sup>

According to Normative Theory, human rights refer to a universal human identity that stands above national, ethnic, and religious identities.<sup>20</sup> Normative theorists are of the opinion that it is sufficient for individuals to be human to have this right and that the nation or community they belong to has nothing to do with these rights. They also accept the freedom of the human will and its ability to determine the outside world by moving away from imposing assumptions such as national interest or the structure of the international system. In this sense, Normative Theory has a selective aspect.<sup>21</sup>

Today’s international system is highly influenced by the plurality of actors. Major changes in the international system also greatly reduce system-level boundaries and the nature of bureaucratic boundaries is changing with the demand to evolve the standard procedures in decision-making processes. For this reason, psychological factors, which were previously defined as limits, now have a richer role in the decision-making processes. In this respect, these problems that we have listed affect the entire international public opinion and fall into the problem area of Normative Theory in the context of ethical values.

Normative Theory does not deal with abstract philosophical issues, but applies moral philosophy to current international problems.<sup>22</sup> From this point of view, Normative Theory is processed with value judgments and makes forward-looking inferences. The propositions of Normative Theory are not only testable, but also guiding, educative, and instructive. It makes suggestions on placing the human element and foreign policy on moral foundations.

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<sup>17</sup> Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves (2017), “Normative Political Theory”, *Teoria Polityki*, no: 1, p. 179.

<sup>18</sup> Hugo Grotius (2011), *Savaş ve Barış Hukuku*, İstanbul: Say Yayınları, p. 243.

<sup>19</sup> Azime Telli (2013), “Normatif Teori ve İnsancıl Müdahale”, p. 34.

<sup>20</sup> Chris Brown & Kirsten Ainley (2007), *Uluslararası İlişkileri Anlamak*, p. 199.

<sup>21</sup> Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, p. 107.

<sup>22</sup> Azime Telli (2013), “Normatif Teori ve İnsancıl Müdahale”, p. 32.

As a matter of fact, one of the problematics of Normative Theory is humanitarian or humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian intervention, which is also defined as the use of force by a state against another state to prevent large-scale human rights violations, was first seen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as hegemonic countries' military operations to protect their citizens or religious minorities in other countries. Early examples of this are France's intervention to protect the rights of the Christian minority in Lebanon. Over time, the concept of humanitarian intervention has expanded in meaning. While military and similar actions were accepted practices before the Cold War, the applications including the scope of this concept expanded after.

In addition to this, the Security Council brought the issue of humanitarian intervention to the agenda by determining that international peace and human rights were violated in accordance with Article 39 of the United Nations Convention on Southern Rhodesia in 1965, and the first humanitarian interventions were made since the 1970s. However, humanitarian intervention is a concept that is still being discussed by international law and International Relations theorists. Since no consensus has yet been established in the definition of the concept, a certain standard has not been reached in terms of the international community. For this reason, there is still no consensus on how to apply this concept, whose boundaries have not yet been drawn, to real life. This ambiguity causes humanitarian intervention in *realpolitik* to consider the interests of the country<sup>23</sup> and national interests are prioritized against the interests of individuals.

Normative Theory also focuses on the morality of war and ethical limitations in any war in the understanding of International Relations. In this sense, the concept of "*just war*" has been discussed by many scientists and philosophers from past to present, especially Augustine, Cicero, Aquinas, Suarez, and Vitoria.<sup>24</sup> While Clausewitz stated that the war was used for political purposes, he recommended that it be used for legitimate purposes and took the morale factor into consideration. In addition, defense against a provocative aggressor is seen as a legitimate political tool that justifies war.

In conclusion, while valuing the ethics, Normative Theory examines the fundamental rights of human beings and as for Normative Theory "*right to life*" is a must, interests of individuals should be prioritized against all national interests. While doing so, Normative Theory defends

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<sup>23</sup> Enzo Rossi & Matt Sleat (2014), "Realism in Normative Political Theory, Forthcoming" *Philosophy Compass*, April 2014, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup> Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, p. 106.

each individual regardless of their legal status that are demanded by each state's regulations. Therefore, on some occasions legal system and normative approaches differ in classifying the rights of immigrants.

## 2. Legal Aspects of Irregular Immigration

The preferences of individuals in a crisis environment to live in another country are regulated by different legal regimes according to their current status. These different legal regimes provide these groups with different rights in the countries where they are newly settled, and the reasons underlying these preferences are important in terms of international law. Immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker, and irregular migrant statuses have been established in order to better define the limits of the rights and responsibilities that are recognized in international law.

The 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees are legal instruments that regulate the rights of refugees at the legal basis.<sup>25</sup> The concept of “*refugee*” is defined in Article 1 (A)(2) of the 1951 Convention as “*As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.*”

Regarding immigration status, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines immigrants as those who move away from their place of origin by crossing an international border or going from one place to another within a state. IOM does not consider factors such as the person's legal status, voluntary or involuntary relocation, the reasons for the relocation, or the length of stay at the destination.<sup>26</sup> The European Parliament and the Council, on the other hand, with the subparagraph (b) of the 1st paragraph of the 2nd article of the Regulation No 862/2007, defines immigration with the following expression such as “*immigration means the action by which a person establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of a Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having*

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<sup>25</sup> Veysel Eren & Şebnem Çakran (2017), “Mülteci Politikası: Avrupa Birliği ve Türkiye Karşılaştırması”, *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, Vol. 14, no: 39, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> IOM (2011), “Glossary on Migration”, *International Migration Law Series*, no: 25, Date of Accession: 10.06.2023 from <http://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>.

*previously been usually resident in another Member State or a third country*<sup>27</sup> and by doing so, the EU adds the time dimension to the classification of the International Organization for Migration.

In summary, as immigrants prefer to leave their country for economic or other reasons, they encounter different legal norms in the country where they have settled. Refugees, on the other hand, are defined as “*people who have a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group or political opinion and who leave their country for this reason and are unable or unwilling to return because of their fear*” and they are provided with a special status and legal protection.

Asylum seekers are classified as individuals whose procedures to obtain this legal protection have not yet been completed. In other words, individuals with asylum seeker status are those who aim to gain special status and legal protection by becoming refugees and their official procedures are continuing. In the light of the above information, in summary, while immigrants leave their country voluntarily, asylum seekers and refugees consist of people who have to leave their country or have been abandoned. The difference between asylum seeker and refugee is related to the fact that the paperwork of the first group has not been completed yet.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, established by the UN General Assembly on 14 December 1950, is responsible for monitoring this special status of refugees and monitoring the continuity of legal protection. Although the Commissariat tries to solve the refugee problems, when evaluated in terms of the current situation, the reluctance of some governments to act in cooperation with regard to international law is also seen in various media sources.<sup>28</sup>

Should the legislation of the Republic of Türkiye is examined, it is seen that it differs in some classifications from the international legislation. As a matter of fact, in national legislation, refugee is defined in Article 61 of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) No. 6458, “*Article 61—(1) Due to events occurring in European countries; A foreigner who is*

<sup>27</sup> European Union (2007), “Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.07.2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 311/76 on the compilation of statistics on foreign workers, No 862/2007”, 11.07.2007, Date of Accession: 11.07.2023 from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/48abd548d.html>.

<sup>28</sup> Muhammet İkbâl Arslan (2022), “İsviçre Televizyonu Yunanistan'ın Ege'de Göçmenleri Geri İtmesi ve Türkiye'nin Kurtarma Operasyonuna Şahit Oldu”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, 19.12.2022, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/isvicre-televizyonu-yunanistanin-egede-gocmenleri-geri-itmesi-ve-turkiyenin-kurtarma-operasyonuna-sahit-oldu/2767678>.

*outside the country of his/her nationality because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and who is unable or unwilling to benefit from the protection of this country due to such fear, or outside the country of residence where he/she previously lived as a result of such events. Refugee status is granted to a stateless person who is found, unable to return there, or who does not want to return due to fear, after status determination procedures.”<sup>29</sup>*

Türkiye has made a geographical limitation in the refugee classification and made a geographical reservation to the Geneva Convention. This status, which defines only people coming from Europe as refugees, is called “*conditional refugee*” in accordance with Article 62 of the LFIP, for people coming from outside European countries and seeking asylum.

As a matter of fact, in Article 62 it is stated that, “*Due to events occurring outside European countries; A foreigner who is outside the country of his/her nationality because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and who is unable or unwilling to benefit from the protection of this country due to such fear, or outside the country of residence where he/she previously lived as a result of such events. Conditional refugee status is granted to a stateless person who is found, unable to return there, or does not want to return due to the fear in question, after the status determination procedures. Conditional refugees are allowed to stay in Türkiye until they are resettled in a third country*”.

Foreigners who cannot be defined as refugees or conditional refugees and if they are sent back to their country of origin will be subject to death, torture, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment, conflict or a serious threat to their person, within the scope of the ban on refoulement, the status of “*secondary protection*” is given.

In the Readmission Agreement signed between the Republic of Türkiye and the European Union on December 16, 2013 and entered into force on March 20, 2016, arrangements were made for Syrian citizens. According to this agreement, it has been decreed that as of 20 March 2016, the obligation to take back all irregular migrants who crossed to the Greek Islands in the Aegean via Türkiye has been brought back by Türkiye, and in return for every Syrian citizen

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<sup>29</sup> Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) No. 6458.

taken back by Türkiye, a Syrian citizen under temporary protection in Türkiye will be placed in EU member states.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union states that “*The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.*”<sup>31</sup> and in accordance with this article, all member states are encouraged to comply with this legislation.<sup>32</sup> From this point of view, although the protection of human rights, which can be considered as the most important ethical values in Normative Theory, is prioritized with the European Union Treaty<sup>33</sup>, the contradiction in practice is an indication that these values are not sufficiently internalized by the EU member states.

Ayata and Sütçü emphasize that right-wing parties are on the rise due to the increasing xenophobia in Europe.<sup>34</sup> These set of circumstances cause a tendency to restrict migration within the European Union.<sup>35</sup> For this reason, the European Union, which tries to prevent migration movements through various summits and agreements, is not successful and attaches importance to establishing the “*Fortress Europe*” system. Owing to the programs such as EURODAC, EUROPAL, FRONTEX, and INTERREG<sup>36</sup>, the borders of “*Fortress Europe*” are strictly controlled.<sup>37</sup> For this reason, the number of irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea, which is a relatively easy transit route for migration, is increasing. With this increase, the practices of Greece resulting in the violation of the right to life in the Aegean Sea become more acute.<sup>38</sup> As a member state of the EU, Greece is bounded with the legal system of it and

<sup>30</sup> Ali Can Özkan (2022), “The Role of External Actors in the Securitisation of Asylum and Migration in the EU and Their Impacts on the EU’s Normative Power”, Master’s Thesis, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara, Türkiye, p. 106.

<sup>31</sup> European Union (2016), “C 202/01”, article 2, 07.06.2016.

<sup>32</sup> Daniel C. Thomas (2009), “Explaining the Negotiation of EU Foreign Policy: Normative Institutionalism and Alternative Approaches” *International Politics*, Vol. 46, pp. 339-357.

<sup>33</sup> Emilian Kavalski & Young Chul Cho (2018), “Worlding the Study of Normative Power: Assessing European and Chinese Definitions of the “Normal”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 15, no: 57, p. 56.

<sup>34</sup> Ali Ayata & Elif Sütçü (2022), *Avrupa’da Bir Güvenlikleştirme Konusu Olarak Göç*, Ankara: İksad Yayınevi, p. 65.

<sup>35</sup> Sühâl Şemşit (2010), *Avrupa Birliği Göç Politikasının Güvenlikleştirilmesi ve Dışsallaştırılması: Türkiye’ye Yansımaları*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İzmir, Türkiye, p. 160.

<sup>36</sup> Esra Çil (2019), “Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde Uluslararası Göç Olgusu ve Toplumsal Güvenliğe Etkileri”, Master’s Thesis, Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, Trabzon, Türkiye, pp. 94-96.

<sup>37</sup> Jaime Castan Pinos (2009), “Building Fortress Europe? Schengen and the Cases of Ceuta and Melilla”, Centre for International Border Research, p. 4.

<sup>38</sup> European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2023), “Greece: Elections on Both Sides of the Border as Pushbacks and Push for Returns Continue, Border Guards Arrested in Evros – More Deaths in the Aegean”,

therefore although the Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union emphasizes “*respect for human rights*”, Greece is obliged to protect the borders of the Union. As a matter of fact, it has been determined that Greece pushed back a total of 41,523 irregular migrants from 2020 to May 31, 2022.<sup>39</sup>

This irregular immigration, which is the main subject of the study, is classified differently in terms of source, destination, and transit states. The term state of origin is used for the ones of which an irregular migrant is originally a citizen, which he/she chooses to leave by not following legal procedures. The destination state is called the ones where the irregular migrant enters illegally or does not leave within the specified exit time even though he/she arrived legally. Transit state, on the other hand, defines the ones on the route used by the irregular migrant leaving the source state while passing to the destination state.<sup>40</sup>

In all three classifications, since irregular migration includes entering a country illegally, staying in a country illegally, or entering a country legally and not leaving within the legal time limit, it makes it difficult to follow the individuals within the region, and this situation causes negative effects on the security policies of the states.

### **3. Turkish Foreign Policy Practices Against Irregular Migration in the Aegean Sea and its Impacts on International Security in the Context of Normative Theory**

#### **3.1. Migration Policies in Türkiye**

The geographical location of Türkiye and the international system have caused it to undergo a wave of migration at various times. The first of these events, which can be examined in four time periods, is the immigration wave, which originated from the First World War and mostly consisted of Turks in the Balkans.<sup>41</sup> The fact that the immigration wave in this period consisted of individuals who were compatible with both cultural and social structure, and their resettlement in economic terms, supported by the state and within a certain plan, facilitated

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ECRE, 02.06.2023, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://ecre.org/greece-elections-on-both-sides-of-the-border-as-pushbacks-and-push-for-returns-continue-border-guards-arrested-in-evros-more-deaths-in-the-aegean/>.

<sup>39</sup> Seval Ocak Adıyaman (2022), “Yunanistan, 2020'den bu yana yaklaşık 42 bin göçmeni geri itti”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, 17.06.2022, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/gundem/yunanistan-2020den-bu-yana-yaklasik-42-bin-gocmeni-geri-itti/2616018>.

<sup>40</sup> Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Başkanlığı, “Düzensiz Göç Hakkında”, Date of Accession: 10.06.2023 from <https://www.goc.gov.tr/duzensiz-goc-hakkinda#:~:text=D%C3%BCzensiz%20g%C3%B6%C3%A7%20hedef%20%C3%BClkeler%20i%C3%A7in,%C3%BClike%20s%C4%B1n%C4%B1rlar%C4%B1n%C4%B1%20ge%C3%A7en%20ki%C5%9Fileri%20i%C3%A7erir.>

<sup>41</sup> Kıvılcım Akkoyunlu Ertan & Birol Ertan (2017), “Türkiye'nin Göç Politikası”, *Contemporary Research in Economics and Social Sciences*, Vol. 1, no: 2, p. 14.



the integration of the said group into the country. As a matter of fact, this group does not have immigrant status.

The process that caused the second wave of immigration started with the Gulf Operation and the U.S. intervention in Iraq. The demographic structure of individuals in this migration wave differed from the individuals in the first migration wave. As a matter of fact, the perception of the state towards the individuals in question had differed and because of this perception, the state-sponsored settlements close to the Iraqi border in terms of location were affected from the migration wave, rather than all regions of Türkiye.

The third wave that Türkiye has faced and is still under influence stems from the Syrian crisis (Syrian civil war). During this wave, some of the refugees stayed in temporary shelters, while others settled in other cities of the country on their own initiative. Over time, this initiative had a negative impact on the country's ability to absorb the group in question. Due to the fact that the plans were made according to the number of citizens registered in the settlements in question, the said initiative caused insufficient satisfaction in the distribution of public resources to the citizens in the cities that received immigration.

The fourth wave was due to the fact that the Taliban administration in Afghanistan has re-emerged simultaneously with the wave originating from the Syrian Crisis.<sup>42</sup> This wave was formed by a group that mostly came from the Eastern Anatolian border and generally had more male population. No resettlement policy was carried out for the group in question, and it is observed that some members of the group are occasionally involved in acts of violence against women and children, and therefore, the negative point of view towards the group in question was being established in the public opinion.

The simultaneous occurrence of the third and fourth waves and the fact that the individuals in these waves did not have an identity structure that would assimilate the social balances in Türkiye compared to those in the first wave caused concern in terms of the sustainability of the said migrations. Both the uncontrolled dispersal of the group in the third wave on their own initiative and the tendency of some men in the fourth wave to commit crimes against women and children, who prefer to leave their spouses in Afghanistan, caused public concern about the immigration policies of decision-makers.

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<sup>42</sup> Deniz Kaygusuz (2021), "Uluslararası İlişkilerde Göç Olgusu ve Göçün Güvenikleştirilmesi", *Akademik Düşünce Dergisi*, no: 3, Spring 2021, p. 64.

In addition, the third and fourth migration waves coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic and the last earthquakes, which caused the deterioration of the economic balance of the country. These two destructions had a significant impact on social welfare. Due to these incidents, social welfare and quality of life were highly affected and the transfer of public resources to immigrants/refugees who spread uncontrollably throughout the country caused reactions in the public.

However, Türkiye's vast experience from the past and its superior respect for the right to life ensure that the policies of the decision-makers towards asylum seekers/immigrants in recent waves remain unchanged. In this respect, it is obvious that Türkiye's policies towards immigrants coincide with the priority of the right to life in the normative approach.

### **3.2. Turkish Foreign Policy Practices Against Irregular Migration in the Aegean Sea**

Türkiye's respect for the right to life, which we mentioned above, also shows continuity in terms of its practices in the Aegean Sea. However, there are some problems in the Aegean Sea due to the disagreements between Greece and Türkiye. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye lists the search and rescue activities carried out in the open seas under the title of "*Main Problems in the Aegean Sea*".<sup>43</sup> Emphasizing the importance of search and rescue activities here, independent of political concerns, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs finds Greece's approach in the Aegean Sea contrary to the 1979 Hamburg Convention and considers the search and rescue zones determined to save human lives as service areas, not sovereignty areas.

The "*International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR)*", called the Hamburg Convention, was accepted on April 27, 1979 and was opened for signature in London on November 1, 1979. It was signed by Türkiye on October 24, 1980. The main purpose of the said convention was to assist people in distress at sea.

At the first paragraph of the second article of the contract, it is stated that: "*Nothing in the Convention shall prejudice the codification and development of the law of the sea by the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea convened pursuant to resolution 2750(XXV) of the General Assembly of the United Nations nor the present or future claims and legal views of any State concerning the law of the sea and the nature and extent of coastal and flag State jurisdiction.*".

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<sup>43</sup> Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı, "Başlıca Ege Denizi Sorunları", Date of Accession: 09.06.2023 from <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/baslica-ege-denizi-sorunlari.tr.mfa>.

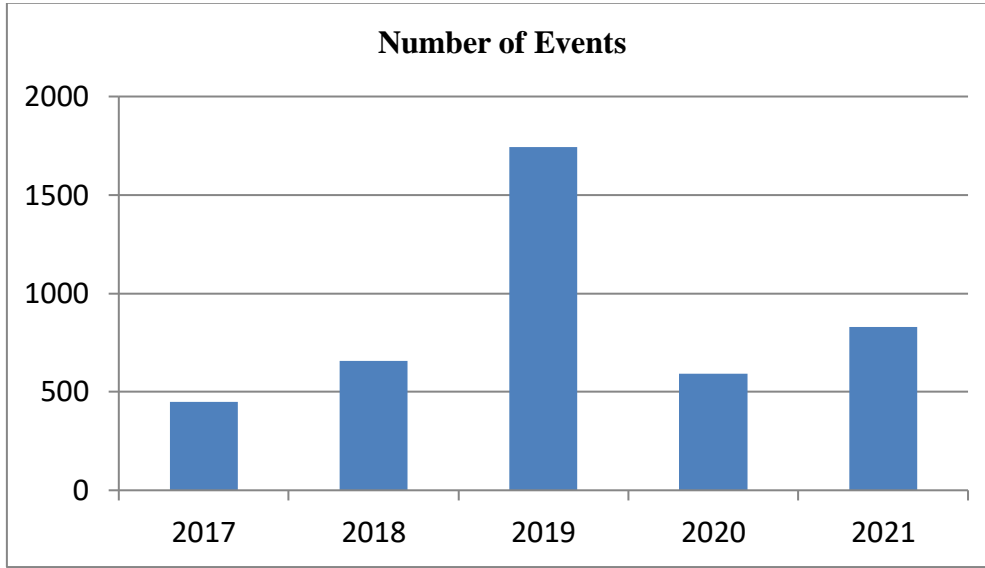
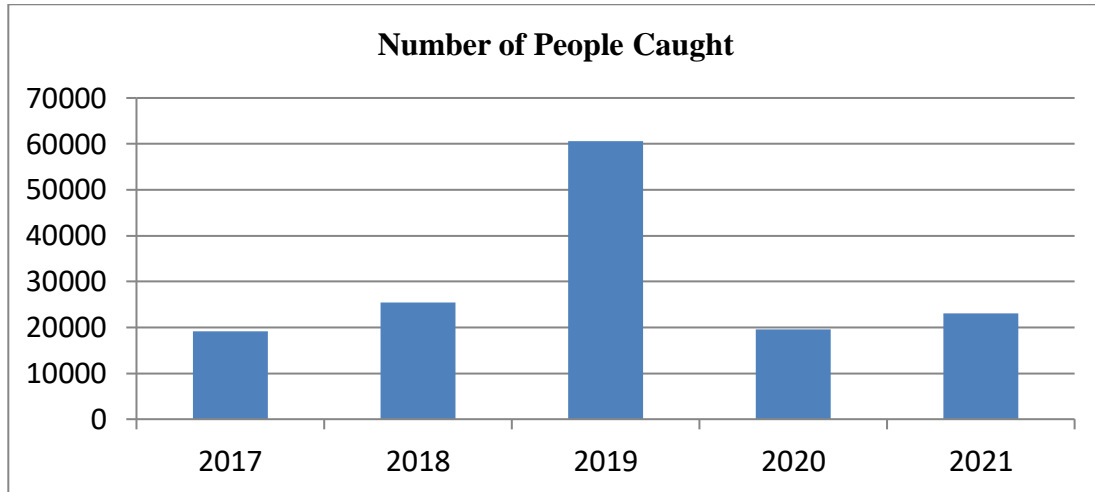
Evaluating these two provisions together, it can be deduced that the main purpose of the contract is to save human life and that the issues related to sovereignty, which should be seen as a secondary status besides the right to life, are not considered within the scope of the contract. Also, in article 2.1.5 of the Hamburg Convention, it is stated that “*In case agreement on the exact dimensions of a search and rescue region is not reached by the Parties concerned, those Parties shall use their best endeavors to reach agreement upon appropriate arrangements under which the equivalent overall co-ordination of search and rescue services is provided in the area. The Secretary-General shall be notified of such arrangements.*” and this statement calls on all parties to cooperate in taking the most effective measures for search and rescue.

Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tanju Bilgiç, in a statement dated November 23, 2020, said, “*Search and rescue zones at sea are service areas to save human lives, these areas are not sovereign areas according to international law. Greece’s approach is an unlawful attitude contrary to the 1979 Hamburg Convention.*”<sup>44</sup> and by this statement he emphasized that Greece’s concerns about its own sovereignty preclude human life. In addition, in the said statement, it was underlined that innocent asylum seekers were pushed back against international law and their lives were endangered by Greece.

This perspective of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, which prioritizes human life, also affects the practices in the field. As a matter of fact, when the statistics of the Coast Guard Command, which is responsible for ensuring border security, regarding irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea are examined, the effects of Turkish Foreign Policy prioritizing the right to life are seen. As shown in **Graphic I**, 448 events occurred in 2017, 656 in 2018, 1,744 in 2019, 591 in 2020 and 829 in 2021. In a total of 4,268 incidents that took place between 2017 and 2021, 147,582 irregular migrants, described in **Graphic II**, were intervened. These numbers were 19,084 for 2017, 25,398 for 2018, 60,544 for 2019, 19,512 for 2020, and finally 23,044 for 2021.

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<sup>44</sup> Investing.com (2022), “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı Sözcüsü Bilgiç: ‘Yunanistan’ın yaklaşımı 1979 Hamburg Sözleşmesi’ne aykırı”, 23.11.2022, Date of Accession: 07.07.2023 from <https://tr.investing.com/news/politics/dsisleri-sozcusu-bilgic-yunanistann-yaklasm-1979-hamburg-sozlesmesine-aykr-2390257>.

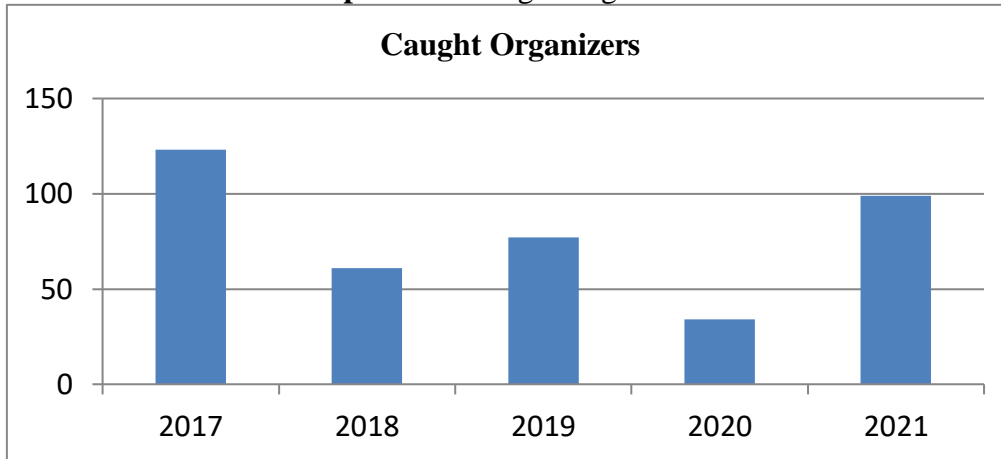
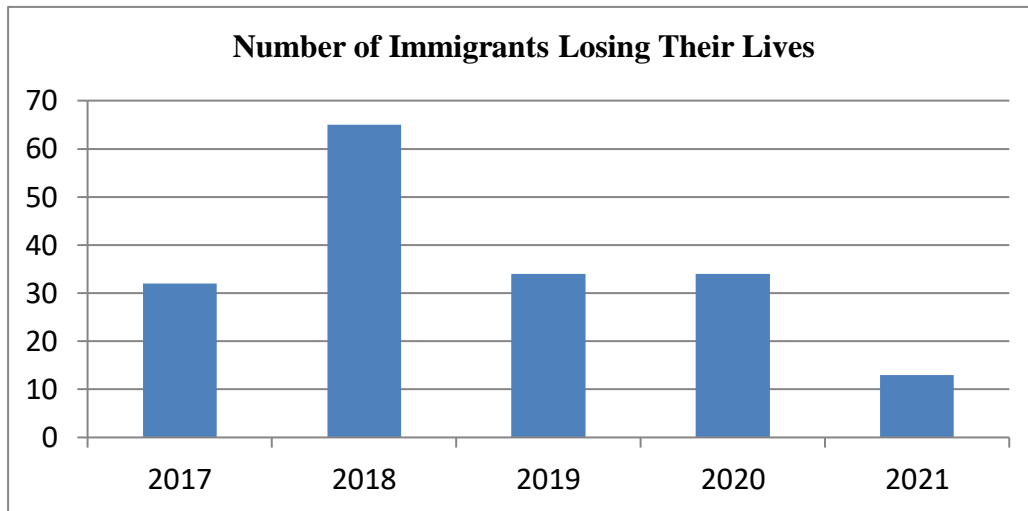
**Graphic I: Number of Events<sup>45</sup>****Graphic II: Number of People Caught<sup>46</sup>**

As shown in **Graphic III**, a total of 394 transactions were made, 123 in 2017, 61 in 2018, 77 in 2019, 34 in 2020, and 99 in 2021. As seen in **Graphic IV**, unfortunately 178 lives were lost between these years. The aforementioned number 178 is given as 32 for 2017, 65 for 2018, 34 for 2019, 34 for 2020, and 13 for 2021. However, since the loss of life in the open seas is not known exactly and the statistics provided by Greece are not included in these graphics, it is thought that the loss is much higher.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> The table is created by the author using the data at <https://www.sg.gov.tr/ege-denizi-duzensiz-goc-istatistikleri>.

<sup>46</sup> The table is created by the author using the data at <https://www.sg.gov.tr/ege-denizi-duzensiz-goc-istatistikleri>.

<sup>47</sup> Kamu Denetçiliği Kurumu (KDK), "Ege Denizi'ndeki Geri İtmeler ve Boğulan İnsan Hakları Özel Raporu", Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.ombudsman.gov.tr/Faaliyetlerimiz/Faaliyetlerimiz?gosterilecekFaaliyetId=99&uygulamaId=1>.

**Graphic III: Caught Organizers<sup>48</sup>****Graphic IV: Number of Immigrants Losing Their Lives<sup>49</sup>**

### 3.3. The Effects of Turkish Foreign Policy Practices About Irregular Immigration in the Aegean Sea on International Security within the Context of Normative Theory

While the decision-makers take measures regarding issues such as ensuring the welfare of the citizens of their own country, protecting the integrity of the country's borders, and ensuring internal security within the country, they have to act foresight against any interference that may come from outside. In today's world, decision-makers who prioritize the survival of their countries can describe any change in the agenda as a situation that threatens security. As a matter of fact, the post-Cold War structure shaped new security understandings in the

<sup>48</sup> The table is created by the author using the data at <https://www.sg.gov.tr/ege-denizi-duzensiz-goc-istatistikleri>.

<sup>49</sup> The table is created by the author using the data at <https://www.sg.gov.tr/ege-denizi-duzensiz-goc-istatistikleri>.

discipline of International Relations and security, which Buzan divided into 5 sectors; began to be examined at military, political, economic, social, and environmental contexts.<sup>50</sup>

With this new understanding of security, it has been seen that the survival of the country can be threatened by different elements in terms of security and the previous narrow-scoped traditional security understanding has begun to be abandoned. As a matter of fact, Rumelili and Karadağ states that beyond military threats, economic, political, social problems, environmental pollution, destruction of natural resources, socioeconomic inequality, ethnic conflicts, epidemics, gender, international smuggling have begun to be examined in the context of security.<sup>51</sup>

Since international migration constitutes a step in the emergence of the abovementioned problems and the security due to international migration can affect the survival of the state, human security, and social security, it creates an obstacle to the establishment of security according to new security approaches. Both the new epidemic derivatives that may come with the immigration wave and the relatively low-income level of the immigrants have the potential to negatively affect the values in human strength. In this context, any structural deterioration due to migration may cause the human power, which is one of the elements of national power, to be threatened.<sup>52</sup>

According to Şimşek and İçduygu, although the migration policies of countries change, the generally accepted rule that they define as “*ensuring the continuity of the economic, social, political and cultural institutions of nation-states*” does not.<sup>53</sup> Decision-makers who aim to maintain their rights of power by maximizing the welfare of their own citizens, therefore, see the phenomenon of migration, which is itself a security threat, as an obstacle.<sup>54</sup>

Whether the immigrants in question can adapt to the dynamics of the country and whether they will be dragged into crime are categorized as drawbacks attributed to the local law enforcement officers. Türkoğlu, on the other hand, states that due to the poor economic situation of the refugees, they cause the deterioration of the peace and stability environment in

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<sup>50</sup> Barry Buzan (1991), *People, State and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp. 134-136.

<sup>51</sup> Bahar Rumelili & Sibel Karadağ (2017), Göç ve Güvenlik: Eleştirel Yaklaşımlar, *Toplum ve Bilim Dergisi*, no: 140, p. 71.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>53</sup> Doğu Şimşek & Ahmet İçduygu (2017), “Uluslararası Göç, Politika ve Güvenlik”, *Toplum ve Bilim Dergisi*, no: 140, p. 7.

<sup>54</sup> Myron Weiner (1992/1993), “Security, Stability, and International Migration”, *International Security*, Vol. 17, no: 3, p. 104.

the countries they settle to.<sup>55</sup> As a result, international migration processes can take on a securitized structure in terms of all the abovementioned facts and events, and immigrants can be perceived as a threat to the survival of the state by decision-makers at the stage of sharing the welfare.<sup>56</sup>

The Copenhagen and Paris schools, which examine the connection between migration and security, approach the issue on different points of view. For example, according to the Copenhagen School, the connection between migration and security is examined at the level of social security.<sup>57</sup> The discourses that social identity is threatened with migration and that security gaps may occur due to the inability to internalize the social culture by the newly arrived communities is the contribution of the Copenhagen School to the International Relations discipline on the securitization of migration.<sup>58</sup> This school states that social actors consisting of powerful people or institutions such as heads of state, politicians, or the media carry out securitization.<sup>59</sup>

Paris School, on the other hand, examines the relationship between migration and security on many levels, not on the level of social identity as in the Copenhagen School.<sup>60</sup> The main reason for this approach is that the school focuses more on the practices of the security problems which constitutes the basis of migration.<sup>61</sup> While examining these practices, the Paris School considers security professionals (such as law enforcement, military personnel) as the main actors to ensure security. Emphasizing that immigration has effects not only on social identity, but also on internal security, social security, and economic security, the Paris School states that professionals such as police and soldiers are involved in the process due to this complex structure.

However, another point that should be considered is that the internal political dynamics of states can be shaped to support immigration policies. In fact, Teitelbaum underlines that some

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<sup>55</sup> Oğuzhan Türkoğlu (2011), “Mülteciler ve Ulusal/Uluslararası Güvenlik”, *Uludağ Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, Vol. XXX, no: 2, p. 102.

<sup>56</sup> Michael Collyer (2006), “Migrants, Migration and the Security Paradigm: Constraints and Opportunities”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 11, no: 2, pp. 255-270.

<sup>57</sup> Barry Buzan & Ole Wæver & Jaap De Wilde (1998), *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Pub., p. 119.

<sup>58</sup> Birgül Demirtaş (2019), “Mülteciler ve Güvenikleştirme”, *Güvenlik Yazuları Serisi*, no: 8, September 2019, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup> Mine Nur Küçük (2021), “Göç-Güvenlik Bağlantısını Yeniden Düşünmek: Eleştirel Güvenlik Yaklaşımları, Özgürleşme ve Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Mülteciler”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 18, no: 69, p. 7.

<sup>60</sup> Jef Huysmans (2000), “The European Union and the Securitisation of Migration”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 38, no: 5, p. 758.

<sup>61</sup> Jef Huysmans (2006), *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU*, London: Routledge, p. 4.

of the states which seek temporary labor from labor-surplus countries stimulate the migration in order to create low-cost working industry.<sup>62</sup> But as for Teitelbaum, these migration policies also may lead to unarmed conquests or assertion of sovereignty.<sup>63</sup> In both circumstances, the important point in terms of Normative Theory is that any event where human life is not prioritized will have a negative impact on both society and the system. In addition, the practices of countries towards immigrants can also lead to international conflicts in some cases.

For example, an operation carried out by the Republic of Türkiye for search/rescue purposes in the Aegean Sea was described as an attack on sovereignty rights by Greece, since the search and rescue zones that Türkiye and Greece declared in the Aegean and Mediterranean to the International Maritime Organization overlap with each other. Also, the overlapping of search/rescue zones may cause security weakness in the detection of irregular migrants, and the follow-up processes of those prone to crime in the target or transit countries may be adversely affected.

Normative Theory examines what has to be lived, not what has happened. In addition, the right to life should not be taken away from anyone, as the foreign policy of the Republic of Türkiye, which is based on the ethical values in this theory, precedes the Aegean Sea practices. When the effects of foreign policy practices on the problem of irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea on international security are evaluated in terms of this theory, which brings ethical values to the fore, the fact that Greece pushes the said irregular migrants back into the territorial waters of the Republic of Türkiye shows that Greece disregards the right to life.<sup>64</sup>

This approach sometimes causes uneasiness between the two countries and is condemned by the international community. The problem of irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea, as emphasized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, is not a matter of sovereignty but a service to humanity.

In this respect, this disagreement and difference in approach between Türkiye and Greece, which have mutual borders in the Aegean Sea, constitute an obstacle to the building of mutual trust. Türkiye, which repeatedly emphasizes that the right to life is the fundamental value, has a conflict with Greece due to its approach to irregular migrants who have been repeatedly

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<sup>62</sup> M. S. Teitelbaum (1984), "Immigration, Refugees and Foreign Policy", *International Organization*, Vol. 38, no: 3, p. 435.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 437.

<sup>64</sup> Lydia Emmanouilidou (2023), "Migrant boat disaster has Greece and European authorities facing criticism", *NPR*, 22.06.2023, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.npr.org/2023/06/22/1183842802/migrant-boat-disaster-has-greece-and-european-authorities-facing-criticism>.



pushed back in the Aegean Sea. This disagreement, on the other hand, leads to an increase in the ongoing marginalization in the relations between the two countries. As stated above, this incompatibility between the two countries is the basis for the lack of coordination in the detection of criminals, and this deficiency forms the basis for new problem subjects<sup>65</sup> that threaten international security such as drug trafficking and human smuggling.<sup>66</sup>

The right to life<sup>67</sup>, which in our opinion, constitutes the most important of the propositions stemming from ethical values in Normative Theory, unfortunately cannot find a place for itself in the foreign policy practices of countries with Machiavellian approaches. As a matter of fact, the pushing back of irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea by Greece with the perception of a threat to their sovereign rights in the said region should be recognized as a violation of the most important value, the right to life. The international community also condemns these practices.

The fact that Türkiye does not push back the irregular immigrants in the Aegean Sea out of respect for the right to life, applying the necessary legal procedures to these groups in its own country is an indicator of how much it internalizes the normative propositions and ethical values, and this approach of Türkiye also contributes to the establishment of international security as it ensures the follow-up of irregular migrants.

Although this foreign policy practice of Türkiye in the field contributes to the establishment of international security, the different approaches of the two countries regarding the measures taken against irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea, unfortunately, have the characteristics that may cause conflicts in the international system in terms of security over time.

When the individual events that led to the First World War and the Second World Wars are examined, it is seen that the international atmosphere was actually ready for these incidents. In this respect, there is a concern in general belief that any single incident that may occur between Türkiye, which prioritizes the right to life, and Greece, which pushes back irregular immigrants with the thought that their sovereignty rights are violated, may cause the re-establishment of the mentioned camps that were initiated before.

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<sup>65</sup> Arif Behiç Özcan (2011), "Uluslararası Güvenlik Sorunları ve ABD'nin Güvenlik Stratejileri", *Sosyal Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol. 11, no: 22, p. 452.

<sup>66</sup> İbrahim Mavi (2022), "İnsan Hakları Bağlamında Göçün Güvenleştirilmesi", *MSGSÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, no: 26, p. 259.

<sup>67</sup> Çağrı Emin Demirbaş (2010), "Normatif Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri Açısından İnsan Hakları", Unpublished Master's Thesis, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Çanakkale, Türkiye, p. 34.

## Conclusion

Ethical values and norms are at the forefront in Normative Theory. Normativism is a doctrine that argues that social and political life should be organized according to norms. These theories are approaches that deal with the ethical dimension of International Relations and also try to solve the wider problems of meaning and interpretation of the discipline. Normativism differs from other theories in that it reconciles the discipline of International Relations with current problems and tries to examine it from different perspectives. In this sense, Normative Theory, which is considered to have important contributions to the International Relations discipline, is not only a collection of philosophical propositions, but also an understanding that seeks solutions on current international problems.

Since “*value*” is the basis of the studies conducted with normative theories, in these studies not only what is experienced but also what needs to be lived due to ethical values is examined. The answers for questions like “*How can wars be prevented? Is there a just war? What should be the attitude towards human rights violations? How should interventions be made against a country that is considered to have violated fundamental human rights? Which actors should participate in this humanitarian response?*” are sought in normativism.

After the Cold War, new forms of security concerns emerged in the restructured international system. As a matter of fact, Buzan and Weaver divided security into 5 main compartments with 5 sector analysis and classified the threat elements as military, political, social, environmental, and economic security. In addition, the international system has faced new security threats such as climate change, widespread diseases, worldwide terrorist attacks, environmental security, human trafficking, drug trade, cyber threats, hybrid wars, and therefore, the concept of international security has arisen to different dimensions.

New security approaches such as human rights violations, which have gained importance today, have evolved into a different dimension with the change of the actors in the international system and competition has arisen in terms of ethical values in Normative Theory between states that continue to be the main actors in real politics and international organizations that are increasingly important. The diversity and complexity of threats in this competitive environment required the cooperation of all parties, and the foundations of Normative Theory were laid in line with these needs.

In today’s world, there is an undeniable level of immigration due to the crisis in the Middle East and Central Asia. The increase in the number of irregular immigrants, on the other hand,

causes an increase in incidents caused by widespread diseases, terrorist attacks around the world, environmental security, human smuggling, drug trade and the like, which are described as new problem areas in international security. For this reason, it is important for the establishment of international security to follow the crime-prone people among the irregular immigrants in question, who are in search of a new life.

Türkiye's foreign policy, exhibits an attitude that prioritizes the right to life, inspired by the country's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's "*Peace at home, peace in the world!*" motto. This attitude ensures that irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea are rescued and intervened within the necessary legal procedures. However, by pushing these groups back, Greece exhibits an attitude against ethical values in terms of Normative Theory and causes a new sovereignty crisis in the interventions to irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea due to the overlap of search/rescue areas between Türkiye and Greece.

In summary, Türkiye carries out its activities for the rescue of irregular migrants by considering the ethical values to which Normative Theory attaches special importance. While ensuring the follow-up of crime-prone people among irregular migrants, Türkiye also contributes to the establishment of international security by preventing common diseases, terrorist attacks around the world, environmental security, human smuggling, drug trade, and similar events, which are classified as the problematic areas in the new international security perception. On the other hand, these activities of Türkiye cause security concerns by the decision-makers in Greece's foreign policy and this security concern may also threaten international security over time.

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## ENERGY SECURITY POLICIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKIYE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY:

### CAN THE TARGET OF DECREASING ENERGY DEPENDENCY BE ACHIEVABLE?

Sina KISACIK<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Türkiye possessing sui generis characteristic features, its pursuing of domestic as well as foreign/security policies closely followed not only by its neighbours, but also by outer regional countries and international organizations, is trying to safeguard of its energy security policies. Because of the provision of political stability in the 2000s, the gradual economic growth annually has obviously caused the practise of great increases on residential and industrial/commercial energy consumption forming the foremost components of Turkish economic system. Türkiye, insufficient on oil and gas, is importing these resources with high dependence to close this gap in this field as well as to continue its sustainable development. That dependency happens at more than 90 % in these energy resources. Also, Ankara has been increasing efforts to discover hydrocarbons within its territories. So, to decrease its high dependence on energy imports in the 2000s, Türkiye has been attaching unique diversification efforts to reach a balanced energy mix by making huge investments into renewable energy resources as well as nuclear energy. In the 2030s and 2040s, Türkiye targets to become a less hydrocarbon-dependent country and have more clean energy systems via renewable energy (RE). Whether or not this target is accomplishable will be determined by conjunctural developments in the international energy world and Ankara's determinedness on reaching net zero carbon economics.

**Keywords:** *Türkiye, Oil, Natural gas, Nuclear energy, Renewable energy.*

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<sup>1</sup> Asst. Prof. Dr., Cyprus Science University, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Nicosia, TRNC.

Email: [sinakisacik@csu.edu.tr](mailto:sinakisacik@csu.edu.tr), [sina1979@hotmail.com](mailto:sina1979@hotmail.com).

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3603-6510>.

## 21. YÜZYILDA TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ'NİN ENERJİ GÜVENLİĞİ POLİTİKALARI:

### ENERJİ BAĞIMLILIĞINI DÜŞÜRME HEDEFİ BAŞARILABİLİR Mİ?

**Öz:** Kendine özgü özelliklere sahip, yürüttüğü iç/dış politikalar sadece komşuları tarafından değil, aynı esnada bölge-dışı ülkelere de yakından takip edilen Türkiye, enerji güvenliği politikalarını güvence altına almaya çalışmaktadır. Özellikle Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde 2000'li yıllarda siyasi istikrarın sağlanmasından ötürü aşamalı ekonomik büyüme, Türk ekonomik sisteminin ana parçalarını teşkil eden hane halkı ve sınai/ticari enerji kullanımında açıkça büyük artışların yaşanmasına yol açmıştır. Petrol ve gaz kaynakları açısından yetersiz durumdaki Türkiye, bu alandaki açığı kapatabilmek ve sürdürülebilir kalkınmasının devamı için bu kaynakları yüksek oranda ithal etmektedir. Bu enerji kaynaklarındaki bağımlılık yüzde 90'ın üzerinde vuku bulmaktadır. Ayrıca, Ankara, bu kaynakların kendi topraklarında keşfine yönelik çalışmalarını artırmaktadır. 2000'li yıllarda enerji ithalatlarına yüksek bağımlılığını azaltmak için, Türkiye, yenilenebilir enerji kaynakları ve nükleer enerji konusunda büyük yatırımlar yaparak dengeli bir enerji karışımına ulaşmak için özel çeşitlendirme girişimlerine önem vermektedir. 2030'lu ve 2040'lı yıllarda, Türkiye, daha az hidrokarbon bağımlısı bir ülke olmanın yanı sıra, yenilenebilir enerji ile daha temiz enerji sistemlerine sahip olmayı hedeflemektedir. Bu hedefin ulaşılabilir olup olmaması uluslararası enerji dünyasındaki gelişmeler ve Ankara'nın net sıfır karbon ekonomisine ulaşma konusundaki kararlılığı sonucunda belirlenecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Türkiye, Petrol, Doğalgaz, Nükleer enerji, Yenilenebilir enerji.*

## Introduction

Türkiye, which holds unique distinguishing structures, its following of national as well as foreign/security policies carefully surveyed not only by its neighbours, but also by external regional states and international organizations, stands endeavouring to protect its energy security strategies. As a consequence of the establishment of political constancy in the 2000s chiefly in the post-Cold War, the steady economic development per annum has perceptibly triggered the realization of excessive rises on residential and industrial/commercial energy usage constituting the leading parts of Turkish economy.

Türkiye, inadequate on oil and gas resources, stands purchasing these resources with huge need to eradicate this breach within this field along with continuing its sustainable development. That reliance materializes at above 90 % within the context of those energy resources.<sup>2</sup> This circumstance institutes the most substantial part of budget gap of Türkiye as approximately a national income source worth of between \$45-50 billion U.S. dollars remains allocated regarding energy purchases.<sup>3</sup> Here, it must be mentioned that meanwhile the finding of oil and gas, these two natural resources have been remaining to embrace indispensably noteworthy properties for energy security deliberations in the world. In this logic, there has been evolving multifaceted and dependent relationships between the suppliers of these properties and the states highly in need of them. In terms of energy suppliers, they have been lining up the demand security to sustain their political, economic, and social systems. Inversely, most of the industrialised and developing countries remain missing adequate quantities of hydrocarbons. Due to this motive, they require to procure these resources to sustain their systems. Thus, for the transference of these reserves by pipelines and tankers from suppliers to demanding states, there stands vitalness of transit countries. This state of affairs unsurprisingly produces demanding states' huge need over suppliers for the consistent conveyance of these resources and for their workable energy mixture.

Türkiye, locating between energy-rich states and energy-poor states cannot be measured autonomously from this authenticity. Owing to huge economic development rates in Türkiye began in 1980s and particularly practised subsequently 2000s, it has been developing into one

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<sup>2</sup> Sina Kısacık (2021), "The Noteworthy Regional Energy Security Initiatives of Turkey in Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Period: Just Being a Transit State or More Than That?", in (eds. by Tayyar Arı & Mesut Hakkı Çaşın) *Turkish Foreign Policy during JDP Era: Regional Coexistence and Global Cooperation*, Berlin: Peter Lang, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> İsmail Kavaz (2021), "Türkiye'nin Enerji Kaynakları ve Politikası", in (eds. by Kemal İnat & Büşra Zeynep & Özdemir Daşcıoğlu) *Dünya Enerji Trendleri: Rezervler, Kaynaklar ve Politikalar*, İstanbul: SETA Kitapları 76, p. 48.

of the supreme economies of the world. In this logic, as a normal reason of this condition, Türkiye's energy usage has been snowballing step by step. Consistent with these facts, Türkiye has been endeavouring to establish collaborations with such energy rich states as Azerbaijan, Russia, Iran, and Iraq subsequently 1990s. Within this background, quite a few remarkable oil and gas projects have been put forward between Türkiye and these countries. Türkiye believes that the energy transference projects stand not only for guaranteeing its energy security, but also, they stand correspondingly advantageous for European energy security, seen as one of the chief energy customers in the world.

By the 2000s, an original feature has been counted in this energy calculation: the Eastern Mediterranean region. In the 2000s, there has been going on an excessive rivalry between Türkiye, other Eastern Mediterranean countries, U.S., Russia, and the EU on the finding and transference of this region's gas deposits exclusively into European markets which comprise soft power tools explicitly diplomacy and drilling ships along with hard power tools definitely naval and air forces. Similarly, in this setting, alternative region that has been coming into fore represents the Black Sea. While Moscow, Kyiv, Bucharest, Sofia have been seeking out hydrocarbons in this sea basin, Türkiye's finding of more than 700 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas stands observed as momentarily weighty progresses for the Eurasian energy security deliberations.<sup>4</sup> Türkiye remains one of the leading purchasers of liquified natural gas (LNG) within its region. Even though the proportion of piped gas to Türkiye stays much more than LNG, the share of LNG in Türkiye's gas importations has been snowballing gradually for divergence of suppliers' strategy followed by Ankara in the past few terms that stands equally anticipated in the following times.

Correspondingly, Ankara has been augmenting its efforts to find hydrocarbons in its territories. Accordingly, on the way to lessen its huge need concerning energy imports within the 2000s, Türkiye has been prioritizing to accomplish a well-adjusted energy mixture by allocating huge sums of money into renewable energy resources along with nuclear energy. As of the 2030s and 2040s, Türkiye stays aiming to turn out to be a less hydrocarbon-dependent country and hold much cleaner energy systems by means of renewable energy. Whether or not this goal stands realizable will remain determined by conjunctural changes within the global energy world and Ankara's firmness regarding holding a net zero carbon economics within the forthcoming terms.

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<sup>4</sup> Sina Kısacık (2021), "The Noteworthy Regional Energy Security Initiatives of Turkey in Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Period: Just Being a Transit State or More Than That?", p. 160.

In line with the abovementioned context, this research article will endeavour to elaborate the energy security policies of Türkiye in the 21<sup>st</sup> century under its target of becoming a less hydrocarbon-dependent country in the following years. For this, this paper will firstly discuss some significant energy security parameters in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Following this part, secondly, the paper will discuss the current state of affairs and future projections of energy mix in Türkiye. Then, thirdly, the paper will look into fossil fuels' policy of Türkiye by focusing on internal as well as external initiatives. Fourthly, the paper will elaborate on Türkiye's renewable energy policies (REPs), its initiatives. Fifthly, the paper will examine Ankara's initiatives from nuclear energy and thorium in terms of its energy mixture. In the Conclusion part, some personal analyses and recommendations concerning the researched subject will be set forth.

### **1. Some Significant Energy Security Parameters in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Daniel Yergin represents one of the most momentous researchers who attempted to speak the disputed concept of energy security all over the 1980s, when he offered his explanation as “*to guarantee satisfactory, consistent supplies of energy at reasonable charges and in conducts that do not put at risk foremost nationwide principles and purposes*”. Accordingly, the most substantial threats and risks to energy security as specified by Yergin, do represent shocks, disruptions besides treatment of supplies that possibly will give rise to unpredicted and forceful increase within the milieu of prices, that will implement supplementary economic and political weight on the country. By explaining the energy security as the physical presence of adequate supplies at inexpensive charges, Yergin has highlighted that there happen plentiful features of energy security. The physical security is the first one that comprises protection of the resources, substructure, manacles of supply, and trade routes and ensuring the fast substitutions and exchange when required. Second one represents the vital worth of accessing into the energy which covers the ability to develop and acquire energy deliveries in physical, prescribed, and marketable conducts. The third one signifies that energy security is a scheme composed of nation-wide strategies and global establishments that are formed to respond in a harmonized method to disruptions, displacements, and also emergency circumstances counting the aid to permit the continuous flow of deliveries. Finally, and imperatively, for longer term, it obviously is the investment. Energy security dictates policies and a workable setting which appeal investment and progression and also invention to pledge that enough deliveries and system will be existing, in the correct period in the upcoming years. When measured from oil and natural gas purchasing states, they do deliberate for supply security. In contrast, the energy selling states have been lining up “*demand security*” for their hydrocarbons sales owing to the fact that

they stand in need of it for backing up the economic development along with a very giant share of government budgetary revenues and in order to conserving the communal stability. They request to admit that the markets will occur there consequently they stand capable of formulating their budgets and also justify upcoming phases of the investments.<sup>5</sup>

Firstly, it should be underlined that the energy demand is increasing and in the foreseeable future, it will continue to increase. On the other hand, it is not definitely certain that the reliable and stable supply that could meet this demand will be available. This situation comes into the fore the gradual increase of energy gap question between supply and demand. Estimations show that the total energy consumption increase in worldwide. For instance, in 2008, 505 quadrillion British Thermal Unit (Btu) energy would be consumed. It is expected that the energy consumption is going to increase to 609 quadrillion Btu in 2020 and 770 quadrillion Btu in 2035. The states comprising Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) namely North America, Europe, South Asia, and Australasia's industrialized states responsible for most of the existing energy consumption in the world are going to increase their consumptions by 20 % until 2030 due to probability of continuously increasing of energy demands in terms of economic developments. But, the states mainly responsible for the increasing of consumption globally will be the newly rising/emerging states that are non-OPEC members. In this context, it is thought that their consumption is going to increase by 85 % till 2030. Primarily the rapid growth of Chinese and Indian economies changes the energy map of the world.<sup>6</sup>

Here, it should be discussed that the level of energy securities of political communities is measured by the existence of reliable and stable energy supply that will meet their energy demands in current times and near future. Even if the problem is felt more differently in global North than global South, all communities are facing the energy insecurity issue. The existence of powerful energy infrastructure in industrialized countries means that the energy security can be handled in the best state level. Chasing after the energy security by states of North having energy intensive economies is seen in terms of economic security. This approach of them has the ability to impact on the dynamics of international security and in the future, might end up

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<sup>5</sup> Daniel Yergin (2012), *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, London: Penguin Books, pp. 268-269, Cited in Sina Kısacık & Ferdi Güçyetmez (2022), "European Energy Security: Can the Balanced Energy Mix Within the European Union Be Accomplished in the 21st Century?", in (eds. by Sina Kısacık & Ferdi Güçyetmez) *Global Energy and Geopolitical Transformation*, İstanbul: İdeal Kültür Yayıncılık, pp. 99-100.

<sup>6</sup> Sam Raphael & Doug Stokes (2017), "Enerji Güvenliği", in *Çağdaş Güvenlik Çalışmaları*, translated by Nasuh Uslu, İstanbul: Röle Akademik Yayıncılık, pp. 307-308.

with the experiencing of conflicts between states for fundamental resources. The inexistence of important energy reserves namely oil and natural gas in the territories of most of the world's top energy producers results in the intersection of energy security issues with more comprehensive foreign and security policies. The possibility of increasing international conflict and competition on energy reserves varies based on the theoretical approach that is employed. For realists, they are pessimistic on the continuation of liberal economic order in the future. Within this context, a fundamental question can be set forth as whether or not the central states will connect with each other in the case of decreasing energy stocks. Also, it must be asked that will the states be able to sustain cooperation through free trade regimes or will they withdraw into the backyard of national borders. Moreover, what will these preferences mean in terms of conflict between states? The historical materialists emphasize the importance of controlling the world energy reserves in terms of the development of global capitalism. They examine how and why the capitalist states of the centre try to continue their dominances.<sup>7</sup>

When we come to the Eurasia region, as of 2020, this region has nearly 60 % of world oil reserves and realizes nearly 58 % of the production as well as roughly 63 % of the consumption. According to International Energy Agency's 2021 data, this region which holds approximately 77 % of the world's proven natural gas reserves realizes nearly 70 % of the production as well as 82 % of the consumption. As stated by Statista's 2022 report, the 14-member countries of the European Union, former Soviet Union/Russia, China, South Korea, and India are the leading figures in terms of nuclear energy. As it is put forward by World Nuclear Association in 2021, 62 % of nearly 400 nuclear reactors in the world is located at the Eurasia region. Moreover, roughly 30 % of the world's proven uranium reserves are situated in Eurasia. The share of this region in global uranium supply is 50 % and 66 % of the regional production is just realized by Kazakhstan. On the other hand, when we come to the renewable energy production, almost 70 %, 67 % of consumption are realized by Eurasian countries. In sum, nearly 70 % of world's primary energy consumption occurs in Eurasian region. It must be underlined that the energy sector is unique and incomparable with any other sector in terms of production and consumption fields. The non-substitution of such energy products namely oil and natural gas with other products and the difficulty in storage make these two goods as inflexible ones in terms of

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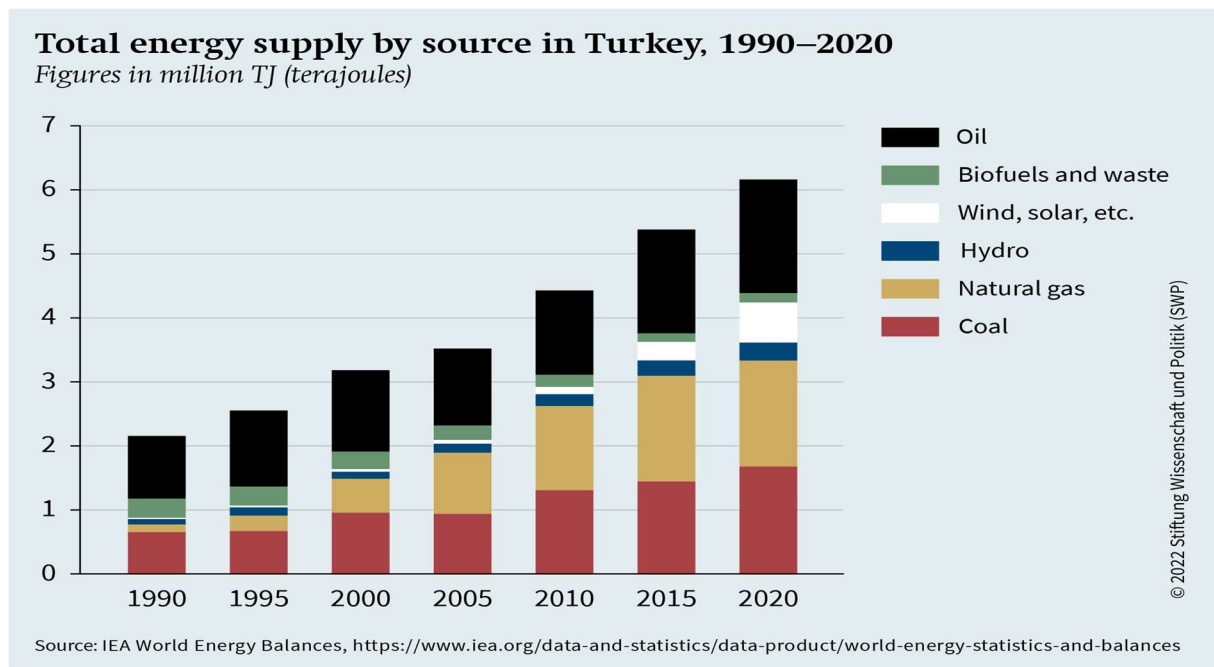
<sup>7</sup> Sam Raphael & Doug Stokes (2017), "Enerji Güvenliği", pp. 308-311.

supply-demand balance as well as it ends up with abnormal decreasing and increasing of prices in case of instability.<sup>8</sup>

It is impossible for countries that do not have energy securities to move forward meaningfully on the way to sustainable development. The fossil energy consumption forms unpreventable and concrete/stable damage over the global environmental balance. In addition to this, against the rapidly growing of world energy consumption, due to exhaustible and non-renewable of fossil fuels, have accelerated the search for new energy resources. The studies on increasing the renewable energy production in such fields as solar, wind, bio-energy, water resources and geothermal are importantly progressing. Despite this factor, it is considered that the renewable energy will be incapable of completely eradicating the dependency on fossil fuels in the foreseeable future of 40-50 years. It appears that the studies on discovering/inventing unlimited energy resource such as fusion technologies are not already in the bearing stage. Therefore, such fossil fuels as oil, natural gas and coal will continue to direct/guide the Eurasian energy policies.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Fundamental Parameters of Türkiye's Energy Security Policies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**Figure I.** Total Energy Supply by Source in Türkiye between 1990 and 2020<sup>10</sup>



<sup>8</sup> Muharrem Hilmi Özev (2022), “Küresel Enerji Görünümünde Yapısal Dönüşüm ve Avrasya”, in (eds. by Arzu Al & Hayri Kaya) *Uluslararası Politik Ekonomide Avrasya*, Ankara: Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık, pp. 183-184.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> SWP Comment (2022), “Decarbonising EU-Turkey Energy Cooperation: Challenges and Prospects”, 29.03.2022, Date of Accession: 10.07.2023 from <https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2022C23/>.



Türkiye remains at an intermediate phase of the industrial development process, with constant growing in energy demand because of both increasing customer earnings and continuous development of energy-starving fundamental businesses. Henceforth, usage remains growing at solely above 4 % annually, in comparison with a decrease of 0.7 % yearly in Europe as a total. Nevertheless, per capita consumption stands still individually nearly 63 % of the European average, signifying that if per person earnings stay ascending to West European statistics, need is going to endure for increasing roughly 1/3 beforehand ultimately stabilize.<sup>11</sup> Türkiye's current Development Plan covering 2019 and 2023 undertakes sustained development in terms of energy need, nevertheless occurring in a yearly proportion lesser than that for the preceding decade. As of 2023, yet, as stated by the Turkish decision-makers' forecasts, for each person need will already stay under the existing level for Europe. Türkiye's main problematic stands that it holds inadequate inner deliveries of fossil fuels, and that extra sources have not been plentifully progressive, consequently standing profoundly in need of importations, which comprise nearly 70 % of energy usage. The 2019-2023 Plan alleges that that dependence is going to stand lessened, nevertheless is not pledging by self to slightly exact goal. It stands inadequate hard coal deposits: brown coal stays abundant, nevertheless holds small calorific value and results in noteworthy greenhouse gas emissions. Within the milieu of usage amongst diverse energy resources, the foremost variance amid Türkiye and the remaining Europe stays that presently Türkiye is not benefiting from nuclear energy, with a constantly snowballing portion for ember. Hydro-power makes up a huge amount of the overall in excess of remaining Europe, with a lesser share at present originated from further renewable energy sources.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, it must be underlined that the targets of Türkiye in the energy field can be grouped under two headings that are increasing the local energy production and being a central country in terms of the global energy trade. The projects that are being carried out in coordinated with the policies in order to reach these targets continue. It is of great importance for such countries as Türkiye that are highly dependent on external suppliers in the energy to prefer diversification and to encourage the local energy production. The becoming of self-sufficiency in energy production is one of the leading final targets of Türkiye at the point of energy generation. Of course, reaching to this target is very far under these current circumstances, the studies carried out in terms of increasing energy production by national resources bear positive results. For instance, it is accepted that the provision of target of 30 % of total electricity production from

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<sup>11</sup> William Hale (2022), "Turkey's energy dilemmas: changes and challenges", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 58, no: 3, p. 453.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

renewable energy in 2023 has also been reached. In addition to this, it is targeted to increase the volume of electricity production from local coal currently 40 billion KWh to 60 billion KWh in the near future. Moreover, in terms of electricity production, studies on augmenting the share of nuclear power plants 10 % at minimum by 2023 are going on.<sup>13</sup> In recent terms, the discovery and drilling activities of Türkiye carried out in the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea increases the motivation of Türkiye in terms of oil and natural gas discoveries. Primarily thanks to important discoveries in the Black Sea has changed the momentum within the context of discovery and drilling studies as well as it has begun to be put forward more realistic targets on this issue. Following the discoveries in the Black Sea, the discovery and drilling activities not only in this but also in the Eastern Mediterranean have accelerated. It is also targeted the realization of new discoveries in a very short period of time within the seas accepted as Blue Homeland. In addition to the continuing activities at the seas, the oil and gas discovery studies are continued at the land sections of Türkiye as well. Therefore, it can be said that Türkiye has been recording an important progress in terms of reversing its foreign hydrocarbon-suppliers based structure into in favour of itself.<sup>14</sup>

### 3. Fossil Fuels Policies of Türkiye in the 2020s

Another important target of Türkiye with regard to energy is turning out to be a centre of commerce in this field. Thanks to its geographical position, Türkiye connecting the world's most important supply and demand centres is one of the indispensable actors of energy transfer routes extending from east to west together with the geographical advantage. Thus, Türkiye's advantageous position does offer many opportunities for the country regarding its one of the final targets in the field as being a central country in the energy trade. Within this context, the accomplishments shown in TANAP<sup>15</sup> and Turk Stream<sup>16</sup> projects are regarded as reference points of Türkiye's standing as energy commerce base. By these projects, Türkiye has been playing a very critically important role within the context of not only ensuring its energy security but also many countries including the European continent. The subject of transfer of

<sup>13</sup> İsmail Kavaz (2022), "Türkiye'nin Enerji Ajandası", in (eds. by İsmail Kavaz) *Türkiye'nin Enerjisi: Politikalar ve Stratejiler*, İstanbul, SETA Kitapları 80, p. 22.

<sup>14</sup> İsmail Kavaz (2022), "Türkiye'nin Enerji Ajandası", pp. 22-23.

<sup>15</sup> Simon Pirani (2021), "Azerbaijan's gas sales strategy at a crossroads", The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies OIES Energy Comment, May 2021, Date of Accession: 19.08.2023 from <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Azerbaijans-gas-sales-strategy-at-a-crossroads.pdf>; Tuğçe Varol Sevim (2013), "Importance of TANAP in Competition Between Russia and Central Asia", *International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy*, Vol. 3, no: 4, pp. 352-359.

<sup>16</sup> Kinga Smoleń (2019), "The geopolitical dimensions of the TurkStream pipeline", *Rocznik Instytutu Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, 17, z. 4, pp. 101-121; Attila Virág (2018), "The TurkStream Pipeline in Light of the Security of Demand for Russian Gas", *European Scientific Journal*, Vol. 14, no: 29, pp. 16-35.

possibly to be extracted Eastern Mediterranean (EM) hydrocarbon reserves<sup>17</sup> and Türkiye's position in this context is another centre of discussion. It is accepted by most of the internationally famous energy experts that the most commercial, rational, and safe route to transfer the EM gas is Türkiye. Despite this issue, Türkiye has been facing some practices that violate political and international law rules in the region.<sup>18</sup> Within that context, since the discovery of Eastern Mediterranean hydrocarbon deposits, it is discussed two pipeline projects and one liquefied natural gas projects for the commercialization of Israeli, Egyptian, and Cyprus gas reserves. Despite the non-existence of mutually agreed exclusive economic zones, littoral states have been developing individual steps mostly resulting in the violation of other sides' rights and transforming the situation into the militarization of the confrontation.<sup>19</sup> Most renowned international energy experts and institutions do highly agree that the most rational, applicable, and the highest profit way of transporting EM gas is the construction of a pipeline between Türkiye and Israel. Within this perspective, Türkiye, Israel, and Egypt are endeavouring to increase the rapprochement processes between them.

Another prominent area that has been coming into agenda under the heading of Eurasian energy geopolitics is the Black Sea (BS). Since the end of 2017, Türkiye has been pursuing proactive activities in terms of searching hydrocarbons within the EM and BS through its seismic activity ships named as Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa and Oruç Reis as well as its drilling ships termed as Fatih and Yavuz. In this context, Türkiye's third drilling ship named Kanuni has also started to operate in August 2020. At the end of first result of these discoveries, 408 bcm of natural gas reserves have been found by Türkiye within its BS EEZ. It should also be mentioned that Türkiye's this discovery in the BS is seen as a very positive development by some experts such as Fatih Birol, the head of International Energy Agency, regarding this question. However, some analysts stand watchfully assessing this issue. As of 11 April 2023, on the word of then the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Fatih Dönmez has underlined that Türkiye has discovered gas valued above \$500bn in the BS. The overall size of deposits discovered within

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<sup>17</sup> Daniel Yergin (2022), *Yeni Harita: Enerji, İklim ve Uluslar Çatışması*, Translated by Oya Özaltın, İstanbul, Nora Kitap, pp. 259-263.

<sup>18</sup> İsmail Kavaz (2022), "Türkiye'nin Enerji Ajandası", p. 23.

<sup>19</sup> Murat Yorulmaz & Sina Kısacık & Gamze Helvacıköylü (2022), "Rivalry in the New Geopolitics of the Mediterranean: Turkey's Geostrategic Vision and Its Effects on Foreign (Energy) and Security Policies", *Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol. 10, no: 1, pp. 417-431; Mehmet Bardakçı (2023), "Türkiye's Shifting Policies Toward the Cyprus Issue and The Eastern Mediterranean Dispute", *Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol. 76, pp. 238-253.

the BS stand above 700 bcm<sup>20</sup>, single the biggest constantly found in that region. That discovery will stand sufficient to answer energy requirements of all residents within the territories of Türkiye for the following thirty-five years. When manufacturing energy usage is considered, that discovery is capable of responding to country's gas demands for the following 15-20 years. The Sakarya field will originally be producing nearly 10 million cubic meters (mcm) daily, progressively snowballing the volume to supply equal to 40 mcm daily within three-year term. Turkish state-controlled hydrocarbon purchaser BOTAŞ will be responsible for distributing the gas to homes from 2023 May ahead. The news possibly will aid Türkiye approach more energy liberation. At the moment, Türkiye purchases hydrocarbons from Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran, LNG from Qatar, the U.S., Nigeria, and Algeria. The BS findings is going to lessen Türkiye's need on gas purchases, which presently make up 99 % of country's usage in accordance with IEA estimations.<sup>21</sup> By 20 April 2023, Türkiye has begun gas production from a massive deposit found within the BS, that is committing for restricting its outward dependency besides decrease end-user energy charges. The progression of taking out natural gas will ensue within phases. 5 of the 10 shafts premeditated in terms of the opportunity of the initial level is going to stand made specially made following the inauguration, as well as lingering 5 shafts is going to be bespoke at the close of September 2023. The next generation stage stands anticipated to commence by 2026, and the third step stays programmed to instigate in 2028. By the second stage, whole home requirements in Türkiye will already stand included by domestic gas.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Felipe Sánchez Tapia (2020), "Geopolitical impact of natural gas discoveries in the Black Sea", IEEE Analysis Paper 37/2020, 25.11.2020, Date of Accession: 19.08.2023 from [https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs\\_analisis/2020/DIEEEA37\\_2020FELSAN\\_gasmarNegro-ENG.pdf](https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_analisis/2020/DIEEEA37_2020FELSAN_gasmarNegro-ENG.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> Ashima Sharma (2023), "Turkey discovers natural gas worth over \$500bn in the Black Sea", Offshore Technology, 11.04.2023, Date of Accession: 28.07.2023 from <https://www.offshore-technology.com/news/turkey-discovers-natural-gas-in-black-sea/#catfish>.

<sup>22</sup> *Daily Sabah* (2023/a), "Türkiye launches Black Sea gas deliveries in historic milestone", 20.04.2023, Date of Accession: 28.07.2023 from <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/Türkiye-launches-black-sea-gas-deliveries-in-historic-milestone>.

Figure II. Black Sea Natural Gas Discoveries of Türkiye<sup>23</sup>

In terms of oil as well as natural gas exploration, the Anatolian geography has not yet sufficiently been examined in detail. But according to existing info, for Türkiye, oil is a source that has not abundant deposits, is just produced in few regions in limited reserves and lastly the existence of high dependence on foreign suppliers. According to the data of Turkish Petroleum (TP), Türkiye has nearly 0,02 % of world reserves with recoverable oil reserve of 366 million barrels. On the other hand, it just realizes nearly 1 % of global consumption. This huge difference results in Türkiye's high dependence on importation in terms of oil consumption by 91.2 %. By this rate, as stated by International Energy Agency, Türkiye is importing 31 million tons of crude oil importation. When the sectors that oil are consumed is taken into consideration, it is seen that between 2017 and 2022, more than 3/5 of total oil consumption has been made in transportation sector, nearly 1/7 in industry and ¼ in other fields. Considering these stats, it is commented on that the most important factor that determines the oil demand of Türkiye is the

<sup>23</sup> Nuran Erkul Kaya (2021), "Turkey's gas reserve volumes in Black Sea expected to rise", *Anadolu Ajansı*, 03.06.2021, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/economy/turkeys-gas-reserve-volumes-in-black-sea-expected-to-rise-/2263274>.

mobilization of societal/economic activities and its implications on the transportation sector. Therefore, it can be expected that the increase in ownership of personal cars as well as the augmentation of demand to cargo services just as in the case of pandemic period result in the increase of the share of transportation sector. When the countries that have the most shares in the total importation of oil (including petroleum products) are elaborated, it is observed that among the top five are as Moscow, Baghdad, New Delhi, and Tehran for many years and also the fifth one changes from time to time as sometimes Riyadh sometimes Kuwait City. For example, as 2019, for the first time, Nur-Sultan has entered among them. Among them, it is viewed that Ankara is dependent on some of them more than others. While the average of Ankara's top three oil suppliers in the last 5 years is examined, despite the changing of them, the dependence on the first, second, and third have occurred as 27.9 %, 19.1 %, 14.42 % respectively. For instance, in 2020, the dependence on Moscow and Baghdad as the top two oil suppliers of Ankara has been 31.2 % and 29.1 %. When these numbers are evaluated, it can be mentioned that Ankara's crude oil trade with Baghdad and also Tehran, crude oil and petroleum products trade with Moscow and petroleum products trade with New Delhi have gained a structural continuity despite the changing volumes. The relations with other countries can show much more changes according to yearly conditions.<sup>24</sup>

In policy standings, the foremost subject for Ankara stands the charging of oil, and henceforth the influence of that issue on the balance of payments. But, similar to other oil-importers, it stands tiny that the government in office is capable of doing concerning this, due to that crude oil stands a standardised and extensively globally commercialized product whose charge remains fixed through international balance of supply and demand. Henceforth, crucial strategy urgency stays to regulate, and if probable diminish usage to comply with ecological requirements.<sup>25</sup>

Within the historical context, when Türkiye's demands to petroleum products have constantly been increasing, the rate of local outputs to meet these demands has gradually been decreasing. When the existing data is examined, it is observed that the local production is occurring roughly 3 million tonnes. On other hand, Türkiye which consumes yearly nearly 50 million tonnes of oil, the rate of total domestic production to meet the demand happens at about 7 %. Therefore, due to very high rate of dependency on foreign suppliers in terms of petroleum products, it is

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<sup>24</sup> Serhan Ünal (2022), "Enerji Arz Güvenliği ve Dış Arz Güvenliği", in (eds. by İsmail Kavaz) *Türkiye'nin Enerjisi: Politikalar ve Stratejiler*, İstanbul: SETA Kitapları 80, pp. 133-135.

<sup>25</sup> William Hale (2022), "Turkey's energy dilemmas: changes and challenges", p. 455.

required to meet this demand from external suppliers. Most of Türkiye's local oil production is supplied from the drillings in Batman and Adıyaman regions. Based on the existing circumstances, the local production meets a very low portion of total consumption. Thus, in the name of increasing the local production, the discovery, and drilling studies are ongoing. In Türkiye, the studies on discovery and drillings for hydrocarbon resources at the onshore sections of Türkiye generally intensify in the Southeast Anatolia and Thrace regions. In terms of oil, it is known that the richest fields in Türkiye take place in Adıyaman, Diyarbakır, and Mardin. It must be mentioned in this context that 98 % of total local production is acquired from this geography. In addition to this, total 303 wells have been opened in this region to discover new resource deposits. Together with this, offshore sea discovery and drilling studies are ongoing to discover new reserve deposits not only in BS, but also within the EM. In Türkiye, total reserve volumes in the discovered fields are about 7.5 billion barrels. The recoverable/produced part of these reserves is more than 360 million barrels according to 2019 data. Moreover, thanks to the determination of new fields between 2009 and 2019, it is seen that Türkiye's total oil reserves is gradually increasing. On the other hand, in case of not discovering of new resource fields, it is calculated that in the country which the yearly 20 million barrels of local production is held, the duration of that producible reserve is nearly 18 years. Consequently, it can be said that it is a must thing to discover new reserve fields and the inclusion of country's resources into the economic system.<sup>26</sup>

TP has found 150 million barrels of oil in the Mount Gabar Area, southeast Türkiye as of 15 December 2022. Türkiye celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> years of its foundation in 2023, and Ankara aims to enlarge its day-to-day production to 100 thousand barrels in that timeline. Erdoğan has too mentioned that TP's regular output, that happened unevenly 40,000 barrels in 2017 has nowadays augmented to 65 thousand barrels. The discovery has realized in the Şehit Esmâ Cevik-1 exploration well, and TP is planning for opening more than 10 additional assessment as well as output shafts in 2023. TP anticipates oil output in this area stands projected to occur as twenty-five thousand barrels daily at the last term of 2023.<sup>27</sup> As of 4 May 2023, TP has realized the biggest crude oil finding in onshore Türkiye with an assessed to possess 1 billion barrels of crude. The finding would occur in the south-eastern province of Şırnak (Gabar Mountain), which is bordering the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region in Iraq and Syria. The

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<sup>26</sup> İsmail Kavaz (2021), "Türkiye'nin Enerji Kaynakları ve Politikası", pp. 41-43.

<sup>27</sup> Smruthi Nadig (2022), "Turkish Petroleum discovers oil worth \$12bn in Mount Gabar", Offshore Technology, 15.12.2022, Date of Accession: 28.07.2023 from <https://www.offshore-technology.com/news/turkish-petroleum-discovers-oil-worth-12bn-in-mount-gabar/#catfish>.

output objective stands established for 100,000 bpd, which might stay above double Türkiye's oil output. The survey achievement stands projected to support accomplish Türkiye's energy liberation.<sup>28</sup> Within this context, by 7 June 2023, according to Turkish Petroleum, Türkiye's daily oil output per day has recorded its maximum phase within 32 years, motivated by the newest findings led by a gigantic discovery within the southern part of country's in earlier 2023. The day-to-day production has surpassed 70,000 barrels.<sup>29</sup>

On account of its swift development in excess of twenty years, natural gas has converted a vital resource in Türkiye's energy supply mixture. Ankara holds a central lead when compared with other buyers, since it remains neighbouring to such chief gas sellers – Moscow, Baku, and Tehran. Till 2001, Moscow would be the single seller, through a pipeline going by eastern Europe, nevertheless within this time, a substitute pipeline originated from Iran would be discussed for streaming. This would be trailed by two more pipelines from Russia going beneath under the BS ('Blue Stream 2003, and 'TurkStream' in 2020) along with a pipeline originated from Azerbaijan, going via Georgia. Therefore, Türkiye's gas imports from Russia have decreased from 17.6 bcm or in other words 46 % of the total within 2010, to 16.2 bcm, or 34 % of the total, as of 2020. By the later term, purchases originated from Azerbaijan would constitute almost 24 % of the whole, in consort with 11% originated from Iran, and more than 31% supplied through LNG, primarily originating from Algeria and also Nigeria.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Charles Kennedy (2023), "Turkey Makes Huge 1-Billion-Barrel Oil Discovery", Oil Price, 04.05.2023, Date of Accession: 28.07.2023 from <https://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/Turkey-Makes-Huge-1-Billion-Barrel-Oil-Discovery.html>.

<sup>29</sup> *Daily Sabah* (2023/c), "New discoveries help lift Türkiye's daily oil output to 32-year high", 07.06.2023, Date of Accession: 28.07.2023 from <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/new-discoveries-help-lift-Turkiyes-daily-oil-output-to-32-year-high>.

<sup>30</sup> William Hale (2022), "Turkey's energy dilemmas: changes and challenges", p. 455.



**Figure III.** Natural Gas Import Contracts of Türkiye<sup>31</sup>

Turkey's "take-or-pay" gas import contracts				
Gas line	Origin	Bcm/annum	Expiry date	Contractee
South Caucasus	Azerbaijan (Shah Deniz 1)	6.6	April 2021	Botas
LNG	Nigeria	1.3	October 2021	Botas
West Line	Russia	4*	December 2021	Botas
LNG	Algeria	5.4	October 2024	Botas
Blue Stream	Russia	16	December 2025	Botas
Eastern Anatolia Tanap	Iran Azerbaijan (Shah Deniz 2)	9.6 6	July 2026	Botas Botas
<b>Total</b>		<b>48.9</b>		
TurkStream	Russia	15.75		Botas

\* Plus 10 bcm/annum contracted by seven private companies. Source: data collected by PETROSTRATEGIES.

Notwithstanding Türkiye's high dependency on energy importations, Ankara holds a serious part in supply route divergence. Exploiting this geostrategic strength, Türkiye seeks to place itself as an 'energy corridor' or even as an 'energy hub.' Freshly, the Turkish Foreign Ministry has similarly widely employed the 'energy trading centre' account. While politicians and specialists frequently practise these standings interchangeably, they hold diverse consequences. Türkiye being as an 'energy transit corridor' necessitates the creation and usage of a diversity of oil and gas pipelines, and related systems, linking Russia, the Caspian Basin, and the Middle East, not only to the Turkish market, but also to European end-users. Though, converting into an 'energy hub' remains a more challenging pursuit, meanwhile it dictates: widespread stimulus on a net of oil and gas pipelines as well as Liquefied Natural Gas trade, not only in terms of its capability to impact passage standings and settings, but also in re-selling some of the hydrocarbons transitory via this system. Henceforth, it stands notable that while the 'energy hub' concept, has remained principal in the official tale for a few decades, there stand correspondingly innumerable disapprovals concerning the practicability of this concept and the upcoming of a pipeline-grounded energy centre in Türkiye. Above all, these disapprovals point toward a diversity of tests counting the non-appearance of a legal-governing basis in Türkiye

<sup>31</sup> Civilnet (2021), "The discovery of gas in the Black Sea drastically broadens Turkey's options", 16.06.2021, Date of Accession: 20.07.2023 from <https://www.civilnet.am/en/news/620839/the-discovery-of-gas-in-the-black-sea-drastically-broadens-turkeys-options/>.

to permit for centre valuing, snowballing LNG trade, and the decarbonization paths in terms of European continent.<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, Türkiye's rapidly increasing inner consumption, expensive dependence on energy exportations besides unpredictable foreign policy situation spoiled with global struggles produce an inconsistency between the striving tales and objectives of Turkish decision-makers and also intricate local changing aspects. Türkiye's extremely high dependency over purchased energy materials institutes the momentous test. Türkiye purchases 99 % of its gas and 93 % of its oil. Huge need of energy importation from Russia and Iran upsurges Ankara's weakness. In the outcome of a disaster in the relationships between Ankara and Moscow<sup>33</sup> as a result of the shooting of Russian SU-24 war plane along Turkish-Syrian border, Türkiye has endeavoured for increasing its initiatives in terms of differentiating its energy providers. Sanctions counter to Tehran have cut Ankara's energy purchases from this exporter. For instance, four years ago, Türkiye's gas purchases from Kremlin would be 33.6 % in overall, while 17.1 % would originate from Tehran. Growing energy collaboration with Azerbaijan has empowered Türkiye for getting 21.2 % of its gas from this supplier. Alterations and snowballing supply of LNG make available original divergence occasions for Türkiye too. Subsequently 2022, the U.S. has turned out to be the major LNG seller towards Türkiye. Growing acquisitions of American LNG have correspondingly reinforced Ankara's procuring situation regarding different traders.<sup>34</sup> As of 6 May 2022, Türkiye has remained amongst the topmost liquefied natural gas (LNG) purchasers in Europe last year, as international importations have grown 4.5 % year-over-year, as stated by the Paris-based International Group of LNG Importers (GIIGNL). Türkiye has bought 4.3 million tons of LNG from Algeria and 1 million tonnes from Nigeria. Norway, Egypt, and the U.S. have similarly underwritten to the country's importations.<sup>35</sup> On 31 January 2023, Türkiye has engaged a crucial liquefied natural gas buying contract with Oman for 1.4 billion cubic metres of yearly gas importations for 10 years.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Şuhnaz Yılmaz (2023), "Facing new security threats in an era of global transformations: Turkey's challenges of energy security, climate change and sustainability", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 24, no: 3-4, p. 718.

<sup>33</sup> William Hale (2023), "The Turkey-Russia Relationship in Historical Perspective: Patterns, Change and Contrast", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Advanced Online Publication, 25 April 2023, pp. 1-16.

<sup>34</sup> Şuhnaz Yılmaz (2023), "Facing new security threats in an era of global transformations: Turkey's challenges of energy security, climate change and sustainability", pp. 718-719.

<sup>35</sup> *Daily Sabah* (2022), "Turkey 4th biggest LNG importer in Europe as global trade jumps", *Daily Sabah*, 06.05.2022, Date of Accession: 31.07.2023 from <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/turkey-4th-biggest-lng-importer-in-europe-as-global-trade-jumps>.

<sup>36</sup> Nishant Ugal (2023), "Turkey signs multi-year LNG import deal with leading Middle East gas producer", *Upstream*, 31.05.2023, Date of Accession: 31.07.2023 from <https://www.upstreamonline.com/lng/turkey-signs-multi-year-lng-import-deal-with-leading-middle-east-gas-producer/2-1-1395749>.

#### 4. Renewable Energy Policies of Türkiye in the 2020s

Türkiye in parallel with its strategy of “more local, more RE” strategy is attaching importance to renewable energy resources (RERs) very much. Primarily in terms of lessening external dependency as well as the diversification of production through internal dynamics, there exist ongoing studies regarding the increasing of share of RERs within the electricity production in Türkiye. Within the context of 2019-2023 strategic plan, the envisaged target to be realized in the energy field has been determined as the increase of RERs based established electricity power within the total established power from 59 % to 65 %. This shows the importance attached by Türkiye to renewable energies. When the distribution of RERs-established power among the resources is examined, it is observed that most of them is composed by hydro-energy based resources. Hydro-energy is followed by wind and sun energy respectively. It is accepted that the advancements in renewable due to the outcome of the geographic advantage that Türkiye has, are among the most important opportunities for the country. When the changes in terms of re-established power volumes between 2011 and 2020 are elaborated, within this term, the highest proportional increase has been experienced in solar energy. Together with this, the largest established power for Türkiye is hydro-energy resources. But when the increase in terms of percentage is examined, between 2011 and 2020, the source having the lowest growth has stayed the hydro-energy. The biggest reason of this situation is the usage of big potential of that resource which is based on water power. At the same time, the long duration of established power plants shows that this resource continues to be used. It is very clear that the applied active policies and promotion mechanisms in Türkiye have resulted in with the increase of whole RERs. Here the most important thing is the provision of continuation of increase in energy production potentials of the resources. In addition to all of these factors, Türkiye in which three parts of it is surrounded by seas, has the wave energy potential. The energy production starting in the offshore Black Sea is targeted to be included in RER centred production network of Türkiye. For instance, when the January 2021 data is elaborated, in Türkiye, energy has been produced from 576 established plants and 133 dam plants over the river resources. Moreover, 7.640 solar energy plants, 332 wind energy plants, 60 geothermal energy plants and 276 bio-cell/biofuel plants are operating.<sup>37</sup>

Türkiye has similarly sought after to reinforce the security of its energy supply by snowballing generation of RERs and dropping energy usage via augmented energy efficiency. Sales,

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<sup>37</sup> Esmâ Gültekin Tarla (2022), “Kavram, Teknoloji ve Politikalar Kapsamında Türkiye’de Yenilenebilir Enerji”, in (eds. by İsmail Kavaz) *Türkiye’nin Enerjisi: Politikalar ve Stratejiler*, İstanbul: SETA Kitapları 80, pp. 69-71.

particularly, have confirmed fruitful in decreasing charges and growing investments in renewables. Türkiye's renewable size has increased by 50 % over the preceding five years. As of 2019, Türkiye would have the fifth maximum stage of original renewable volume embellishments in Europe and the 15<sup>th</sup> uppermost within the world. The IEA report has set forth that Türkiye is capable of accomplishing even tougher progress in RERs – specifically solar, wind and geothermal – owing to its substantial resource grant. Its abundant capacity for development of RERs stands not restricted to electricity production nevertheless stays likewise applicable within the heating area. Remarkably, Türkiye solely benefits from a projected 3 % of its solar and also 15 % of its onshore wind capacity.<sup>38</sup>

Türkiye has announced plans to increase RERs use by 2035, but other aspects of its energy strategy remain under disapproval, counting constant investment in coal-fuelled and nuclear power plants. A National Energy Plan out in January 2023<sup>39</sup> outlines goals in the energy sector as of 2035, which, as stated by the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Türkiye, stand in agreement with country's objective to access net zero carbon emissions as of 2053. Consistent with the strategy, electrical energy will be comprising 25 % of Türkiye's energy usage as at the second half of 2030s, going up from 21.8 % within 2020, whereas the portion of renewable sources within the connected power capacity has upsurged to approximately 65 % from 52 % by the first quarter of 2000s. Türkiye's fixed power capacity, which stood at 95.9 gigawatts (GW) at the end of 2020, will be reaching virtually 190 GW as of 2035, and three-fourths of the original power volume will be originated from renewable energy sources — a goal received by supporters of clean energy. Under the strategy, coal- and gas-fired thermal plans will be making up 34.2 % of electricity output by the second half of 2030s, decreasing from 57.6 % within 2020. Türkiye objects to upsurge the usage of RERs both within its total energy usage and power production.<sup>40</sup> For total energy usage, RERs will be accounting for 18.4 % in the first quarter of 2000s and also 23.7 % in the second half of 2030s. Electrical energy,

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<sup>38</sup> International Energy Agency Press Release (2021), "Turkey's success in renewables is helping diversify its energy mix and increase its energy security", 11.03.2021, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <https://www.iea.org/news/turkey-s-success-in-renewables-is-helping-diversify-its-energy-mix-and-increase-its-energy-security>.

<sup>39</sup> EnerData (2023), "Turkey's National Energy Plan for 2035 will boost solar and wind capacities", 05.01.2023, Date of Accession: 04.08.2023 from <https://balkangreenenergynews.com/turkey-aims-to-almost-double-electricity-generation-capacity-by-2035/>.

<sup>40</sup> Mustafa Sönmez (2023), "Turkey plans to expand renewable energy but sticks to coal, nuclear", *Al Monitor*, 02.02.2023, Date of Accession: 04.08.2023 from <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/01/turkey-plans-expand-renewable-energy-sticks-coal-nuclear#ixzz89PDDaBKw>.

in the meantime, will characterise approximately 25 % of the final energy usage, with the established power volume increasing to virtually 190 GW. As a component of that goal, the portions of solar and wind sources will be reaching into 28 % and 16 %, separately. In terms of additional RERs, the connected volume will be reaching into 35.1 GW in hydroelectric power plants and 5.1 GW for geothermal and biomass plants. Therefore, RERs will be accounting for almost 65 % of the country's established power size as of the second half of 2030s. Increasing solar energy usage positions as the most motivated aim for RERs. The strategy foresees that the solar energy established volume will be reaching into 53 GW as of the second half of 2030s, a 470 % rise from 9.3 GW by 2022.<sup>41</sup>

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has formally opened what stands thought to stay Europe's largest solar power plant constructed on a sole place and one of the five biggest within the world. Established by Kalyon Energy, an associate of one of Türkiye's top corporations, Kalyon Holding, the solar plant within the central province of Konya asserts a fixed volume of 1,350 megawatts (MW). The Kalyon Karapınar Solar Power Plant commits for aiding Türkiye in terms of limitation of its massive energy purchases and supports ambition to increase renewable energy output that has by now stood boosted by huge-scale solar and wind power tenders. Over 3.2 million solar panels at the facility stand to produce 3 million kilowatt-hours of electricity per annum, adequate to make available power to 2 million people and avoid the usage of \$450 million of fossil fuel corresponding resources. The \$1 billion plant has by now begun generating electricity, will avoid 1.5 million tons of carbon emissions per annum and upsurge the portion of solar energy in Türkiye's whole energy output by 20 %. In additional milestone declaration in the ceremony, he has correspondingly publicized that Türkiye has similarly found high-quality petroleum in south-eastern Anatolia with a regular output volume of 100,000 barrels. He has underlined that Türkiye will no more remain a state dependent on energy reserves nevertheless will somewhat stay a state able to energy sales. He has similarly underscored that Türkiye has begun oil output within regions where oil wells were closed over allegations of no oil, and places that stood required to be closed because of PKK terrorist threats.<sup>42</sup>

As of 18 July 2023, Riyadh and Ankara have engaged in an energy contract intended at increasing collaboration in hydrocarbon production throughout a high-level meeting. The Kingdom's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman would negotiate with President Recep

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Daily Sabah* (2023/b), "Türkiye officially launches Europe's largest solar power plant", 02.05.2023, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/Türkiye-officially-launches-europes-largest-solar-power-plant>.

Tayyip Erdogan at the meeting, which happened in the President of Türkiye's three-state Gulf visiting. A memorandum of understanding would be contracted by Saudi Minister of Energy Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman and his colleague from Türkiye Alparslan Bayraktar. On the word of the Saudi Press Agency, the MoU includes the production, marketing, distribution and trade of refined petroleum products, along with the manufacturing of petrochemicals. It similarly includes the collaboration within renewable energy and electricity fields, besides the search of investment occasions between the two countries within that area. There has correspondingly a contract on examining electrical interconnectedness amid the Kingdom and Türkiye.<sup>43</sup> As of 20 July 2023, Erdogan would complete the abovementioned visiting accompanied by 13 deals predicted as \$50.7 billion contracted in the United Arab Emirates.<sup>44</sup> The scope of the pacts and memorandums of understanding broadcast by both nations proposes a giant helping hand to Türkiye's economic system, which encounters extra pressure subsequently the shocking earthquakes in February 2023 that have cost the country in excess of hundred billion U.S. Dollars. Erdogan and UAE President Zayed Al Nahyan have participated deals contracted by officials of both countries in Abu Dhabi. These have covered sponsoring up to \$8.5 billion for earthquake relief bonds and encompassing \$3 billion in loan facilities for funding Turkish exportations. Supplementary contracts have included energy, defence and industry.<sup>45</sup>

## 5. Nuclear Energy and Thorium Policies of Türkiye in the 2000s

In order to increase the diversity in its energy mixture, Türkiye has been prioritizing to benefit from RERs and will be starting to use a modern energy type in the form of nuclear energy owing to the first reactor of Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant envisaged to become operational at the first half of 2023. Türkiye has an important potential for nuclear energy resources. It is necessary to establish plants that need high investments to produce energy by benefiting from those resources. But due to the uneconomical and unnecessary of the establishment of these facilities in terms of within the today's circumstances, those resources in the country are awaiting its time for the energy production. In the forthcoming terms, in parallel with the increasing of nuclear power plants in the country, those resources will be included into the economy.

<sup>43</sup> *Arab News* (2023), "Saudi Arabia and Türkiye sign energy cooperation agreement", 18.07.2023, Date of Accession: 04.08.2023 from <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2340061/business-economy>.

<sup>44</sup> Sinem Cengiz (2023), "Will economy-driven Türkiye-Gulf relations yield political gains?", *The Frontier Post*, 31.07.2023, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <https://thefrontierpost.com/will-economy-driven-turkiye-gulf-relations-yield-political-gains/>.

<sup>45</sup> Sinan Tavşan (2023), "Erdogan ends Gulf tour in UAE with agreements worth \$50bn", *Nikkei Asia*, 20.07.2023, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Erdogan-ends-Gulf-tour-in-UAE-with-agreements-worth-50bn>; *Daily Sabah* (2023/d), "Türkiye says energy covers nearly \$30B of deals signed with UAE", 31.07.2023, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/Turkiye-says-energy-covers-nearly-30b-of-deals-signed-with-uae>.

Moreover, the trade of those resources can be spread by following world nuclear energy usage trends. Within the context of energy production by benefiting from nuclear resources, two elements namely uranium and thorium come into the fore.<sup>46</sup> In the existing circumstances, the uranium is the most commonly used one among those resources. It is seen that the uranium reserves in Türkiye is located at the western part of the country and the thorium is mostly found in Eskişehir region.<sup>47</sup> When the distribution of resources at the territorial regions of the country is like that, the offshore fields are awaiting to be discovered. According to the current reserves, the total uranium reserve is about 12.614. Most of these reserves take place in Yozgat, Manisa, Aydın. Furthermore, searching for new reserve field around Nevşehir continues. In Türkiye which the studies on developing new reserve potential, one cannot talk about its production and trade yet. However, as a result of passing into a new phase of Türkiye's nuclear energy adventure continuing more than half century, in the forthcoming years, it is indispensable in increasing of uranium production and trade.<sup>48</sup>

In terms of thorium<sup>49</sup> as another important nuclear energy source, Türkiye has very important volumes. For the discovered thorium reserves, Türkiye comes after India in the world. Thorium which is a very important nuclear energy raw material holds the potential of turning out to be the future energy fuel by spreading in parallel with the technological developments.<sup>50</sup> In today's world, studies at the point of benefiting from thorium<sup>51</sup> as a fuel raw material of new generation nuclear power plants in such countries as Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, India, Japan, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Russia and United Kingdom. In terms of energy production from nuclear resources, Türkiye has made important steps in recent years. Türkiye's initiatives for establishing nuclear power plants continuing for more than a half century has been realized thanks to the bilateral agreement signed between Türkiye and Russian Federation in 2010. As a result of this deal, it is planned to produce power of 4.8 GW from

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<sup>46</sup> Muhammet Karataşlı (2020), "Nuclear energy and raw material reserves in Turkey", *ABMYO Dergisi*, Year: 15, no: 59, pp. 249-261.

<sup>47</sup> Melih Tokay & Cahit Erentöz (1959), "Uranium and Thorium Possibilities in Turkey", *Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration*, pp. 80-99, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/44132>.

<sup>48</sup> İsmail Kavaz (2021), "Türkiye'nin Enerji Kaynakları ve Politikası", pp. 61-62.

<sup>49</sup> Thorium Energy World (2018), "Turkey Joins the Thorium Race", 06.02.2018, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <http://www.thoriumenergyworld.com/news/turkey-joins-the-thorium-race>.

<sup>50</sup> Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (2023), "Thorium", 22.06.2023, Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from <https://enerji.gov.tr/info-bank/natural-resources/thorium>.

<sup>51</sup> Numan Kalbitemiz Bodur (2012), "Thorium potential of Turkey resource and recent developments", Workshop on Recent Developments in Evaluation of Uranium and Thorium Resources, Lisbon, Portugal, 15-18 October 2012,

Date of Accession: 01.08.2023 from

[https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/energy/se/pdfs/UNFC/ws\\_IAEA\\_CYTED\\_UNECE\\_Oct12\\_Lisbon/19\\_Bodur.pdf](https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/energy/se/pdfs/UNFC/ws_IAEA_CYTED_UNECE_Oct12_Lisbon/19_Bodur.pdf).

four-part nuclear power plant in Akkuyu-Mersin. The first reactor of Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant in which its groundbreaking was held in 2018 envisaged to be operational in 2023, and other three reactors are planned to be operational in 2024, 2025, 2026. Together with this, in 2013, it would be planned to construct a 4.480MW-capacity nuclear power plant in Sinop via the agreement between Ankara and Tokyo. But in today's circumstances, owing to not reaching of desired results in feasibility studies for timing and cost, the collaboration between Türkiye and Japan on this issue has been suspended. For this reason, the studies for finding a new supplier have begun for the nuclear power plant construction. Moreover, the feasibility studies for constructing third nuclear power plant are ongoing.<sup>52</sup>

It is planned to produce electricity from Akkuyu NPP as 35 billion kWh and from Sinop NPP as 34 billion kWh per annum. When Türkiye's daily electricity consumption at the end of 2019 as 304 billion kWh is considered, if those two NPPs have been operative, nearly 22 % of the total electricity demand would be met by nuclear energy today. Moving from this point, when the abovementioned projects are completed, it is envisaged that the share of NPPs in the electricity production of Türkiye will be at least 10 %. On the other hand, in parallel with the establishment of NPPs, it is planned to start production development studies by benefiting from nuclear technology in the fields of medicine, industry, agriculture, space technologies and satellite communication. Therefore, the nuclear resources do feature for contributing not only in energy production but also in various fields. In line with this issue, it is implemented several Research and Development activities by the support of universities, industry and public sectors.<sup>53</sup> In April 2023, a ceremony was made to signify the onset of nuclear fuel at the site. Rosatom has mentioned that the objective remained for physical inauguration to come to pass next year. Türkiye articulates that when whole four units stand functioning, which it expects will stay in 2028, it will afford nearly 10% of the country's electricity requirements.<sup>54</sup> As of 2 June 2023, the conclusion of concretization of the internal containment dome at Akkuyu 1 stands realized as an important building instant at Türkiye's primary nuclear power plant.<sup>55</sup>

## Conclusion

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<sup>52</sup> İsmail Kavaz (2021), "Türkiye'nin Enerji Kaynakları ve Politikası", pp. 62-64.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>54</sup> World Nuclear News (2023), "Concreting of Akkuyu 1's inner containment dome completed", 02.06.2023, Date of Accession 01.08.2023 from <https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Concreting-of-Akkuyu-1-s-inner-containment-dome-co>.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*



Türkiye has been undergoing high development rates subsequently 1990s. Meanwhile 1990s and 2000s, because of Türkiye's turning out to be one of the supreme economies of the world, the internal energy usage in the country has been snowballing gradually in line with this authenticity. Consequently, Türkiye has enthusiastically been including in quite a few oil and gas transference projects that aim to transmit the energy wealth of East to the energy-starving markets of the West. Türkiye advocates that both Russian settled energy projects like Turk Stream stands not against Southern Gas Corridor established by itself and Azerbaijan along with powerfully sponsored by the EU & U.S. In that milieu, Türkiye highlights that both these pipelines stay supportive of each other which correspondingly support in guaranteeing the energy securities of both itself and Europe. Similarly, within this basis, both primary energy suppliers precisely Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Iraq besides extremely energy demanding countries of the West do deliberate that Türkiye's accepted energy bridge setting remains an excessive gain for them and Ankara too. By implementing its ever-growing part for energy transference within the Eurasian continent in 21st century, Türkiye has fruitfully been following positive parts for transfer of hydrocarbons in its eastern neighbourhood to western neighbourhood. In addition to the effective achievement of SGC directing to transfer the Azerbaijani abundant gas to both itself and European markets along with the Turk Stream that aims to send Russian gas towards Europe, Türkiye has been making efforts for the addition of transferring Iran and Iraq's abundant gas deposits to initially itself and then to Europe through itself. Nevertheless, political and security volatilities in Iraq by reason of terrorist actions and the execution of sanctions by the U.S. over the nuclear plan of Iran, the conveyance of Iraq & Iran's rich hydrocarbon deposits towards European markets by Türkiye appears extremely improbable for at best in short and medium timelines.

Within this milieu, a relatively brand-new factor coming into the forefront of Eurasian energy geopolitics since 2000s has been the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>56</sup> The rich natural gas reserves discovered in Israel, GCA as well as in Egypt have resulted in the great and complex competition between the regional countries and outer-regional countries such as Russia and U.S. which have been attaching sui generis prominence to this region. In line with these facts, one of the most important issues coming into the agenda for the East-Med gas reserves is how they will be transported primarily to European markets. In that sense, two pipelines and one LNG option are comprehensively discussed in recent years. However, it should be underlined

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<sup>56</sup> Mehmet Bardakçı (2022), "Turkey and the Major Powers in the Eastern Mediterranean Crisis from the 2010s to the 2020s", *Comparative Southeast European Studies*, Vol. 70, no: 3, pp. 516-539.

that transportation of these reserves by the construction of a pipeline over Türkiye is generally acknowledged as the most rational, economical and highly profitable one among these alternatives. Conversely, one should take into account the presence of several impediments on the commercialization of East-Med reserves specifically the Cyprus Question, Israel-Palestine Question and the mutual consensus on the delimitation of EEZs in the region and so on. Here, Türkiye has been strongly underlining the fact that any initiatives underestimating the rights of TRNC and itself are regarded as invalid. Therefore, to protect its and TRNC's rights in the East-Med, Türkiye has lawfully been developing proactive policies through benefiting from both soft and hard power means. These strategies of Türkiye should be considered as rational movements to protect the interests of both TRNC and itself. Türkiye's active involvement in the East-Med by using both diplomatic means such signing EEZs with TRNC and Libya, showing the presence of its drilling vessels, declaring navigational telexes (NAVTEX) as well as using its naval and air forces proactively are clearly evaluated by the regional states and outer-regional states as the game-changing sensible chess movements. In the near future, one should anticipate the continuation of Türkiye's decisive steps within the East-Med in the short/medium / long terms.

Within this setting Türkiye's gas reserve discovery in the second half of 2020 at the Black Sea ought to stand assessed as a critically imperative progress for Eurasian energy security deliberations. Nonetheless it had better stand recalled that the time and forthcoming progresses (explorations and so on) concerning this substance will well make known the importance of this finding. Consequently, whole linked parties in that region will thoroughly stand observing the credible upcoming advances with regard to this question. Additionally, Türkiye's steps over differentiating its gas suppliers by concentrating on LNG imports must similarly remain reasonably significant step owing to plenty of gas and also low charges within the markets to guarantee its energy security in upcoming times. Within this framework, Türkiye's intensive initiatives on the discovery of oil reserves within the country should be seen as a very noteworthy development regarding the decrease of dependence on this issue. Several accomplishments have been recorded within this framework up until now. It is critically imperative on being determined for the continuation of efforts regarding this issue.

When we come to RE and other significant raw materials specifically uranium and thorium, Türkiye has been recording very noticeable developments. When the recent energy strategy papers are thoroughly examined, it is clearly seen that there has been ongoing process for the prioritization on the increase of RERs within the total energy mixture of the country. Türkiye

has been / will be allocating huge sums of investments for benefiting from nuclear energy, thorium, uranium and RERs by now and in the forthcoming which stand / will stand a beneficial initiative for country's becoming a net zero-carbon economy in the next years.

To conclude, Türkiye as one of the fastest developing country of world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> year of foundation, is / will be one of the most central relative energy producers and huge energy consumers of the world. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Türkiye's rising prominence of energy transportation projects will be supported new initiatives. Also, in order to decrease its high dependence on external energy suppliers, Ankara continues to be determined on attaching special prominence on finding local hydrocarbon resources as well as increasing its investments on the use of RERs much more in the near and longer terms. The achievements with regard to this issue will be effective of Türkiye's turning out to be a relatively energy independent country in the twenty-first century's forthcoming terms.

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## BİRİNCİ VE İKİNCİ KARABAĞ SAVAŞLARINDA TÜRKİYE-AZERBAYCAN İLİŞKİLERİ

Mustafa Nail ALKAN<sup>1</sup>

Mahsa MEHDİZADEHYOUSHANLOUEİ<sup>2</sup>

**Öz:** Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti 1918’de Azerbaycan tarihi topraklarının kuzey bölgesinde kurulmuştur, ancak 1920’de Ruslar tarafından işgal edilmiş ve 1991’e kadar SSCB’nin terkinde kalmıştır. SSCB’nin dağılmasıyla birlikte Azerbaycan bağımsızlığını kazanmıştır, ancak SSCB döneminin eseri olan Karabağ’ın Ermenistan tarafından işgal edilmesi Azerbaycan için iki büyük savaşı beraberinde getirmiştir. 1991 sonrası ikinci kere bağımsızlığını kazanmış ve yeniden kurulmuş bir devlet olarak, Azerbaycan, Sovyetler Birliği döneminin yıkıcı izleri ile birlikte iç sorunlarla da savaşırken, Ermenistan’ın saldırı ve işgal politikasıyla da karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi’nin 822, 853, 874 ve 884 sayılı kararlarına dayanarak işgal edilmiş Azerbaycan topraklarından askeri birliklerin derhal çekilmesi istenmiş, ancak bu kararlara dair herhangi bir uygulama ve yaptırım olmadığı gibi, Ermenistan söz konusu kararlara uymayarak Azerbaycan topraklarını işgal etmeye devam etmiştir. Türkiye için Azerbaycan’ın toprak bütünlüğünün korunması büyük öneme sahiptir. Azerbaycan’ın işgal edilmiş topraklarını kurtarmak için verdiği savaşlarda Türkiye’nin tutum ve hareketleri önemli bir faktör olarak sayılmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Azerbaycan, Türkiye, Karabağ, Ermenistan.*

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Dr., Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi, İİBF Uluslararası İlişkiler bölümü.

Email: [nail.alkan@hbv.edu.tr](mailto:nail.alkan@hbv.edu.tr).

<sup>2</sup> Doktora Adayı, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi, İİBF Uluslararası İlişkiler bölümü.

Email: [mehdizademehsa@gmail.com](mailto:mehdizademehsa@gmail.com).

## **TÜRKİYE-AZERBAIJAN RELATIONS IN THE FIRST AND SECOND KARABAKH WARS**

**Abstract:** The Republic of Azerbaijan was founded in 1918 in the northern region of the historical Azerbaijan territory. However, it was occupied by Russians in 1920 and remained a part of the USSR until 1991. Azerbaijan gained independence after the collapse of the USSR, but the occupation of Karabakh by Armenia, which was initiated during the Soviet era, led to two significant wars for Azerbaijan. As a country that regained its independence in 1991 and was established as an independent state second time, Azerbaijan, while struggling against Soviet era-based destructive problems, had to face with Armenia's invasion policy and attacks. The United Nations Security Council, in its resolutions 822, 853, 874, and 884, demanded that Armenia withdraw its troops immediately from the territories it has occupied in Azerbaijan. However, Armenia failed to comply with these decisions and persisted in its occupation of Azerbaijani territory. The protection of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity is of great importance to Türkiye. Türkiye's actions and attitudes are considered significant in Azerbaijan's wars to liberate the occupied lands.

**Keywords:** *Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Karabakh, Armenia.*

## Giriş

SSCB'nin çöküşünden sonra, Güney Kafkasya devletlerinin bağımsızlıklarını ilan etmeleri ve Dağlık Karabağ ve çevresindeki bölgelerin Ermenistan tarafından işgal edilmesi, Azerbaycan'ı büyük bir zorlukla karşı karşıya bırakmıştır. Bu durum, Bakü'nün özellikle Türkiye, Rusya Federasyonu, İran ve Ermenistan ile olan ilişkilerini etkilemiştir. Karabağ Sorunu, bilhassa Türkiye-Azerbaycan ilişkilerinde büyük etki yaratmıştır. Azerbaycan'ın jeostratejik konumu, zengin enerji kaynakları, kültürel ve tarihi bağları, dil benzerliği ve coğrafi yakınlık gibi faktörler, Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan'a yönelik dış politikasını şekillendirmesinde önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Ayrıca, Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlığını kazanmış olması, Türkiye için Orta Asya'ya açılan bir köprü ve uluslararası projelerin hayata geçirilmesi açısından kilit bir ortak ülke olmasını sağlamıştır. Türkiye ve Azerbaycan'ın kültürel, tarihi ve toplumsal bağları manevi bir yakınlık oluştururken, aynı zamanda bölgesel çıkarlar açısından da iki ülke stratejik müttefikler olarak öne çıkmaktadırlar. Azerbaycan'ın uluslararası projelerin gerçekleştirilmesindeki rolü, bölgesel iş birliği ve ekonomik kalkınma açısından da büyük önem taşımaktadır. Özetle, Sovyetler Birliği'nin çöküşünün ardından yaşanan gelişmeler, özellikle Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlığını ilan etmesi ve Karabağ Sorunu, Türkiye-Azerbaycan ilişkilerini derinden etkilemiş ve Türkiye'nin dış politikasını şekillendiren en önemli faktörlerden biri haline gelmiştir.

Azerbaycan için tekrar bağımsızlığını kazanmasının ardından karşı karşıya kaldığı en önemli sorun, (Dağlık) Karabağ'ın Ermenistan tarafından işgal edilmesi ve bu işgalin uzun yıllar devam etmesi olmuştur. Ülkenin ekonomik ve sosyal problemlerinin temel nedeni, 2020 yılına kadar çözümsüzlüğü devam eden işgal problemi olmuştur. Bağımsızlık süreci ve sonrasında günümüze kadar Azerbaycan dış politikasının da temel şekillendirici faktörü Karabağ Sorunu olmuştur. Karabağ'ın Ermeniler tarafından işgal edilmesi ve kurtarılma iradesi, milli bir mesele olarak Azerbaycanlıları derinden etkilemiştir. Türkiye, Karabağ meselesinde ister söylemde ister eylemde olsun daima Azerbaycan'ın yanında yer almış ve Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkilerinde Karabağ davası önemli bir etken olmuştur. Bu çalışmada, Türkiye Azerbaycan ilişkileri ve daha çok Türkiye'nin Birinci ve İkinci Karabağ Savaşlarındaki tutumu ve eylemleri ele alınmıştır.

### 1. Kuzey-Güney Azerbaycan Gerçeği

19. yüzyılın başlarında, Kafkaslar (Kafkasya) bölgesi, Rusya ve Gacar (Kaçar) İran arasında egemenlik mücadelelerine sahne oldu. Rusya ile o dönemdeki İran'ın Türk kökenli Gacar Devleti arasında 1804'te başlayan Azerbaycan bölgesi üzerinde hüküm sürme çabaları

sonucunda, Gacar Devleti'nin iç sorunları nedeniyle zayıflaması neticesinde 1813 Gülistan ve 1828 Türkmençay Antlaşmaları ile Azerbaycan toprakları Aras Nehri aracılığıyla ikiye ayrıldı. Bu antlaşmalarla, Azerbaycan Türklerinin iradesi görmezden gelindi ve Azerbaycan toprakları üzerinde söz sahibi olma hakları ellerinden alındı. Bu tarihi anlaşmalar, Azerbaycan Türklerini ve vatanlarını ikiye böldü. Bu sorun günümüze kadar devam ediyordu ki, Azerbaycan'ın tarihini de büyük ölçüde bu ayrılığa göre şekillenen sosyal ve siyasi süreçler belirlemiştir.

Bu süreçte Aras Nehri'nin kuzeyi Çarlık Rusyası'na bırakılırken, güneyi Türk kökenli Gacar Devleti'nin egemenliği altında kalmıştır. Ancak neredeyse bir yüzyıl sonra, 1925 yılından itibaren Güney Azerbaycan Fars Pehlevi hükümeti tarafından yönetilmiştir. Azerbaycan Devleti, tarihi Azerbaycan topraklarının kuzey kesiminde kuruldu, güney kısmı ise İran sınırları içinde kaldı. Günümüzde İran Devleti'nin sınırları içinde yer alan Azerbaycan'ın güney bölgesi, literatürde “*Güney Azerbaycan*” olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Güney Azerbaycan Türklerinin nüfusu ise 35-40 milyon olarak tahmin edilmektedir.

## 2. Karabağ'ın İşgali

Tarihi olarak, Karabağ bölgesi çeşitli medeniyetlere ev sahipliği yapmış stratejik bir bölgedir. Bugünkü tanımlamalara göre, Karabağ bölgesi, Azerbaycan'ın batısında yer almaktadır. Kura ve Aras nehirleri, bu bölgenin doğusunda yer almaktadır. Karabağ bölgesi, günümüzde Dağlık Karabağ olarak da bilinmektedir ve Azerbaycan ile Ermenistan arasında uzun süredir devam eden bir anlaşmazlık konusu olmuştur. “*Dağlık Karabağ*”, Karabağ'ın 18.000 km<sup>2</sup>'lik yüzölçümünün sadece 4392 km<sup>2</sup>'lik kısmını kapsamaktadır. Karabağ bölgesi, coğrafi konumu itibarıyla bölgede jeopolitik ve jeostratejik açıdan büyük önem taşımaktadır. Karabağ, Azerbaycan'ı (kuzey), Ermenistan'ı ve İran'ı (Güney Azerbaycan bölgesi) kontrol altında tutabilecek bir konuma sahiptir. Bu coğrafyayı kontrol altına alan herhangi bir devlet, Trans-Kafkasya arazisinin büyük bir bölümünü kontrol edebilir.<sup>3</sup>

Tarihî Azerbaycan toprağı olan Karabağ'ı işgal etme projesi 19. yüzyıla dayanmaktadır. Rusya, Kafkasya'da yürüttüğü politikanın gereğı olarak, İrevan Hanlığı hâkimiyetinden çıkarılarak, yüzde 73,8'i Müslüman olduğu halde Karabağ'ın bir Ermenistan vilayetine çevrilmesini hedeflemiştir. Rus Çarı I. Petro, 10 Kasım 1724 tarihinde imzaladığı bir fermanla Rusya'nın Ermeni halkını himaye ettiğini ilan etmiştir. Ermenilerin Rusya tarafından himaye edildiğine dair ilan edilen bu fermanla birlikte, onların Azerbaycan topraklarına

<sup>3</sup> Adalet İbadov (2007), “Azerbaycan Dış Politikasında Dağlık Karabağ Sorunu ve Ermeni Sorunu: Çözümler, Öneriler”, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, Isparta, Türkiye, s. 78.

yerleştirilmesine büyük önem verilmiştir.<sup>4</sup> Karabağ'ın nüfus yapısını değiştirerek Azerbaycan'ın yerli ahalisini kendi topraklarından çıkarmak, Ermenilerin bölgeye yerleştirilmesi ve buradaki toprak iddiaları, 19. yüzyıldan başlayarak Karabağ'ın işgal sorununu oluşturmaya başlamıştır.

1980'lerin sonlarına doğru SSCB'nin gücünü kaybetmesiyle birlikte, Ermenistan, daha önce hazırlanan toprak iddialarını ortaya koymaya başlamıştır. Sovyetler Birliği döneminde, Azerbaycan topraklarının demografik yapısı Ermenilerin lehine değiştirilmiştir. Bu demografik değişiklikler sonucunda Azerbaycan toprakları Ermeni nüfusu tarafından hedef alınmış, Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılma sürecinde de Moskova tarafından hazırlanan toprak iddiaları öne sürülmüştür.<sup>5</sup>

Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasıyla, Sovyet Azerbaycanı'na bağlı olan Dağlık Karabağ Özerk Bölgesi'ndeki (DKÖB) Ermeniler, Azerbaycan'a karşı toprak iddialarını gündeme getirmişlerdir. 1989 yılının Kasım ayında Sovyetler Birliği Yüksek Sovyeti tarafından DKÖB'ün özerkliğinin kaldırılarak doğrudan Azerbaycan Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti'nin egemenliğine geçmesine yönelik bir karar alınmıştır. Buna rağmen, 1989 yılının Aralık ayında Ermenistan Yüksek Sovyeti ile Karabağ Ulusal Konseyi'nin ortak oturumunda, Moskova'da alınan karar geçersiz sayılarak DKÖB'ün Ermenistan Sovyet Cumhuriyeti'ne birleştiği ilan edilmiştir. Bu durum, çatışmaların artmasına ve zamanla bunların cephe savaşına dönüşmesine yol açmıştır.<sup>6</sup> Bu dönemde, Azerbaycan topraklarında yaşayan Ermenilerin Azerbaycanlılara yönelik saldırıları da büyük gerginliklere neden olmuştur.

### 3. Birinci Karabağ Savaşı

Ermenistan'ın sürekli toprak iddiaları ve işgalde direnmesi, Azerbaycan'ı tedirgin etmiş ve sonuç olarak Ermenistan ile Azerbaycan arasında bir çatışma ortaya çıkmıştır. Nitekim Şubat 1988 ile Mayıs 1994 arasında Birinci Karabağ Savaşı gerçekleşmiştir. Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi (BMGK), 822, 853, 874 ve 884 numaralı kararlarıyla işgal edilmiş Azerbaycan topraklarından askeri birliklerin derhal çekilmesi istemiştir; ancak Ermenistan söz konusu kararlara uymayarak ve Azerbaycan'da yaşanan siyasi istikrarsızlıklardan faydalanarak yeni bölgeleri işgal etmeye devam etmiştir.

<sup>4</sup> Kamil Süleymanov (2013), "Türk Kamuoyunda Dağlık Karabağ Sorunu ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin Dağlık Karabağ Politikası", Marmara Üniversitesi SBE, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İstanbul, Türkiye, s. 87.

<sup>5</sup> Mehsa Mehdizade (2021), *44 Günlük Karabağ Savaşında Güney Azerbaycan*, Ankara: Bengü Yayınları.

<sup>6</sup> Yalçın Sarıkaya (2020), *44 Gün Savaşı: Azerbaycan'ın Karabağ Zaferi*, TASAV, s. 7.

2020 yılına kadar Ermenistan'ın işgal altında tuttuğu bölge, Kuzey Azerbaycan topraklarının yaklaşık yüzde 20'sine denk gelmekteydi. 9 Mayıs 1994 tarihinde Azerbaycan, Ermenistan ve Karabağ Ermenileri temsilcileri arasında bir ateşkes anlaşması imzalanmıştır. Ancak bu ateşkes, 2020 yılına kadar birçok kez ihlal edilmiştir.

### 3.1. Birinci Karabağ Savaşı Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri

Sovyetler Birliği'nin çöküşü ve Azerbaycan'ın yeniden bağımsızlığını kazanma süreci, Ermenilerin Ermeni Diasporası'nın etkisi ve desteği ile Karabağ konusunda baskı yapma çabalarını beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu dönemde, 16 Ağustos 1989 tarihinde Ermenistan'ın desteklediği şekilde, sadece Ermenilerin katılımıyla Dağlık Karabağ Milli Konseyi kurulmuştur.<sup>7</sup> Bu gelişmelerin arka planında, Türkiye, bu süreçte siyasi olarak herhangi bir müdahalede bulunmamıştır. Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan'a yönelik bu politikasının temel gerekçelerinden biri, Azerbaycan'ın tarihsel ve hukuksal olarak Sovyetler Birliği'nin bir parçası olmasından kaynaklanmaktadır.

1990'lı yılların başında, iç ve dış gelişmelerin hız kazanmasıyla Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlık süreci hızlanmıştır. Bu dönemde, Türkiye, Azerbaycan ile daha yakın ilişkilere odaklanmıştır. Bu sürecin bir sonucu olarak, 1990 yılının Ocak ayında, Azerbaycan heyetinin Türkiye'ye Başbakan seviyesinde gerçekleşen ilk resmi ziyareti olmuştur. Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlık sürecindeki bu ziyaret, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ve iki ülke arasındaki ilişkiler için büyük önem taşımıştır.

Ocak 1990 tarihinde, Azerbaycan Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti Başbakanı Ayaz Mütellibov'un Türkiye'ye gerçekleştirdiği resmi ziyaret sırasında çeşitli anlaşmalar ve protokoller imzalanmıştır. Bu anlaşmalar ve protokoller şunlardır:

- 1) Ekonomik ve Ticari İlişkilerin Geliştirilmesi ile ilgili Protokol,
- 2) Dış Ticarete Dair Protokol,
- 3) Kültürel ve Bilimsel Değişim Programı,
- 4) Kültürel ve Bilimsel Değişim Mukavelesi'nin Uygulanmasına İlişkin Anlaşma.

Bu ziyaret ve imzalanan anlaşmalar, iki ülke arasındaki ilişkilerin ve iş birliğinin temel taşlarını oluşturmuştur.<sup>8</sup> Lakin söz konusu antlaşmalar, Azerbaycan Parlamentosu tarafından

<sup>7</sup> Zeynep Salmanlı (2007), "1991 Sonrası Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri", Gazi Üniversitesi, Yayınlanmış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, Türkiye, s. 51.

<sup>8</sup> Bilal Şimşir (2011), *Azerbaycan, Azerbaycan'ın yeniden doğuş sürecinde Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkileri*, Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, ss. 71-89.

onaylanmamıştır. Bunun sebebi ise, ülkedeki baskın iç politik durgunluk ve Azerbaycan'ın bu anlaşmalarla Karabağ ve diğer meselelerle ilgili kuzey komşusu Rusya'nın tepkisini üzerine çekmek istememesidir.<sup>9</sup> Yine de, bağımsızlık öncesinde Mütellibov döneminde de Türkiye ile ilişkiler açısından önem arz edecek bazı olumlu adımlar atılmıştır.

Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlığıyla beraber ortaya çıkan Birinci Karabağ Savaşı süreci ise üç Cumhurbaşkanı dönemine denk gelmektedir. Bu bağlamda, Birinci Karabağ Savaşı dönemi Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkileri; (1) Ayaz Mütellibov, (2) Ebulfez Elçibey ve (3) Haydar Aliyev dönemleri olarak üç alt başlıkta incelenebilir.

### 3.1.1. Ayaz Mütellibov Dönemi

Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlığını ilan ettiği dönemde, ülkenin Cumhurbaşkanlığını Ayaz Mütellibov üstlenmiştir. Bağımsızlık kararı, 30 Ağustos 1991 tarihinde Azerbaycan Parlamentosu'nda kabul edilmiş ve 18 Ekim 1991 tarihinde yürürlüğe girmiştir. Azerbaycan Parlamentosu, 29 Ekim 1991 tarihinde Birleşmiş Milletler'e (BM) başvurarak ülkenin bağımsızlığının tanınmasını talep etmiştir.<sup>10</sup> Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlık kararını tanıyan ilk ülke olarak Türkiye'nin bu önemli adımı, Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkileri için büyük bir anlam taşımaktadır. Ardından, 27 Kasım 1991 tarihinde Azerbaycan Milli Konseyi ilk görüşmesini gerçekleştirmiş, 29 Aralık 1991 tarihinde ise Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlığına dair yapılan referandumda ülkenin bağımsızlığı halkın kararıyla desteklenmiştir.<sup>11</sup>

Azerbaycan'a resmi ziyarette bulunan ilk heyet olan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı heyeti, 1991'de Bakü'de yeni yönetimle resmi temaslarda bulunarak desteklerini ifade etmişler. Aynı zamanda, 9 Kasım 1991 tarihinde dönemin Başbakanı Mesut Yılmaz, Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlığının resmi olarak tanındığını duyurmuştur.<sup>12</sup>

30 Aralık 1991, Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkilerinin önemli bir dönüm noktasını işaret etmektedir. Bu tarihte, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti tarafından alınan bir kararnameyle, Bakü Başkonsolosluğu'nun statüsü yükseltilerek Bakü Büyükelçiliği olarak değiştirilmiştir. İki ülke arasındaki ilişkilerde bir başka önemli adım ise 14 Ocak 1992'de gerçekleşmiştir. Bu dönemde Azerbaycan ve Türkiye arasında "*Diplomatik İlişkilerin Kurulması Protokolü*"

<sup>9</sup> Araz Aslanlı & İlham Hesenov (2005), *Haydar Aliyev Dönemi Azerbaycan Dış Politikası*, Ankara: Platin Yayınları, s. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Hulusi Kılıç (2012), "Son yirmi yılda Azerbaycan ve Türkiye ilişkilerine kısa bir bakış", içinde (editörler: C. Veliyev & R. Resullu & K. Aslanlı), *Azerbaycan-Türkiye: dostluk, kardeşlik ve strateji ortaklık*, Ankara: Berikan Yayınları, s. 15.

<sup>11</sup> Bilal Şimşir (2011), *Azerbaycan, Azerbaycan'ın yeniden doğuş sürecinde Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkileri*, s. 437.

<sup>12</sup> Hulusi Kılıç (2012), "Son yirmi yılda Azerbaycan ve Türkiye ilişkilerine kısa bir bakış", s. 15.



imzalanmış ve bu sayede, Türkiye, bağımsız Azerbaycan'ın başkenti Bakü'de kendi Büyükelçiliğini açmıştır.<sup>13</sup> Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan politikası, Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlığını koruma ve Karabağ üzerindeki egemenlik haklarını sağlama ve koruma çabalarını desteklemesi açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bu politika, Azerbaycan'ın yeni kazandığı bağımsızlığını ve Karabağ'daki egemenliğini güvence altına alma hedeflerine sağlanan önemli bir destek olarak kabul edilmiştir.

26 Kasım 1991 tarihinde, Azerbaycan Yüksek Sovyeti, Dağlık Karabağ Özerk Bölgesi'nin özerkliğini sonlandırma ve bölgeyi oluşturan illeri doğrudan Bakü'ye bağlama kararı almıştır.<sup>14</sup> Bu karar, 20 Kasım 1991 tarihinde meydana gelen bir olayın ardından, bazı devlet yetkililerinin olduğu bir helikopterin Ermeni askerler tarafından düşürülmesi sonucu yaşanmıştır. Bu olayın gerçekleşmesi, Ermenilerin Azerbaycan topraklarında işgalci tutumlarını sürdürdüğüne dair ciddi bir mesaj olarak algılanmış ve bu nedenle, Azerbaycan, Ermenistan ile ilgili yeni önlemler almanın gerekliliğini hissetmiştir.

23-24 Ocak 1992 tarihlerinde, Ayaz Mütellibov ve onun liderliğindeki Azerbaycan heyetinin dönemin Türkiye Cumhurbaşkanı Turgut Özal'ın daveti üzerine gerçekleştirdiği resmi ziyaret, bağımsız Azerbaycan'ın Devlet Başkanı düzeyinde Türkiye'ye yapılan ilk resmi ziyarettir. Ayrıca, bağımsızlık sonrası Azerbaycan'ın gerçekleştirdiği ilk resmi ziyaret de bu olmuştur. Ziyaret sırasında, Azerbaycan Devlet Başkanı ve beraberindeki heyet ile Cumhurbaşkanı Turgut Özal öncülüğündeki heyet arasında görüşmeler, her iki ülkenin ilişkilerinin güçlendirilmesi ve iş birliğinin artırılması yönünde atılan adımların bir parçasıydı. Benzer şekilde, 10-15 Şubat 1992 tarihlerinde Başbakan Süleyman Demirel, ABD'ye yaptığı resmi ziyaret esnasında Karabağ Sorunu gibi önemli konuyu ABD yetkililerinin önünde gündeme getirmiştir. Bu girişim, Azerbaycan'ın uluslararası platformlarda da destek ve ilgi gördüğünü gösteren bir örnek olarak önem taşımaktadır.<sup>15</sup>

Karabağ meselesinde, Türkiye'nin ABD'yi bu soruna dahil etme çabası sonucunda, ABD başta olmakla diğer Batılı devletler ilk önce Birleşmiş Milletler (BM) çerçevesinde soruna müdahil olmuş ve eski ABD Dışişleri Bakanı Cyrus Vance'i Karabağ ile ilgilenmek üzere görevlendirmiştir. Bu süreçte Avrupa ülkeleri de Avrupa Güvenlik ve İşbirliği Teşkilatı (AGİT) aracılığıyla soruna müdahil olmuştur.

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<sup>13</sup> A.g.e.

<sup>14</sup> Araz Aslanlı & İlham Hesenov (2005), *Haydar Aliyev Dönemi Azerbaycan Dış Politikası*, s. 46.

<sup>15</sup> Bilal Şimşir (2011), *Azerbaycan, Azerbaycan'ın yeniden doğuş sürecinde Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkileri*, ss. 289-301.

İlk aşamada, AGİT, Karabağ Sorunu'nun çözümünde aktif bir rol üstlenmiştir. Bu çerçevede, 24 Mart 1992 tarihinde Finlandiya'nın başkenti Helsinki'de düzenlenen AGİT Dışişleri Bakanları Toplantısı'nda bu mesele ele alınmış ve sorunun çözümü için Minsk'te bir konferans düzenlenmesi kararı alınmıştır. Bu konferansın çerçevesinde “*Minsk Grubu*” adı altında bir müzakere grubu oluşturulmuştur. Minsk Grubu, Karabağ Sorunu'na çözüm bulmak amacıyla AGİT tarafından oluşturulan bir müzakere grubudur ve Rusya, Fransa ve ABD Minsk Grubu'nun eşbaşkanlığını yürütmektedir. Ancak bu uluslararası müzakere grubu, Ermenistan'ın işgalci eylemlerinden vazgeçirilmesinde etkili olamamıştır. Şubat 1992'de Ermenistan, Şuşa-Hocalı yoluyla birlikte Şuşa çevresindeki yerleşim birimlerini işgal etmiştir. 1992 yılında 26 Şubat'a geçen gece ise, Azerbaycanlılar, kendi topraklarında Ermeniler tarafından soykırıma maruz kalmış ve bu elim olay “*Hocalı soykırımı*” (Hocalı katliamı) olarak tarihe geçmiştir.<sup>16</sup>

İki gün sonra Bakü'yü ziyaret eden Türk heyeti, Karabağ'da Hocalı Soykırımı'na dair istişarelerde bulunarak Azerbaycan'ın yanında olduğunu iletmiştir. 28 Şubat 1992 Cuma günü ise aşağıdaki protokoller imzalanmıştır:

- Türkiye ve Azerbaycan Dışişleri Bakanlıkları Arasında Sürekli Danışmanlık Toplantılarının Düzenlenmesi ve Azerbaycanlı Diplomatların Türkiye'de Staj Programlarına Katılmasına İlişkin Protokol,
- İki Ülke Arasında Vize Bağımsızlığı Protokolü,
- Milli Eğitim Bakanlıkları Arasında İşbirliği Anlaşması.

Hocalı Soykırımı ve bu trajik olayın ardından gelişen olaylar, Mütellibov iktidarını zor duruma düşürmüştü ve Azerbaycan'ın ilk Devlet Başkanı 6 Mart 1992 tarihinde istifa etmek zorunda kalmıştır. Azerbaycan anayasasına göre, bu istifanın ardından geçici olarak Azerbaycan Devlet Başkanlığı görevi Azerbaycan Meclis Başkanı Yakup Memmedov'a devredilmiş, kendisi de bu vazifeyi 1992 tarihine kadar vekâleten üstlenmiştir.<sup>17</sup>

22-24 Mart 1992 tarihlerinde Türkiye'yi ziyaret eden dönemin Nahçıvan Özerk Bölgesi Yüksek Meclis Başkanı Haydar Aliyev, “*Nahçıvan-Türkiye İşbirliği Protokolü*”nün imzalanmasına nail olmuştur. Hocalı soykırımının ardından, Ermeniler, Nahçıvan'ın Sederek ilçesine saldırmıştır. Bunun üzerine, Süleyman Demirel, Nahçıvan ziyaretinden sonra

<sup>16</sup> Nəsiman Yaqublu (1992), *Hocalı qırğımi*, Bakı: Azərbaycan, s. 4.

<sup>17</sup> Bilal Şimşir (2011), *Azerbaycan, Azerbaycan'ın yeniden doğuş sürecinde Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkileri*, ss. 301-310.

Moskova'yı ziyaret ederek dönemin Rusya Devlet Başkanı Boris Yeltsin'le Kafkasya'daki olayla ilgili görüşmelerde bulunmuştur. Rus birlikleri, Demirel'in Rusya'daki görüşmelerinin ardından Nahçıvan sınırından çekilmiştir.<sup>18</sup> 1992 yılının Mayıs ayında Ermenilerin Nahçıvan'a saldırısı sonucu, Türk yetkililer, 1921 Kars Antlaşması bağlamında Nahçıvan'ın güvenliğini sağlamak amacıyla bölgeye askeri operasyon gerçekleştirebileceklerini dile getirmiştir. Ancak yaşanan katliamlar ve işgal hareketlerine rağmen BM ve Batılı devletlerden bu konuda caydırıcı bir adım gelmemiştir.<sup>19</sup>

Karabağ ve Nahçıvan etrafında gelişen olaylar TBMM Genel Kurulu'nda da tartışılmış; dönemin Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakan Yardımcısı Erdal İnönü, Ermenistan'a saldırıya son vermeleri çağrısı yaparak aksi takdirde sonuçlarının ağır olacağını bildirmiştir. Dönemin Dışişleri Bakanı Hikmet Çetin ise, Türkiye'nin aktif diplomasi ile Karabağ ve Nahçıvan olaylarını çözmeye çabası içinde olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Azerbaycan ile Türkiye arasında ilk askeri temasların gerçekleştiği dönemde, Mütellibov, Ermenistan ile Karabağ'da savaş başladığında Azerbaycan'ın savunmasını güçlendirmek amacıyla acil olarak ordu kurma gerekliliğini vurgulamış, ama Türkiye yönetimi ile istişarelerde bulunduğunu ve Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan'a destek olacağını belirtmesine rağmen sahada bu konu gerçekleşmemiştir.<sup>20</sup>

### 3.1.2. Ebulfez Elçibey Dönemi

1992 yılı Haziran ayında, Azerbaycan Cumhurbaşkanlığı için yapılan seçimler sonucunda Azerbaycan Halk Cephesi Lideri Ebulfez Elçibey, Azerbaycan Cumhurbaşkanı olarak seçilmiştir. Elçibey'in ilk yurtdışı ziyareti Türkiye'ye olmuş ve kendisi 25 Haziran 1992 tarihinde İstanbul'da gerçekleşen Karadeniz Ekonomik İşbirliği (KEİ) Zirve Toplantısı'na katılmıştır.<sup>21</sup>

Birleşmiş Azerbaycan ideallerini savunan Elçibey, genel olarak Rusya ve İran'a karşı bir politika izlemiş ve Türkiye ile ilişkileri güçlendirmeye odaklanmıştır. Elçibey, aynı zamanda Türkçü bir lider olarak tanınmış ve Türkiye ile ilişkilerin güçlendirilmesine özel önem vermiştir. Azerbaycan Cumhurbaşkanı Elçibey döneminde, Türkiye'nin Karabağ Sorunu'nun çözümünün ikili ilişkilerin geliştirilmesine katkı sağlayacağı inancıyla Erivan'a bir heyet gönderdiği bilinmektedir. Ancak Elçibey döneminde, Ermenistan, Karabağ'ı Ermenistan'a

<sup>18</sup> A.g.e., ss. 405-432.

<sup>19</sup> Kamer Kasım (2002), "Azerbaycan'ın dış politikası", içinde (editörler: Emine G. & Naskali, E. Ş.), *Bağımsızlığının onuncu yılında Türk Cumhuriyetleri*, Sota, s. 443.

<sup>20</sup> Nazim Cafersoy & Araz Aslanlı (2012), "Türkiye-Azerbaycan askeri ilişkileri", içinde (editörler: C. Veliyev & R. Resullu & K. Aslanlı), *Azerbaycan-Türkiye: dostluk, kardeşlik ve strateji ortaklık*, Ankara: Berikan Yayınları, s. 155.

<sup>21</sup> Kamer Kasım (2002), "Azerbaycan'ın dış politikası", ss. 444-449.

bağlayan Kelbecer bölgesine saldırarak Kelbecer'i işgal etmiştir. Bu olay, Türkiye'nin sorunun çözümü için yaptığı müzakerelerin sonuçsuz kalmasına neden olmuştur.

Ermenilerin Kelbecer'e yoğun saldırılar düzenlediği bir dönemde Elçibey Başbakan Demirel'e bir mesaj göndererek “Azerbaycan olarak Ermeni saldırılarını durdurmak için otoritenizi ve elinizdeki bütün imkânları kullanmanızı istiyoruz” demiştir. Başbakan Demirel ise, Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan-Ermenistan anlaşmazlığına müdahalesinin Rusya ile karşı karşıya gelme riski taşıdığını ve bu tür bir müdahalenin gerçekçi olmadığını belirterek, Elçibey'in talebini reddetmiştir. Fakat yine de, Demirel, arasında ahdi bir durum bulunan Nahçıvan'a hiçbir ülkenin zarar vermeye cesaret edemeyeceğini vurgulamıştır.

Uluslararası güçlerin Ermenistan'a yönelik herhangi bir yaptırım veya uygulama yapmaması ise Ermenistan'ı daha da cesaretlendirmiş ve hareket alanını genişletmiştir. Bu dönemde Türkiye'de Başbakan Süleyman Demirel ile Cumhurbaşkanı Turgut Özal arasında siyasi anlaşmazlıklar da yaşanmıştır. İki lider arasındaki anlaşmazlıklardan biri de Azerbaycan siyaseti konusundaki farklılıklardır.<sup>22</sup> Turgut Özal, Kelbecer'in işgali sırasında Türkiye'nin Karabağ Sorunu'na müdahalesini düşünerek “*Dişimizi göstermezsek bu sorun halledilmez*” şeklinde açıklamalarda bulunmuştur. Başbakan Demirel ise daha farklı bir siyaset izlemiştir.<sup>23</sup> Ermenistan'ın ilerleyen saldırıları sonrasında ise, Başbakan Süleyman Demirel de önceki yaklaşımını değiştirerek Ermenistan'a yönelik ciddi bir uyarıda bulunmuş ve Azerbaycan'a yönelik saldırıların derhal durdurmasını talep etmiştir. Bu tutum, Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan'a desteğini daha güçlü bir şekilde ifade etmesinin bir yansımasıdır. Aynı dönemde, Türkiye Cumhurbaşkanı Turgut Özal da 1993 senesinde Bakü'yü ziyaret etmiş ve Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan'ın arkasında durduğunu açıkça belirtmiştir. Bu ziyaret, Ankara'nın Bakü'ye verdiği destek ve dayanışmayı resmi bir şekilde teyit etmiştir.<sup>24</sup>

Ermenistan'ın Azerbaycan'a yönelik saldırıları devam ederken, Türkiye, Ermenistan'a yönelik bir “*ambargo*” kararı alarak bu ülkeye yapılan insani yardımları durdurmuş ve Ermenistan'a karşı sert bir tavır sergilemiştir. Ayrıca Türk Hava Kuvvetleri, Ermenistan sınırında uyarı uçuşları gerçekleştirerek sert bir mesaj iletmeyi amaçlamış ve yetkililer “*sabırımız taşıyor*” şeklinde açıklamalarda bulunmuştur. Türkiye'nin bu tavırları, Ermenistan'ın saldırganlığına karşı Azerbaycan'a duyulan desteği ve bölgedeki istikrarı

<sup>22</sup> Nazim Cafersoy (2001), *Elçibey dönemi Azerbaycan'ın dış politikası (Haziran 1992- Haziran 1993): Bir bağımsızlık mücadelesinin diplomatik öyküsü*, Kafkasya Araştırmaları Dizisi: 6, Ankara: ASAM Yayınları, ss. 128-131.

<sup>23</sup> Emin Arif Şihaliyev (2004), “Azerbaycan-Ermenistan ilişkilerinde Rusya ve İran faktörü (1828-2000)”, Ankara Üniversitesi, Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi, Ankara, Türkiye, s. 160.

<sup>24</sup> A.g.e., s. 160.

koruma amacını yansıtmaktadır. Türkiye, bu tür adımlarla Azerbaycan'ın yanında durduğunu göstermiş ve Ermenistan'ın saldırgan politikalarına karşı caydırıcı bir tutum sergilemiştir. Bu süreç, Türkiye'nin bölgedeki güvenlik ve istikrarı koruma çabalarının bir parçası olarak da değerlendirilebilir. Ancak bu tür adımlar ve açıklamalar, Ermenistan'ın Azerbaycan topraklarındaki iddia ve saldırılarına engel olamamıştır. Öte yandan, Ermenistan, diğer ülkeler veya BM gibi uluslararası platformlar tarafından herhangi bir yaptırımla da karşı karşıya kalmamıştır.

Türkiye'nin bu çabaları, uluslararası toplumun dikkatini işgal altındaki Azerbaycan topraklarının kurtarılması gerekliliğine çekme amacını taşımaktadır. Ancak Ermenistan'ın bu çağrılara uymaması ve işgalci faaliyetlerine devam etmesi, bölgesel istikrara ve güvenliğe yönelik ciddi bir tehdit oluşturmuştur. Türkiye'nin çabaları, uluslararası arenada işgal altındaki toprakların kurtarılması için destek olmayı ve Ermenistan'ın işgalci politikalarını caydırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Maalesef, BMGK kararlarına rağmen işgal devam etmiş ve bu durum bölgedeki gerginliği artırmıştır. Bu durum, uluslararası toplumun müdahalesinin yetersiz kaldığı ve Ermenistan'ın saldırgan politikalarını sürdürebildiği bir dönemi yansıtmaktadır.<sup>25</sup>

1993 yılında Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkilerinin zedelendiği görülmektedir. Azerbaycan'ın Laçın şehrinin düşmesi üzerine yardım istemesine rağmen, Türkiye, yardım konusunda çekimser davranmıştır. Ayrıca bu dönemde Azerbaycan'da iç karışıklıklar yaşanmış, bu fırsatı değerlendiren Ermenistan da Azerbaycan topraklarını işgal etmeye devam etmiştir. Elçibey döneminde yaşanan siyasi dalgalanmalar sonucunda, Elçibey'e karşı bir darbe gerçekleşmiş ve Haydar Aliyev iktidara gelmiştir.<sup>26</sup>

Azerbaycan'da iç isyanlar ve karışıklıklar yaşandığı bir dönemde Ermenistan için bir fırsat oluşmuş ve Erivan da Azerbaycan topraklarını işgal etmeyi ilerletmiştir. Bu dönemde Azerbaycan Cumhurbaşkanı Elçibey'e karşı da bir darbe gerçekleşmiştir. Bu süreçte Türkiye'nin diplomatik müdahalesi yavaş kalmış gibi görünebilir. Neticede, tüm bu siyasi çekişmelerin ardından Elçibey iktidarı bitmiş ve Haydar Aliyev'in iktidar dönemi başlamıştır.

Elçibey döneminde Azerbaycan ve Türkiye arasındaki askeri ilişkiler yoğunlaşmıştır. Karabağ'daki gelişmeler sırasında, Elçibey, Türkiye ile temaslarını sürdürmüştü ve 3 Kasım 1992'de taraflar arasında yeni askeri iş birliği sahaları yaratılmıştır. Bu dönemde Azerbaycan

<sup>25</sup> Kamer Kasım (2002), "Azerbaycan'ın dış politikası", s. 443.

<sup>26</sup> Rövsən Novruzov (2006), *Beynəlxalq terrorizm silsiləsindən Erməni Terrorizmi (Genosid...Ecocid)*, Xanlar Vəliyev (Red.), Bakı: Adıoğlu, s. 275.

Silahlı Kuvvetleri'nin güçlendirilmesi ve eğitilmesi amacıyla önemli adımlar atılmıştır. 1992 yılında Azerbaycan Hükümeti ile Türkiye Hükümeti arasında “*Askeri Alanda Bilimsel Teknik ve Eğitim Öğretim İş Birliği Protokolü*” imzalanmıştır. Bu protokol çerçevesinde, Türkiye'den gelen yetenekli subay ve astsubaylar, Azeri subaylara eğitim ve teknik destek vermek üzere Azerbaycan'a gönderilmişlerdir. Bu çabalarla Azerbaycan'ın savunma yeteneklerinin artırılması hedeflenmiştir. Bu iş birliği sayesinde, Azerbaycan, Türkiye'nin deneyim ve uzmanlığından faydalanarak askeri kapasitesini güçlendirmiştir. Bu süreç, iki ülke arasındaki askeri iş birliğinin daha da derinleştiği ve karşılıklı çıkarlar doğrultusunda şekillendiği bir dönemi yansıtmaktadır.<sup>27</sup> Ayrıca Azerbaycan'da güçlü bir milli ordu kurmak için ilk somut adımı da Elçibey atmıştır.<sup>28</sup> Elçibey, Rus Ordusu'nu da Azerbaycan sınırlarından dışarı çıkarmıştır.

### 3.1.3. Haydar Aliyev Dönemi

1993 senesinde Haydar Aliyev'in Devlet Başkanı seçilmesiyle birlikte Azerbaycan'da yeni bir dönemin başladığı görülmektedir. Aliyev yönetimi, Türkiye ve Batı ile ilişkileri yeniden güçlendirmeye yönelik bir politika izlemeye başlamış, bu da Azerbaycan siyasetinde yeni bir aşamayı başlatmıştır.<sup>29</sup> Azerbaycan dış siyasetinin başat konusu, -daha önceki dönemlerde olduğu gibi- Aliyev döneminde de Azerbaycan'ın toprak bütünlüğü çerçevesinde Karabağ Sorunu'nun çözüme kavuşturulması ve işgale uğrayan Azerbaycan topraklarının geri alınması olmuştur.<sup>30</sup> Aliyev döneminde Azerbaycan'ın dış politika önceliği, toprak bütünlüğünü koruyarak Karabağ Sorunu'nun çözülmesi ve işgal altındaki Azerbaycan topraklarının geri alınması olmuştur. BM, Karabağ'ın işgalini kınamak amacıyla 4 ayrı karar almıştır. Ancak bu kararlar yaptırım içermemektedir ve bu nedenle herhangi bir sonuç da doğurmamıştır. Türkiye, bu kararların alınma sürecinde Azerbaycan'a destek vermiş ve yoğun diplomasi faaliyetleri yürütmüştür.

Aliyev, Karabağ Sorunu'nda Rusya'nın sağlayamadığı yeterli desteği almanın zorluğuyla karşılaşarak, Türkiye ile ilişkilerini güçlendirmeye odaklanmıştır. Aralık 1993'te, Cumhurbaşkanı Süleyman Demirel'in arabuluculuğuyla, Aliyev, Fransa'nın başkenti Paris'i ziyaret etmiştir. Fransa ziyaretinin ardından, Aliyev, Avrupa başkentlerini ziyaret etmeye

<sup>27</sup> Nazim Cafersoy & Araz Aslanlı (2012), “Türkiye-Azerbaycan askeri ilişkileri”, s. 167.

<sup>28</sup> Yahya Musayev (2012), “Askeri-Teknik Alanda Azerbaycan-Türkiye İş Birliği (1991- 2001)”, içinde (editörler: C. Veliyev & R. Resullu & K. Aslanlı), *Azerbaycan-Türkiye: dostluk, kardeşlik ve strateji ortaklık*, Ankara: Berikan Yayınları, s. 174.

<sup>29</sup> Nazim Cafersoy (2001), *Elçibey dönemi Azerbaycan'ın dış politikası (Haziran 1992- Haziran 1993): Bir bağımsızlık mücadelesinin diplomatik öyküsü*, s. 133.

<sup>30</sup> Hulusi Kılıç (2012), “Son yirmi yılda Azerbaycan ve Türkiye ilişkilerine kısa bir bakış”, s. 16.

devam etmiştir. Aliyev'in Türkiye ile yakınlaşması hem siyasi, hem de stratejik anlamda önem taşımıştır. Türkiye'nin desteğiyle, Aliyev, Azerbaycan'daki iktidarını sağlamlaştırarak ülkesinin uluslararası arenada daha etkin bir konuma gelmesini hedeflemiştir. Ayrıca Batı ile ilişkilerini geliştirerek, Azerbaycan'ın uluslararası tanınırlığını artırmıştır. Türkiye ile yakınlaşma ve Batı ile ilişkilerini güçlendirme çabaları, Aliyev'in liderliği altında Azerbaycan dış politikasının temel bir parçası haline gelmiştir. Bu çabalar, Azerbaycan'ın stratejik konumunu vurgulamış ve ülkenin enerji kaynaklarına erişimi ve dağıtımını konusunda daha fazla güç elde etme hedefini yansıtmıştır. Bu dönemde Türkiye ile olan yakın iş birliği, Azerbaycan'ın ulusal çıkarlarını destekleme ve bölgesel dengeyi güçlendirme amacı taşımıştır.<sup>31</sup>

Aliyev, 8-10 Şubat 1994 tarihlerinde Türkiye'yi ziyaret etmiş ve bu ziyarette Azerbaycan ile Türkiye arasındaki ilişkilerin güçlendirilmesi ve dostluk mesajları verilmiştir. Ayrıca, Aliyev, Ermenistan Karabağ ve çevresindeki işgalini sona erdirmese, Türkiye'nin de sınır kapılarını Ermenilere açık tutmayacağı kararını açıklamıştır.<sup>32</sup> TBMM'deki konuşmasında, Aliyev, iki ülke arasındaki parlamentolar arası ilişkilerin önemini vurgulamış ve bu ilişkilerin artırılması gerektiğini tavsiye etmiştir. 9 Şubat 1994 tarihinde ise, Türkiye ile Azerbaycan arasında 17 antlaşmanın imzalanması, ikili ilişkiler açısından önemli bir adım olarak tarihe geçmiştir.<sup>33</sup>

Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan devletleri arasında vuku bulan Karabağ Sorunu için barışçıl çözüm yolları bulmak amacıyla kurulan Minsk Grubu ve Rusya'nın uzun uğraşları sonucunda, 1994 yılında bazı barış anlaşmaları imzalanmıştır. Türkiye, bu süreçte ateşkesin devam etmesi adına yoğun diplomatik faaliyetlerini sürdürmüş, Karabağ Sorunu'nun çözümü şartına bağlı olarak Ermenistan'la diplomatik ilişkilerini askıya almış ve Erivan'a ekonomik yaptırımlar uygulamıştır. Türkiye'nin bu mesafeli siyaseti, ikili ilişkilerin yalnızca Karabağ Sorunu çözüldüğü takdirde normalleşebileceğini ortaya koymuştur.<sup>34</sup>

Aliyev döneminde Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri'nin (TSK) desteğiyle Azerbaycan Harp Okulu, Azerbaycan Askeri Hava Kuvvetleri Okulu ve Azerbaycan Askeri Denizcilik Okulu yeniden yapılandırılmış ve NATO standartlarına yükseltilmiştir.<sup>35</sup> 10 Haziran 1996 tarihinde Azerbaycan ile Türkiye arasında "*Askeri Alanda Eğitim, Teknik ve Bilimsel İşbirliği*

<sup>31</sup> Seçkin Akdoğan (2007), "Bağımsızlık sonrası Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İlişkileri (1991-2000)", Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, Yayımlanmış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Trabzon, Türkiye, s. 52.

<sup>32</sup> Zeynep Salmanlı (2007), "1991 Sonrası Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri", s. 41.

<sup>33</sup> Bilal Şimşir (2011), *Azerbaycan, Azerbaycan'ın yeniden doğuş sürecinde Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkileri*, s. 675.

<sup>34</sup> Zeynep Salmanlı (2007), "1991 Sonrası Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri", s. 56.

<sup>35</sup> Yahya Musayev (2012), "Askeri-Teknik Alanda Azerbaycan-Türkiye İş Birliği (1991- 2001)", s. 175.

*Protokolü*” imzalanmıştır. 1 Mart 2001’de ise Türkiye-Azerbaycan arasında askeri iş birliğini artırmak amacıyla görüşmeler yapılmış ve bu görüşmeler sonucunda “*Karşılıksız Askeri Yardım Protokolü*” ile “*Ekonomik Yardım Protokolü*” imzalanmıştır. 14 Eylül 2001 tarihinde de “*Askeri Alanda Eğitim, Teknik ve Bilimsel İşbirliği Protokolü*” kapsamında TSK tarafından Nahçıvan’da eğitim amacıyla kurslar açılmıştır.<sup>36</sup>

#### 4. İkinci Karabağ Savaşı

Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan arasındaki Karabağ Sorunu, uzun bir tarih boyunca çatışmalara ve gerilimlere neden olmuştur. 1994 yılında Bişkek’te imzalanan ateşkes anlaşması çatışmaların tamamen durdurulmasına yeterli olmamıştır. Kuzey Azerbaycan topraklarının yaklaşık yüzde 20’si işgal altında kalmış ve bu durum Azerbaycan’ın toprak bütünlüğünü zedelemiştir. Minsk Grubu’nun çabalarına rağmen, Azerbaycan’ın işgal altındaki topraklarını geri alması için somut bir sonuç elde edilememiştir. Azerbaycan, 26 yıl boyunca barışçıl çözüm için çaba harcamış, ancak bundan sonuç alamayınca da bunu zaman kaybı olarak değerlendirerek alternatif politikalara yönelmiştir.

Dolayısıyla, 2020 yılının Eylül ayı, yeni bir savaş döneminin başlangıcı olmuştur. Azerbaycan Ordusu, işgal altındaki toprakları geri almak amacıyla 27 Eylül 2020’de bir askeri operasyon başlatmıştır. Bu müdahale, Azerbaycan için tarihi bir adım olmuş ve işgal altındaki toprakları geri alma hedefine yönelik atılmış bir adım olarak kabul edilmiştir. Ancak Ermenistan’ın sivil yerleşim yerlerini hedef alarak gerçekleştirdiği saldırılar, büyük insanlık trajedilerine neden olmuştur. 10 Kasım 2020’de, Azerbaycan, Ermenistan ve Rusya arasında imzalanan mutabakatla çatışmalar sona ermiş ve İkinci Karabağ Savaşı veya 44 Gün Savaşı, Azerbaycan’ın zaferi ile noktalanmıştır. Ermenistan’ın saldırıları ise Azerbaycan’ın meşru savunma eylemi için bir zemin oluşturmuştur. Bu süreç, aynı zamanda, BMGK ve AGİT Minsk Grubu’nun işgalin yıllar içinde devam etmesi karşısında sorunun çözülmesine yönelik etkisiz kaldığına da işaret etmektedir. Bu şekilde, Bakü, diplomatik yolların yetersiz olduğunu ve çözümün ancak askeri eylemlerle sağlanabileceğini ortaya koymuştur.<sup>37</sup>

Bilhassa “*bir millet, iki devlet*” olarak adlandırılan kardeşlik ve müttefiklik ilişkileri çerçevesinde, Türkiye’nin Azerbaycan’ın toprak bütünlüğünü sağlama mücadelesi, İkinci Karabağ Savaşı’nın gidişatını belirleyen önemli bir dinamik olarak görülebilir. İki devletin

<sup>36</sup> Nazim Cafersoy & Araz Aslanlı (2012), “Türkiye-Azerbaycan askeri ilişkileri”, s. 158.

<sup>37</sup> Museyib Shiraliyev (2022/c), “Jeopolitik ve Jeoekonomik Perspektiften İkinci Karabağ Savaşı’nın Sonuçları: Zengezur Koridoru’nun Stratejik Önemi”, *II. Uluslararası Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Sosyal, Ekonomik ve Siyasal Gelişmeler Bağlamında Güney Kafkasya Sempozyumu Bildiri Kitabı*, Ankara: İKSAD, ss. 181-196; Museyib Shiraliyev (2022/a), “Amerika Birleşik Devletleri’nin Obama ve Trump Dönemi Güney Kafkasya Politikasında Güvenlik Faktörü”, *Kafkasya Çalışmaları Dergisi*, Cilt 8, Sayı: 14, ss. 18-19.



liderleri (Recep Tayyip Erdoğan-İlham Aliyev) arasındaki kişisel ilişkilerin, siyasi, ekonomik, insani ve kültürel iş birliğinin seviyesini yükseltmede önemli bir rol oynadığı da vurgulanmalıdır. Bu iş birliği, her iki ülkenin de güçlenmesine ve ortak hedeflerine ulaşmalarına destek olmuştur.<sup>38</sup>

Bu dönemde, Türkiye, uluslararası platformlarda Azerbaycan'ın haklı davasını savunma konusunda kararlılıkla hareket etmiştir. Nitekim TBMM'de bulunan dört parti (AK Parti, CHP, MHP ve İYİ Parti), Ermenistan'ın Tovuz bölgesine saldırısını kınamak amacıyla ortak bir bildiri yayınlamış ve Ermenistan'ı bölgedeki barış ve istikrarın önündeki en ciddi engel olarak tanımlamıştır.

Türkiye Cumhurbaşkanı Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, 28 Eylül 2020'de, savaşın ikinci gününde, Türkiye'nin tutumunu net bir şekilde ifade etmiştir. Erdoğan, bölgedeki krize son verilmesi gerektiğini ve Ermenistan'ın işgal ettiği Azerbaycan topraklarını terk etmesiyle bölgenin yeniden barışa kavuşabileceğini belirtmiştir. Erdoğan, “Minsk Üçlüsü” olarak adlandırılan ABD, Rusya ve Fransa'nın sorunu çözmedeki başarısızlığını da vurgulayarak, Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan'a olan desteğini ve çözüm arayışını açıkça dile getirmiştir. Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan, “*Türk askeri burada var mı?*” şeklindeki tartışmalara da cevap vererek, Suriye'nin kuzeyinde teröristlere binlerce tır silah taşıyanların bu şekilde sorular sorduğunu ve Türkiye'nin meşru savunmasına gölge düşürmeye çalıştıklarını ifade etmiştir. Aynı zamanda, Erdoğan, Azerbaycan'ın işgal altındaki topraklarının iadesi için uzun yıllar boyunca diplomatik çözüm arayışında bulunduğunu, ancak bunlardan müspet bir sonuç alamadığını ve bu nedenle meşru savunma hakkını kullandığını belirtmiştir. Erdoğan, Azerbaycan'ın işgale uğrayan topraklarının kimseye ait olmadığını ve bu sorunun artık çözülme zamanının geldiğini de vurgulayarak, Azerbaycan'ın meşru taleplerinin dikkate alınması gerektiğini dile getirmiştir. Bu durum, Azerbaycan'ın kendi topraklarını geri alma çabasının altını çizmiştir.<sup>39</sup>

#### 4.1. Ağdam Gözlem Merkezi

8 Kasım 2021 tarihinde stratejik öneme sahip Şuşa'nın işgalden kurtarılmasının ardından, Türkiye'nin 10 Kasım Mutabakatı'na imza atan ülkeler arasında yer almaması, ateşkese dair rolü hususunda çeşitli tartışmalara yol açmıştır. Ancak 5. madde çerçevesinde, Türkiye'nin 30

<sup>38</sup> Museyib Shiraliyev (2022/d), “Uluslararası Hukuk Açısından Şuşa Beyannamesi ve Önemi”, II. Uluslararası Kafkasya'nın Geleceği Kongresi, SDE, 2022, s. 106.

<sup>39</sup> Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Başkanlığı (2021), *Yukarı Karabağ'da 44 Günde Gelen Zafer: Türkiye-Azerbaycan Kardeşliğinin Nişanesi*, Ankara, ss. 53-56.

Ocak 2021 tarihinde eyleme geçen Türk-Rus Ortak Merkezi'nin gözlemci statüsü elde eden eşit taraflardan birisi olması konusu, kesin olarak kabul edilmesi gereken bir ilkedir.<sup>40</sup>

11 Kasım 2020 tarihinde, Azerbaycan topraklarında kurulan Türk-Rus Ortak Merkezi'nin ateşkesin kontrolünü sağlama amacıyla Türkiye ve Rusya Savunma Bakanlıkları tarafından imzalanan bir mutabakat zaptı ile resmi olarak kurulduğu duyurulmuştur. Merkez, Ağdam kentinin Merzili köyü yakınlarında konuşlanmış ve 30 Ocak'ta açılışı gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu ortak merkezde görevli askerler, bölgeden alınan insansız hava araçları (İHA) ile elde edilen görüntüleri birlikte izleyerek ateşkese uyulup uyulmadığını gözlemlemektedirler. Bu merkez, Türkiye ve Rusya'nın iş birliğiyle, Karabağ bölgesindeki ateşkesin kontrolünü sağlamayı amaçlayan önemli bir adım olarak hayata geçirilmiştir.

#### 4.2. İHA ve SİHA'lar

2010 yılında imzalanan “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ve Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti Arasında Stratejik Ortaklık ve Karşılıklı Yardım Anlaşması”, Azerbaycan ve Türkiye arasındaki askeri iş birliğinin hukuki zeminini oluşturmuştur. Bu anlaşma, üçüncü tarafların saldırısı karşısında saldırıya uğrayan tarafa yardım edilmesini öngörmesiyle öne çıkmaktadır. Bu anlaşmanın ardından, iki ülke arasında birçok ortak tatbikat düzenlenmiş ve askeri iş birliği faaliyetleri gerçekleştirilmiştir.<sup>41</sup>

Ortak tatbikatlar sayesinde, Türkiye, Azerbaycan Ordusu'nun manevra kabiliyetini artırmış ve teknik destek sağlayarak Azerbaycan'a askeri anlamda büyük avantajlar kazandırmıştır. Türk savunma sanayisinin ilerlemesi ve teknolojik ürünlerinin kullanılması, Azerbaycan'ın savaş yeteneklerini de artırmıştır. Özellikle Türk yapımı İHA/SİHA'ların kullanımı, saha üstünlüğü sağlayarak Azerbaycan'ın savaşta üstünlük elde etmesine yardımcı olmuştur. Azerbaycan'ın savaşı kazanmasında etkili olan stratejik silahlar ve teknolojiler arasında uzun menzilli TRG-300 Kaplan Füzesi gibi unsurlar da yer almaktadır.

Türk yapımı İHA/SİHA'ların etkili şekilde kullanımı, Azerbaycan'a sadece askeri değil, aynı zamanda psikolojik bir üstünlük de sağlamıştır. Bu teknolojiler, Ermenistan'ın moralini bozarak dirençlerini kırmada önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Türk SİHA'ları, uluslararası basında da geniş bir ilgi görmüş ve dikkat çekmiştir. Ayrıca, 17 Kasım 2020'de Türk askerlerinin Azerbaycan'a gönderilmesini içeren tezkere TBMM'de kabul edilmiştir. Bu adımla, Ankara ile Bakü arasında savunma sanayii alanında başlayan iş birliği, İkinci Karabağ Savaşı

<sup>40</sup> Museyib Shiraliyev (2022/d), “Uluslararası Hukuk Açısından Şuşa Beyannamesi ve Önemi”, s. 106.

<sup>41</sup> Ahmet Yüce (2016), “Azerbaycan-Türkiye Askeri İşbirliği Faaliyetlerinin Hukuki Temeli”, *Azərbaycan Ali Hərbi Məktəbi Elmi Əsərlər Məcmuəsi*, 1 (26), ss. 3-14

sonrasında ivme kazanarak devam etmiştir. 2021 senesinde, Bakü, Ankara'dan 202 milyon doların üzerinde savunma sanayi ürünü satın almıştır. Türkiye'nin savunma sanayisi üretimini millileştirme hedefleri ile birlikte gelecek yıllarda bu iş birliği sürecinin giderek ivme kazanacağı öngörülmektedir.<sup>42</sup>

### 4.3. Şuşa Beyannamesi

15 Haziran 2021 tarihinde Türkiye ile Azerbaycan arasında imzalanan Şuşa Beyannamesi, Türk Dünyası için önemli bir tarihi doruk noktası olarak kabul edilebilir. Şuşa Beyannamesi, Türk Dünyası için anayasal bir öneme sahip olabilir; çünkü gelecekte Türk Dünyası anayasasının önemli bir parçası olarak kabul edilebilir. Beyanname, gelecekte askeri, siyasi ve ekonomik başlıkları içeren bir belge olduğu için, Türkiye ve Azerbaycan arasındaki iş birliğinin geleceğine yönelik bir yol haritası sunmaktadır. Bu açıdan, Şuşa Deklarasyonu, Türkiye ve Azerbaycan arasındaki ilişkilerde yeni dinamikleri dikkate alan içeriğiyle önemli bir belge olarak tarihe geçmiştir. Ayrıca, anlaşmanın Azerbaycan'ın kültür başkenti Şuşa'da imzalanması, bu belgenin sembolik değerini artırmaktadır. İmzalanan Şuşa Beyannamesi, Türk Dünyası'nın birlik ve iş birliğine katkı sağlayacak önemli adımlardan birisi olarak kabul edilmektedir.<sup>43</sup>

Karabağ Savaşı'nın ardından imzalanan "*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti Arasında Müttelik İlişkileri Hakkında Şuşa Beyannamesi*", son derece önemli bir belgedir. Bu belge, Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'ın İkinci Karabağ Savaşı sonrasında Ermeni işgalinden kurtarılan Şuşa kentine düzenlediği ziyaret sırasında 15-16 Haziran 2020 tarihlerinde imzalanmış ve iki ülke arasındaki ilişkileri "*Stratejik Ortaklık*" düzeyinden "*Mütteliklik*" düzeyine çıkarmıştır. Şuşa Beyannamesi, sadece ikili ilişkilere yönelik hükümleri içermemekte, aynı zamanda bölgesel ilişkiler ve Türk Dünyası ile ilgili hükümleri içeren önemli bir belge olarak da öne çıkmaktadır.<sup>44</sup>

Belgenin içeriği, üç temel düzeyde etki doğurucu hükümleri içermektedir:

1. İkili İlişkilere İlişkin Hükümler: Türkiye ile Azerbaycan arasındaki dostluk ve kardeşlik vurgusundan sonra daha önce imzalanan anlaşmalara atıfta bulunularak, ikili ilişkilerin tarihçesi ve temel prensipleri anılmıştır.

<sup>42</sup> Paul Iddon (2021), "The Growing Military Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan", *Forbes*, 27.07.2021, Erişim Tarihi: 20.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/pauliddon/2021/07/27/the-growing-military-cooperation-between-turkey-and-azerbaijan/>.

<sup>43</sup> Museyib Shiraliyev (2022/d), "Uluslararası Hukuk Açısından Şuşa Beyannamesi ve Önemi", s. 108.

<sup>44</sup> *CNN Türk* (2022), "Şuşa Beyannamesi nedir, ne demek? Şuşa Beyannamesi maddeleri!", 02.02.2022, Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.cnntrk.com/turkiye/susa-beyannamesi-nedir-ne-demek-turkiye-azerbaycan-arasinda-imzalanan-susa-beyannamesi-maddeleri>.

2. Bölgesel İlişkilere İlişkin Hükümler: Belgede, Türkiye ve Azerbaycan'ın bölgesel istikrar, güvenlik ve barışın korunmasına yönelik iş birliğine vurgu yapılmıştır. Bölgesel gelişmelere duyarlılık gösterme ve dayanışma, terörle mücadele, enerji güvenliği, ulaşım, ticaret ve yatırım gibi alanlarda iş birliği öngörülmüştür.
3. Türk Dünyasına İlişkin Hükümler: Beyannamede, Türk Dünyası'nın birliğinin ve dayanışmasının önemi vurgulanmıştır. Türk Devletleri ve toplulukları arasında kültürel, ekonomik ve sosyal alanlarda iş birliğini artırmak amacıyla çeşitli adımlar atılması hedeflenmiştir.

Şuşa Beynamesi'nde, askeri iş birliği alanında, savunma yeteneklerinin güçlendirilmesi ve iki ülke silahlı kuvvetlerinin birlikte çalışabilirliğinin artırılması amacıyla ortak eğitim ve tatbikatların artırılması öngörülmüştür. Ayrıca, diğer dost devletlerin orduları ile askeri tatbikatların desteklenmesi de taahhüt edilmiştir.<sup>45</sup>

Şuşa Beynamesi, Türkiye ve Azerbaycan arasında imzalanan ve içeriğinde “*ittifak*” vurgusunu taşıyan ilk belge olarak özel bir öneme sahiptir. Bu beyannamede, Türkiye ve Azerbaycan arasındaki ikili ilişkilerin çeşitli boyutlarını kapsayacak şekilde çok yönlü hükümler yer almaktadır. Temelde ise, iki ülkenin ortak çıkarlarını korumak amacıyla siyasi, ekonomik, savunma, kültür, insani, sağlık, eğitim ve spor alanlarındaki imkân ve potansiyelin birleştirilmesi hedeflenmiştir. Özellikle askeri alanda yapılan iş birliklerine odaklanıldığında, Şuşa Beynamesi'nin savunma yeteneklerinin güçlendirilmesi amacıyla askeri eğitim ve tatbikatların ortaklaşa artırılmasını öngördüğü görülmektedir. Bu, iki ülkenin silahlı kuvvetlerinin birlikte çalışabilirliğinin artmasına ve daha etkili savunma yeteneklerine sahip olmalarına yönelik bir adımdır. Ayrıca, belgede yer alan “*Türkiye ve Azerbaycan diğer dost devletlerin orduları ile askeri tatbikat düzenlenmesini destekleyecektir*” ifadesi, iki ülkenin sadece kendi iş birliklerine değil, aynı zamanda bölgesel ve uluslararası düzeyde diğer ülkelerin ordularıyla da iş birliği yapmayı taahhüt ettiklerini göstermektedir. Bu, daha geniş bir savunma ve güvenlik iş birliği ağına işaret etmektedir. Şuşa Beynamesi, Türkiye ve Azerbaycan arasındaki stratejik ortaklığı ve dayanışmayı güçlendirmeyi amaçlayan kapsamlı bir belgedir. Bu anlamda, iki ülke arasındaki ilişkilerin sadece askeri alanda değil, aynı zamanda siyasi, ekonomik, kültürel ve insani alanlarda da derinleşeceğine işaret etmektedir.

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<sup>45</sup> Sabah (2022), “Karabağ zaferi sonrası imzalanan Şuşa Beynamesi 1 yaşında!”, 15.06.2022, Erişim Tarihi: 21.07.2023, Erişim Adresi: <https://www.sabah.com.tr/yasam/susa-beyannamesi-1-yasinda-6036026>.

#### 4.4. Zengezur Koridoru

Zengezur, 1920’li yıllarda Sovyetler Birliği tarafından Ermenistan’a bağlanmış olup, bugün de Ermenistan’ın sınırları içinde bulunmaktadır. Zengezur’un Ermenistan’a bağlanmasıyla birlikte Azerbaycan’ın Nahçıvan’la olan kara bağlantısı kaybolmuştur. Yapılan savaşta Ermenistan’ın yenilgiyle sonuçlanan ve akabinde imzalanan ateşkesin 9. maddesi, bölgede kurulması planlanan ulaşım hatları hususunu içermektedir.

Ocak 2021’de Moskova’da gerçekleştirilen üçlü formattaki görüşmeden sonra, Azerbaycan, Ermenistan ve Rusya Cumhurbaşkanları, bölgedeki ilişkilerin yeniden canlandırılması noktasında anlaşmaya varmışlardır. Bu anlaşma, iki önemli koridorun restorasyonunu öngörmüştür. İlk koridor, Zengezur ve Azerbaycan’ın önemli bir bölümünden geçerek Nahçıvan’a ulaşan karayolu ve demiryolu koridorudur. İkincisi ise, Erivan’dan Nahçıvan’a uzanan ve Ermenistan’ın aynı bölgesinden geçecek olan demiryoludur. 10 Kasım 2020 tarihinde varılan anlaşma ile Azerbaycan-Nahçıvan arasındaki bağlantının onarılması planlanmaktaydı. Ocak 2021’deki görüşmelerde ise, bu planların hayata geçirilmesi için somut adımlar atılmış ve anlaşmaya varılmıştır. Bu anlaşma, bölgedeki ticaret ve ulaşımın canlanmasına ve ilişkilerin geliştirilmesine yönelik önemli bir adım olarak değerlendirilmektedir.<sup>46</sup>

Bu durumun gerçekleşmesi, yalnızca Azerbaycan ile Türkiye arasında doğrudan bir ulaşım kanalının oluşturulması değil, aynı zamanda Edirne’den Çin sınırına kadar uzanan ve Orta Asya devletleriyle yeni bir ulaşım hattının da oluşturulması anlamına gelecektir. Bu durum, Türkiye açısından Zengezur Koridoru’nun, Rusya ile Türkiye arasında mevcut olan Gürcistan dışında yeni bir rota oluşturması açısından da büyük bir önem taşımaktadır.

#### Sonuç

Azerbaycan ve Türkiye arasındaki ilişkiler, temelde manevi yakınlık ve çıkar ortaklığı üzerine kurulmuştur. Her iki ülke de “*Güçlü Azerbaycan, Güçlü Türkiye*” ilkesini benimsemiştir. Bölgesel olaylar ve özellikle Karabağ Savaşı gibi durumlar, Türkiye ve Azerbaycan’ın dayanışma içinde birlikte adım atmasını gerektirmiştir.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Museyib Shiraliyev (2022/c), “Jeopolitik ve Jeoekonomik Perspektiften İkinci Karabağ Savaşı’nın Sonuçları: Zengezur Koridoru’nun Stratejik Önemi”, s. 189; Museyib Shiraliyev (2022/b), “İkinci Karabağ Savaşı’nın Sonuçları Açısından “Kuşak ve Yol” Projesinde Azerbaycan’ın Rolü”, Uluslararası Geçmişten Geleceğe İpek Yolu Sempozyumu, AHBVÜ, s. 623.

<sup>47</sup> Cavid Veliyev (2012), “Bölgesel Olayların Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkilerine Etkisi”, içinde (editörler: C. Veliyev & R. Resullu & K. Aslanlı), *Azerbaycan-Türkiye: dostluk, kardeşlik ve strateji ortaklık*, Ankara: Berikan Yayınları, s. 25.

Karabağ'ın işgal edilme probleminin tarihi kökleri vardır ve bu problem bir asırdan fazladır özellikle Ruslar ve Ermeniler tarafından bölgede oluşturulmaya başlamıştır. SSCB'nin dağılma sürecinin başlamasıyla birlikte, Azerbaycan, Ermenistan'ın Karabağ'ı işgal iddia ve eylemleriyle karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Uzun bir esaret döneminden çıkmakta olan Azerbaycan, bağımsızlık sürecinde bir kez daha işgal problemi ile karşı karşıya kalınca, daha SSCB'nin dahilinde bulunduğu için, Türkiye, Azerbaycan'a bir Sovyet Cumhuriyeti olarak bakmış ve başlarda sorunun Moskova eksenli çözüleceği şeklinde bir yaklaşım geliştirmiştir. Ancak Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlık sürecinde de Türkiye Azerbaycan'la yakın ilişkiler kurmaya başlamıştır. Azerbaycan bağımsızlığını ilan ettikten sonra ise, Türkiye, Azerbaycan'ı tanıyan ilk ülke olmakla birlikte gelecekteki ilişkiler açısından da çok önemli adımlar atmıştır. Bağımsız Azerbaycan gerek manevi ilişkiler ve toplumsal yakınlık açısından, gerek siyasi ve bölgesel çıkarlar açısından Türkiye için büyük bir önem arz etmiştir. Türkiye, Ermenistan ve Ermeni diasporasının suçlayıcı iddialarının her zaman hedefinde olmuştur. Birinci Karabağ Savaşı'nda 1994 ateşkesine kadar, Türkiye, Azerbaycan'la yakın ilişkilerini güçlendirmeye çalışmış ve Azerbaycan'ın toprak bütünlüğünü savunmuştur. Ancak sahada ve masada çok belirleyici bir aktör olamamıştır. 2020 İkinci Karabağ Savaşı'na gelince ise, Türkiye bu defa ağırlığını hissettirmiş ve Azerbaycan ile birlikte hareket ederek sadece söylemde değil, eylemde de etkisini göstermiştir. Türkiye'nin Azerbaycan ile kültürel, tarihi, etnik ve dilsel bağları mevcuttur ve Türkiye-Azerbaycan toplumları nerdeyse aynı milletin iki parçası olarak aynı manevi bağa sahiplerdir. Ayrıca karşılıklı çıkarlar ve “*Güçlü Azerbaycan, Güçlü Türkiye*” gerçeği de bölgesel olarak önemini göstermiştir.

Azerbaycan, Türkiye için ister enerji kaynakları açısından, ister Orta Asya'ya bağlanma açısından oldukça önemlidir. Ayrıca Güney Kafkasya'da Türkiye'nin belirleyiciliği, Ermenistan, Rusya, İran ile bölgesel ilişkileri düzenleme ve çıkarları maksimize etme boyutuyla da, Azerbaycan, Türkiye için önemlidir. Azerbaycan'ın İkinci Karabağ Savaşı'nda görünen taraf Azerbaycan olsa da, Türkiye'nin de bu savaşta Azerbaycan'dan yana taraf olduğu açıktır. Türkiye, gerek savaş sürecinde, gerek savaş sonrası süreçte Azerbaycan'la birlikte savaşın bölgedeki kazanımı olmuştur. Neticede, 2020 Karabağ Savaşı veya 44 Gün Savaşı, Türk Dış Politikası'nın büyük bir başarısı olarak Türk ve dünya tarihine geçmiştir.

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**KİTAP İNCELEMESİ:****TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASI: AKTÖRLER, KRİZLER, TERCİHLER, ÇÖZÜMLER**Seda Gözde TOKATLI<sup>1</sup>**Article Category:** International Relations**Date of Submission:** 13.08.2023**Date of Acceptance:** 18.08.2023

*Türk Dış Politikası: Aktörler, Krizler, Tercihler, Çözümler* isimli bu eser (2017, Barış Kitap Yayınları), Türkiye'nin süreç içerisinde değişen dış politikasını farklı dinamik, tercih ve faktörler kapsamında ele almıştır. Dönemsel olarak gelişmeleri ele alan yazarlar, Türkiye'nin yükselen ekonomik gücünün, genişleyen askeri kapasitesinin, artan kültürel gücünün ve etkili diplomasi yeteneğinin küresel yönetim üzerinde etkili bir rol oynadığını göstermektedir. Eserde, Türk Dış Politikası tarihsel süreç içerisinde izlenirken, analiz edilen dönem ve konunun tarihsel süreç içerisindeki gelişimi ele alınmıştır. Yazarlar, Türkiye'nin genişleyen gücünü kapsamlı bir şekilde ele alırken, küreselleşme bağlamında dış politika alanında ortaya çıkan tüm olay ve değişimleri incelemektedir. Bu çalışma, Türk Dış Politikası'nı etkileyen faktörleri derinden incelerken, bölgesel/ülkesel ve örgütsel/konusal temelde detaylı bir analiz ortaya koymaktadır. Küreselleşme sonrasında devletler arasında karşılıklı bağımlılığın artması sonucunda iç ve dış politika arasındaki ayırım azalmaya başlamış, karşılıklı iş birliği mekanizmaları daha işlevsel hale gelmiş ve teknolojik gelişmeler aracılığıyla dış politikadaki değişim esas alınmıştır.

Kitabın ilk bölümünde, Türkiye'nin dönemsel dış politikasında yaşanan değişim tarihsel gelişmeler çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiş, ikinci bölümünde Türkiye'nin bölgesel ve ülkesel temelde dış politikası ele alınmış ve son olarak Türk Dış Politikası örgütsel ve konusal ayırım ile detaylandırılmıştır. Dönemsel olarak birey bazlı yapılan analizlerde, liderlerin kişilikleri, iktidarların politik yaklaşımları veya hırslarının alınan kararlarda önemli bir değişimi de beraberinde getirdiği görülmüştür. Kitapta yer alan üç bölüm, Türk Dış Politikası öğelerini ayrıntılı olarak değerlendirmiştir. Kitabın her bölümünde alt başlıklardan oluşan alt bölümler yer almaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu eser içerisindeki 3 farklı bölümün içerisinde toplam 25 alt başlık yer almaktadır.

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<sup>1</sup> Doktor Öğretim Görevlisi, Uluslararası İlişkiler Ana Bilim Dalı.  
Email: [sedagozde@hotmail.com](mailto:sedagozde@hotmail.com).  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1880-1338>.

Kitabın ilk bölümünde, yazarlar, Türk Dış Politikası'nı dönemsel olarak ele almaktadır. Bu bölümde, ilk olarak “*Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Dış Politikası (1800-1922)*” alt başlığı yer almaktadır. Bu alt başlıkta, 1800'lü yıllardan günümüze kadar olan Türk Dış Politikası dönemsel olarak incelenmiştir. Dönem içerisinde dış politikaya yön veren savaşlar serisi ele alınmış, dış ve iç etkenler ön plana çıkarılmıştır. Osmanlı Devleti'nin dış politikasını her ne kadar daha çok devletin iç yapısı veya toplumsal dinamikler etkilese de, 1789 Fransız Devrimi veya Sanayi Devrimi sonrası Batı'nın teknolojik ve kültürel yönden üstünlüğü de dış politikayı etkileyen önemli etkenler arasında yer almıştır. Dönem içerisinde içeride veya dışarıda yaşanan çeşitli sorunlar, Batı ile Doğu arasında artan etkileşimler, ekonomik yönde artan gerileme, askeri çatışmalar veya devletin dışsal değişimlere ayak uyduramaması gibi faktörler Osmanlı Devleti'nin çöküşünü hızlandırmıştır.

İlk bölümde yer alan ikinci alt başlık ise “*Cumhuriyet'in İlk Dönemindeki (1923-1938) Türk Dış Politikası*” konusundadır. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin güvenlik temelli dış politikası Lozan Anlaşması ile ön plana çıkmıştır. İki büyük savaş arasındaki bu dönemde Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin izlediği başarılı dış politika, ulusal çıkarların meşru yollarla korunmasını sağlamış ve Cumhuriyet tarihi boyunca en iyi dış politika uygulamalarının bu dönemde alındığını ortaya koymuştur.

Üçüncü alt başlıkta yer alan “*İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Sonrası: 1939-1950 Yılları Arası Türk Dış Politikası*”, Türkiye'nin 1950 yılında ilk serbest seçimlerle iktidar değişikliğine gittiğini, fakat dış politikadaki temel paradigmanın değişmediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Cumhuriyetin kuruluşundan 1939 yılına kadar olan dönemde, dış tehditlerin en aza indirildiği ve ekonomik bağımsızlık temelli bir dış politika yürütüldüğü görüşü ön plana çıkmaktadır. Yeni kurulan devletin ilk öncelikleri arasında yer alan siyasi, ekonomik ve kültürel bağımsızlık hedefi, dış politikanın da temelini oluşturmuştur. Ayrıca 1945 yılına kadar Türk Dış Politikası'nda realist kuram hâkim olmuş ve bu ilk etap, devletin ulusal çıkarlarını her şeyden üstün tuttuğu bir dönem olarak kayıtlara geçmiştir.<sup>2</sup> Bu dönemin Türk Dış Politikası liderleri, rasyonel, sorumluluk sahibi, uzun vadeli perspektifli ve realist olarak tanımlanmıştır.<sup>3</sup> Bu dönemde, Türkiye, tarafsız, sakin ve barışçıl bir dış politikaya daha fazla yönelmiş ve komşu/bölgesel devletlerle çeşitli paktlar yapmıştır. Dünya tarihinin en mühim olaylarından olan İkinci Dünya Savaşı ise, Türkiye'nin dış politika tercih ve davranışlarını kökünden

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<sup>2</sup> Sertif Demir & Poyraz Gürson & Ayça Eminoğlu (2017), *Türk Dış Politikası: Aktörler, Krizler, Tercihler, Çözümler*, Ankara: Barış Kitap Yayınları.

<sup>3</sup> Dankwart A. Rustow (1989), *Turkey: America's Forgotten Ally*, New York, London: Council on Foreign Relations Press.

değiştirmiştir. Yaklaşık 15 yıllık süre içerisinde tarafsız olarak kalmayı tercih eden Türkiye, daha sonra ise tercihini Batı eğilimli dış politika yönünde kullanmıştır. Bu dönemde güçler dengesinde yapısal değişim yaşanmış, iki kutuplu yapısal düzene doğru geçiş hızlanmış ve devletler iki kutuptan birisine doğru hizalanmak zorunda kalmıştır. Türkiye'nin savaşın dışında kalma isteği de çok uzun sürmemiş ve Ankara, savaşın sonlarına doğru liberal dünya düzeninin temsilcisi olarak tanımlanan Batı bloku içerisinde yer almaya başlamıştır. Aktif tarafsızlık döneminden çıkarak Batı ittifakı içerisinde dahil olan Türkiye, böylelikle yeni bir döneme geçiş yapmıştır.

Bu bölümün dördüncü kısmı, “*Demokrat Parti Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası (1950-1960)*” konusunu ele almaktadır. Bu süreç, Türkiye'nin Batı ile bütünleştiği, dış politikada ise ABD'nin ağırlığının daha fazla hissedildiği bir dönemin başlangıcı olmuştur. Bu dönemin ana dış politika unsurları arasında ülkenin Batı ittifakı içerisinde güvenliğini koruma gereksinimi yer almaktadır. Türkiye'nin dış politika araçları arasında diplomasi, askeri ve ekonomik unsurlar yer alırken, klasik araçların yerine geçen ülkenin jeopolitik konumu da önemli bir dış politika aracı olmuştur. Türkiye iç siyasetinde yaşanan köklü değişim Demokrat Parti'nin (DP) iktidara gelmesiyle her ne kadar önemli bir ses getirirse de, Batı bloku ve Doğu bloku arasında giderek artan rekabet ve mücadele, Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki köklü değişikliklerin de önünü açmıştır. Bu dönemde Balkanlar'da ortaya çıkan sorunlar, Kıbrıs Sorunu, Irak darbesi, Suriye ve Lübnan krizleri gibi çeşitli gelişmelerin yaşanması Türk Dış Politikası'nda Batı merkezli dış politikayı da gerekli kılmıştır. DP'nin ülke çıkarlarını korumak amacıyla Batı'nın dış politika çıkar ve menfaatleri ile dengeli bir siyaset izlediği, ABD ile sıkı bir iş birliği yaptığı ve geleneksel Türk Dış Politikası'nda aynı zamanda önemli sapmaların da olduğu bu kısımda ön plana çıkan tezlerdir. DP'nin ideolojik tabanlı izlediği dış politika Türkiye'nin NATO'ya üye olmasıyla belirginlik kazanmıştır.

Bu bölümün beşinci kısmı, “*1960-1990 Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası*” olgusunu işlemektedir. Yazar, Türkiye'nin 1960'lı yıllardan itibaren izlediği ideolojik temelli dış politikadan sıyrıldığını, uluslararası koşullara daha fazla uyumlu ve daha özerk bir dış politikaya doğru yöneldiğini dile getirmiştir.<sup>4</sup> 1960'lı yıllarda iç siyasette yaşanan kırılma 27 Mayıs askeri darbesi ile ön plana çıkmış ve Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki önemli değişimleri gerekli kılmıştır. Özellikle 1960 ile 1980'li yıllarda ortaya çıkan kırılmalar, ABD ile olan ilişkilerin seyrini değiştirirse de, Türkiye, bu durumu kendisi için bir fırsata çevirme imkânı elde etmiştir. Yazar, “*görelî özerklik*” olarak tanımlanan bu dönemde, Türkiye ile Batı arasında önemli kırılmaların

<sup>4</sup> Baskın Oran (2001), *Türk Dış Politikası*, 1. Cilt, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

meydana geldiğini ve Ankara'nın bu dönemde bağımlı bir dış politika yerine çok yönlü bir dış politika yürüttüğünü dile getirmektedir. Kıbrıs Sorunu ise, Türkiye'nin çok yönlü dış politika izlemesinde önemli bir kaldıraç vazifesi görmüştür. Kıbrıs'ın zamanla Türkiye ile Amerika Birleşik Devletleri (ABD) arasındaki ilişkileri derinden etkileyen bir kriz haline dönüştüğünü belirten yazar, bu dönemde yaşanan sorunların büyük ölçüde Kıbrıs Sorunu ile ilişkili olduğunun altını çizmiştir. Örneğin, Johnson Mektubu, Türk-Amerikan ilişkilerine eleştirel ve sorgulayıcı bir yaklaşım getirmiştir. Bu dönemde, Türkiye, kendi içerisindeki iç siyasal çalkantıların yanında önemli dış politika krizleri ve tercih yapma zorunlulukları ile de karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Yazar, bu dönemde Türkiye'nin ekonomik olarak ciddi bir darboğazda olduğunu ve dış borç sarmalı içerisinde sıkıştığını ifade etmektedir. Özellikle 1973 OPEC petrol krizi ve 1975 yılında ABD tarafından uygulanan ambargo mevcut durumu daha da kötüye götürmüştür. Soğuk Savaş'ın son 10 yılı olarak tanımlanan 1980-1990'lı yıllar ise çok daha sert geçmiştir. Türkiye'nin iç siyasetinde ortaya çıkan en önemli gelişmelerden olan 12 Eylül 1980 askeri darbesi ile ise, ılımlı İslam, Yeşil Kuşak Projesi ve neoliberalizm kavramları ön plana çıkmaya başlamıştır. 1980'li yıllarda Turgut Özal'ın Başbakanlık koltuğuna geçmesiyle de köklü değişiklikler meydana gelmiştir. Yetki ve sorumluluklarını sonunda kadar kullanma eğiliminde olan Özal yönetimi, her şeyi yapma yetisini düşünerek hareket etmiş, ekonomik çıkarların siyasi çıkarlardan daha önemli olduğunu vurgulamış ve dış politika modelini ağırlıklı olarak ekonomik temeller üzerine kurmuştur.

Bu bölümün altıncı alt başlığı olan "*Türk Dış Politikasında 1990'lı yıllar*", Doğu blokunun yıkıldığı ve Soğuk Savaş'ın sona erdiği dönemi ele almaktadır. Bu dönemde, Türk Dış Politikası, iki kutuplu yapısal düzende karşılaştığı sınırlamalardan sıyrılmış ve çok yönlü bir dış politikaya doğru eğilim göstermiştir. 2002 yılına kadar dış politikayı etkileyen temel dinamikler arasında Sovyetler Birliği tarafından inşa edilen NATO'nun doğudaki muadili Varşova Paktı'nın dağılması, Irak'ın Kuveyt'i işgali ve sonrasında ABD'nin Birinci Körfez Savaşı, Balkanlar ve Kafkasya'da ortaya çıkan iç çatışmalar ve PKK terörü yer almıştır. Yazar, 2002 yılı dış politikasını revizyonist ve irredantizmden (yayılmacı milliyetçilik) uzak, barışçıl ve Batı yönelimli bir yaklaşım olarak tanımlamaktadır.

Birinci bölümün son alt başlığı olan "*2002 Sonrası Türk Dış Politikası*" bölümünde ise güncel konular ele alınmaktadır. Yazar, 2002 yılında iç siyasette yaşanan büyük değişime vurgu yaparak, önceki tüm iktidar partilerinin dağıldığı kritik seçim sonrasında yönetime gelen Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin (AK Parti) ilk 5 yıl içerisinde temel ilkelere uygun bir şekilde hareket ettiğine vurgu yapmaktadır. Bu dönemde ön plana çıkan temel dış politika dinamikleri

arasında Türkiye'nin AB'ye üye olma çabaları, İkinci Körfez Savaşı veya ABD'nin 2003 Irak işgali, artan PKK terör eylemleri ve beraberinde çözülmeyi bekleyen Kıbrıs Sorunu yer almaktadır. Yazar, özellikle 2007 yılından itibaren Türkiye'nin iç politikasında askeriyenin azalan rolüne vurgu yaparken, AK Parti'nin çok yönlü ve çok katmanlı proaktif diplomasisine atıfta bulunmaktadır. Yazar, ayrıca bu dönemde Türkiye'nin her ne kadar Batı bloku içerisinde yer alsada, İslami referansları ön plana çıkararak bir dış politika inşa ettiğini de dile getirmiştir. Bu çerçevede, Ortadoğu, İran, Rusya ve Çin ile olan etkileşim artmış, Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu tarafından ortaya atılan “*stratejik derinlik*” anlayışı çerçevesinde Osmanlı topraklarında yaşayan ülkeler ve halklarıyla tarihi ve kültürel bağları geliştirme çabası ön plana çıkarılmıştır. Yazar, bu bağlamda bilhassa 2011 yılında başlayan Arap Baharı'nın Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki önemli yerini ortaya koyarken, Suriye Krizi'nin Türkiye iç ve dış siyaseti üzerinde yarattığı etkiye de değinmekte ve Ortadoğu'da yaşanan krizlerin Türkiye'nin Batı ile olan ilişkilerine olağan yansımalarını ele almaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, devam eden AK Parti iktidarı döneminde geleneksel dış politika anlayışında önemli bazı sapmaların olduğu da dile getirilmektedir. Batı bloku içerisinde yer alan Türkiye'nin çok yönlü bir dış politikaya daha fazla yöneldiği, özellikle İslami kesimlerle iş birliğini artırdığı ve Ortadoğu (popülist İslamcılık) ve Avrasyacılık eğilimlerini de barındıran yeni bir dış politika arayışı içerisinde olduğu ifade edilmektedir. Bu bölümde, Türkiye'nin dış politika analizinde iç politikanın artan rolüne de önemle vurgu yapılmaktadır. Bu bölüm, Türkiye'nin ulusal çıkarları temelinde dış politika yürüttüğünü ve özellikle ulusal çıkarları tehdit altında olduğunda (Kore, Kıbrıs ve Suriye sorunlarında) askeri güce başvurabileceğini de ortaya koymaktadır.

Kitabın ikinci bölümde yazarlar, Türkiye'nin dış politikasının etkileyebilen küresel güçler olarak tanımlanan ABD, Rusya, Çin ve Avrupa Birliği (AB) ile olan ilişkileri kapsamlı bir şekilde ele alınmaktadır. Türkiye'nin bölgesel bazdaki dış politika analizi Ortadoğu, Asya, Balkanlar ve Kafkasya bölgeleri üzerinden incelenmiştir. Türkiye'nin bölgelere yönelik dış politikası bütüncül bir şekilde analiz edilmiştir. İkinci bölüm içerisinde yer alan ilk alt başlık, “*Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri: Kısa Tarihçe ve Günümüz*” hususunu ele almaktadır. Yazar, iki NATO üye ülkesi olan Türkiye ve ABD'nin, zaman zaman sıkıntılar yaşasalar da, bölgesel ve küresel konularda yoğun bir ilişki ve iş birliği içerisinde olduklarını dile getirmiştir. Her iki ülkenin de hayati çıkarlarını ilgilendiren önemli konularda zaman zaman ciddi fikir ayrılıkları yaşadığını ifade eden yazar, dönemsel olarak ilişkilerin farklılık gösterebileceğini de ifade etmiştir. Özellikle, yazar, 1960'lı yıllardan itibaren Türk-Amerikan ilişkilerinde ciddi iniş ve çıkışların yaşandığını ortaya koymaktadır. Türk Amerikan ilişkilerini dört farklı döneme

ayırır yazar, bu dönemleri; Osmanlı dönemi, Birinci ve İkinci Dünya Savaşı dönemi, Soğuk Savaş dönemi ve 1991 Irak Savaşı ve sonrası olarak tanımlamaktadır. İlk bölümde, Amerikalı Konsololar, tüccarlar, okullar ve yardım kuruluşlarının Osmanlı dönemindeki rolü ön plana çıkmaktadır. Osmanlı'nın yıkılışından sonra kurulan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile ABD arasında 1926 yılında resmi ilişkilerin başladığı ama 1929 Ekonomik Buhranı sonucunda ABD'de yaşanan içine kapanma nedeniyle ilişkilerin aynı seyirde devam etmediği belirtilmiştir. Soğuk Savaş yıllarında güçlü bir Batılı müttefik arayışı içerisine giren Türkiye, Sovyetler Birliği'nin yayılcı politikaları karşısında önemli stratejik kararlar almıştır. Özellikle, 1947 Truman Doktrini ve Marshall Planı kapsamında Türkiye'ye yönelik askeri yardımların yapılması, ABD yanlısı politikaların da bir yansıması olmuştur. Ankara'nın NATO ve Bağdat Paketi içerisinde yer alması, Kore'ye asker göndermesi ve Amerikan askeri üslerinin Türkiye'de kurulmasına izin vermesi, ABD ile Türkiye arasındaki yakın iş birliğinin varlığını göstermektedir. Güvenlik alanında karşılıklı ağların inşa edildiği bu dönemde, Türkiye de komünizme karşı mücadele sürecine dahil olan ülkeler arasında yerini almıştır. Lakin 1962 yılındaki Küba Füze Krizi sonrasında, ABD tarafından gönderilen Johnson Mektubu ikili ilişkilerde derin bir kriz ve boşluk yaratmıştır. Özellikle 1970'li yıllarda Türkiye ekonomisinde yaşanan gerileme ve 1980 askeri darbesi ise içsel sorunların daha fazla ön plana çıktığı bir döneme neden olmuştur. İkili ilişkileri dördüncü dönem başlığı altında da inceleyen yazar, Sovyetler Birliği'nin çöküşünü ve beraberinde ABD'nin küresel güç mücadelesinde artan rolüne atıfta bulunurken, başlıca sorunlardan 11 Eylül (9/11) krizi, 1991 ve 2003 Irak Savaşları ve Suriye Savaşı'nın yarattığı bölgesel ve küresel etkiyi incelemektedir. Türkiye ile ABD arasındaki 1962 füze krizi, 1974 yılında haşhaş krizi, 1974 Kıbrıs Sorunu, 2003 yılında 1 Mart tezkeresinin kabul edilmemesi ve yine 2003 yılında yaşanan çuval krizi en önemli sorunlar arasında yer almaktadır. Değişen dünya koşulları gereği Türkiye ile ABD arasındaki ilişkilerin eski günlerde gibi olmayacağını dile getiren yazar, kazan-kazan politikasından yola çıkarak Türkiye'nin ABD yanlısı politika izlemesinin önemini vurgularken, bu durumdan sadece iki ülkenin değil, bölge ülkelerinin de kazançlı çıkacağını vurgulamaktadır.

Ek olarak, Türkiye ile ABD arasındaki ilişkileri güçlü ve zayıf yönleri ile değerlendirmek gerekmektedir. İki müttefik arasındaki güçlü yönleri ele alırsak; ilk olarak askeri iş birliğinin artan önemi, Türkiye'nin bölgede sahip olduğu avantajlı jeopolitik konumu, Batı yanlısı dış politika geleneği/anlayışı ve iki ülke arasında gelişen ekonomik ve kültürel bağlar ön plana çıkmaktadır. İki ülke arasındaki en önemli meydan okumalar ise; çözülmeyi bekleyen Kürt Sorunu, Türkiye'nin son dönemde koyulaşan otoriter yönetim anlayışı, iki ülke arasında artan

güven kaybı ve artan anti-Amerikan bakış açısı olarak ön plana çıkmaktadır.<sup>5</sup> Türkiye'nin gelişmekte olan bir ülke olması, Amerika'nın ise dünyada halihazırdaki tek süper güç olmasından dolayı iki ülkenin hiçbir zaman aynı ölçekte değerlendirilemeyeceği gerçeği ise, iki ülke arasında her zaman asimetrik bir ilişkinin varlığını öne çıkarmaktadır.<sup>6</sup> İki ülke arasındaki asimetrik ilişkinin varlığı ise daha çok ABD'nin yararına işlemektedir. Özellikle Türkiye ile ABD arasında karşılıklı ilişkilerin görece daha istikrarlı olduğu dönemler Soğuk Savaş döneminin sonuna kadar devam etmiştir. Bunun en temel nedenleri arasında ise iki ülkenin Sovyet karşıtlığı ve ortak çıkarları yer almaktadır.

İkinci bölümün dokuzuncu alt başlığında “*Türkiye-Rusya İlişkileri*” incelenmektedir. Türkiye'nin milli mücadele yıllarında izlediği Sovyet dostu yaklaşımı, Stalin'in tehditleri neticesinde, ilerleyen yıllarda komünizm karşıtı ve Sovyet karşıtı bir cephe ülkesi olarak pozisyon değiştirmesiyle sonuçlanmıştır. Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemden Rusya'nın toparlanmasına kadar olan dönem içerisinde iki ülke arasında iş birliği ve bölgesel rekabet devam etmiştir. Rusya'nın çevre ülkelerinden Orta Asya ve Kafkasya devletleri üzerinden artan rekabet, ikili ilişkilerin sınırlı bir düzeyde devam etmesini sağlamıştır. Yazara göre, Vladimir Putin'in Devlet Başkanlığı ile başlayan süreçte ise, tarihsel rekabet ve husumete rağmen, Türkiye ile Rusya arasındaki iş birliği yeniden canlanmış ve “*çok boyutlu ortaklık*” kavramı ön plana çıkmıştır. Yazar, bu bölümde, 2000'li yıllardan itibaren Rusya'nın enerji alanındaki üstünlüğünü etkili bir dış politika enstrümanı olarak kullandığını ve bölgeler üstü güç siyaseti izlediğini ifade etmektedir. Türkiye'nin “*komşularla sıfır sorun*” politikası izlemesi de ikili ilişkilerin olumlu yönde seyretmesine yol açmıştır. Zamanla, ikili ilişkilerin itici gücü olan ekonominin yerini siyasi ilişkiler almıştır. Türkiye'nin değişen siyasi öncelikleri Rusya ile olan ilişkilere de olumlu yönde yansımıştır. Avrasya devletleri olarak tanımlanan Türkiye ve Rusya, hem rekabeti, hem de iş birliğini teşvik eden çeşitli kararların içerisinde yer almıştır. Rusya'nın özellikle 2000'li yıllardan itibaren artan küresel güç olma yönündeki tavrı ise, küresel sistemde çok kutuplu yapısal düzenin inşasını hızlandırmış, buna karşın Türkiye'nin bölgesel güç olma yönündeki iddiası da iki ülkeyi zaman zaman karşı

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<sup>5</sup> Ozan Örmeci (2020), “Turkish-American Relations in the Post-Cold War Era”, içinde (editörler: Hüseyin, Işıksal & Ozan Örmeci) *Historical Examinations and Current Issues in Turkish-American Relations*, Berlin: Peter Lang, ss. 61-115.

<sup>6</sup> Hüseyin Işıksal (2020), “Conclusion: Turkish-American Relations in the 21st Century: An Uneasy Alliance”, içinde (editörler: Hüseyin, Işıksal & Ozan Örmeci) *Historical Examinations and Current Issues in Turkish-American Relations*, Berlin: Peter Lang, ss. 379-386.



karşıya getirmiştir. Sonuç olarak, yazar, Rusya ile Türkiye arasındaki 500 yıllık ilişkiyi “*huzursuz komşuluk*” olarak tanımlamaktadır.<sup>7</sup>

Çalışmanın onuncu alt başlığı ise “*Türkiye’nin AB Dış Politikası*”nı ele almaktadır. AB ile uzun yıllardır ilişki halinde olan Türkiye, 1999 Helsinki Zirvesi’nde aday ülke olma statüsünü kazansa da, AB üye ülkesi olmak için yıllardır büyük çaba göstermeye devam etmektedir. Yazar, Türkiye’nin AB ile ilişkilerde tek hedefinin AB tam üyeliği olduğunu açıkça dile getirmektedir. 2015 AB-Türkiye Zirvesi, 2016 yılında AB ile imzalanan anlaşmalar ve kopmayan müzakere süreci de sorunlara rağmen olumlu yöndeki gelişmelerin bir göstergesidir. Fakat Türkiye’nin katılım müzakerelerinde yaşadığı sorunlar, müzakere başlıklarının çok yavaş ilerlemesi veya Türkiye’nin aday ülke statüsünü uzun yıllardır devam ettirmesine karşın ciddi bir ilerleme kaydedememesi de iki ülke arasındaki ilişkilerin halen istenilen seviyede olmadığını göstermektedir. Yazar, Türkiye’nin bütün bu olumsuzluklara rağmen hâlâ AB’nin stratejik ortağı olduğunu, yaşanan bölgesel krizlerde (Suriye, Ukrayna, Kuzey Afrika) iş birliği mekanizmalarını devreye soktuğunu ve Türkiye ile AB’nin birbirlerine hâlâ ihtiyacının olduğunu açıkça belirtmektedir. Türkiye’nin tam üyelik hedefi ile ilerlediğini ön plana çıkartan bu bölümde, AB’nin içe değil, dışa dönük bir strateji izlemesinin gerekliliği de ortaya konmuş ve bu stratejinin Türkiye’nin Avrupa vizyonunu kolayca benimsemesine yardımcı olacağını düşüncesi ön plana çıkarılmıştır.

Çalışmanın on birinci bölümünü, “*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ve Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti İlişkileri: Eski Tanışıkların Yeniden Karşılaştırılması*” alt başlığı oluşturmaktadır. Türkiye ile Çin arasındaki tarihsel ilişkileri derinlemesine ele alan yazar, her iki ülkenin de köklü bir geçmişe sahip olduğunun altını önemle çizmektedir. Yazar, Türkiye ile Çin ilişkilerinin son 45 yıl içerisinde önemli gelişmelere imza attığını, Çin’in Asya kıtasında Türkiye’nin en önemli ticari ortağı olduğunu ve iki ülke arasındaki ikili ilişkilerin ciddi bir düzeye ulaştığını ifade etmektedir. Her iki ülkenin de farklı siyasi rejime sahip olması, küresel güç rekabetinde Türkiye’nin Batı yanlısı dış politika anlayışına yönelmesi veya Çin egemenliğindeki Türk topluluklarına (Uygur Türkleri) yönelik sorunların varlığı ise iki ülke arasında geliştirilmesi gereken en önemli başlıklar arasında yer almaktadır.

İkinci bölümün on ikinci kısmı “*Türkiye ile Yunanistan İlişkileri*”ni incelemektedir. Yazar, coğrafi olarak komşu olan iki milletin yüzyıllarca iç içe yaşamış olmalarına rağmen, aralarında birçok çatışma ve anlaşmazlıkların bulunduğunu ifade etmektedir.<sup>8</sup> Yazar,

<sup>7</sup> Ivan Stradubtsev (2017), *Rossiya-Turtsiya: 500 let bespokoyного sosedstva*, Moskva: Eksmo, s. 403.

<sup>8</sup> Salahi Sonyel (2011), *Türk-Yunan İlişkileri, 1821-1923*, Ankara: Remzi Kitabevi, s. 24.

Türklerin ve Yunanlıların bağımsızlıklarını kanlı savaşlar sonrasında elde ettiğini, ulus-devlet inşa etme sürecinde birbirlerini düşman olarak tanımladıklarını ve ötekileştirdiklerini, aynı kaynaklar üzerinden mücadele yarışı içerisine girdiklerini ve birbirleri için bazı dönemlerde yaşamsal tehdit haline geldiklerini bu bölümde detaylı bir şekilde anlatmıştır. Türkiye ve Yunanistan'ın sahip olduğu ortak tarih, ikili ilişkilere genelde olumsuz yönde yansımıştır. Ancak 1999 yılından sonra yumuşama sürecine giren ikili ilişkiler, ekonomi, turizm ve kültür alanlarında etkisini göstermiştir. Buna rağmen, Kıbrıs Sorunu, azınlıklar ve kıta sahanlığı problemleri gibi önemli başlıklar hâlâ çözüm bekleyen meseleler arasında yer almakta ve ikili ilişkilerin önünde önemli bir engel teşkil etmektedir. Yazar, her ne kadar Türkiye AB'ye aday ülke ve Yunanistan da üye bir devlet olsa da, AB'nin arabuluculuk mekanizmalarının ikili ilişkilerin tamir edilmesinde yetersiz olduğunu ifade etmektedir. Türk-Yunan ilişkilerinde köklü değişimlere gidilmesi için öncelikle eğitim, kültür ve sosyal ağlarda artan ötekileştirmenin önüne geçilmesi, düşman imajının değiştirilmesi ve ortak kültür ve benzerliklere daha fazla vurgu yapılması gerektiği de bu kısımda açıkça ortaya konmuştur. Yazara göre, karşılıklı iş birliğinin artması sonucunda sağlanacak olan fayda iki taraf için de avantaj sağlayacak, silah, çatışma veya bitmeyen kriz ortamı ise iki taraf için de maliyetli olacaktır. Yazar, iki ülkenin de insani perspektifle olaylara yaklaşmasını, tarihsel haksızlıkları arka plana atarak, sağlık, eğitim ve altyapı alanlarına yatırımlar yapmanın daha doğru olacağını ve barışçıl bir dış politikanın inşasına katkı sağlayacağını vurgulamaktadır. Yazar, Türkiye ve Yunanistan'ın olumlu hislerini ön plana çıkararak ilişkilerin yönünü değiştirmesini ve kazan-kazan dış politikaya doğru eğilimin artmasına vurgu yapmaktadır.

Kitabın bir sonraki alt başlığı ise “*Soğuk Savaş'ın Ardından Türk-Yunan İlişkileri ve Ege Sorunu*”nu detaylıca incelemektedir. Bu başlıkta, yazar, Türk-Yunan ilişkilerinin genel olarak nasıl bir seyir izlediğini incelerken, en önemli temel mesele olan Ege Sorunu'na daha fazla yönelmiştir. Ege Bölgesi'nin her iki ülke için de önemli bir coğrafi bölge olması aslında sorunun çözümünü de geciktirmektedir. Ege Sorunu konusunda tarafların tek taraflı hak iddiaları ve tezleri, çözümü daha da zor hale getirmektedir. Yunanistan, sorunu kıta sahanlığı başlığı altında incelerken, Türkiye ise meşru egemenlik haklarının kısıtladığı yönünde tezlerle iddialarını beslemektedir. Tarihsel süreçte yaşanan çeşitli olayların yansımaları, Ege Sorunu içerisinde daha belirgin hale gelmiştir. Yazar, iki ülke arasındaki güven sorununun hâlâ devam ettiğini ve bunun ikili ilişkilere ve özellikle Ege Sorunu'na olumsuz yönde yansıdığını dile getirmektedir. Toplumsal uzlaşımın sağlanması, var olan üst kimliğin yeniden yenilenmesi, barış ve istikrar odaklı bir anlayışın ortaya çıkması ise ortak krizlerin çözümünde

etkili olabilecektir. Yazara göre, taraflar arası güç dengesi ve Batılı devletlerin bölge üzerinde artan etkisi Ege Sorunu'nun daha büyük bir sorun haline gelmesini engellemektedir.

Kitabın on dördüncü bölümü “*Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikası*”nı incelemektedir. Türkiye'nin Balkanlar'a yönelik dış politikasını ele alan yazar, bu siyasanın geçirdiği dönüşümleri analiz ederken, 1990'lı yıllardan günümüze kadar olan dönemi detaylıca incelemiştir. Türkiye'nin bölge ülkeleriyle olan ilişkileri, Türkiye'nin çevre ülkeler üzerinde artan yumuşak gücü ve bölge ülkelerin politikasındaki yeri ve rolü bu başlık altında incelenmiştir. Türkiye'nin Balkan politikası dönemselsel olarak farklılık gösterse de, Batı merkezli dış politika anlayışı Balkanlar'daki bölge ülkeleri üzerinde de etkisini göstermiştir. Türkiye, Balkanlar bölgesinde üye devletler ile kurduğu politik, ekonomik ve tarihi bağlar nedeniyle bölge ülkeleri üzerinde önemli bir aktör olmayı sürdürmektedir. Yazar, Türkiye'nin Balkan politikasının bölge ülkelerinin AB süreci ile de yakından ilgili olduğunu dile getirmektedir. Türkiye'nin istikrarlı ve yapıcı politikalar yürütmesi ise, bölge ülkeleri üzerindeki cezbedici gücünü arttırmasına katkı sağlayacaktır.

Çalışmanın ikinci bölümünde yer alan on beşinci kısım “*Türkiye'nin Orta Doğu Dış Politikası*”nı incelemektedir. Bu alt başlıkta, 1923 ile 2010 yılları arasında Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu'ya yönelik dış politikası incelenmiştir. Öncelikle iki savaş arasında en önemli meselelerden Musul Sorunu ve Hatay Sorunu ön plana çıkarılmıştır. Türkiye'nin DP iktidarı döneminde Ortadoğu'ya yönelik aktif bir dış politika süreci yürüttüğünü ifade eden yazar, Bağdat Paktı içerisinde bölge ülkelerinden sadece Irak'ın yer aldığını ve bölge ülkelerinin ittifak dışında kalmayı tercih ettiğinin altını önemle çizmektedir. Türkiye, her ne kadar 1960'lı yıllardan itibaren tarafsız bir dış politika izlese de, ilerleyen dönemlerde Irak ve Suriye ile çeşitli sorunlar (su, terör, mülteci) yaşanmaya başlamıştır. 1980'lerde yumuşamanın sona ermesiyle tarafsızlık politikası izleyen Türkiye, özellikle İran-Irak Savaşı'nda her iki ülkeyle de ilişkileri aynı seviyede tutmayı başarmıştır. 2000'li yıllarda ise, Türkiye, Suriye ve İran da dahil olmak üzere tüm komşularıyla iyi geçinme yönünde önemli adımlar atmıştır. Türkiye'nin bu yıllarda izlediği ideolojik temelli dış politika ise geleneksel denge politikasını gerekli kılmıştır. Türkiye'nin uzun yıllar boyunca aktif bir Ortadoğu siyaseti izlediğini söyleyen yazar, özellikle 2000'li yıllardan sonra Türkiye'nin Batı ile olan ilişkilerini kendi lehine çevirdiğini ve bunun sonucunda aktif bir Ortadoğu siyaseti izleme şansı elde ettiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Çalışmanın bu bölümünde yer alan bir diğer başlık ise “*Türkiye-Suriye İlişkileri: Birbirine Uzak İki Komşunun Öyküsü*” başlığı altında Türkiye-Suriye ilişkilerini ele almaktadır.

Türkiye-Suriye ilişkilerini tarihsel süreç içerisinde çeşitli faktör, olay ve olgular bazında ele alan yazar, ikili ilişkilerin dostluk ve hasımlık arasında gidip geldiğini dile getirmiştir. Suriye'nin uzun yıllar boyunca sergilediği düşmanca tavırlara karşın Türkiye bunlara sessiz kalmış, 2000'lerde yaşanan normalleşmenin ardından, 2011 yılında yaşanan Suriye krizi ile birlikte ikili ilişkiler daha da kötüye doğru gitmiştir. Her iki ülke arasındaki ilişkiler, günümüzde Suriye krizi veya Suriye dış politikası ile şekillenmektedir. Yazar, Beşar Esad'ın Suriye'yi yönettiği sürece her iki ülke arasındaki ilişkilerin sıkıntılı olarak devam edeceğini önemle vurgulamaktadır.

Çalışmanın on yedinci bölümü, “20.yy’ın Başından Günümüze Türkiye-Mısır İlişkileri” konusudur. Bu bölümde, Türkiye ve Mısır’ın sahip olduğu tarihsel ve kültürel derinliğin yanı sıra, köklü devlet gelenekleri de ön plana çıkarılmaktadır. Ortadoğu siyasetinin en önemli aktörü olan Türkiye ve Mısır arasındaki ilişkiler dönemsel olarak değişkenlik göstermiştir. Soğuk Savaş döneminde Türkiye'nin bölgesel oluşumlar içerisinde bulunması (Bağdat Paketi), Mısır tarafından kendisine karşı Türkiye'nin üstünlük sağlama ve bölgesel liderlik girişimi olarak algılanmıştır. Mısır Devlet Başkanı Cemal Abdünnâsır'ın ölümüyle ikili ilişkilerin yumuşama dönemine girmesi sonucunda Mısır'ın Batı'ya yönelik algısında da olumlu yönde bazı değişimler yaşanmıştır.<sup>9</sup> Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesiyle iki ülke de ilişkilerinde yeni bir sayfa açmıştır. Özellikle 2000'li yıllarda, AK Parti, Ortadoğu ülkeleri ile ilişkilerini geliştirmiş; karşılıklı ekonomik, siyasi ve kültürel iş birliklerini artırmaya yönelik önemli girişimlerde bulunmuştur. 2011 yılında Arap Baharı sürecinde Hüsnü Mübarek yönetiminin devrilmesi ise, Ankara-Kahire ilişkilerinde yeni bir dönemin yapıtaşlarını oluşturmuştur. Müslüman Kardeşler'in desteklediği Muhammed Mursi'nin Mısır'da iktidarı ele geçirmesiyle iki ülke arasındaki en yakın ilişkiler inşa edilmiştir. General Abdül Fettah el Sisi'nin askeri darbesi ise ikili ilişkilerin gerilemesine yol açmış ve Kahire'deki Türk Büyükelçisi istenmeyen adam ilan edilmiştir.

Bu bölümün on sekizinci kısmı “Türkiye-İsrail İlişkileri”ni ele almaktadır. Türkiye, İsrail'i ilk tanıyan Müslüman nüfuslu ülke olması nedeniyle büyük bir öneme sahiptir. 1949 yılında başlayan ikili ilişkiler, 1990 yılına kadar askeri, siyasi ve ekonomik boyutlarda ilerlemiştir. 1990'lı yıllarda yaşanan bölgedeki gelişmelerin her iki ülkenin ortak çıkar ve tehditlerine hizmet etmesi sonucunda ise, iki ülke arasında “stratejik iş birliği” mümkün hale gelmiştir. İsrail'in arkasına ABD desteğini alması bölgedeki konumunu güçlendirmesine hizmet

<sup>9</sup> Sertif Demir & Poyraz Gürson & Ayça Eminoğlu (2017), *Türk Dış Politikası: Aktörler, Krizler, Tercihler, Çözümler*, s. 485.

etmektedir. ABD hükümetinin İsrail'e yönelik uyguladığı çifte standartlar, aynı zamanda İsrail'in bölge üzerindeki saldırgan tavırlar benimsemesine de yol açmaktadır. Yazar, tarihsel süreçte iki ülke arasında krizlerin altında İsrail'in revizyonist girişimlerinin bulunduğunu belirtmektedir. Yazar, her iki ülke arasındaki dönemsel sorunlar veya meydan okumalar devam etse de, hiçbir zaman ilişkilerin kopma noktasına gelmediğini de ifade etmektedir. İki ülke arasında her ne kadar “*Mavi Marmara Sorunu*” ve “*One Minute*” olayı gibi önemli krizler yaşansa da, ticari ve ekonomik ilişkiler istikrarlı bir şekilde devam etmiştir. Ortadoğu'daki barış ve istikrarın sağlanmasında Türkiye ve İsrail'in oynadığı rol da bu bölümde ön plana çıkarılmaktadır.

On dokuzuncu alt başlıkta “*Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Dış Politikası*” incelenmektedir. Yazar, öncelikle Türkiye'nin üç önemli kriz merkezinde (Ortadoğu, Kafkaslar ve Balkanlar) yer aldığını dile getirmektedir.<sup>10</sup> Kafkasya'nın enerji bakımından zengin bir bölge olması, önemli bir güç merkezi haline geldiğini göstermektedir. Kafkasya'nın bulunduğu bölge Türkiye için de hayati bir öneme sahiptir. Zira burası, Doğu Anadolu bölgesinin güvenliğinin sağlanmasında veya Rus yayılcılığının önüne geçilmesinde tampon bölge işlevi görmektedir. Türkiye, Kafkasya'da varlığını yumuşak güç mekanizmalarını kullanarak devam ettirmektedir. Türkiye'nin özellikle Azerbaycan ve Gürcistan ile kurduğu sıkı ilişkiler üst düzey ziyaretler ile pekiştirilmekte, eğitim, turizm ve ekonomi gibi diğer alanlarda da etkileşimler devam etmektedir. Buna rağmen, 1915 sözde soykırım meselesi ve Karabağ Sorunu, Ermenistan ile Türkiye arasında çözülmeyi bekleyen sorunlar arasında yer almaktadır. Rusya'nın Kırım'ı ilhakı ve Ukrayna'nın doğu bölgesindeki gruplara yönelik sağladığı askeri destek ise Moskova'nın Kafkasya'da hegemonik güç olma yönündeki iddiasını ortaya koymaktadır. Rusya'nın Ermenistan topraklarında sahip olduğu askeri üsler, Türkiye için de önemli bir tehdit unsuru olmaktadır. Yazar son olarak, Çin öncülüğünde ortaya çıkan ve tarihi İpek Yolu'nu canlandırma projesi olan Kuşak Yol İnisiyatifi'nin Ortadoğu, Kafkasya ve Balkanlar'ın geleceği ile şekilleneceğini dile getirmektedir.

Bu bölümün diğer bir alt başlığında “*Türkiye'nin Orta Asya'ya Yönelik Dış Politikası*” konusu incelenmektedir. Türkiye için Orta Asya bölgesi de önemli ve yakın coğrafyalar arasında yer almaktadır. Orta Asya, her ne kadar az nüfusu olsa da, bölgenin sahip olduğu zengin doğal kaynakları buranın önemini artırmaktadır. Bu bölgede bulunan 5 Cumhuriyetin Türk kökenli olması da bu bölgeyi Türkiye için özel yapmaktadır. Türkiye ile Orta Asya arasındaki ilişkiler SSCB'nin dağılmasıyla başlamıştır. Türk toplumu ile Orta Asya toplumu arasındaki ortak

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<sup>10</sup> A.g.e., s. 594.

kültürel bağların ön plana çıkarılması ilişkileri daha da ileri bir seviye taşımıştır. Rusya egemenliğinden sıyrılıp kendi kimliklerini inşa etme çabası içerisinde giren bu devletlerin Türkiye ile kurduğu her türlü bağ, bu ülkelerin gelişimine pozitif yönde katkılar sağlamıştır. Türk Dış Politikası'nda ortaya konan stratejik derinlik konsepti ile amaçlanan, Orta Asya bölgesinde dengeli ve pragmatik bir dış politika anlayışını sürdürmektedir. Orta Asya ülkeleri, Rusya, Çin ve İran'ın yer aldığı Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü (ŞİÖ) içerisinde Türkiye'nin de diyalog ortağı olarak bulunması, Türkiye'nin Orta Asya bölge ülkeleri ile iş birliğini genişletme çabası içerisinde olduğunu göstermektedir.

Bu bölümün son alt başlığında “*Geniş Grup Kimlikleri Bağlamında Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri*” ele alınmaktadır. Yazar, bu bölümde, Türkler ile Ermeniler arasındaki sorunları geniş grup kimlikleri çerçevesinde ele almaktadır. Bu kimliklerin ana taşıyıcıları olan bireyler, toplumsallaşma sürecinde yaşanan travmalar karşısında öteki veya düşman ifadelerine sıkça yer vermektedir. Kuşaktan kuşağa aktarılan anı, öykü, hikâye veya anıtlar, öteki kavramı çatısı altında lanse edilmektedir. Etnik, dinsel, mezhepsel veya diğer psikolojik etmenler ise sorunların çözümünde önemli rol oynamaktadır. Türkiye ile Ermenistan arasındaki ilişkileri psikolojik boyutta inceleyen yazar, geçmişten günümüze taşınan bellek sayesinde normal ilişkilerin tesis edilemediğini dile getirmektedir. Yazar, iyi hatıralar çerçevesinde ilişkilerin yeniden tesis edilmesi sonucunda gerçek çıkarlar çerçevesinde ikili ilişkilerinde inşa edilebileceğini ifade etmektedir.

Çalışmanın üçüncü bölümünde, Türk Dış Politikası örgütsel/konular bazda analiz edilmiştir. Bu bölümde, toplam 4 alt başlık bulunmaktadır. Bölümün ilk başlığı “*Kıbrıs Sorunu ve Türk Dış Politikasındaki Yeri*” alt başlığı ile ön plana çıkmaktadır. Bu bölüm, Kıbrıs Sorunu'nu detaylı bir şekilde ele almaktadır. Kıbrıs Sorunu'nun uzun yıllardır önemli ilerlemeler sağlansa da hâlâ devam etmesi, Türkiye ile Yunanistan arasındaki ilişkileri olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir. Yunanistan'ın AB üyesi olması sonucunda kazandığı karşılaştırmalı üstünlük ve avantajlar Türkiye'nin aleyhine sonuçlar doğurmuştur. Bu bağlamda, Türkiye'nin Kıbrıs adası üzerindeki hak iddialarının diğer devletlere tanıtma noktasında aktif bir dış politika yürütmesinin gerekliliği görüşü de ağırlık kazanmaya başlamıştır. Kıbrıs Sorunu'nun da diğer sorunlar gibi iki ülke arasındaki tarihsel süreçlerden kaynaklanması, ikili ilişkilerde yaşanan derin güvensizliğinin bir yansımasıdır.

Çalışmanın diğer alt başlığı ise “*Türkiye ile NATO İlişkileri*”ni ele almaktadır. Türk Dış Politikası'nın şekillenmesinde bölgesel örgütler ile kurulan ilişkiler önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Soğuk Savaş döneminde Türkiye'nin NATO çatısı altına beraber hareket

etmesi sonucunda insani müdahale girişimlerinde artış görülmüş, Batı norm temelli anlayış dış politikada hâkim olmuş ve normatif değerler temelli dış politika ön plana çıkmıştır. Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde, devletler kadar uluslararası örgütlerin de önemli hale geldiğini ifade eden yazar, NATO'nun da değişen şartlar kapsamında dış politikasında önemli değişimler yaşandığını ifade etmiştir. Türkiye ile NATO arasındaki ilişkilerin 60 yıldan fazla olduğunu, bu süreçte köklü iniş ve çıkışların yaşandığını dile getiren yazar, NATO'nun yapılaşmasında ve Türk Dış Politikası'nda dönemsel olarak ciddi farklılıkların yaşandığı çeşitli örnekler üzerinden incelemiştir. Özellikle AK Parti döneminde öne çıkan çok boyutlu dış politika yürütme hedefi, Türkiye'nin AB ve NATO gibi ittifaklar ile daha mesafeli ilişkiler kurmasına yol açmıştır. Türkiye'nin çok yönlü dış politika yürütme yönünde attığı önemli adımlar arasında ŞİÖ üye devletleri ile kurduğu yakın temaslar, Rusya'dan S-400 alması ve ABD ile yaşadığı önemli krizler yer almaktadır. Türkiye, askeri güvenlik şemsiyesi altında NATO ile birlikte ve uyumlu hareket etse de, özellikle FETÖ ve PKK ile mücadelede Batılı müttefiklerinden beklediği desteği görememiştir. Ancak askeri güvenlik tehditleri karşısında Türkiye ve NATO'nun ortak hareket etme bilincini kazanmasının iki tarafın da yararına olacağı bu kısımda açıkça ifade edilmektedir.

Çalışmanın yirmi dördüncü alt başlığında “*Türkiye'nin Enerji Politikası*” konusu yer almaktadır. Türkiye, enerji kaynaklarına yönelik ihtiyacın artması sonucunda alternatif enerji rotalarına yönelmeye başlamıştır. Çok kutuplu yapısal düzende küresel güçlerin özellikle Çin, Rusya ve ABD'nin enerji alanında artan güç yarışı, petrol ve doğalgaz kaynaklarının üretim süreçlerindeki önemini artırmıştır. Gelişmekte olan ülkelerin artan enerji talepleri yeni enerji rotalarının keşfedilmesini sağlamaktadır. Petrolün Ortadoğu bölgesinde bulunması, doğalgazın Kafkasya'dan ihraç edilmesi ve yenilebilir enerji üretiminin Avrupa ülkeleri tarafından yaygınlaştırılması, Türkiye'nin temel enerji kaynaklarına coğrafi olarak yakınlığını göstermektedir. Bu kısımda, enerji arzının sağlanmasının yanında, sera gazının azaltılması, yeşil enerji üretiminin desteklenmesi ve iklim krizine yönelik alternatif kaynakların desteklenmesi gerekliliğinin altı önemle çizilmiştir. Türkiye'nin nükleer enerjiyi uygun şartlar altında kullanması, alternatif enerji rotaları inşa etmesi veya enerji politikalarını çevre ve teknoloji ile uyumlu hale getirmesinin gerekliliği de bu bölümde önemle belirtilmiştir.

Çalışmanın son alt başlığı ise “*Boğazlar: Türk Dış Politikasında Jeopolitik bir İstikrar ve Güvenlik Unsuru*” olgusunu incelemektedir. Bu bölüm, özellikle coğrafyanın dış politika üzerindeki etkisine değinmektedir. Dış politika alanında her ne kadar uluslararası gelişmeler veya teknolojik gelişmeler karşısında önemli değişiklikler yaşansa da, Boğazların Türkiye'de

dış politikada sahip olduğu jeopolitik ve jeostratejik önem, bir sabit parametre olarak hâlâ etkisini sürdürmektedir. Yazarlar, özellikle 1936 yılında imzalanan Montrö Boğazlar Sözleşmesi'nin Türkiye'nin elde ettiği kazanımların dış politikada hâlâ etkisini sürdürmeyi başaran önemli bir siyasi başarı olduğu ifade etmektedir. Fakat Türkiye'nin Kanal İstanbul projesi ile öngörülemeyen kararlar almaya başladığını vurgulayan yazar, Türkiye'nin Karadeniz ve Boğazlar'da sonu görünmeyen bir maceraya atıldığını dile getirmektedir.<sup>11</sup> Dış politikada her ne kadar müttefikler, aktörler veya ilkeler dönemsel olarak değişse de, ülkelerin coğrafi konumları sabit kalmaya devam etmektedir. Yazar, bu bağlamda Boğazlar'ın Türkiye için menfaat değil, varlık, egemenlik ve güvenlik meselesi olduğunu dile getirmektedir.<sup>12</sup>

Sonuç olarak, bu eser, Türkiye'nin küresel sistem içerisinde artan önemini, küresel güvenlik içerisindeki yerini ve küresel ekonomik varlığını değerlendirirken, Türkiye'nin güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini ile ilgili ayrıntılı bilgilere de yer vermektedir. Türk Dış Politikası'nda önemli rol oynayan iç dinamikler, uluslararası yönetim üzerinde de önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin süreç içerisindeki gelişimini ve bunun bölgesel ve küresel temelde etkisini çeşitli yönleriyle bütünlük içerisinde ele almış, dış politika alanındaki dönüşümleri de açıkça ortaya konmuştur. Türk Dış Politikası analizinde iç politikanın artan önemi tüm bölümlerde dayanaklarıyla birlikte ortaya konmuştur. Türkiye'nin iç ve dış politika alanındaki etkileşiminin dönemsel olarak farklılaştığı bu çalışmada önemle vurgulanmaktadır. Türkiye'nin dış politikanın temel araçlarından diplomasiyi etkili kullanan bir devlet olduğu görüşü de bu çalışmada ön plana çıkmaktadır. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin kuruluşundan 2002 yılına kadar olan dönemde dış politika iç politika mücadelesinden arınmış görünse de, son yıllarda iç ve dış politika arasındaki etkileşimin hızla arttığı da bu çalışmada ortaya konmuştur. Yazarlar, iç ve dış politika arasında yaşanan etkileşimin hızla arttığına önemle vurgu yaparken, ideolojik değerlerin, siyasi yaşamın ve kişisel yargıların dış politika üzerindeki etkisine önemle değinmektedir.

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<sup>11</sup> A.g.e., s. 777.

<sup>12</sup> Cemil Bilsel (1948), "Sovyet-Rusya-Türk Notaları Aydınlightında Türk Boğazları", *İstanbul Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Cilt 144, Sayı: 1-2, s. 8.



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