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İçindekiler / Contents

Editörden / From the Editor

Prof. Dr. Cem Harun Meydan'ın Sunuşu.....1-2

Makaleler / Research Articles

A Rational Theoretic Analysis of the Iran-Iraq War3-24

İran-İrak Savaşı'nın Rasyonel Teorik Bir Analizi

Egehan Hayrettin Altınbay

Opportunities and Challenges of Gulf-South Asia
Relations.....25-44

Körfez-Güney Asya İlişkilerinin Fırsatları ve Zorlukları

Oğuzhan Akgün

Kamu Diplomasisi ve Yumuşak Güç Bağlamında İnanç Diplomasisi: İran ve Suudi
Arabistan Örneği.....45-78

Public Diplomacy and Faith Diplomacy in the Context of Soft Power: The Case of
Iran and Saudi Arabia

Osman Türk

The US Foreign Aid to Middle East and North Africa in Bush and Obama Era
.....79-116

ABD'nin Bush ve Obama Dönemleri Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika Dış Yardımları

Yunus Yıldırım

Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The Cases of Türkiye and
Malaysia.....117-132

Karşılaştırmalı Perspektifte Din ve Politika: Türkiye ve Malezya Örnekleri

Hakan Köni

Sovereignty Disputes and Resource Discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean: A
Conflict Analysis Perspective133-155

Doğu Akdeniz'de Egemenlik Anlaşmazlıkları ve Doğal Kaynakların Keşfi: Çatışma
Çözümü Perspektifinden Bir İnceleme

Esra Dilek

Editörden

Değerli Okuyucularımız,

Middle East Perspectives dergisi, kısa zamanda önemli ilerleme kaydeden üniversitemizin sosyal bilimlerin tüm alanlarından çalışmaları kabul eden akademik dergisidir. Dergimizin yayın hayatında ikinci sayısını çıkarıyor olmanın mutluluğunu yaşıyoruz. Dergimiz, ilk sayısının yayımlanmasından kısa bir süre sonra ulusal ve uluslararası dizinlerde taranmaya başlamıştır. Bu başarımızı tüm sayılarımızda gösterebilme hedefiyle çalışmaktayız.

Bu sayımızda altı makale bulunuyor.

Egehan Hayrettin ALTINBAY, “A Rational Theoretic Analysis of the Iran-Iraq War” başlıklı makalesinde İran-İrak Savaşı örneğini Charles Glaser’in Rasyonel Teori (RTIP) çerçevesinde analiz etmekte ve bu yaklaşımın çatışmanın başlangıcına ilişkin nasıl bir açıklama sağladığını incelemektedir.

Oğuzhan AKGÜN, “Opportunities and Challenges of Gulf-South Asia Relations” başlıklı makalesinde, Körfez-Güney Asya bölgelerinin siyasal ve ekonomik ilişkilerinin gelişim dinamiklerini açıklayarak sürecin bugününü aydınlatmaya çalışmaktadır. Ayrıca, iki bölge arasındaki bu ilişkilerin şu anda sahip olduğu zorlukları analiz ederek de yakın gelecekteki potansiyel gidişatı ele almaktadır.

Osman TÜRK, “Kamu Diplomasisi ve Yumuşak Güç Bağlamında İnanç Diplomasisi: İran ve Suudi Arabistan Örneği” başlıklı makalesinde, inanç diplomasisinin kamu diplomasisi içindeki etkinliğini Suudi Arabistan ve İran örnekleri üzerinden ele alarak incelemiştir. Din kavramını mezhepsel politika unsuru olarak ele alan her iki ülkenin, kendilerine biçtikleri hamilik rolü ile benimsemiş oldukları inanç sistemini toprakları dışına ihraç ederek nüfuzunu artırma yoluna gittiğini savunmuştur.

Yunus YILDIRIM, “The US Foreign Aid to Middle East and North Africa in Bush and Obama Era” başlıklı makalesinde, dış yardım kavramı, türleri ve niteliklerinin genel çerçevesini çizmiş ve dünya ölçeğinde yapılan kalkınma

yardımlarının genel bir görünümü sunmuştur. Buna müteakip, ABD'nin dış yardım politikasını izah etmiş ve ABD'nin 2001–2015 yıllarında (Bush ve Obama Dönemleri) Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika dış yardım durumu, sektörleri, miktarları OECD ve USAID verileri çerçevesinde bir analiz gerçekleştirmiş.

Hakan KÖNİ, “Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The Cases of Türkiye and Malaysia” başlıklı makalesinde, Türkiye’de uzun bir süre dinin siyasal, hukuki ve idari alanlarda yayılmasına karşı olmasıyla meşhur Fransız modeline yakın bir laiklik anlayışı hüküm sürdüğünü; Malezya’da ise anayasa ülkenin kuruluşundan bu yana İslam’ı devlet dini olarak tanımladığı ve İslam’ı siyasal hayatın her sahasında önemli bir referans olarak kabul ettiğini öne sürerek, Türkiye ve Malezya örnekleri üzerinden dinin demokrasilerde siyasal hayattaki yerini incelemektedir.

Esra DİLEK, “Sovereignty Disputes and Resource Discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean: A Conflict Analysis Perspective” başlıklı makalesinde, Doğu Akdeniz’de son zamanlarda yaşanan gelişmelerin, Türkiye, Yunanistan, Kıbrıs Rum Cumhuriyeti, Kuzey Kıbrıs Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, Mısır, İsrail ve Libya da dâhil olmak üzere bölge ülkeleri arasında egemenlik ve deniz sınırları ile ilgili çatışma olasılığını gündeme getirdiğinden bahsetmektedir.

Bilimsel çalışmaların tüm ilgililere kolaylıkla ulaşabilmesinin öneminin bilinciyle dergimizin uzun soluklu bir yayın hayatı olması gayreti içindeyiz. Dergimize üniversitemiz İnternet sayfası üzerinden ulaşabilirsiniz.

Değerli yazarlarımıza ve değerlendirme sürecinde yer alan hakemlerimize gayret ve emekleri için teşekkür ediyorum.

Yayımlanan çalışmaların ilgili tüm taraflara faydalı olmasını diliyorum.

Prof. Dr. Cem Harun MEYDAN

A Rational Theoretic Analysis of the Iran-Iraq War

Egehan Hayrettin Altınbay*

Abstract: This article analyzes the case of Iran – Iraq War under Charles Glaser’s Rational Theory of International Politics (RTIP) framework and seeks out how does this approach provides an explanation concerning the initiation of the conflict. Firstly, the research portrays a literature review of the existing theoretical understandings the Iran – Iraq War and shows that these conceptualizations have rather narrow lenses. Secondly, the paper describes Glaser’s RTIP theorizing, its assumptions and variables, and shows that this theoretical standpoint is an attempt to fuse Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist interpretations into a workable framework. Thirdly, the study then analyzes the Iran – Iraq War through the perspective of Rational Theory, portraying that state motives based on greed and security seeking, capability determinants based on offense-defense balance and security dilemma, and mutual hostile perceptions due to each state not knowing the others’ motives were crucial triggers for the war.

Keywords: Iran, Iraq, Middle East, Rational Theory of International Politics, Iran – Iraq War

İran-İrak Savaşı’nın Rasyonel Teorik Bir Analizi

Öz: Bu makale İran-İrak Savaşı örneğini Charles Glaser’in Rasyonel Teori (RTIP) çerçevesinde analiz etmekte ve bu yaklaşımın çatışmanın başlangıcına ilişkin nasıl bir açıklama sağladığını incelemektedir. İlk olarak bu araştırma, İran-İrak Savaşı’na ilişkin mevcut teorik anlayışların bir literatür taramasını ortaya koymakta ve bu kavramsallaştırmaların oldukça dar merceklerle sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. İkinci olarak bu makale, Glaser’in RTIP kuramlaştırmasını, varsayımlarını ve değişkenlerini açıklamakta ve bu teorik bakış açısının Realist, Liberal ve Konstrüktivist yorumları uygulanabilir bir çerçevede birleştirme girişimi olduğunu göstermektedir. Üçüncü olarak bu çalışma, İran-İrak Savaşı’nı Rasyonel Teori perspektifinden analiz ederek savaşın tetikleyicilerini bu iki devletin açgözlülük ve güvenlik arayışlarına bağlı motivasyonlarında, hücum-savunma dengesi ve güvenlik ikilemine dayalı güç değişkenlerinde ve karşılıklı düşmanlık algılarının ışığında birbirlerinin motivasyonlarını kestirememeleri durumlarına bağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İran, Irak, Orta Doğu, Rasyonel Teori, İran – Irak Savaşı

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Introduction

This paper tests Charles Glaser's conceptual approach, framed as the 'Rational Theory of International Politics' or RTIP (Glaser, 2010), on the case of Iran-Iraq War, and observes how such a theoretical attitude interprets the drivers of this conflict. The first part of the paper gives an IR Theory based critical literature review on the works that examines the causes of the Iran-Iraq War and argues that even though there exist diverse and comprehensive explanations, the theories have missing points which can be supplemented under RTIP. The second part describes the foundations of the Rational Theory, while the final section provides an interpretation of the Iran-Iraq War through that theoretical perspective. The research reaches the conclusion that states' individual aggressive motives, factors concerning power, and the mutual perceptions of both states towards the other as being greedy and labeling each other as antagonistic, had an impact on the war's initiation.

Literature Review

The existing International Relations Theoretic literary works on the Iran-Iraq War is impressive and diverse, and this situation can be attributed to the developments that reside at the theoretical domain (Marr, 2012, pp.360-361). The war's temporal sphere, that is the 1980s, corresponds to the emergence of new IR approaches, such as Constructivism, Leadership Trait Analysis, Ideology-Religion Studies, Historiographical Analysis, and Military Approaches, as well as new methodologies, such as the development of data sets and computational and statistical programs (Sprinz & Wolinsky-Nahmias, 2004 ; Singleton & Straits, 2010). Accordingly, it is observed that apart from the dominant theoretical paradigms of Realism and Liberalism, these novel approaches also constitute the main body of works that have scrutinized the conflicts of the 1980s. Therefore in the light of this overview, this section aims to provide a coherent literature review on

the works that have examined the initiation and causes of the Iran – Iraq War, before arguing that these works have certain limitations or missing elements in their elaborations of this conflict that can either be supplemented by and fused into Glaser’s approach called the Rational Theory.

Historical Analysis

It is primarily observed that the largest body of works that touch upon the causes of the war are the ones that examine the conflict historically, that is, the literature that tries to form a causal mechanism based on inter- or intra- state historical developments that go back to many centuries. These historical perspectives focus on the deeper historical background of the so-so Iran-Iraq relations that stem from the political, economic, and social interactions, and display that a long-lasting rivalry, territorial matters, religious issues, and complex ideological relations having a regional effect were the factors that stimulated the war (Ismael, 1982, p.22). For instance, to display the entangled situation of the Iran-Iraq territorial border line dispute, the works within this approach date back to the Ottoman-Safavid Wars, and show that the conflict prone Mesopotamian boundary between the Ottoman and Persian Empires had left a confusing heritage for the successor states; thus, stipulating that the roots of the Iran-Iraq conflict is the outcome of ripple effect of the centuries old territorial instability (Sigler, 1986, pp. 424-436 ; Hiro, 1985, pp. 30-39). To reveal the roots of the Iran-Iraq hostility and their territorial disputes, the historical studies show that cases such as the vagueness of the 1911 Border Agreement between the Ottomans that and Iran, the inability of forming a waterway commission, Iraq’s withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact in 1959, Iran’s renunciation of the 1937 Frontier Agreement in 1960s, Iran’s deployment of armed outposts on the disputed territories and seizure of several Gulf islands in the 1970s, Iraq’s involuntary signing of the Algiers Agreement following a Kurdish uprising in 1975, and the cross border skirmishes subsequent to the 1979 Iranian

Revolution disrupted the uneasy relations between the two states and paved the way to war. These historical approaches also stipulate that the long-term ethnic and sectarian cleavages, implementation of societal fragility as a leverage in state interference, and using religion in subversive activities have always stood in the delicate historical agenda and eventually triggered the war (Hiro, 1985, pp. 175-185).

Military Analysis

The other mainstream literature that examines the Iran-Iraq War is the Military Approaches. These studies scrutinize the initiation of the war by using large data sets and empirical-statistical models to test their conflict-centered hypotheses' degree of validity and plausibility. For these theoretical attitudes, purely strategic qualifications, mainly military and economic data, as well as shifts in capability balances, security issues, and military parameters are the focus (Segal, 1988; Sabin, 1987; Talmadge, 2013). It is observed that this literature either directly examines the Iran-Iraq War or inspects it as an empirical case study. For instance, Donovan uses Power Transition Theory before arguing that the war occurred from "the Iranian desire for Pan-Shi'ism and the Iraqi fears for domestic security and stability set a context from which a conflictual and escalatory conflict cycle emerged" (Donovan, 2011, p.108), while Geller & Singer (1998), using the Correlates of War Project data set and an empirical-statistical model, argues that war was likely, since the two states had a common border, both were nondemocratic regimes, both were economically underdeveloped, both had a long-lasting rivalry, the capability balance had shifted towards Iraq, and that both states were revisionist (pp.150-155).

Constructivism

Another body of International Relations Theoretical perspective on the causes of the Iran-Iraq War is the Constructivist approach. Bringing up issues such as identity, religion, norms, beliefs, intersubjectivity, and

culture, Constructivists have a pure ideational approach towards the war and they look at how the identity attribution of states have triggered the war (Wright, 1987, p.110). For instance, Marr (2012) describes that the “clash of identities” and “cultural differences” reside at the core of the conflict and “to cultural [and identity] differences, must be added religious differences” (pp.291-292). Additionally, Marr (2012, p.291) also examines how “language, literary traditions, and religious schism”, have created a hostile mutual relationship, which is then argued to have influenced Saddam Hussein’s perceptions (or misperceptions) on initiating the conflict (Lai, 2006 ; Wright, 1987). Still under the Constructivist framework, Adib-Moghaddam (2007), focusing on the creation of perceptions and “enemy images”, argues that through “contextualizing the empirical facts about the war with a narrative that appreciates the impact of norms, images, institutions, and other invented cultural artefacts”, the Baathist leadership’s decision to attack Iran rests “within the inter-subjective context of Iraqi-Arab nationalism, its anti-Iranian precepts, and the regime’s internalized self-perception as the indispensable pan-Arab force in the region” (p.64). The Constructivists therefore point out that “socially engineered cultural inventions came into play when Saddam Hussein decided to invade Iran” (Adib-Moghaddam, 2007,p. 64).

Liberalism

Apart from these previous approaches, it is observed that the Liberal International Relations arguments tend to focus on domestic dynamics, domestic politics, regime survival, and leadership preferences to explain the causes of international crises (Moravcsik, 1997). To formulate the Iran – Iraq War under this approach, Tripp & Chubin (1988, pp.4-5), for instance, state that the liberal argumentation of war is obtained through “the close examination of the political units in question, the definition of their interests, and how those interests are seen to intersect with the interests of others”. To complement, Wright (1985), in conjunction with other Liberal studies (Renfrew,

1987) argue that to delineate the escalation to war, the analysis should be on Saddam Hussein's acts to consolidate his regime and reinforce his political survival, which the war with Iran was the last phase (others being the July 1979 purge, deportation of Iraqi Shiites to Iran, and assisting the July Plot in Iran) of his deliberate actions. According to the Liberal IR perspective, Saddam's domestic motive with regards to an "internally stable Iran" would correspond to a stable Baath regime where there is minimal Kurdish insurgency, less clandestine activity of the Shiites, and lower possibility of great power intervention; thereby a more stable governance (Renfrew, 1987, p.102). In parallel, Makiya (1998, p.151) displays the importance of domestic politics and ideology, and points out that the Baathist regime's "mood had nothing to do with rancor over possessions, competition for economic assets, territory, or alleged Iranian intentions", arguing that "the Baathist motives were singularly political, derivative from ultimately deeply held ideological tenets". As in line with the abovementioned argumentations, Takeyh (2010, p. 356) also notes that the war's background lies within ideology and domestic politics, thence, asserting that "this was not an interstate conflict fought for territorial adjustment or limited political objectives", but rather, "a contest of ideologies" and that for both sides, "to wage war was a way of demonstrating one's commitment" to their respective "divine" aspirations.

Realism

The last main body of work within the International Relations literature that examines the Iran-Iraq War is the Realist Approach, which takes into consideration material factors, gain-cost analysis, relative distribution of capabilities, issues such as security, threat, and survival, as well as the regional balance of power. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the available Realist approaches on the Iran-Iraq War are twofold, that is, they are either Offensive Realist or Neoclassical Realist. Offensive Realists give great emphasis on the

ever-present competitive environment created by the anarchic international system, the gain-cost analysis of states or state leaders, and assume that states are always power or security maximizers with hegemonic aspirations as their main goal and material capabilities as main drivers (Mearsheimer, 2001). To depict its reflection on the Iran – Iraq War, Cohen (1986, p.146), points out that “[among Iran and Iraq] we see a pattern of suspicion and preparation for war, fears and resentments, competition for allies, and jockeying for advantages”, while Gause III (2002, p.50) describes that “with Iran bogged down in its own internal problems, it seemed a perfect time for the ambitious new president of Iraq to reassert Iraqi border claims, teach the new Iranian regime a lesson, and establish Iraq as the dominant regional power in the Gulf”, as “Saddam saw few risks in and enormous gains to be made by going to war”. Further, for the Offensive Realists, it was mainly Iraq’s security maximization that have prompted Saddam to attack his neighbor, as Iran’s decrease in its military potential after Khomeini’s purges -which increased Iraq’s utility in attacking Iran- and the opportunity of a “chance for Iraq to reclaim the Shatt, Khuzestan, several strategic Gulf Islands, and to overthrow the Islamic regime” where crucial triggers (Cohen, 1986, p.146 ; Gause III, 2002, 50).

Neoclassical Realists on the other hand have a more diverse approach, that is, they try to incorporate material variables with a leadership analysis and come with arguments defending that in conjunction with military capability, the decision makers’ perspective also matters in shaping foreign policy (Rose, 1998). The Neoclassical Analysis and the decision maker standpoints concerning the Iran-Iraq War is mainly built around the figure of Saddam Hussein, and arguments such as “the quest for power and prestige, an expansionist intention, a power vacuum generated by internal political convulsion, and a concern for the regional balance of power” are given as main reasons for his attack perceptions over Iran (Levy & Froelich, 1985, p.130). To be concise, it is

observed that the Neoclassical argument on the Iran-Iraq War revolves around the following framework: Saddam Hussein wanted Iraq to be the main power in the Gulf and in the Arab world; however Iran, with its solid material capability and policies towards Syria and the Gulf countries, barred the Iraqi area of maneuver, thereby decreasing the Iraqi likelihood of achieving Saddam's regional intentions. Yet, the military purges, provincial unrest, breaking up of the United States arms supply line due to the hostage crisis, and its regional isolation following the 1979 Revolution weakened the relative military capabilities of Iran with regards to Iraq, and altered Saddam Hussein's previously pessimist perspectives of challenging its neighbor for regional dominance, and prompted him to take the opportunity for regional revisionism and engage in war (Karsh, 1988; Gause III, 2002; Tripp, 2008; Satterfield & Seligman, 1994; Karsh & Rautsi, 1991; Razi, 1988)

General Remarks for the Literature Review

What are the argumentative deductions that we can infer from this review? Firstly, it is possible to say that the evident main theoretical works on the Iran-Iraq War consists of five categories; these are the Historical and the Military Approaches, Constructivism, Liberalism, and Realism. Secondly, it is revealed that although the theories that examine the Iran-Iraq War have distinct and different agendas, it is possible to contemplate and assume that they can borrow from each other to enhance their explicability and build upon each other's works to provide systematicity as well as knowledge accumulation within the discipline. This subjective observation is deemed to be significant, since Glaser's RTIP attempts to accomplish just that, by fusing Realist & Military perspectives on one hand and Neoclassical Realist and Liberal standpoints, along with Constructivist lenses, to provide a coherent analysis which takes into consideration state (or leadership) motives, military-systemic factors, and information variables regarding reciprocal perception (Glaser, 2010).

It is monitored that all five approaches concerning the Iran-Iraq War have drawbacks, or in other words, are open to criticism. For instance, it is obvious that the Historical Approaches have certain shortcomings, as they are mainly descriptive, have minimal subjective argumentation, and disregard making inferences, thereby leaving deductions to the reader. However, the Historical Approaches are still vital, if they are used amid, or in concurrence with, a theoretical perspective to describe the background of a particular strategic interaction. Secondly, the Military Approaches, although suitable for examining wars, is observed to have a complex methodological framework that is based on empirical-statistical models with a regression or computer assisted analysis that renders following the research design impossible without an appendix of explicit parameters of the data set; thus limiting the comprehensive expectation of qualitative researchers. Glaser's Rational Theory of International Politics, on the other hand, although possessing a military approach, displays a much more concise research design with limited amount of abstractness, and with a clearer delineation of military and capability variables to explain wars.

Constructivism, similarly, also has complications; since it focuses on the ideational exchanges and intersubjective processes without considering the potency of the existing material factors, namely the actual present military parameters, which, in itself influences the creation of the ideational structure. Secondly, these works give minimal attribution to Iraqi or Iranian intersubjective understanding regarding the other's military stance postures. It should be noted that material variables are still crucial in determining the foreign policies of Middle Eastern countries, since security, survival, self-help, and relative gains are still on their state agendas; thence disregarding them may weaken the depth of the analysis for wars of the Middle East. Glaser's Rational Theory of International Politics approach, on the contrast, does attempt to fuse material and ideational variables, hence

enabling a more “complete” picture of the mutual understanding and perceptions between states (Glaser, 2010, pp.166-171).

The Liberal approach is also open to criticism. Liberal argumentations, for instance the ones of Makiya (1998, p.151) and Takeyh (2010, p.365), that argue on linking the causes of war to “regime survivability” and “political ideology” rather than “a competition over possessions or regional ambitions”, seems too naive for a Middle East war that has a long background of regional antagonism over border and territorial security issues. It is possible to argue that regime security is also linked with territorial security, since stable and uncontested borders mean a more secure internal regime. Thus, the Liberal perspective seems incomplete by disregarding the pressures coming from the states’ outside environments. Glaser’s Rational Theory of International Politics framework attempts to include and refine Liberal assumptions within its theoretical framework by incorporating domestic actor preferences with the capability and strategic perception variables of Neoclassical Realism (though accomplishing it in a narrower way, labeling it simply as “motives”), as central determinants in examining state foreign policy (Glaser, 2010, pp. 161-166).

The Realist works, similarly also have certain missing elements, which can be refined through additional scrutiny. The major flaw within Offensive Realism is that the theory takes competition due to anarchy as ever present and security maximization as given, that is, it does not consider variation in state motives that can deviate from becoming a regional hegemon. Glaser’s perspective attempts to develop these assumptions by building upon an argumentation that, rather than pure power and security maximizing, states may have different motivations concerning their foreign policies (Glaser, 2010, pp.152-156). Neoclassical Realism is observed to produce the most coherent, systematic, and plausible explanations for the Iran-Iraq War. This standpoint, within its framework, includes all levels of analysis, though, this theory’s elaboration of systemic constraints is still faint,

since it pays negligible attention to “structural modifiers” such as the offense-defense balance and the degree of security dilemma (Taliaferro, 2000) which are crucial in rivalry environments, hence, it is open for the addition of these variables with a new conceptualization.

Consequently, this literature review evaluated the available works that have examined the Iran-Iraq War, showed that their limitations can be supplemented by Glaser’s Rational Theory of International Politics framework, which combines the main variables of these approaches into its own structure, and provides a base for a powerful research design that examines international relations in a more holistic way. The following section presents Glaser’s Rational Theoretic perspective and puts forward how this particular theoretical standpoint provides an explanation for the sparking of the Iran – Iraq War.

The Rational Theory of International Politics (RTIP)

Basic Assumptions of RTIP

Glaser’s RTIP, developed in 2010, is a relatively new approach within the International Relations discipline (Glaser, 2010; Lake & Powell, 1999; Glaser, 2004; Glaser & Kaufmann, 1998; Glaser, 1997; Glaser, 1997; Glaser, 1994; Glaser, 1992). To place it in the map of International Relations theorizing, his perspective can be juxtaposed between Neoclassical Realism and Defensive Realism; hence, it is an attempt to combine both theories’ main variables together with the addition of Constructivist and Liberal lenses. Nevertheless, the theory conforms to the basic assumptions of the Realist and Rational Choice Paradigms, and accordingly, stipulates that the international system is anarchic in nature and states are rational actors (Glaser, 2010, pp. 28-32). The theory basically argues that rather than examining a single type of variable through a particular level of analysis, it opts for the elaboration of different layers of variables, noting that “both a state’s goals and the international situation it faces may influence the state’s choice between cooperative and competitive strategies” (Glaser, 2010,

p. 23). Therefore, Glaser's theoretical organization mainly tries to understand how the variation in state's motives, its power balance relative to its neighbors, and the degree of information concerning the state and its international environment determines its foreign policy (Glaser, 2010, pp.3-6).

Variables and Hypotheses

The theory identifies three independent variables. These are state motives, power, and information parameters. The theory's main domestic variable elaborates on the scrutinization of state motives. According to Glaser (2010, p. 3), "motives embody what a state values, capturing its fundamental interests and goals" and point out that "the types of states are distinguished by their motives". Relatedly, the theory argues that states may have three kinds of motives: security seeking, greed, and mixed (Glaser, 2010, p. 40). States that are only driven for the purpose of achieving a sense of security are called "pure security seekers", if they are driven by motives of expansionism for the sake of domination than maintain security, then they are labeled as "purely greedy", and if they are driven by both security seeking and expansionist greed, then they are called "greedy security seekers" (Glaser, 2010, p. 33). In Rational Theoretic terms, a pure security seeker state engages in wars if via military conflict, it can increase its security by "decreasing its adversaries' security, eliminating its adversary, providing a buffer zone, or to acquire more defensible borders"; pure greedy states participates in wars if they desire to "increase their wealth, territory, prestige, or to spread their political ideology or religion"; and that greedy security seekers involve in armed hostilities if there is a combination of the two motives (Glaser, 2010, pp. 36-37).

Power variables are a refined version of the military variables of the other Realist-Military Approaches. The Rational Theory has two determinants that define this variable, these are the "state's ability to perform military missions", which depends on how "a state's military

power (relative size and quality) compares to the military that an adversary can build or has”, and the offense-defense balance, which refers to the conditions of geography, military capability, and military doctrine determining whether attacking or defending is advantageous in a war (Glaser, 2010, pp. 40-46). Accordingly, if there is a high discrepancy between states’ military performances in implementing military missions and in their relative capabilities, and if the states’ international environment provides an offense dominance then, under these conditions, the likelihood of war is expected to be high.

Thirdly, the information variable is concerned with the degree of uncertainty between states and examines whether their reciprocal perception and motive attribution for each other are accurate or not (Glaser, 2010, p. 47-50). This variable is important, since the Rational Theory assumes that international politics is an imperfect information game which limits accurate decision taking of states. The information variable is similar to reading international politics via Constructivism, but rather than focusing on shared ideations or intersubjective beliefs, this theory argues that actually, beliefs, in international politics, are only subjective, thus noting that there is only signaling to understand the type or posture of the other state (Glaser, 2010, pp. 47-50). According to Rational Theory, war is more likely to occur when states’ perceptions towards each other hold the opposite of their actual types or if they have difficulty reading the other’s motives. In addition, if states perceive each other as purely greedy then their reactions or measures concerning their own protection would be instant, thereby triggering a pre-emptive war to ensure their securities if the offense-defense conditions present such a window of opportunity.

Rational Theory and the Iran-Iraq War

The Research Design

The empirical examination of RTIP’s explanatory potential in this paper is an example of a theory testing case study, with the causes of

Iran-Iraq War as the main center of its scrutiny. Taking note that a Middle Eastern case has not been elaborated before by a Rational Theoretical approach, but US-Soviet Relations during the last years of the Cold War, Post-Cold War Europe, China-Japan Relations, and Nazi Germany in 1930s, this paper also attempts to provide a contribution to the Rational Theoretic studies and on the existing International Relations Theories which have already examined the Iran-Iraq War (Glaser, 2010, pp. 207- 227). The empirical application of RTIP is designed to be built upon secondary sources, and it embraces a temporal dimension of 1979-1980 that is the just after the Iranian Revolution. This investigation, to analyze the reasons of the Iran - Iraq War, moves on through three steps: firstly, it examines the motives of Iranian and Iraqi states, secondly, it analyzes the material variables, and thirdly it looks at states' information variables.

State Motives

Through a Rational Theoretic examination of Iran and Iraq's motivations prior to the war, under Glaser's terminology, given the statements of its leading-elite, Iran possessed purely greedy motives, while Iraq was a greedy security seeking state with mixed motives. Iran is considered as having such motives since it was apparent that it sought expansion not for security reasons but for the cause of spreading the revolution, Islamic statehood, Shiism, and anti-secular rhetoric, and it was observed that its foreign policy reflected just that, as it meddled in the affairs of Gulf states and Iraq, and even Lebanon by stationing revolutionary guards there which clearly had nothing to do with pure security motivations. On this point Levy & Froelich (1985, pp. 134-135) mention that "reinforcing the Arab fears was the expansionist mission of the revolutionary Islamic regime", and their goal of exporting the revolution through concrete programs of agitation, radio broadcasts, assassinations, and calling for the annexation of Bahrain". Iran's such ambitious and aggressive motives targeted Iraq for several reasons, these were linked with Iraq's

majority of the population being in the same sectarian lines with Iran, “Tehran’s hopes of Iraqi Shiites would emulate the Iranian example, the secular nature of the Baath which opposed the notion of Islamic political order, the geostrategic location of the Shiite holy cities”, as well as “Iraq’s position as the major obstacle to the Iranian quest for regional hegemony, and the Iranian perception that the combination of these factors would create a powerful weapon in the hands of their Islamic state” (Karsh, 1987, p. 29).

Iraqi motives on the other hand were both security oriented and greedy, that is, Iraq wanted to take territory for security reasons rather than for pure voraciousness, but it also possessed pursuing ambitions for other non-security intentions via the grabbing of limited strategic territory. On this issue, “the reassertion of Iraqi sovereignty in the Shatt al-Arab was a matter of national honor and a sacred mission for the nation and its leaders; at the same time Iraq also made claims on the province of Khuzestan” (Chubin & Tripp, 1988, p. 225), and that “the objective of Saddam Hussein to gain for Iraq a position of predominant power in the Persian Gulf” display the greedy nature of Iraqi mixed motives (Levy & Froelich, 1985, p. 131). Iraq’s security seeking aspiration under its greedy motives were captured by the limit of its initial military operations which solely aimed at securing “the Khorramshahr-Ahvaz-Susangerd-Messian line” rather than a broad territorial operation along its 700km border with Iran (Karsh, 1987, p. 92) , or its desire to liberate Khuzestan, which created a “buffer zone” between Iran and Iraq (Renfrew, 1987, p. 103). This interpretation displays that both countries had strong intentions to go to war with each other by possessing greedy motives that delineated a dangerous atmosphere around the Gulf.

Power Variables

Considering power variables, that is, the combined material and offense-defense balance parameters, it is evident that Iran with its size,

population, and geography, and with its defense minded military doctrine, seemed advantageous for a long attrition war. It has a large territory thus a deep strategic depth, in which its main cities are beyond direct Iraqi air and land attacks, and its border with Iraq is largely mountainous (except near the Gulf) with the terrain favoring defense within Iran. However, considering material capabilities it should be noted that Iran's geographical advantages were negated by its poor quality and quantity of its armed forces which declined after Khomeini's purges, and its oil exporting and agriculture dominant economy with little capacity to produce and develop modern conventional arms, had lowered its capacity for a total war. Just before the conflict in 1980, "Iran possessed 150,000 active personnel with 1735 tanks, 1700 armored vehicles, and 1000 artillery pieces"; its air force, due to poor maintenance, was unfit for a military confrontation and consisted of ~200 aircrafts (Herzog, 1989, pp.255-269). Iran's revolutionary guard and Basij militias were audacious, but were poorly trained in open combat tactics, therefore, these units had an inclination for ambush, roadblock, and urban warfare, which favored defense (Talmadge, 2013, p. 193). Since Iran was diplomatically isolated right after the revolution, it also had few regional allies other than Syria, and had to rely on Far East states such as North Korea and China for arms purchases. Iran though, at least had one material superiority over Iraq in military quality terms, and that was the condition of its navy, with still maintaining a strong operational capacity.

Iraq on the other hand, although having a disadvantage concerning geography and demographics, possessed a high quality and quantity material capability, which allowed for the embracing of mobile-offensive warfare with advanced weapons systems purchased from the Soviet Union. Iraq's armed forces were larger and more capable with "2750 tanks, 1400 artillery pieces, 4000 armored vehicles, and 340 aircraft"; however, since its economy was not industry based but built

upon oil export and agriculture, it had problems replacing its losses, thus relying on foreign arms purchases through the loans lent from the Gulf countries (Talmadge, 2013, p. 193). Doctrinally, Iraq's ability to perform military missions were higher than that of Iran since it possessed a "Central Revolutionary Command Council" with Saddam Hussein directly involved in controlling the war, whereas Iran, right before the war, did not possess a central command which would determine its coherent military strategy, thus "suffered from the confusion and power struggle between the Revolutionary Guards the Armed Forces" (Herzog, 1989, pp. 255-260).

Regarding the perception of power variables, both states were aware of these facts and parameters, thus it was apparent that Iraq's attack, if intended, would be very limited along the mountainous frontier but would mainly be delivered along the southern Gulf area, where geography favored offense and included strategically valuable territory. Whereas Iran, also aware of its capabilities, refrained from offensive actions and followed its defense minded doctrine around the areas of defense dominance, such as in cities and around rugged terrain. Thus, it is apparent that there was a large discrepancy between Iranian and Iraqi potential military performance capabilities, which is considered by Rational Theorists as a critical factor that triggers war between states, and even though the offense-defense balance favored defense in the overall war, geographical permittance allowed an offensive advantage in the southern front near the Gulf which might have prompted an Iraqi greedy security seeking attempt to conquer territory to obtain a strategic buffer, strategic depth, more access to the gulf, push Iran out of the Shatt al Arab region.

Information Variables

How did both states perceive each other, and did they have an inkling regarding each other's motives which impacted the war? Did both states perceive each other similar like their actual motives or due to the

mere presence of an uncertainty that war occurred? To be apparent, there did not exist a hazy fog of war, since, right after the revolution and just before the war, there already existed a low intensity-subversive conflict in which, cross-border shelling, assassinations, agitations, and influencing religious and minority groups were examples of an ongoing asymmetric war, thus both states perceived the other as antagonistic with having non-security destabilizing motives and had already produced a dangerous environment that an inter-state war seemed imminent.

Concerning the perception of each other's actual state motives, things were slightly different. Iraq, it seems, had accurately read Iranian motives as Levy & Froelich (1985, p. 135) quote Iraqi Foreign Minister's speech in October 1980 United Nations Security Council, where he clearly states that Iraq was aware of Iran's greedy motives, since "Khomeini has unmasked the true intentions of his Islamic revolution by deciding to export it to Iraq and decided to overthrow our government through subversion, sabotage and terrorism", and argue that Ayatollah Rouhani's speech in September 1979, "calling for the annexation of Bahrain and exporting the revolution to the Persian Gulf", had already revealed Iran's greedy motives to Iraq, thus Iraq was sure that its eastern neighbor was volatile and dangerous. Considering Iran, it should be noted that the Islamic Republic was only partially aware of Iraq's mixed (security & greed) motives, and had read Iraqi ambitions as being purely greedy. Iranian side of information variables were evident in their response to the 1982 Iraqi ceasefire attempt, in which Saddam sought to start negotiations concerning the status of the Shatt al Arab region, but the speaker of the Iranian Assembly, Rafsanjani declined, fearing that even after a truce, Iraq would "not hand over"(Razi, 1988, p. 711), instead, might "expand or stay on conquered territories", or even "strengthen them for a later invasion" towards Iran, thus labeling Iraq as a ravenous state with greedy ambitions (Farroukh, 2011, pp. 365-369). This

interpretation stipulates that both states new that they were residing in a dangerous environment where their reciprocal perceptions towards one another reflected that the other was definitely antagonistic and greedy, thereby signifying a severe security dilemma situation that enhanced mutual fear and hostility and showed that war was imminent.

Implications and Conclusions

This paper analyzes the background factors behind the initiation of the Iran-Iraq War through a new perspective. After observing that the existing interpretations of the war had limitations in explanatory potential, it attempts to refine and fix their argumentations by trying to re-use their variables within a framework called Rational Theory which to some extent incorporates Liberal, Realist, Military, and Constructivist approaches through state motives, power determinants, and information variables to understand state foreign policy decision choices. Implementing a theory testing case study, the results imply that the causes of the war, according to this particular theoretic lens, lay with both states having individually greedy motives, with Iraq also seeking security by aiming to use its military advantage and attack via the Basra area for a possible buffer for the Shatt where the offense-defense balance favored offense, and at the mutual hostile insight of both states concerning the other as purely greedy with having antagonistic aspirations.

Still, it can be argued that individual state motives had the highest impact on Iran and Iraq's decisions in engaging in the conflict, where their greedy aspirations and desire to expand were significant. The impact of other variables, power, and information, seems to be more moderate, since the overall offense-defense balance favored defense, thus signaling states that offensive operations would be too costly, and there already existed a dangerous environment that influenced both states to perceive each other as expansionist and antagonistic. As a

whole, the Rational Theoretic analysis of the Iran-Iraq War has revealed that the theory performs well in incorporating Neoclassical-Liberal and Realist-Military variables in reaching arguments concerning foreign policy decisions, and provides a contribution to the available International Relations Theoretical works on the Iran-Iraq War by displaying what kind of argumentative deductions would rise if the mainstream approaches' variables were fused into a single theoretical framework.

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Opportunities and Challenges of Gulf-South Asia Relations

Oğuzhan Akgün*

Abstract: The Gulf Arab region has been always known historically for its cooperation with Western countries. Relations with Great Britain and America, which deepened through their security and economic relations, showed signs of evolving from one-sidedness to diversity after 2000. This process of diversification has gained momentum with the fact that the Gulf countries are at the intersection of the political strategies and economic interests of countries such as China and India, which are on the rise economically and politically in Asia. To better understand what opportunities and challenges this new engagement has, it is necessary to analyze the process from political economy perspective. For this very purpose, this article analyzes Gulf-South Asia relations with a historical approach with a focus on economic and political factors. At this point, it tries to illuminate the present of the process by explaining the development dynamics of the political and economic relations of the two regions. It also analyzes the current difficulties of these relations between the two regions and considers their potential course in the near future.

Keywords: Gulf Arab Countries, South Asia, Political Economy, One Road and One Belt Initiative, Economic Cooperation

Körfez-Güney Asya İlişkilerinin Fırsatları ve Zorlukları

Öz Körfez Arap bölgesi tarihsel olarak hep batılı ülkelerle işbirliğiyle tanınmıştır. Büyük Britanya ve Amerika ile güvenlik ve ekonomik ilişkileri üzerinden derinleşen ilişkiler 2000 sonrası tek yönlülükten çeşitliliğe evrilmeye başlamışlardır. Bu süreç, Körfez ülkelerinin Asya'da ekonomik ve siyasal olarak yükselişe geçen emareleri göstermiştir. Bu süreç, Körfez ülkelerinin Asya'da ekonomik ve siyasal olarak yükselişe geçen emareleri göstermiştir. Bu süreç, Körfez ülkelerinin Asya'da ekonomik ve siyasal olarak yükselişe geçen emareleri göstermiştir. Bu süreç, Körfez ülkelerinin Asya'da ekonomik ve siyasal olarak yükselişe geçen emareleri göstermiştir. Bu süreç, Körfez ülkelerinin Asya'da ekonomik ve siyasal olarak yükselişe geçen emareleri göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Körfez Arap Ülkeleri, Güney Asya, Politik Ekonomi, Kuşak Yol İnisiyatifi, Ekonomik İşbirliği

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Introduction

The Gulf- South Asia relations have always had a dynamic characteristic, having a powerful historical background owing to the material interest collisions between the two regions (Calabrese, 2022). This material interest merging has even realized itself during the Covid-19 pandemic in spite of its world-wide disruptive impacts since the relations between the Gulf states and the major Asian countries especially such as China, India and Japan have remained, to a large extent, intact amid the wide cuts in the global supply chains (IISS, 2021).

Following the rise of India and China as the powerhouses of the South Asia especially since the early 2000, the economic ties between the Gulf Arab states and South Asian countries have been in an increasing tendency (Jeong, 2020). However, despite the fact that economic ties would be thought as the main defining feature of such a relationship between these two regions, their primary focus of attention has been the geopolitical considerations of the countries of the regions (Sharifi, 2020). In terms of geopolitical aspects of this relation, geopolitical considerations of the both regions' states have been highly decisive in the configuration of the developing mechanisms of ties among the regions, highly impacted by the complex geopolitical context that both regions have.

Based on a closer look at the geoeconomic and geopolitical connectivities and flows between the two regions, the current dynamics of the relationship could be clearly captured. Thus, this article focuses on the geoeconomic and geopolitical connections, flows and engagements between the two regions especially since the 2010s. The combination of geopolitical and geoeconomic analyses have the credit of demonstrating the changing faces of the relationship more explicitly and concretely. In terms of methodological approach toward what defines the Gulf and South Asian "regions", this article regards a region firstly as not an enclosed and monotonous unity. Rather, it prefers

an understanding of a region through focusing on connections, flows and processes. In this regard, this article regards both the Gulf region and the South Asia through mainly their connectivities in geopolitical and geoeconomic aspects both mediated through the relations between the nation-states and societies.

This article primarily argues that the geopolitical and geoeconomic engagement between the two regions have been the case for two decades. Although the direction of the relations has been toward more engagement in terms of geopolitical and geoeconomic aspects, the faces of such aspects have been increasingly materialized through diversifying interests, including security perspectives, trade and investments agreements, labor market engagement. Although this will analyze the different faces of such deepening relations, it is sufficient enough to argue that the development in the global political economy has been effective in defining such a close partnership between the two regions whereas the strategies and policy choices of the individual states have been decisive for more connections to flourish and to take root.

Historical Context of the Engagement

The interregional relations do not have a long period of time in the modern era. The most important turning point for the interregional relations to thrive is the dramatically increasing demand for energy resources by the South Asian countries especially following the rise of China and India as the global economic powerhouses in the 1990s and 2000s (Strategic Comments, 2016). Thus, the first powerful face of a material relationship of interest between the two regions has been created through the maintenance of the energy supply and procurement (John, 2018). Furthermore, material determinations of the apparent relationship between the two regions could be detected through an analysis of the connectivities and flows between two regions such as the labor mobility and export destinations. These two flows have been intensified with the high volume of commodities

imported mostly by the Gulf countries such as luxury items as well as the investments of South Asian entrepreneurs in the free trade zones in the Gulf region (Habibi, 2011). Most recently, the accelerating race for the attraction of the foreign direct investment among the Gulf states has increased and had the potential to more increase the degree of connections of two regions through investment interests (Keshavarzian, 2010). Historically, although commodity and investments flows have been mostly one-dimensional from the South Asia towards the Gulf region, the recent interest of the Gulf countries for having economic partnerships and investments in the South Asian territory have suggested the likelihood of the bilateral dimension of the flows from the both sides.

In addition to the economic connections and flux, two regions have strongly engaged in geopolitical and strategic activities as well. This could be seen in different scales such as state-to-state relations and global public opinion. In this regard, the attempt of some Gulf countries in order to play a powerbroker role for the geopolitical tensions between the states in the South Asia has been a powerful sign of the priority given to the relations between the two regions among the eye of the decision makers of the regions (Sharifi, 2020). In addition to that, the attempts of regions' countries for supporting each other in international settings have been a clear demonstration of the increasing common sense of geopolitical interests among the countries of the regions despite the fact that this has been realized through mostly state-to-state level.

It is the case that the increased connectivity and flows have intensified the interdependence between two regions. Although the increased connectivities in terms of economic and political aspects have benefited to the both sides on the one hand, the intensified interdependence of two regions has also the likelihood of causing negative outcomes for the parties (Samaan, 2014). Thus, the intensifying relations between two regions do not negate the challenges that the policy implementations in one region negatively

affects the other one. In this regard, the Vision strategies of the Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman, have caused a tightening of the employment opportunities for the expatriates from the South Asia. The most important outcome of such a change in the policy implementation in the Gulf states is the drying up the remittance flows (Samonova, 2019). Remittance flows have been an important political economic reality of the South Asian societies and states since they have been an important factor to increase the social welfare in the South Asian societies (India Migration Now, 2019). Alongside the loss in social welfare caused by the decreasing opportunities of remittance flows from the Gulf countries, such a dramatic shift in the long-established mechanisms of the labor market might have several other negative consequences for states and societies in the South Asia (Calabrese, 2022).

Geopolitical Aspect of the Relationship

The post-9/11 period has opened a new strategic relationship between the Gulf and South Asian states (Buzan, 2011). The response of the Gulf states for the increased tension between the USA and the Gulf states has been the strategic decision to diversify their foreign policy engagements towards more inclination with Russia and Asian states (ECFR, 2019). This diversification attempt has been mostly symbolized with the visit of the Saudi King Abdullah to China in January, 2006. This was seen as a part of the “Look East” policy strategy of the new King for the purpose of achieving more diversification of its geopolitical and geoeconomic engagements since the security paradigm of the Gulf countries has been dependent upon the Western alliance for decades (Burton, 2020). High dependence of the Gulf Arab states on the US security umbrella has been felt as causing new uncertainties for the regime survival and regime security of the dynasties of the Gulf region.

Currently, geopolitical competition on the Indo-Pacific mainly between the China and the USA has several repercussions in the Gulf-

Asia relations. However, it is important to emphasize here that the Gulf states mainly prefer not to make a choice between the two powerholders such as the USA or China (Jeong, 2022). Their primary concern in this regard is the future obligation on them to make such a choice. Rather, they prefer not to get involved in the sphere of influence of just one side, as materialized in the balance policy of these states. Furthermore, the primary policy of the Gulf Arab states regarding the issues and tensions within the South Asian region has been to decouple the geopolitical and geoeconomic relations with one specific country. In this regard, since the Gulf countries want achieving close relations with both sides in the fight, they do not want to take position on who is the rightful in the specific issue of conflict. However, it is not always easy not to get involved and not to take positions between two sides since competing individual states would want at least a diplomatic support, if not a material backing.

Historically, one important geopolitical issue creating closer ties between the two regions has been the provision of energy security for both sides. The increasing demand for energy resources by the South Asian countries has also intensified the depth and extent of relations between the two regions (Lee, 2005). As examples for the several repercussions of energy security concerns, these two regions have developed increasing relationships and engagements in defense, counterterrorism, maritime and naval cooperation (IISS, 2021). Strategic Partnership Agreement has been the institutionalization of the security relations between the two countries (Mogielnicki, 2019). For example, Saudi Arabia and UAE have signed agreements with India in order to improve and cooperate the security issues. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia has launched a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with China in order to enhance military relations despite the Chinese limited capacity to supply the armament that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is in need of. However, the increasing ties in terms of cybersecurity cooperation between the two regions have been highly important since the South Asian states especially China have

the qualified cybersecurity technology which the monarchical regimes in the Gulf countries are in need of in order to achieve their regime survival (Burton, 2020).

The Gulf states have been increasingly involved in the tension between the Asian countries such as the Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan. Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates have been effective in order to reach a peace resolution between the two states during the conflict in 2001 and 2002 (Mogielnicki, 2021). This involvement has been a sign of the priority given to the regions' stability by the eyes of the decision makers in the Gulf Arab states (Ulrichsen, 2021). Also, with their endeavor for easing the tensions started January 2019 between India and Pakistan, diplomats from Saudi Arabia and the UAE -under the leadership of Mohammad bin Salman, the Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Mohammad bin Zayed, the Crown Prince of the United Arab Emirates- have been praised by the Pakistani officials as well as the US officials (Mogielnicki, 2019).

Understanding the geopolitical rapprochement between the two regions also requires analyzing the existent cracks and tensions within each regional area. For example, the rapprochement of the UAE and Saudi Arabia with India could not be thought without having a closer eye on the Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan. While approaching toward India, both the UAE and Saudi Arabia also have to create a balance between India and Pakistan so that such a rapprochement does not lead Pakistan to be impulsed by the security threat, and thus; in return, does not cause an irreparable damage to the historic relationship of Pakistan with the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, in order to better understand the geopolitical engagement, it is crucial to have a look at the enthusiasm and priority that countries of the regions allocate to mutual relations. This also shows the distinctiveness of the nation-states of the regions. For example, while the UAE is ahead of the geopolitical engagement with its strategic partnership agreement with China and India, and being

the top trading partner with those countries caused by the dramatic development of its re-exportation activities, Kuwait is seen as lagged behind considerably. Also, Saudi Arabia could be seen as an important partner by the South Asian states since it has been dramatically expanding its fields and scope of engagement with the South Asian countries (IISS, 2021).

Economic Aspect of the Relationship

Although post-2011 period has shown an increase in the security cooperation between the two regions, the last two decades have been a showcase for increasing the economic linkages and interest for the two regions. Economic linkages between the two regions have suggested being premature because of the deficiencies in the exchange mechanisms such as regulations, red tapes and challenging aspects of business environment since GCC states do not have a free trade agreement with India although the region has signed free trade agreements with the European Free Trade Association and Singapore (Al Fazari & Tang, 2019). However, these challenges have not prevented the large developments forward to deeper connectivity and engagement between the two regions' countries in terms of economic aspect.

This engagement has had the potential to get closer because of the connection creating forces of the China's One Belt and One Road Initiative between the two regions. This initiative has been seen as the major testing ground for the future trajectory of the two regions since its potential rivalry and tensions creating impulses and forces owing to the economic competition and power politics have potentials to cause deep historic enmities between the neighboring or competing countries as well as its cooperation generation opportunities (Liefu, 2020). This is what the future history will show since it will be the complex sets of relationships between multiscalar forces and actors over and within the perceived and defined structures of power and existence. However, in this section, this article will focus on capturing

the material determinations of the connectivities and flows between the two region such as energy stakes, labor issues, trade relations, investment opportunities, and economic aid.

Energy Stakes

Crude oil supply of the GCC towards the South Asia has been decisive in the interaction of the two regions. Asian countries, including China, Japan, India, South Korea and Singapore, have been highly dependent upon the Gulf countries since around 60% of its crude oil comes from those countries. This percentage even reaches to around 90 percent for the case of Japan (Niblock & Malik, 2013). In addition to the high importance of the energy supply from the Gulf countries to the South Asia, GCC states have been launching several strategies in order go beyond the export of crude oil to the South Asia and to diversify its export bases towards these countries. They have the vision of diversifying the downstream activities and facilities regarding the natural resources in the South Asia (Mogielnicki, 2019). They have attempted to invest in refineries, petrochemical complexes and storage facilities. In this regard, the high stakes of the energy cooperation have also intensified the common geopolitical considerations of the two regions.

Labor Issues

Long-established spatial fix in the GCC economies through the cheap labor force coming from the South East has been crucial for the economy of the both regions. Gulf employers have long been dependent upon the flow of cheap labor force from the South Asian countries since it is comparatively more practical to resort to this cheap labor force instead of inefficient and non-motivated domestic labor force. Also, cheap labor force has been highly important for the Gulf countries to achieve a stable inflation rate owing to the low costs of labor. Low-skilled workers from the South Asian countries have long provided comparative advantage for the Saudi companies owing to the low costs of labor (Shayah & Sun, 2019).

Such a long-established spatial fix has been not only helpful for the Gulf Arab states, but also it has been highly important for the South Asian states and economies. This is because it has given them the opportunity to push the unemployment and social welfare crises to other times and places. While the Gulf Arab states have found solutions for their lack of low-skilled and middle-skilled labor force, the South Asian states have sent their high reserves of human labor to the Gulf Arab states, which in turn partially generates solutions for the lack of social welfare institutions and implementations in these countries (Medium, 2019; Abdul-Aziz, Olanrewaju, Ahmed, 2018). Thus, these two regions have been highly key to each other for a long period of time in terms of regime survival and social welfare. However, labor nationalization attempts in the Gulf states have started changing labor market dynamics between these two regions since the early 2000s despite the fact that for the time being the percentage of the expatriate population working in the Gulf region make up around the half of the Gulf labor force.

For the last decade, the Gulf states have launched several nationalization programs in the labor force such as Omanization and Saudization. In this regard, several policy implementations have been launched in order to restrict the expatriates preferring to the Gulf states for their working destinations (John, 2018). Main objective of these policy strategies and implementations has been making the Gulf states a less attractive working place for the potential oncoming expatriates such as pressures over the expatriates through issuing and increasing the monthly fees of the expatriates and increases in fees for visas, and also restricting the time period for visas (Mogielnicki, 2021).

Trade Relations

Import-export destinations and flows have been important signs demonstrating the power of economic connectivity and engagement between the two regions. Looking at the historical development of such connectivity and engagement have several points to demonstrate

us the increasing tendency of flows in terms of trade relations between the two regions (Habibi, 2011; Strategic Comments, 2016; Burton, 2020). Economic connectivity could be seen by following the flows of international flights between the two regions. For example, almost one-third of international flights taking off from the India arrive to an Emirate airport while almost again one-third of international flights from the UAE reach to an Indian airport.

Especially, the increase in the trade volume between the UAE on the one hand and India and China on the other hand is highly important to understand the current tendencies of the trade relations between the region. The volume of re-export activities of the commodities coming from mainly India and China to the UAE has been an important part of the institutionalization of the relations. Thus, the deepening of the relations has its roots in the increase and deepening of the economic activities between the region. Increasing infrastructural investments for the ports and free trade zones in the both regions has helped facilitating the deepening of the relations. Ports such as Jebel Ali and Mina Zayed not only have connected the GCC region to the South Asia but also have connected the South Asian countries and commodities to the Europe and the Western hemisphere. In this regard, currently Gwadar Port in Pakistan has highly impacted the relations of the countries between the two regions owing to the highly geostrategic location of the port and the investment opportunities that it provides.

Investment Opportunities

Until the early 2000, the investment routes between the two regions have been mainly one-directional, that is, from the South Asian countries towards the Gulf region (Jeong, 2020; Samaan, 2014; Liefu, 2020). However, Gulf countries' new policies of shifting their eyes towards the east as materialized in the King Abdulah's vision to China with the title of "Look Eastward" and defined by some as the Gulf's "eastward shift 2.0" has opened new pages for the relations of the two regions (Al-Adwani, 2020). The early 2010s have shown the new

openings of the Gulf states through their Vision strategies towards more deeper relations and cooperation with the South Asian countries. As a follower of the idea of look eastward, the Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman has visited to the South Asian countries in 2019, ending with several investment pledges in the South Asia. Gulf states have seen opportunities with being an active part of the China's One Belt and One Road initiative. In this regard, the United Arab Emirates and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have launched several investment plans along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor from Chinese border to the Gwadar Port. For example, the UAE firms such as DP World have been highly enthusiastic in order to get contracts for the infrastructural projects pledged by China. Those contracts and projects have also created several connectivities between the two regions, ranging from national level and trans-societal level (Mogielnicki, 2019).

On the other side of the investment equation, South Asian countries have been keen to make investments in the Gulf countries and to take advantage of several opportunities and free trade zones that the Gulf states provide for the foreign investors and entrepreneurs. For example, China-supported Infrastructure projects such as YASREF (Yanbu Aramco Sinopec Refining Company), Jeddah-Mecca-Medina Railway, King Salman International Complex for Maritime Industries and Services in Ras Al Khair have demonstrated the materialization of enthusiasm of the South Asian countries for investments.

Challenges of the Engagement

This article has shown the increasing and deepening relations and connections between the countries of the two regions. The relations between the two regions have been seen as doomed to deepen and get more closer to each other in order to the plans and projects of the states on the both sides and general tendencies of the global economy politics. However, an estimation over the future projections of the

relations and engagement of the two regions has to take the potential challenges these relations have to cope with into consideration.

Political Challenges

The nature of the statesmanship of the states in the both regions has authoritarian tendencies. The Gulf states have been ruled by monarchies from the beginning of their state-building. Thus, the authoritarian tendencies of the regimes create uncertainties for the maintenance of the powerful relations in the future projections. This is mainly because the deepening of the relationship has been highly impacted by the decisive strategies and activities of the authoritarian regimes and monarchies (Samaan, 2014).

The other factor that has the potential to affect this process and engagement is the rivalry between the Gulf countries on the one hand and South Asian countries on the other hand. Maintenance of the economic relations has been highly dependent upon the powerful political certainties since the rational investment decisions have to take the potential risks preventing the profit in the near and long-term into consideration. On the South Asian part, Potential antagonisms such as Pakistan since the tension between Pakistan and India has been shaping the relationship very deeply. Also, the South Asian states have several border disputes which have the potential to negatively affect the trade routes and trade flows such as the dispute over the Jammu and Kashmir region and the Durand Line dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan. On the GCC side, eruptions of the disputes between intra-GCC states such as the Qatar Blockade in 2014 and 2014 by other GCC states and the long-term rivalry between the Gulf states such as the rivalry between Qatar on the one hand and Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the other hand following the Arab Spring movements and also the current competition between the UAE and Saudi Arabia in order to take the lead of the region and to attract more investors.

Furthermore, competition in the Indo-Pacific between China and the USA has had the important potential to negatively affect the relation

between the two regions (Samaan, 2014; ECFR, 2019). This is because the competition has an impact on the trade routes and geopolitical choices of the individual states. Reflections of this competition on the individual states have the potential cut the deepening tendencies of the engagement towards more isolationism. However, for the time being, it is a fact that individual countries have not been seen as impacted by the Sino-US competition to a great extent. Diversification policies of the Gulf states for their security partnership from being only dependent upon the Western states towards including the security umbrella of the Eastern powerholders have been highly risky policy making requiring an extensive endeavor to make a clear balance and not to provoke the Western powerholders to the point that the regime survival of the Gulf monarchies have been shaken off.

Economic Challenges

In addition to the negative impacts of the national, regional and global geopolitical competition and rivalry on the connectivity and engagement of the two regions, there are other economic realities and challenges that the regions have to deal with. Although the both sides have been considered highly keen and enthusiastic about making investment on other states and attracting investors from other countries, both the Gulf rulers and the South Asian rulers have to avoid making their domestic alliances angry at them by favoring the foreign investors in the contracts and projects with the purpose of the maintenance of the deepening economic and political engagement. Thus, the entrepreneurs from the Gulf countries have to compete with the domestic companies in the South since the local opposition to commercial projects have been influential for the trajectory of the investment project allocations. For example, local opposition in India has achieved to have the project of the \$44 billion mega-refinery in Maharashtra with ADNOC (Abu Dhabi National Oil Company from the UAE) and Saudi Aramco as the strategic project partners postponed.

It is the case that the increased connectivity and flows have intensified the interdependence between two regions. Although the increased connectivities in terms of economic and political aspects have benefited to the both sides on the one hand, the intensified interdependence of two regions has also the likelihood of causing negative outcomes for the parties. Thus, the intensifying relations between two regions do not negate the challenges that the policy implementations in one region negatively affects the other one. In this regard, the Vision strategies of the Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman, have caused a tightening of the employment opportunities for the expatriates from the South Asia (Chowdhury, 2018). The most important outcome of such a change in the policy implementation in the Gulf states is the drying up the remittance flows. Remittance flows have been an important political economic reality of the South Asian societies and states since they have been an important factor to increase the social welfare in the South Asian societies. Alongside the loss in social welfare caused by the decreasing opportunities of remittance flows from the Gulf countries, such a dramatic shift in the long-established mechanisms of the labor market might have several other negative culminations for states and societies in the South Asia (Shayah & Sun, 2018; Niblock & Malik, 2013).

Furthermore, although some experts have argued that the two regions have had cooperation opportunities arising from the energy transition issues and green energy investments, such a cooperation has been highly concerning for the oil and natural gas exporters of the Gulf region. This has been mainly because India and China have been the forerunners of the transition to green energy, electric cars and renewable energy resources. This means a loss in demand for the Gulf countries in the middle and long-term. It has been argued that the pressure of the long-term decrease in demand for the hydrocarbon energy resources has been highly influential for the Gulf states in order to launch and implement the long-term Vision strategies,

including an economic diversification program as their primary concerns.

Conclusion

Based on a closer look at the geoeconomic and geopolitical connectivities and flows between The Gulf countries and The South Asian countries, this article has argued that the current dynamics of the relationship could be clearly captured. Thus, this article has focused on the geoeconomic and geopolitical connections, flows and engagements between the two regions especially since the 2010s. Also, this article has both analyzed the Gulf region and the South Asia through mainly their connectivities in geopolitical and geoeconomic aspects mediated through the relations between the nation-states and societies.

The article has primarily argued that the geopolitical and geoeconomic engagement between the two regions have been the case for two decades. Although the direction of the relations has been toward more engagement in terms of geopolitical and geoeconomic aspects, the faces of such aspects have been increasingly materialized through a diversifying interest, including security perspectives, trade and investments agreements, labor market engagement. Although the article has widely analyzed the different faces of such a deepening relation, it is necessary also to argue that the development in the global political economy has been effective in defining such a close partnership between the two regions whereas the strategies and policy choices of the individual states have been decisive for more connections to flourish and to take root.

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Kamu Diplomasisi ve Yumuşak Güç Bağlamında İnanç Diplomasisi: İran ve Suudi Arabistan Örneği

Osman Türk*

Öz: Kamu diplomasisi, bir başka ülkede kamuoyu oluşturma maksadı ile sahip oldukları kültür, dil, din, ekonomi, sinema, spor gibi değerleri politik cazibe unsuru haline getirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. İnanç unsuru ise sahip olduğu değerler bağlamında kamu diplomasisinin bir parçası olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Bu değerler bağlamında din olgusu, din ve dine ait kavramların dış politikada etkin bir konuma sahip olduğu ülkelerde bir güç unsuru olarak kullanılmaktadır. Din temelli bu etkileşim bazen farklı dinler arasında gerçekleşirken bazen de Vahhabi anlayışa sahip Suudi Arabistan ve Şii anlayışa sahip İran örneğinde olduğu gibi aynı din içerisinde mezhep temelli yapılmaktadır. Dolayısı ile inanç kavramı teolojik epistemolojisinden zaman zaman ayrılarak ideoloji ve politik dinamikler çerçevesinde bir güç unsuru olarak kullanılabilir. Bu makalede inanç diplomasisinin kamu diplomasisi içindeki etki/etkinliğini Suudi Arabistan ve İran örnekleri üzerinden ele alınarak incelenmiştir. Din kavramını mezhepsel politika unsuru olarak ele alan her iki ülke kendilerine biçtikleri hamilik rolü ile benimsemiş oldukları inanç sistemini toprakları dışına ihraç ederek nüfuzunu artırma yoluna gitmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İnanç Diplomasisi, İran, Kamu Diplomasisi, Suudi Arabistan, Yumuşak Güç

Public Diplomacy and Faith Diplomacy in the Context of Soft Power: The Case of Iran and Saudi Arabia

Abstract: Public diplomacy aims to make the values such as culture, language, religion, economy, cinema, sports, etc., into a political attraction in order to create public opinion in another country. The phenomenon of religion is also considered as a part of public diplomacy in the context of its values. In this context, the phenomenon of religion is used as a power factor in countries where religion and religious concepts have an effective position in foreign policy. While this religion-based interaction sometimes takes place between different religions, sometimes it is sectarian-based within the same religion, as in the case of Saudi Arabia with a Wahhabi understanding and Iran with a Shiite understanding. Therefore, the concept of religion can be separated from the theological epistemology from time to time and used as an element of power within the framework of ideology and political dynamics. This article examines the effect/effectiveness of faith diplomacy in public diplomacy by considering the examples of Saudi Arabia and Iran. Both countries, which consider the concept of religion as a sectarian policy element, seek to increase their influence by exporting the belief system they have adopted out of their lands, with the patronage role they have set for themselves.

Keywords: Faith Diplomacy, Iran, Public Diplomacy, Saudi Arabia, Soft Power

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Giriş

Din olgusu toplumsal, sosyal, ekonomik işlevine dikkat çekilerek bireyin inanca dayalı zihinsel fonksiyonlarını, yalnızken ya da toplum içindeki tutum ve davranışlarını, bireyin diğer bireyler ve kurumlar ile olan ilişkilerini belirleyen ve belirli bir disiplin çerçevesinde sınırlayan bir sistem olarak değerlendirilmiştir. İnsanlık tarihi kadar eski bir sürece sahip olan din olgusu toplumsal bütünleşmede oynadığı işlevsel rolün yanı sıra "inançlılar" ve "inanmayanlar", "biz" ve "öteki" ayrımı yapılması bağlamında çatışmaya ve toplumsal ayrışmaya yol açan bir özelliği de bulunmaktadır. Dolayısı ile birey ve toplumların hayatlarında etkili bir konuma sahip olan inanç değerleri sadece teolojik bağlamda kalmayıp söz konusu değerleri bir güç unsuru olarak gören ülkeler tarafından politik amaçlar için de kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. Özellikle İslam dünyasında Vahhabi-Şii diyalektiğinin temsilcileri olan Suudi Arabistan ve İran benimsemiş oldukları inanç sistemi üzerinden Müslüman toplumlar nezdinde bir hamilik politikası izleme stratejisini benimsemişlerdir. Bu strateji ile birlikte Müslüman ülke toplumlarının kamuoyuna yönelik faaliyetler gerçekleştirmek ve onların fikir, tutum ve taleplerini kendi politikaları doğrultusunda şekillendirmek sureti ile bir kamu diplomasisi oluşturmaktadırlar. Bu politika her ne kadar hamilik kavramı altında birleştirici görünse de "öteki" oluşturma bağlamında ayrışmanın merkezinde yer almaktadır. Bu çalışmada Suudi Arabistan ve İran örnekleri üzerinden bir inanç sisteminin nasıl kamu diplomasisi argümanı olarak kullanıldığı, hangi araçlar kullanılarak hedef toplum etkilemeye çalışıldığı ve bu doğrultuda yapılan faaliyetlerin neler olduğu aktarılmaya çalışılmıştır.

Çalışma öncelikle dini kavram ve argümanların dış politikada yumuşak güç argümanı olarak kullanıldığı iddiası ile şekillenmiştir. Dolayısı ile çalışmanın birinci bölümünde güç ve gücün unsurları buna bağlı olarak kamu diplomasisi gibi kavramlar inanç diplomasisi bağlamında açıklanmıştır. Çalışmanın analiz bölümünde ise İran ve Suudi Arabistan'ın sahip olduğu inanç değerleri incelenmiş ve bu

değerlerin hangi bağlam ve faaliyetler ile bir kamu diplomasisi argümanına dönüştürüldüğü aktarılmıştır.

Güç Kavramı ile İlgili Teorik Yaklaşımlar

Tarihsel süreç içerisinde devletler sahip oldukları değerleri güç unsuru olarak kullanıp uluslararası alanda etkinliğini arttırma çabası içerisine girerek gücün çeşitli boyutlarını oluşturmuşlardır. Uluslararası disiplinde merkezi bir konuma sahip olan güç kavramı, Sümer medeniyeti ve onun etrafında şekillenen kent devletleri ile ilk defa siyasal birlik içerisinde varlık bulmuştur (Sancak, 2016, s. 2). Sun Tzu "Savaş Sanatı" eserinde güç kavramını zaman, mekân ve içinde bulunduğu duruma göre açıklarken (Tzu, 2008), Thucydides Sparta ve Atina arasında gerçekleşen "Peloponnesos Savaşları" sırasında güç kavramının devletler arası siyasette merkezi bir rol oynadığını, savaşların ise aslında güç mücadelesi sonucu çıktığını söylemiştir. Bu noktada Thucydides ile benzer bir güç tanımlaması yapan ve sosyal bilimlere "Mukaddime" eseri ile önemli katkılar sunan İbn Haldun (ö.1406), geliştirdiği "asabiyet" kavramı ile siyasi gücü kavramsallaştırmıştır. İbn Haldun saf güç kullanımı yetersiz görmüş, din ile gücü bir araya getiremeyen ve olan ile olması gerekeni bütünleştiremeyen devletleri organı kesik şahıslara benzetmiştir (Sancak, 2016, ss. 8-9).

Bu noktada kimi zaman realist olarak anılan İbn Haldun, "asabiyet olmadan dinin tek başına toplumları etkilemede yetersiz kalacağını ve fiili güçle desteklenmeye ihtiyaç duyulduğunu" vurgulayarak (İbn-Haldun, 2020) Machiavelli'nin "bütün silahlı peygamberler zafer kazanırken, silahsızlar ise ortadan kayboldular" (Machiavelli, 2016, s. 22) ifadesi ile paralellik göstermektedir.

Edward Hallett Carr tarafından uluslararası ilişkiler disiplininin merkezine yerleştirilen ve "siyasetin temel unsuru" olarak tanımlanan güç kavramı (Mearshmeier, 2005, s. 140) Morgenthau tarafından "...insanın insan üzerinde denetim kurmasını ve devam ettirmesini sağlayacak olan her şey" olarak ele alınmıştır. Morgenthau güç

unsurlarını; coğrafya, doğal kaynaklar, endüstri, askeri kapasite ve nüfus olarak somut güç kavramı içinde ele alırken soyut unsurları ise ulusal karakter, ulusal moral, diplomasi ve hükümetlerin niteliği olarak tanımlamıştır (Morgenthau, 1970). Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininde farklı tanımlamaları yapılan güç kavramı teorik çerçevede realistler için birincil amaç olarak kabul edilirken, neo-realistlere göre ise güvenlinin sağlanması için bir araç olarak kullanılmaktadır. Realistlerin güç unsurları üzerine yaptıkları tanımlamaları yok saymamakla birlikte liberaller ise askeri unsurların yanı sıra ekonomi, karşılıklı bağımlılık, kültürel ve siyasi motifleri de içinde barındıran, bir bakıma yumuşak gücü ön plana çıkartan bir tanımlamaya gitmişlerdir (Sancak, 2016, s. 27). Kimlik kavramına vurgu yaparak gücü fikirlerin bir unsuru olarak ele alan inşacılar ise esas olanın fikir olduğunu ve uluslararası ilişkilerde güç yaklaşımın fikirler doğrultusunda şekillendiğini vurgulamıştır (Arı, 2013).

Güç üzerine geleneksel güvenlik teorileri tarafından ele alınan bütün bu yaklaşımlar özet ile gücün somut ve soyut unsurları olarak bilinen coğrafya, ekonomi, askeri unsur, nüfus, dil ve kültür gibi değerlerin devletler arası ilişkilerde kullanılmasıdır. Bu değerler kimi zaman sert güç unsuru olarak süreç içerisinde konumlanırken özellikle 21.yy. ile birlikte yumuşak güç unsuru olarak da devletlerin politikalarında kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. Yumuşak güç kamu diplomasisinin temel argümanlarından birisi olarak ifade edilmektedir. Yumuşak güç kullanarak toplumlar arasında etkileşime imkân sağlayan ve kamu diplomasisine fırsat veren ülkeler dış politikada ve yabancı kamuoyunun nazarında sahip oldukları değerleri paylaşarak uluslararası platformda kendilerine önemli bir yer bulmaktadırlar.

Yumuşak güç kavramı kapsamında gücü, hava durumu ile ilişkilendiren Nye "herkes ona bağlıdır ve onun hakkında konuşur; fakat çok azı onu anlar" şeklinde tanımlamıştır (Nye, 2005, s. 11). Gücü kullanılan argümanlara göre sert güç (hard power), yumuşak güç (soft power) ve smart güç (smart power) olarak üç gruba ayıran Nye özellikle yumuşak güç kullanımının kavramsallaştırıp dış politikanın

temel bir unsuru haline getirmiştir. Bu çerçeveden bakıldığında başka bir ülkenin dış politikasında değişiklikler meydana getirme yeteneği olarak değerlendirilen gücün zaman, mekân ve vaka durumuna göre tercih edilen her üç boyutu ülkelerin çıkarları doğrultusunda bir politikayı bir diğer ülkeye zorla ya da isteyerek yaptırma argümanı olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Uluslararası sistem içerisinde ülkeler genel olarak potansiyel asker ve silah unsurlarını hesaba katıp mutlak ve karşılaştırmalı üstünlüklerine göre sert güç (hard power) kullanırken, kimi zaman ise sahip oldukları ve bir ötekini kendi istekleri doğrultusunda etkileyecek ve cezbedecek yumuşak güç (soft power) kullanmayı tercih etmişlerdir (Nye, 2005).

İstenileni elde etme doğrultusunda bir diğerini etkileyebilme yeteneği olarak değerlendirilen güç kavramında Nye'nin "*istenileni, zorlama ve para karşılığında ziyade, sahip olunan cazibe değerleri ile elde etme yeteneği*" (Nye, 2005) tanımlaması ile birlikte yumuşak güç ayrımına gidilmiştir. Gücün zaman, mekân ve olayların içeriğine göre kullanımında ve unsurlarında meydana gelen değişiklikler küreselleşmenin ve aynı minvalde teknolojinin de gelişmesi ile hedef kitlesinin değişiminde de görülmeye başlamıştır. Devlet dışı aktörlerin uluslararası platforma çıkması, çok uluslu şirketlerin varlığı ve iletişim ve ulaşımın gelişmesi ile farklı ülke başkentlerinin aynı başkent içinde bulunan bir kasabadan birbirine daha yakın hale gelmesi (McLuhan, 2001) uygulanması planlanan yumuşak gücün hedef kitlesini devletlerin yanı sıra toplumlara ve devlet dışı aktörlere de yöneltilmesine sebep olmuştur.

Bu noktada yumuşak güç kavramı devletlerin dış politika hamlelerinde askeri güce alternatif bir konuma gelmiştir. Yumuşak güç üzerine yapılan tanımların ana temasının "*cezbetme*" kavramı üzerinden şekillendiği dikkate alındığında, birey ve toplumları zor kullanmadan kendi istekleri doğrultusunda hedeflenen yöne yöneltilen her değer yumuşak güç argümanı olarak ifade edilebilir. Söz konusu bu değerler ülkeden ülkeye değişiklik gösterebilir. Bu noktada hedef toplumun hassasiyetleri, hayatlarını anlamlandırılan

temel dinamikler, kültür ve inanç biçimleri yumuşak güç argümanı seçiminde önemli referans noktasıdır. Örneğin Asya toplumunu cezbedecek değerler ile Batı ya da Afrika toplumu cezbedecek değerler bir birbirinden farklılık gösterebilmektedir. Dolayısı ile ana tema cezbeden değerlerin ne olduğu ve hedef kitlede karşılık bulup bulamadığı ile ilgilidir. Bir başka ifade ile bir toplumu cezbeden değerlerin hangi tema etrafından şekillendiğidir.

Bu noktada Suudi Arabistan ve İran cezbeden değeri benimsemiş oldukları dinin kendilerine özgü yorumlayış formunda bulmuş ve bu formu yumuşak güç unsuru olarak kullanmaya başlamışlardır. Yumuşak güç kavramı din olgusunun özü ile ilgili olabileceği gibi cüzü ile ilgili de olabilir. Burada önemli olan nokta hedef birey ya da toplumun kararlarında lehte bir değişikliğe yol açıp açmamasıdır. Zira İran ve Suudi Arabistan örneklerinde olduğu gibi yumuşak gücün temel değeri din olgusunun bütününde değil benimsemiş oldukları Şii ve Selefi anlayış teması etrafından şekillenmiştir. Ayrıca her ne kadar da Şii ve Selefi anlayış söz konusu ülkelerin dış politikalarında yumuşak güç ya da kamu diplomasisi unsuru olarak kullanılsa da özellikle Ortadoğu coğrafyasında sert güç kullanımının temel meşrulaştırma kaynağını da oluşturduğu dikkate alınmalıdır.

Kamu Diplomasisi

Küreselleşme ile teknolojik gelişmenin eş zamanlı ilerleyişi bilgiye erişimin hızlanmasına internetin yaygın kullanımı ile birlikte bireylerin ve toplumların etkileşimin artmasına ve doğal olarak toplumları sorgulayan, tartışan, öğrenen ve sürece katılımını destekleyen 20. yy 'ın aksine 21. yy 'da kamuoyunu öne çıkartan ve iknayı önemseyen bir konuma getirmiştir. İngilizcede "public diplomacy", Türkçe 'de "kamusal diplomasi", "kamuoyu diplomasisi" olarak kullanılan kavramın kullanımı ilk kez 1965 yılında Tufts Üniversitesi Hukuk ve Diplomasi bölümü dekanı Gullion tarafından kullanılmıştır (Sancar, 2014, s. 79). Kamu diplomasisi kavramını; "kamuoyu davranışlarının dış politika teşkilinde ve

icrasındaki tesiridir'' şeklinde tanımlayan Gullion; milletlerarası etkileşimin farklı boyutları ile ele alarak geleneksel diplomasiye ötesine taşımıştır (Cull, 2008). El-Kaide tarafından dünya ticaret merkezine yönelik yapılan saldırı sonrası kamu diplomasisinin popülaritesi artmış (Leonard, Stead, & Snewing, 2002, s. 2) saldırı öncesine kadar Amerikan diplomasisinin askeri, istihbarata ve teknolojiye yönelik kaynaklara ağırlık vererek yabancı kamuoyunu ikna stratejisinin gözden kaçırıldığı söylenmiştir (Amstrong, 2009, s. 63). Sert güce dayalı bu tarz bir dış politika stratejilerinin hem ulusal hem de uluslararası alanda Amerika'ya yönelik tepkilerin artmasına neden olmuş, politikalarına yönelik hoşnutsuzluk ve tepki yarattığı belirtilmiştir. Dönemin ABD başkanı Obama'nın Amerika'nın çıkarlarını önceleyen ve bu bağlamda dış kamuoyuna odaklanması gerektiğini ifade eden "yeni idealizm düşüncesi" kamu diplomasisinde paradigma değişikliğine işaret etmektedir (Cull, 2008).

İletişimin bir ikna aracı olarak kullanımı, kamu diplomasisinde ülkelerin ve toplumların yumuşak güç potansiyellerini harekete geçirebilme noktasında stratejik bir öneme sahip olduğunu söyleyen Nye, kamu diplomasisini stratejik bir şekilde kullanabilen ülkelerin, cazibe merkezi haline gelerek kendi politikalarını başka ülkelere kabul ettirme imkanına kavuştuğunu belirtmiştir (Nye, 2005, ss. 2-3).

Bu çerçevede kamu diplomasisini etkin bir iletişim aracı olarak tanımlayan Tuch bu vesile ile bir ulusun sahip olduğu değerlerin bir başka ulusa ihracı olarak ele almıştır (Sancak, 2016, s. 79). Bir başka tanımda ise bir devletin dış politikasını ve ulusal çıkarlarını desteklemek amacı ile hedef ülke halkını bu doğrultuda bilgilendirmek ve etkilemek olarak ele alınmıştır. Kamu diplomasisi araçlarını çift yönlü köprü olarak tanımlayan Şahin ise her iki ülke halkları arasında yaşanan etkileşim süreci içerisinde değişim, dönüşüm ve gelişime vesile olacağını vurgulamıştır (Şahin & Seyedi, 2020, s. 5).

Görüldüğü üzere kavramın dış politikada kullanılmaya başlanması ile birlikte süreç içerisinde farklı tanımlamalar yapılmış fakat ana ülkenin

kendi politikası doğrultusunda hedef ülkeye dış politika kapsamında değişiklikler yaptırması ortak payda olarak kalmıştır. Yumuşak gücün bir unsuru olarak ele alınan kamu diplomasisi bir başka ülkenin kamuoyunu bilgilendirme ve bu vesile ile etkileyip cezbetme çabası olarak ele alındığında diplomasi kavramının da giderek fikirlerle ve değerlerle küresel halklara hitap etme noktasına evirildiği söylenebilir. Bu noktada bir ulusun dış politikasına hizmet eden bir araç olarak değerlendirilen kamu diplomasisi ile dış politika arasında karşılıklı bir sinerjinin oluşması beklenmektedir. Bu sinerji oluşurken/oluştururken ülkelerin dış politikalarına bağlı olarak geliştirilmesinden ziyade uzun vadeli sürdürülebilir olması gerektiğini söyleyen Melissen, aksi halde dış politika sorunlarına yönelik geliştirilen diplomasi'nin amacı dışına çıkarak çatışmayı alevlendirecek sert güce hizmet ettiğini vurgulamıştır (Melissen, 2007, s. 15).

Tanımlamaları genel başlıklar altında özetleyecek olursak; ana ülkenin sahip olduğu ekonomi, kültür, dil, teknoloji, demokrasi, özgürlük, inanç sistemi, sinema, medya, lobi faaliyetleri, yayınlar, marka vb. birçok değer hedef ülkedeki insanları etkilemek ve ana ülkenin politikaları doğrultusunda kendi hükümetlerine baskı yapmalarını sağlayarak politika değişikliğine sürüklemek ve bu süreçleri cezbetme yöntemi ile gerçekleştirmek olarak ifade edilebilir. Kamu diplomasisini "analitik sınırları ve ayırt edici özellikleri olan politik bir araç" değerlendiren Şahin daha önceki tanımlamalara uygun olarak bir ülkenin yumuşak güç unsurları ile "başkasını etkileme/cezbetme" kapasitesi olarak tanımlamıştır (Şahin & Seyedi, 2020, s. 160).

Devletlerin sahip oldukları değerleri yumuşak güç unsuru olarak kullanmaları hedef kitleyi etkilemek ve politika değişikliğine sürüklemek açısından önemli bir konuma sahiptir. Bu stratejide, devletler sahip oldukları potansiyel değerlerin farkında olmaları ve bu değerleri ihraç edecek zemin bulmaları kamu diplomasi'nin işlevselliği açısından da önemli rol oynamaktadır. Yumuşak güç unsuru olarak ele alınacak değerler ülkelerin konumlandığı coğrafyadan, içinde bulunduğu inanç sistemine kadar değişkenlik gösterebilmektedir. Bu

bağlamda İngiltere ve Amerika'nın sahip olduğu değerler ile İran ve Suudi Arabistan'ın sahip oldukları ve yumuşak güç kapsamında kullandıkları kamu diplomasisi unsurları arasında doğal bir farklılık beklenmektedir.

İnanç Diplomasisi

Uluslararası politikada devletler ulusal çıkarları korumak ve nüfuz alanını genişletmek için kamu diplomasisi kapsamında "yumuşak" güç unsuru olan inanç diplomasisini göz ardı etmemektedir. Smith, uluslararası politikada inanç diplomasisinin önemine yönelik, "Bir halkın kalbine giden en keskin yol inançlarından geçer." sözleriyle işaret etmektedir (Smith, 1994, s. 13). Din; bireylerin toplumdaki sosyal ve manevi ilişkiler ağının oluşmasında davranış değer ve tercihler üzerindeki rolü ile etkili olmaktadır. Dolayısı ile din bireylerin davranışlarını aynı ya da başka bir sosyal ağ içerisinde yer alan bireyler aracılığıyla etkilemektedir. Bu bağlamda dini diplomasi kamu diplomasisinin bir parçası olarak değerlendirilmektedir. İnanç diplomasisini dış politikada yumuşak gücün bir unsuru olarak değerlendiren Haynes, yabancı ülke kamuoyunun gönlünü cezbetmede inanç temelli bir angajman olarak tanımlamaktadır (Haynes, 2007, s. 42).

İlk insanın aynı zamanda bir Peygamber olması din ve etkisi insanlık tarihinin başlangıcına kadar götürülebilir. İnsanlık tarihi ile birlikte varlığını sürdüren din kavramı uluslararası ilişkilerde ve devletlerin dış politikaların kimi zaman Osmanlı'da olduğu gibi hilafeti elde tutmakla, kimi zaman ortak bir düşmana karşı dinin bütünleştiriciliği ile harekete geçen haçlı seferleri ile güç dengesini sağlamak için bir güç unsuru olarak kullanılmıştır (Sancak, 2016, s. 179). Modern dönem örneklerine bakılacak olursa; 2006-2009 yılları arasında Çin hükümetinin "uyumlu bir dünya akılla başlar" mottosu ile 1000 Budist'i "Dünya Budist Formu" da bir araya getirerek gerçekleştirdiği Budist diplomasisi inanç diplomasisinin bir örneği olarak ele alınabilir.

Bu vesile ile Çin hem Budist hem de Çin kültürünü aynı zamanda yayılması imkanını yakalamıştır (Sancak, 2016, s. 180).

İnanç diplomasisinin tartışmalı konularda barışı sağlamak ve ortak akli ön plana çıkartarak sorunlara çözümler üretmek amacının dışında ülkelerin bölgesel ve küresel etkinliklerini artırmak ve dış politikalarında nüfuz elde etmek maksadı ile de kullanım alanı vardır. Dış politikasında dini etkin bir şekilde kullanan İran ve Suudi Arabistan sahip olduğu inan sistemini ihraç etme doğrultusunda gerçekleştirdiği inanç diplomasisi bu kapsamda etkin bir politika aracı olarak kullanılmaktadır.

İRAN

İran'ın Dış Politikasında İnanç Diplomasisi

Ortadoğu bölgesinin temel dinamiklerini şekillendiren siyasi, etnik, ekonomi ve ideoloji gibi kavramların etki alanı bölgesel ve küresel yansımaları kapsamaktadır. Orta Doğu'da mevcut istikrarsızlık ve çatışma ortamı reel politik üzerine şekillenen din, mezhep ve etnisitenin istismarı üzerinden temellendirilmiş olması, İran'ın bölgede varlığını koruma ve etki alanını genişletme hedefleri doğrultusunda din ve mezhep temelli politikalar uygulamasına yol açmıştır. 1979 yılında gerçekleşen İran İslam devrimi ile teokratik siyasi düzlemin içerisine giren İran, Ayetullah Humeyni tarafından şekillendirilen dış politikasında mezhepsel tutumu merkezi bir konum getirerek "Devrim İhracı" politikası uygulamıştır (Şahin & Seyedi, 2020, s. 162). Devrim sonrası ilk etapta Ortadoğu bölgesinde yaşayan ve Şii inancını benimseyen ya da kültürel olarak yakın olan gruplar üzerinden hamilik misyonu altında nüfuzunu artırma çabasına giren İran, süreç içerisinde özelde Irak, Suriye, Afganistan, Pakistan, Türkiye ve Balkanlar genelinde ise bütün dünyaya devrimi ihraç etme yönünde faaliyetlerde bulunmuştur. Bu faaliyetlerin ilk örnekleri Irak'ta bulunan Şii Dava Partisi'ni destekleyerek Saddam yönetimine karşı alternatif bir yapı oluşturması, Şii Musa es-Sadr'ı Lübnan'a göndererek Şii Emel ordusunu kurması, Bosna savaşı sırasında (1992-

1995) verdiği destekler ile Şiiğin Balkanlarda tanıtılması şeklinde sıralanabilir (Konukçu, 2018).

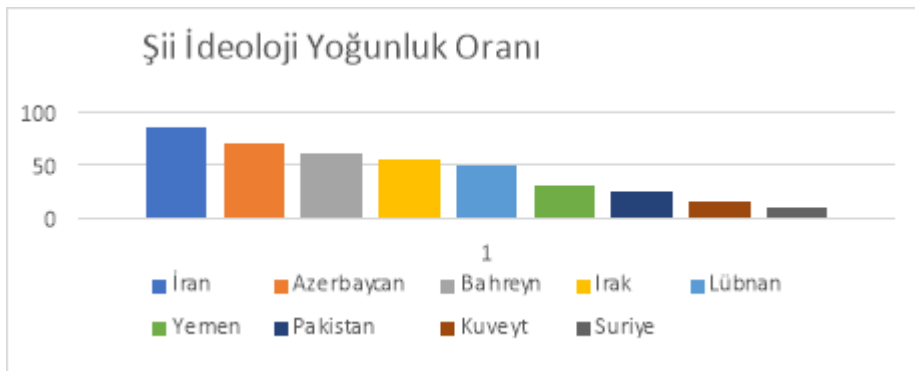
Bir devlet politikası olarak kullanılmaya başlanan Şiiilik, ‘ş, y, a’ kökünden türemiş olup ıslahat olarak ayrılmak, ayrışmak anlamına gelmektedir. İslam terminolojisinde ise Peygamber *s.a.v.* vefatından sonra Hz. Ali’nin halife olması gerektiğini ileri süren ve kendilerine Hz. Ali taraftarı olarak adlandıran grubun genel adıdır. Şii inanç sisteminin en temel özelliği imamet meselesinde barınmaktadır. Özellikle halk arasında on iki imam olarak adlandırılan imamet inancı Şia’nın en ayırt edici inanç temelini oluşturmaktadır. Hz. Muhammed’in *s.a.v.* vefatı ile onun neslinden gelen (Ehli-Beyt) on iki imamın masum ve hatasız olduğu inancı Şii gruplar arasında yaygın olup aksini iddia edenler tekfir edilmiştir. Kendi içinde de birçok fırkaya ayrılmış olan Şiiilik, Pakistan’dan Yemen’e kadar çok geniş coğrafyada varlığını sürdürmektedir. Dini liderlerine ‘ayetullah’, ‘rehber’ olarak adlandırılıp “büyük gayb” da olan on iki imamın sonuncusu İmam Muhammed Mehdi’nin yeniden dünyaya gelene kadar temsilcisi konumundadır (Onat, 1989).

1979 Şii devrimi ile birlikte yeni bir dış politika söylemi ortaya koyan İran “ümmetin hamiliği”, “Filistin meselesi”, “zulme karşı mücadele” gibi mottolarla dış politika argümanlarını şekillendirmiştir. Devrim anayasasının “devrim ihracı” şiarı ile dünyaya yayılması amaçlanmıştır (Sarıkaya, 2012, s. 17). Şahin’e göre İran rejimi devrimden sonra Şii inanç sistemini dış politikada ön plana çıkararak özellikle komşu devletlere yönelik stratejik bir argüman olarak kullanılmaya başlamıştır (Şahin & Seyedi, 2020, s. 162).

Tablo I: Kıtalaraya Göre Dünya’daki Şii Nüfusu (2015) (Ortadoğu Etütleri, 2020, cilt:12, Sayı:1).

Ortadoğu	Asya Pasifik	Avrasya	Avrupa	Afrika	Kuzey Amerika	Latin Amerika	
52.400.000	81.192.000	19.500.500	2.350.000	12.450.000	985.000	425.000	
Dünya Müslümanları İçinde Şii İnanç Sistemini Benimseyenlerin Oranı							16%

Tablo-1'deki Şii inanç sistemini benimseyen toplumların dağılımı incelendiğinde Şia jeopolitiği dış politika ve kamu diplomasisi kapsamında İran'ın gerek bölgesel etkinlik kazanımında gerekse yayılımcı politikasında mevcut nüfusun etkinliği nispetince bir araç olarak kullanılmış ve Şii inanç sistem temelli transnasyonal ve teopolitik söylem geliştirilmiştir. Terimsel olarak din anlamında kullanılan "teo" ve "politik" kavramının birleştirilmesi ile ortaya çıkan teopolitik, teolojik bir bakış ile politikaların formülasyonu olarak ele alınmaktadır. ABD'nin "Yeşil Kuşak" teorisi, Rusya'nın üçüncü "Roma Doktrini", İsrail'in "Arz-ı Mev'ud" (vaat edilen topraklar) strateji ya da kavramları teo-politiğin büyük rol oynadığı olduğu söylenebilir. Bununla birlikte esasen küresel siyasette 1990'larda Samuel Huntington' un "medeniyetler çatışması" tezi çatışmaların teo-politiğin bir neticesi sonucu ortaya çıkacağını ileri sürmektedir (Huntington, 2020). Teo -politik tartışmalar bölgeden bölgeye değişmekte ve her aktörün benimsemiş olduğu inanç değerine göre şekillenmektedir. Bu notada İran'ın teo-politiğinden Şii inancını benimseyen ya da yakın gören topluluklarla kültürel, dini ve eğitim programlarıyla ittifak ilişkisi kurarak nüfuzunu yayma politikası kastedilmektedir (Ekşi, 2017, s. 47).



Şekil I: Şii İnancının Benimsenme Oranına Göre Dağılımı (Pew Research Center , 2022)

Bu çerçevede jeopolitik temelinden öteye geçerek teopolitik temelli kamu diplomasisi özelliğe sahip olan İran, yeryüzündeki tüm Şiiilerle transnasyonel (sınır ötesi) bağlar kurarak onların hamiliğini üstlenip bir bakıma ulus üstü (supranational) özellik kazanmaktadır. Şii nüfusunun yoğunlukta bulunduğu ülkeler İran için öncelikli faaliyet alanını oluşturmaktadır. Zira mezhepsel yakınlığı kullanarak söz konusu ülkelerin politikalarına angaje olma fırsatı yakalamaktadır. Irak'ta Haşdi Şabi ve merkezi yönetim, Suriye'de rejim, Lübnan'da Hizbullah, Yemende Ensarullah, Pakistan'sa Zeynebiye gibi Şii motivasyonlu gruplar aracılığı ile bölge siyasetinde etkili olabilmektedir. Özetle sıralayacak olursak İran kamu diplomasisinde Şiiliği;

- Teolojik ve ideolojik bir araç,
- Dış politika argümanı,
- Nüfuzunu yaymak,
- Şii topluluklarla angaje,
- Devletten halka yönelik propaganda ve algı,
- Devletler yerine halklarla ilişki tesis etme yoluna giderek Şii oryantasyonlu ve algı odaklı yumuşak ve sert gücün birlikte kullanıldığı ve halkla ilişkilere yönelik bir politika olarak kullandığı ifade edilmektedir (Dorakhshah & Gafari, 2012, ss. 20-22).

İran'ın İnanç Diplomasisi Argümanları ve Önemli Kavramlar

Şii Hilali

İlk olarak Ürdün Kralı Abdullah tarafından kullanılan "Şii hilali" kavramı 2004 yılında verdiği bir demeçte (Black, 2022) özellikle Sünni inanç sistemini benimseyen Arap toplumlarının İran, Irak ve Suriye'yi içine alıp Lübnan, Bahreyn hatta Türkiye'ye kadar devam eden Şii hilali tarafından kuşatıldığını ileri sürmüştür.

Kral Abdullah'ın iddiasına destek açıklaması ise dönemin Mısır devlet başkanı Mübarek tarafından verilen bir röportajda¹ "Ortadoğu'da

¹ <https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2017/01/31/shia-crescent-middle-east-geopolitics/>

yaşayan Şii nüfusun buldukları ülkelerden çok İran'a karşı bağlılık hissettiklerini'' belirtmesi ile gelmiştir. Mübarek'in açıklaması incelendiğinde İran'ın bölge hakları üzerindeki etkinliği anlaşılmaktadır. Zira Ortadoğu bölgesinde devletler nezdinde özellikle Sünni Araplar ile iyi ilişki kuramayan İran'ın o ülkede yaşayan ve kendilerini Şii ya da bu inanç sistemine yakın hisseden toplumlar üzerinde sahip olduğu cezbetme politikası ile bu toplumların kendi ana devletlerinden ziyade ideolojik olarak yakın hissettikleri İran'a bağlanmasına sebep olmuştur. Bu itibarla bu coğrafyada Şiiler üzerinden varlığını, gücünü ve etkisini arttırma politikası olarak tanımlanan Şii hilali İran'ın etkin bir kamu diplomasisi argümanıdır (Ekşi, 2017, ss. 51-52).

İran'ın yabancı ülkelerdeki Şiilere angaje olarak geliştirdiği kamu diplomasisi politikasında sadece yumuşak güç ilkesi değil aynı zamanda İran'ın çevre ülkeler nezdinde bulunan Şiilerin siyasal, askeri ve iktisadi olarak güçlendirilmesine yönelik politika belirlemesi ve bu kapsamda Lübnan'da Hizbullah, Yemen'de Şii motivasyonlu Husiler, Suriye'de ise Esad rejimine yönelik desteği ve onlarla müttefiklik ilişkileri İran'ın dış politikada hem yumuşak güç unsuru olarak dini kullanımı ve buna bağlı olarak da mezhep şemsiyesi altında sert güç kullanımı söz konusudur. Kamu diplomasisi bağlamında İran'ın yabancı ülke halkları ile kurmuş olduğu ulus-sınır ötesi (transnasyonel) ilişkiler neticesinde Şiilerin yaşadığı ülkelerin siyasetine etki yapabilmekte öte yandan Şiileri güçlendirerek nüfuzunu yaymaktadır.

Bununla birlikte İnanç diplomasisi kapsamında, Fred Halliday'in de ileri sürdüğü gibi Şiilik ve ona bağlı kolları, 1979 İran İslam devrimden itibaren siyasi ve ideolojik bir araç olarak kullanılmaktadır (Halliday, 1992, s. 53). İran'ın bu inanç sistemini hedef ülkelerdeki yoğunluk ve bağlılık derecelerini de hesaba katarak dış politikada bir araç olarak kullanılması, İran Dış Politikasını teopolitik ve mezhepsel doğrultuda

şekillendirmektedir (Ekşi, 2017, s. 53). Bir başka ifade ile İran'ın milli hedeflerini gerçekleştirmek ve ulusal çıkarlarını korumak için Şiiliği pragmatik doğrultuda kullanması, dış politikasında ideolojileri araçsallaştırmasına yol açmaktadır. Bu çerçevede Şii hilali, Şia inanç sistemine göre temellendirilen uluslararası platformda ideolojik bir koalisyon kurma politikası olarak görülebilir. Fakat İran'ın dış politikasında Şiilik ya da mezhepsel hassasiyet nihai bir amaç değil bir araç olarak değerlendirilebilir. Zira Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan arasında vuku bulan savaşta İran'ın mezhepsel hassasiyet gösterip Caferi olan Azerbaycan'ın yanında yer almaktansa etnik hassasiyet ile Ermenistan'ı desteklediği bilinmektedir. İran'ın bu tutumu aynı zamanda Samuel Hangtington'un medeniyetler çatışması tezi ile de tezatlık göstermektedir. Zira Hangtington'un tezine göre çatışma ve rekabetin din ya da kültürler arası olması beklenmekteydi. Dolayısı ile İran'ın Hristiyan Ermenistan'ı değil Müslüman/Caferi Azerbaycan'ı desteklemesi gerekirdi. İran'ın bu tutumu her ne kadar da ilk bakışta bir tezatlık olarak görülse de İran dış politikası bir bütün olarak incelendiğinde Şiiliğin bir amaçtan ziyade bir araç olduğu anlaşılacaktır.

Velayet-i Fakih:

Şii inanç sisteminin temel araçlarından biri olan *velayet-i fakih* kavramı Şii-Sünni mezhepleri arasındaki temel farklılığı da oluşturmaktadır. İran'da yaygın bir öğreti olarak temellendirilen kavram Şii inanç sistemine göre Hz. Muhammed *s.a.v.* vefatından sonra *risalet'in* sona erdiği fakat vahyin uygulanmasının devam ettiği bu vesile ile peygamberden sonra ümmete rehberlik edecek ve " *gaybet-i kübra'ya*" (büyük kayıp) karışan ve kıyamete yakın tekrar gelecek olan on ikinci imamın sonuncusu olan İmam Muhammed Mehdiye kadar vekillik yapacak olan temsilciyi ifade eder. Bu vekiller risalet görevleri dışında (vahiy almak) peygamber ile aynı özellikleri taşımaktadır. Peygamberlere ait olan masumiyet özellikleri imamlarda da bulunmaktadır. Bir diğer özellik ise risalet gibi imametinde seçim yolu

ile değil doğrudan Allah tarafından verildiği inancıdır (Onat, 1989; Uyar, 2000, ss. 78-80).

Bu öğreti doğrultusunda İslam toplumunun *velayet-i fakih* olarak isimlendirilen imamlara karşı sorumlulukları Peygambere karşı sorumluluğu gibidir ve bu temsilcilere kayıtsız şartsız itaat etmekle yükümlüdürler. Beklenen son İmam Muhammed Mehdi gelene kadar ona vekillik yapacak rehber/fakihler Şii toplumun inanç, yaşam, siyaset ve ekonomi gibi konularda şekillenmesinde merkezi rol oynamaktadır (Şahin, Mehmet, 2006, s. 41). İran bu müessese üzerinden hamiliğine soyunduğu Şiiler üzerinden yabancı ülke kamuoyuna angaje olmakta ve nüfuzunu arttırmaktadır.

İran İslam Kültürü ve İlişkileri Örgütü (ICRO)

İran ICRO' ya bağlı alt kuruluşlar ile birlikte Şii inanç sistemini yaymak ve buna bağlı olarak Fars kültürünü empoze etmek gibi politikalar izlemektedir. Burada dikkat edilmesi gereken husus kültür ile dinin birbirine bağlı ve ortak bir stratejik amaca hizmet etmesidir. Bu örgüt resmi internet sitesinde² İngilizce, Arapça ve Farsça olmak üzere 3 dilde yayın yapılmaktadır. Stratejik planını sıralayan ICRO bu amaç doğrultusunda;

- İslam dininin Peygamber döneminde var olan asıl gaye ve mesajını dünyaya yaymak,
- İran İslam Devrimi ilkeleri ve gayesini yabancı ülke vatandaşları nezdinde farkındalığını arttırmak,
- Özellikle baskı altında kalmış (Filistin gibi) toplumlarda manevi ve kültürel ilişkiler kurmak,
- İslam ve İslam Devrimi karşıtı topluluklarla bilimsel arenada mücadele etmek (Ekşi, 2017, s. 54).

Bu çerçevede örgüt stratejik planını yabancı ülkelerdeki öncelikli olarak Şii topluları dizayn etmek sonraki süreçte ise Şii inanç sistemine uzak bireyleri etkilemek amacı ile politika oluşturmak,

² <https://en.icro.ir/>

bilimsel araştırma yapmak ve yürütmek olarak üç boyutta şekillendirmiştir.

Bu hedef doğrultusunda yapılan faaliyetler;

- Ortodoks ve İslam Ortak Diyalogu eş başkanı olan ICRO başkanı Torkaman önderliğinde 2018’de Rus Ortodoks kilisesi ile Tahran’da çalıştay düzenlenmesi,
- 2019 yılında İran Japonya kültür ataşeliğince “İslam ve Şintoizm’de Ailenin Statüsü” başlıklı panel düzenlenmesi,
- 1 Aralık 2018 bölgesel inanç grupları arasında “Diyalog” konferansının Tahran’da gerçekleştirilmesi,
- 2016 yılında Şam’da “İran İslam Devriminin 36. Yılı” etkinliği düzenlemiş ve Suriye’deki rejim yanlılarına destek sözü vermesi şeklinde sıralanabilir (Cankara & Cankara, 2021, s. 129).

Dünya Ehli Beyt Meclisi

Dünya Ehlibeyt Meclisi 1990 yılında faaliyetlerine başlayan İran menşeli bir uluslararası sivil toplum kuruluşu olup, Şii inanç sistemi nezaretinde tesis edilmiş ve Ehli Beyt kavramını Şiilikle özdeşleştirerek politik bir amaç gütmektedir (Cankara & Cankara, 2021, s. 130). Bu doğrultuda meclisin faaliyetleri³:

- Sahih İslam inanç ve kültürünün korunması Kuran ve Hadis eğitiminin yaygınlaştırılması,
- İslam birliği ve Ehli Beyt’in kutsallığının savunulması,
- İslam toplumları arasında Ehli Beyt şemsiyesi altında birliğin sağlanması,
- Ehli Beyt taraftarlarının dünyanın her yerinde maddi ve manevi olarak desteklenmesi doğrultusunda stratejik plan oluşturması şeklindedir (Cankara & Cankara, 2021).

İran bir kamu diplomasisi argümanı olarak gördüğü inanç sistemi üzerinden “küresel Şii ağı” oluşturarak Dünya Ehli Beyt Meclisini de

³ <https://www.ahl-ul-bayt.org/tr/>

bu doğrultuda kullanıp gerek Şiiler üzerinden nüfuzunu muhafaza etmek gerekse Sünni dünyanın sempatisini kazanmayı hedeflemiştir. Bu doğrultuda Lübnan halkının bölgede etkin bir şekilde bulunan Hizbullah'a karşı bağlılığını arttırmak ve toplum nezdinde "Şiiliğin Vatikan'ı" olma yolunda hizmet vermiştir.

Dini diplomasi doğrultuda hizmet veren diğer kuruluşlar ise;

- İran İslam Kalkınma Teşkilatı
- İslam Propaganda ve Kum Ofisi
- Terkib-i Mezahip
- Dinler Arası Diyalog Merkezi
- Uluslararası İslam Mezhepleri Takrip Kurumu
- El Mustafa Üniversitesi (Cankara & Cankara, 2021).

Kum Şehri Medreseleri

Şii temelli inanç sisteminin bir bakıma epistemolojik merkezi olarak kabul edilen Kum şehri İran'daki dini eğitim kurumlarını bünyesinde barındırmaktadır (Şahin & Seyedi, 2020, s. 169). Başta İran'ın dini eğitim merkezi olan Kum şehrindekiler olmak üzere ülkedeki bütün dini eğitim kurumları ve medreseleri bu ofise bağlıdır. 1970 İslam devrimi sonrası süreçte Müslüman toplumlar arasında cazibesi artan İran Şii dünyasının hamiliğini üstlenmesinin yanı sıra yayıncılık ve tebliğ metotları ile Sünni dünyayı da etkileme çabalarına girmiştir. İmam Humeyni (ö.1989), Tabâtabâi (ö.1981) ve Murtaza Mutahhâri (ö. 1979) Kum medreselerinin müfredatının şekillenmesinde önemli rol oynamışlardır (Akbari & Uluç, 2009, ss. 64-65). Bu süreçte önemli bir misyon gören Kum şehri medreseleri Şii eğitimin merkezi haline gelmiş ve dünyanın farklı bölgelerinden hoca ve öğrenci bu şehre gelerek eğitimlerini tamamlamışlardır. ⁴ Bu noktada bünyesinde bulundurduğu "İslami Tebliğ Ofisi" hali hazırda İran'ın dini lideri Ayetullah Ali Hamaney'e bağlı olup görev ve sorumlulukları dini lider

⁴ Mehmet Şahin, "Şii Jeopolitiği: İran İçin Fırsatlar ve Engeller", Akademik Orta Doğu, Cilt. 1, Sayı. 1, (2006), s.46.

tarafından tayin edilmektedir. İslami Tebliğ Ofisi'nin Şiiliği yaymak noktasındaki vazifeleri şunlardır:

- İslam fıkıh ve akaide ait bir konunun Kur'an-i Kerîme uygunluğu,
- Medreselerin Şii eğitim metodolojisine uygun olarak araştırma imkanlarının sağlanması,
- Devrim ihracı stratejisi doğrultusunda Kum medreselerini aktif hale getirmek,
- Medreselerin temel ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak ve bu doğrultuda stratejik planlar yapmak,
- Dünya üzerinde ihtiyaç duyulan her bölgeye Şii alim yetiştirmek ve görevlendirmek,
- Şii ideolojisini yaymak amacı ile gerekli kitap, dergi ve diğer yayınların basım ve yayını yapmak,
- İslam Hukukuna ait konularda Şii fıkıhına uygun cevaplar ve reddiyeler hazırlamak,
- Reddiye niteliğinde kitap ve yayın çıkarmak (Cankara & Cankara, 2021, s. 131).

SUUDİ ARABİSTAN

Suudi Arabistan'ın Dış Politikasında İnanç Diplomasisi

Ortadoğu bölgesinde özellikle Harameyn olarak adlandırılan Mekke ve Medine'nin içinde bulunduğu Hicaz bölgesini bünyesinde barındıran Suudi Arabistan, dar anlamda Arap ve Sünni Müslümanların hamiliği geniş anlamda ise bütün Müslümanların hamiliğini üstlenme politikası izlemektedir. Tarihsel süreç içerisinde Ortadoğu'da kurulan devletlere kıyasla zor bir kuruluş mücadelesine giren Suudiler bu süreçte Osmanlı Devleti ile girmiş olduğu inanç mücadelesini zamanla siyasal alana taşımıştır. Sonuç itibari ile 20.yy. başlarında İngilizler tarafından Osmanlıya karşı desteklenen Hicaz Emiri Şerif Hüseyin (ö.1931) önderliğinde bağımsızlığını ilan etmiştir (Doğan & Şahin, 2016, s. 42). Bu çerçevede Suudi Arabistan'ın siyasal hakimiyeti Âl-i Suud ailesine geçmiş ve kuruluş ideolojisi olarak

temellendirilen Vahhabilik anlayışı ise devletin Selefî olmayan Sünniler ve Şiilere karşı öne sürdüğü resmi inanç sistemi haline gelmiştir (Büyükkara, 2016).

Suudi Arabistan'ın sahip olduğu jeopolitik konum, İslam dininin ilk merkezi olan Mekke ve Medine gibi Müslüman toplumlar nezdinde kutsal mekanlar olarak kabul edilen bölgeleri bünyesinde barındırması, İslam dininin 5 temel ilkesinden biri olan hac ibadetinin zorunlu bir merkezi olması ve bu vesile ile her yıl milyonlarca insana ev sahipliği yapması stratejik açıdan Suudi Arabistan'ı bölge ülkeleri içerisinde daha önemli hale getirmektedir. Bitmeyen hazine olarak adlandırılan Mekke ve Medine'nin içinde bulunduğu Harem bölgesi Müslüman toplumların nazarında İslam dininin doğup yayıldığı yer olması hasebi ile büyük bir öneme sahiptir. İslam'ın 5 temel esaslarından Hac ibadeti ve Peygamber *s.a.v.* Sünneti olan Umre ibadetini yapmak için Mekke şehrini ziyaret etmenin zorunlu olması bunun yanı sıra Peygamberin *s.a.v.* ve Sahabelerin kabirleri için ise Medine şehrine gelecek olmaları Suudi Arabistan'a doğal bir diplomasi ve halkla ilişkiler fırsatı sunmaktadır. Bu çerçevede her yıl ortalama; 10-15 milyon arası ziyaretçinin ibadet maksadı ile Mekke ve Medine şehirlerini ziyaret ettiği düşünülmektedir. Her yıl bu ibadetleri ifa etmek maksadı ile Suudi Arabistan'a gelen Müslümanlar doğal olarak Vahhabi propagandaya maruz kalmakta, mescitler etrafında kurulan stantlar aracılığı ile Vahhabi öğretisi anlatılmaktadır. Sadece 2017 resmi verileri dikkate alındığında yaklaşık 15 milyon Müslüman Suudi Arabistan'ı hac ve umre maksadı ile ziyaret etmiş ve Vahhabi uygulamalara maruz kalmıştır (Statista.com, 2022).

Kâbe İmamlarının yurt dışı ziyaretleri ve geniş katılımlı sohbet ve ibadet programları Arabistan'ın Müslüman coğrafyada etkisinin artması noktasında önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Bu noktada Harem bölgesinin (Mescidi Haram ve Mescidi Nebevi) baş imamı olan Abdurrahman Sudeysi 2007 yılında Pakistan ziyareti sırasında 1,5 milyon Pakistanlı meydana toplanarak Sudeysi'in sohbetine katılmış ve devamında açık alanda namaz kılmışlardır. Yine Kâbe

İmamlarından Salih el Talip (aynı zamanda Mekke'de şeriat mahkemesinde yargıç/kadı olarak görev yapmakta olup 2018 yılı cuma hutbesinde Muhammed bin Selman'a yönelik eleştiriden dolayı hali hazırda tutukludur) 2017 yılına Arnavutluk'un başkenti Tiran'ın en büyük meydanında bayram namazını açık alanda binlerce insana kıldırması ve devamında Selefilik temalı sohbet yapmıştır⁵. Suudi Arabistan'ın sahip olduğu dini, tarihi ve coğrafi bu değerler etkin bir inanç diplomasisi alanı sunmaktadır.

Suudi Arabistan'ın İnanç Diplomasisi Argümanları ve Önemli Kavramlar

Suudi İnanç Sisteminde İki Temel Kavram: Selefilik ve Vahhabilik

Selef kelimesi kelimenin tam anlamıyla selef veya daha önce gelen anlamına gelirken kelimelerin literatüründe kendi yöntem ve tekniklerini geliştiren ve İslam'ın ilk dönemlerinde yaşamış âlimler olarak tanımlanır. Önce gelip geçmişte kalmak anlamına gelen selef kelimesinden türeyen Selefilik kelimesi, aslında erdem ve ilim açısından geçmişte olan veya kendilerinden önce gelmiş insanlar anlamına gelmektedir (Kavas, 2014, s. 39). Literatürde bu kavramın çeşitli kullanımları vardır. Aynı zamanda, İslam'ı dini yenilikler olarak gördükleri şeylerden (örneğin, dine sonradan eklenen dualar ve uygulamalar) arındırmaya çalışan ve Kur'an ve Sünnete dönüşü temsil eden reformist dini düşünce hareketlerine bir isim olarak verilmektedir (Koçak, 2006, s. 27). Selefilik'in bağlı olduğu dönem ve içerik konusunda ciddi bir belirsizlik ve karmaşa olduğu vurgulanmaktadır. Onat, Selefilik'in öncelikle bir zihniyet olduğunun sık sık göz ardı edildiğini ve İslam tarihi boyunca hiçbir zaman mezhep kimliği kazanmadığını vurgulamaktadır (Onat, 1989). Suriyeli kelâm alimi Muhammed Said Ramazan el-Buti de Selefilik 'in bir mezhep olmadığını ve böyle bir anlayışın tarihte var olmayan bir şeyin tahmininden ibaret olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Selefilik'in İslam düşünce

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iO-ziav1S-A>

tarihinde ortaya çıkan bir kelim ya da hukuksal mezhep olmadığını, aksine Kur'an'ı yorumlarken ve hukuki hükümleri çıkarırken gözlemlenen bir yaklaşım ve düşünce biçimi olduğunun altını çizmektedir (Al-Bouti, 1993, ss. 223-224).

Vahhabilik ise, on sekizinci yüzyılda Arabistan'da Muhammed bin Abdulvahab (ö.1792) tarafından kurulmuş ve günümüzde sıklıkla ortaya çıkan radikal akımlar arasında merkezi bir konuma sahip olmuştur (Büyükkara, 2016, s. 60). Vahhabilik köktendinci ve radikal felsefeleri ortaya çıkışından bu yana onu diğer Müslüman gruplarla çatışma rotasına sokmuştur. Peygamber'in doğum gününü kutlamak, Şii gelenekleri ve tasavvufun mistik öğretileriyle ilişkili bazı uygulamalar gibi birçok popüler İslami uygulamaya karşı çıkmışlardır (Blanchard, 2008, s. 2).

Osmanlı Devleti ise Vahabileri *tefîr* tutumunda aşırılığa kaçtıklarından dolayı *Haricilere* benzetmiştir. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, Vahhabi hareketini XVII. yy 'da İstanbul'da ortaya çıkan Kadızadeli hareketiyle ilişkilendirmiştir (Uzunçarşılı, 1982, s. 608). Kadızadeli hareketi doktrinlerinin bir kısmını İbn Teymiyye'den (ö.1328) etkilenen ve Türkçe yazdığı ilmihaliyle ün kazanan Birgivi Mehmet Efendi'ye (ö. 1573) dayandırır. Kadızadeli hareketinin temel amacı, İslam'ı Kuran ve Sünnet 'ten sapma olarak gördükleri her şeyden arındırmak ve bu anlayışı devletin her kademesinde yaymaktır. Bu tutum, onları medeniyetin çok sayıda kültürel unsuruna savaş açmaya zorlayarak, orijinal hedeflerinden sapmalarına neden oldu (Bilkan, 2005, s. 122). Kadızade Mehmet Efendi'nin ölümünden sonra hareketin mensupları gittikçe daha saldırganlaştı ve tarikat mensupları ve tasavvuf localarına katılanları dahi küfür ile suçlamaya başladılar (Bilkan, 2005, s. 130).

Ahmet Cevdet Paşa ise Vahhabiliği teolojik olmaktan çok siyasi bir *tefîr* hareketi olarak tanımlamaktadır. Aslında Cevdet Paşa, Vahhabilik 'in sadece dini yenilikleri kökten sökmeye çalışan bir hareket değil, meşruiyetini *tefîre* dayandıran merkezi hükümete karşı

bir isyan olduğunu ileri sürmüştür. Daha spesifik olarak Vahhabi hareketi, tasavvuftan kelama kadar birçok ilmi dini şirke yol açmakla olmakla suçlayarak otoriteye karşı isyanı meşrulaştırmaya çalışmaktadır (Cevdet (Paşa), 2018, s. 193). Burada, İbn Teymiyye'nin ve onun tekfir anlayışının, Vahhabiler'in Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na karşı bu tutumunu beslemede merkezi bir rol oynadığına dikkat edilmelidir.

Her iki kavram Suudi Arabistan'ın inanç diplomasisinde merkezi bir konuma sahiptir. Suudi Arabistan Selefi-Vahhabi öğretiyi yaymak sureti ile dış politikasında kendisine fahri temsilciler tayin etmektedir.

Selefilik ve Vahhabilik'in Dış Politika Argümanı Olarak Kullanımı

Balkanlar'da Selefilik ve Vahhabilik

İslam dinine ait kutsal mekanları elinde bulundurması ve dinin ilk çıkış noktası olması hasebi ile toplumlar nezdinde zaten doğal bir cazibe merkezi olması Suudi Arabistan'a kamu diplomasisi oluşturma sürecinde büyük avantajlar sağlamaktadır. Bununla birlikte sahip olduğu ekonomik imkanlar Vahhabi motivasyonlu propaganda faaliyetlerinin önünü açmakta ve özellikle Selefi anlayışa yakın kitleler üzerinde hegemonya kurmaya çalışmaktadır. Soğuk savaş sonrası dönemde özellikle Balkanlarda inanç ve manevi boşluğun bulunması Müslüman toplumların kendilerine el uzatacak koruyucu aile niteliği taşıyan devletler gözetmesi bu bölgenin Suudi Arabistan için yayılımcı bir politika izleyeceği bir pazar haline getirmişti. 1990'lı yıllar itibari ile meydana gelen savaş ve çatışmalar sonucu Balkan ülkeleri daha kırılğan bir siyasi zemine gelmiş böylelikle dış müdahalelere (aynı anda yumuşak ve sert gücün kullanıldığı, kimi devletler silah satarken kimi devletlerin de ideolojik olarak müdahale etmek istediği) açık hale gelmiştir. Bu noktada Suudi Arabistan Müslümanların abisi rolünü kendisine biçerek bölgedeki Müslüman halka açık ya da örtülü desteklerde bulunmuş ve Müslüman kimliği koruma adı altında nihai olarak bölge Müslümanları nezdinde Selefi ideolojinin yaygınlaşmasını sağlamıştır (Efegil, 2013, s. 5).

Sırbistan'ın Bosna'ya müdahalesi devamında gelen Arnavutluk'taki rejim değişikliği ve Kosova krizi Suudi Arabistan'ın Balkanlara müdahalesini hızlandırmıştır. Sonuç itibari ile Suudi Arabistan'ın Balkan politikası motivasyonunu biri yerel, ikincisi de küresel gelişmelere bağlı olarak uluslararası arenada gelişen şartlar neticesinde oluşan iki ayaklı politika olarak şekillendiği söylenebilir (Domazeti, 2017, s. 17).

Balkanlardaki yaşanan siyasi, ekonomik ve toplumsal kriz sürecinde ve sonucunda dini hareketlerin ve manevi motivasyonun motor gücü konumuna gelmek isteyen Suudi Arabistan, uzunca yıllar komünist-marksist ideolojinin baskısı altında kalan Bosna, Arnavutluk ve Kosova gibi ülkelerde dini okullar, dini kurslar ve Kuran kursları açmak suretiyle faaliyetlerine başlamış ve bölge haklı ile sıcak temasa girmiştir. Bu çerçevede Suudi Arabistan Balkan Müslümanlarının dini bir eğitmeni misyonu ile bölgede faaliyet göstermesi Müslüman jeopolitiğinde doğal bir aktör haline gelmesine yol açmıştır.

Balkan toplumları ile İslam şemsiyesi altında ilişki kuran Suudi Arabistan'ın kamu diplomasisinde Selefî İslam anlayışını öne sürerek bölge halkının inanç ve zihin dünyasına etki yapmaya ve böylelikle asıl hedefi olan Vahhabi akımı yayarak jeopolitik hedeflerini gerçekleştirmeye çalışmaktadır (Domazeti, 2017).

Bu noktada Suudi Arabistan'ın Balkanlardaki varlığını sürdürebilmesi yolunda Balkan halkı ile Selefî-Vahhabi ulema arasındaki duygusal yakınlık önemli bir etkiye sahip olduğu söylenebilir. Nasruddin el-Elbani (ö.1994) Suudi Arabistan ekolünde önemli bir konuma sahip olan Selefî hadis alimi Arnavut asıllı olması ve hutbe ve sohbetlerinde Arnavutça hitap etmesi Arnavut toplumu ile Vahhabileri ve nihai olarak da Suudi Arabistan ile gönül köprülerinin oluşmasına vesile olmuştur.

Bu doğrultuda Vahhabiliğin kurucu babası olarak kabul edilen Abdulvehhab'ın görüşleri ve öğretileri buna paralel olarak Elbani'nin kitapları ve eserleri Arnavut imamlar (bir çoğu Suudi Arabistan

bursları ile Medine İslam Üniversitesi ve Ümmül Kur'a Üniversitesinde Selefi eğitim almış kişilerden oluşmaktadır) tarafından tercüme edilmesi, yayınlanması ve cuma hutbelerinde ve sohbetlerde bu ideoloji sahibi kişilerim öne çıkarılması karşılıklı olarak etkileşimi arttırmış ve bölge halkı nazarında Suudi Arabistan'ın tanınırlığı ve cazibesi artmıştır (Domazeti, 2017, s. 23). Bu çerçevede ele alınması gereken başka bir nokta ise da özellikle Arnavutluk'ta imam, vaiz ve İslam alimlerinin büyük bir çoğunluğunun şeyh Nasruddin el-Elbani'nin öğrencisi ya da sempatizanı olmasıdır.

Sonuç itibari ile Suudi Arabistan etnik kimlikten gelen bu yakınlığı dini diplomasi stratejisi ile birleştirerek Balkanlı Müslümanlar ile arasında gönül bağları inşa etmiş ve bu doğrultuda Vahhabi ve Selefi ideolojiyi bölge halkı arasında yayarak Suudi Arabistan'a bağlılıklarını güçlendirmiştir.

Kral Fahd Cami ve Kültür Merkezi

Suudi Arabistan'ın kamu diplomasisi faaliyetlerinde ülke yabancı ülke merkez ve kırsallarında inşa ettiği Cami ve mescitler bulunmaktadır. Görünürlüğü ve temsiliyeti sağlama açısından merkezi bir konuma sahip olan bu camiler özellikle Avrupa ve Balkanlar gibi Müslüman toplumların azınlıkta yaşadığı yerlerde toplumun buluşma noktaları haline gelmektedir. Bu çerçevede Suudi Arabistan Balkanlarda yaşanan bölgesel kriz sonrası kapsamlı bir cami inşa programı uygulayarak Kral Fahd Camisini finanse etmişlerdir. (Stern, 2011, s. 201).

Saraybosna'nın merkezi bir konumunda inşa edilen Kral Fahd Cami, Suudiler tarafından Balkanlarda inşa edilen en büyük camilerden bir tanesi olup Saraybosna'nın silüetini oluşturan içinde ve dışında 2500 kişiden fazla insanın aynı anda ibadet etmesine imkân sağlayan büyük bir yapıdır. Buna paralel olarak caminin toplum nezdindeki yeri ve önemine binaen bir de kültür merkezi inşa edilmiş, Arapça dersleri ve Selefi anlayış doğrultusunda İslami ilimler sohbetler ve vaazlar verilmektedir. Genel itibari ile imamlar bölge halkı arasından seçilmiş

olup daha önceki süreçte Suudi Arabistan'da Arapça ve ilahiyat eğitimini tamamlamış kişilerdir. Bir diğer nokta ise Kral Fahd'ın Bosna savaşı sırasında Aliya Izzetbegoviç'e destek sözü vererek İslam Konferansı örgütünü toplamasıdır (King Faisal Foundation, 2022). Bu vesile ile Bosnalı Müslümanlar nezdinde cazibesini arttırmaya çalışmıştır.

El-Harameyn Vakfı (Muessesetu el-Harameyn el Hayriye)

Suudi Arabistan İnanç diplomasisini desteklemek ve etkisini artırmak noktasında insani yardım çalışmalarında ve bu doğrultuda kurulmuş dernek ve vakıfları da kullanmaktadır. Zira bu dernek ve vakıf üzerinden mescit ve camiler inşa edilmekte, inanç temelli faaliyetler vesilesi ile Suudi bayrağı görünürlüğünü arttırmakta ve aynı zamanda hamilik misyonunu tamamlamasına yardımcı olmaktadır. (9-11 Commission Repor, 2004). Bu vakıf Türkiye'deki Diyanet Vakfı benzeri bir yapıya sahip olup Suudi Arabistan resmi dini otoritesine bağlı olarak çalışmakta ve Balkanlar dahil dünyanın 150 ülkesinde operasyon yapmaktadır. Vakıf kapsamında senelik ayrıla bütçe ortalama 80 milyon dolar civarında olup dünya genelinde 300'den fazla cami inşa, tamir ve tadilatını yapıp bu vesile ile bu camilerde imamlık yapan imamların maaşını ödemiş ve İslam dünyasında Selefi davetçi misyonunu gören 3 binden fazla kişiye maddi destek vermiştir (Domazeti, 2017, s. 33).

Suudi Arabistan Uluslararası İslami Yardım Kuruluşu (İİRO)

Kuruluşun resmi sayfası incelendiğinde doğrudan Suudi Arabistan'ın inanç diplomasi yönünde stratejik çalışmalar yapan bir misyonu olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. İslam Konferanslarının düzenlenmesinde rol oynayan kurum 1978 yılında kurulmuş olup merkezi Cidde kentindedir. Örgüt özellikle Balkan coğrafyasında etkisini artırmaktadır. Selefi İslam anlayışını kendisine şiar edinmiş kuruluş 1992 yılı itibari ile Arnavutluk Müslümanlarının İslam dini ile tekrar

tanışmaları için İslami faaliyetlerde bulunup camilerin inşa edilmiş, yetimhanelerin açılmıştır⁶.

Balkanlarda İslami eğitim alanında Selefi ve Vahhabi öğretiler doğrultusunda eğitim programları düzenleyen kuruluş bu kapsamda 'Holy Qur'an and Da'wa' projesi ile birlikte 259 Selefi eğitim merkezi 256 öğretmen, 6,632 öğrenciye ve 328 imam ve alime finansla destek sağlamaktadır (Domazeti, 2017, s. 60).

İslam Vakfı (el Waqf el İslami)

Kuruluşu 1989 yılı olup Selefi bir çizgi üzerine hareket eden vakıf Selefililer tarafından desteklenmektedir. Balkanların çeşitli bölgelerinde faaliyet gösteren vakıf özellikle Bulgaristan ve Kosova'da Selefi ideolojiye sahip imam, vaiz ve müftüleri desteklemektedir. Bulgaristan'da Pomak bölgesinde faaliyetlerini yaygınlaştıran vakıf sağlamış olduğu burslar ve imkanlar ile bölgede etkinliğini arttırmakta ve bu bölgedeki öğrencileri Suudi Arabistan'daki Selefi eğitim merkezlerine götürerek ideolojik bir propaganda yapmaktadır. (Al Waqf-Al İslami in the Balkans, Radical İslam Monitor in Southeast Europe, 2022).

Afrika'da Selefilik ve Vahhabilik

Suudi Arabistan elinde bulundurduğu maddi imkanlar ve Harem bölgesine ev sahipliği yapmanın verdiği bir avantajla bunun yanı sıra Afrika bölgesinin fakirlik ve imkanlardan yoksunluk durumunu da fırsata çevirerek Vahhabilik'i bu gölgede yayma çalışmaları içine girmiştir. İslami faaliyetleri bir strateji olarak kullanan Suudi Arabistan hac mevsiminde kesilen kurban etlerini özellikle Sudan, Nijerya, Somali, Mali, Nijer gibi çevre ülkelere göndererek bir aidiyet bağı oluşturmayı sağlamıştır.

Suudi Arabistan Selefilik'i yaymak amacı ile Mali, Sudan ve Çad ve diğer Afrika ülkelerindeki öğrencilere burs vermektedir. Bu stratejide önemli olan nokta Afrika toplumunun büyük bir kısmının ameli

⁶ <https://agendaforhumanity.org/stakeholder/479.html>

mezhep olarak Maliki ya da Şafi oluşu ve tasavvuf ekolünü benimsemiş olmasıdır. Ahmet-el Ticani önderliğinde faaliyetlerine başlayan Ticani Tarikatı Afrika'nın büyük bir bölümünde etkili olmuştur. Nijerya, Nijer, Senegal, Moritanya, Togo, Gambiya, Mali gibi ülkelerde halkın genel inancını ifade etmektedir (Kocaoğlu, 2017, s. 346). Suudi Arabistan'ın bölgedeki faaliyetleri öğrenci hareketlilikleri, cami inşası ve imam atamaları, vakıf faaliyetleri ile birlikte halkın inanç eğiliminde Selefilik'e doğru bir yönelim gözlenmektedir. Bu noktada Selefi ideolojiyi takip eden "İzale Hareketi" Suudi Arabistan rejimi ile ilişkileri bulunmaktadır (Ferhavi, 2015, s. 10).

Strateji bir öneme sahip olan Somali Selefilik'in yaygın olduğu bir diğer Afrika ülkesidir. Ülke ilk olarak Şii inancının etkisine girmiş fakat sonraki süreçte Suudi Arabistan'ın yayılcı politikası sonucu Selefilik'e doğru yönelmiştir. Halkın genel eğilimi olmama Selefilik olmamasına karşın Selefi bir örgüt olan el- Kaide örgütü ile bağlantılı eş-Şebab bir azınlık örgüt olarak Somali genelinde etkinliğini sürdürmektedir. Bir diğer politika ise Yemen'de kain Demmac köyünde İslami ilimler ve hadis halkalarının olduğu Demmac Dar-el Hadis okulunu Vahhabilik'i yayma faaliyetleri ile Yemen olmuştur. Bu okulda Vahhabi öğretiler okutulmakta ve Suudi rejimine bağlılığını arttırmaktadırlar (Kocaoğlu, 2017, ss. 346-347).

Asya'da Selefilik ve Vahhabilik

Afrika kıtasında olduğu gibi eğitim, medrese ve öğrenci bursları ile Asya kıtasında da yayılcı politikasına devam eden Suudi Arabistan, Hindistan'da Şah Veliyullah tarafından kurulan "Ehl-i Hadis" cemaati tasavvufu ve bidatleri reddetmeleri ve hadisleri zahiri anlamıyla anlamaları ve mezar ziyaretlerine reddetmelerinden dolayı Suudi Arabistan'ın fahri konsolosluğunu yapmaktadır. SSCB'nin dağılması ile bölgede oluşan siyasal boşluk ve inanç karmaşası Suudi Arabistan'ın özellikle Kafkaslar ve Orta Asya'da varlığını arttırması ile sonuçlanmıştır. Öğrenci hareketliliği neticesinde Suudi Arabistan'a gelerek Medine İslam, Ümmül Kur'a ve Kral Faysal üniversitelerinde

Vahhabi temelli eğitim alan öğrenciler ülkelerine döndüklerinde bu ideolojiyi yayma sürecine girmişlerdir. Bunun yanı sıra Suudi rejimi bölgenin ekonomik sıkıntılarında faydalanarak, sivil toplum kuruluşları, mali destekler, burs ve finans ihtiyaçlarını karşılayarak Vahhabiliğin toplum içindeki etkinliğini arttırmaya çalışmıştır (Kocaoğlu, 2017, s. 347).

Ruslara karşı başlatılan ve genel eğilimi tasavvuf ve Mâturîdî olan mücahid hareketi zamanla Suudi etkisine girerek radikalleşme eğilimi göstermiş ve Çeçenler içinde Vahhabilik baskın bir itikat haline gelmiştir

Sonuç

Yumuşak gücün bir unsuru olarak ele alınan kamu diplomasisi bir başka ülkenin kamuoyunu bilgilendirme ve bu vesile ile etkileyip cezbetme çabası olarak ele alınmaktadır. Bu noktada bir ulusun dış politikasına hizmet eden bir araç olarak değerlendirilen kamu diplomasisi ile dış politika arasında karşılıklı bir sinerjinin oluşması beklenmektedir. Bu noktada içerisinde diyalektik bir söylem barındıran İran ve Suudi Arabistan'ın dini diplomasi stratejisi her iki ülkenin dış politikasında önemli bir konuma sahiptir. Özellikle 1979 İran İslam Devrimi ile başlayan devrim ihracı politikası ve Şiiilerin hamiliği rolü İran'ının dış politikasında bir diplomatik bir argüman olarak kullanılırken, Suudi Arabistan ise Vahhabilik'i devletin resmi inanç sistemi haline getirerek, Mekke ve Medine gibi Müslümanlar için kutsal sayılan bölgesini dış politika unsuru olarak kullanıp bölgedeki etkinliğini artırma çabasına girmiştir. Din kavramını dar anlamda mezhepsel politika unsuru olarak ele alan her iki ülke kendilerine biçtikleri hamilik rolü ile Şii ve Vahhabi inanç sistemini toprakları dışına ihraç ederek nüfuzunu artırma yoluna gitmişlerdir.

İnanç diplomasisinin tartışmalı konularda barışı sağlamak ve ortak aklı ön plana çıkartarak sorunlara çözümler üretmek amacının dışında ülkelerin bölgesel ve küresel etkinliklerini artırmak ve dış politikalarında nüfuz elde etmek maksadı ile de kullanım alanı vardır.

Dış politikasında dini etkin bir şekilde kullanan İran ve Suudi Arabistan sahip olduğu inan sistemini ihraç etme doğrultusunda gerçekleştirdiği inanç diplomasisi bu kapsamda etkin bir politika aracı olarak kullanılmaktadır.

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The US Foreign Aid to Middle East and North Africa in Bush and Obama Era

Yunus Yıldırım*

Abstract: Middle East and North Africa has been of political and strategic importance to the United States (The US) since late eighteenth century. The 2001 Twin Towers hit provided a legitimate basis for The US intervention in Middle East. Acting with the motives of "restructuring" and "preserving democracy" in the face of the destruction and damage that occurred in Iraq after the occupation, the US provided a large amount of foreign aid to Middle East and North African countries between 2003 and 2015. The negative American image left in the region during Bush era was tried to be eliminated in various ways during Obama era. According to official figures, aids increased in 2003-2009, varying from country to country, and decreased every year since 2010. This gives hints and insight about the situation the US was in, the strategy it wanted to follow and the impression it wanted to make. In the first part of the article, the general framework of the concept, types and characteristics of foreign aid is drawn, and a general view of the development aid provided on a world scale is presented. In the second part, the foreign aid policy of the US is briefly explained and a general picture of the US's foreign aids between 2003 and 2015 is drawn. In the third part, situation, sectors and amounts of US foreign aids to Middle East and North Africa in 2001-2015 (Bush and Obama Periods) is analyzed and evaluated within the framework of OECD and USAID data.

Keywords: Middle East and North Africa, US Foreign Policy, Foreign Aid, US Foreign Aid

ABD'nin Bush ve Obama Dönemleri Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika Dış Yardımları

Öz: XVIII. yy sonlarından bu yana, Orta Doğu ve Kuzey Afrika, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri için politik ve stratejik öneme sahip olagelmıştır. 2001 İkiz Kulelerin vurulması, ABD'nin Ortadoğu'ya müdahalesi için meşru bir zemin teşkil etmiştir. İşgal sonrası Irak'ta meydana gelen tahribat ve zararlar karşısında "yeniden yapılandırma" ve demokrasinin te'mini" saikleriyle hareket eden ABD, 2003-2015 yıllarında, Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika ülkeleri için büyük miktarda dış yardımda bulunmuştur. Bölgede, Bush döneminde bırakılan olumsuz Amerikan imajı, Obama döneminde çeşitli yollarla giderilmeye çalışılmıştır. Resmî rakamlara göre yapılan yardımlar, 2003-2009 yıllarında ülkeden ülkeye değişiklik gösterecek şekilde artış, 2010 yılından itibaren her geçen yıl azalış göstermiştir. Bu ise, ABD'nin içinde bulunduğu durum, izlemek istediği strateji ve oluşturmak istediği izlenim konusunda ipuçları vermektedir. Makalenin birinci bölümünde dış yardım kavramı, türleri ve niteliklerinin genel çerçevesi çizilmiş ve dünya ölçeğinde yapılan kalkınma yardımlarının genel bir görünümü sunulmuştur. İkinci bölümünde ABD'nin dış yardım politikası kısaca izah edilmiş ve 2003-2015 yılları arası ABD'nin Dış Kalkınma Yardımlarının dünya ölçeğindeki genel bir resmi çizilmiştir. Üçüncü bölümde ise ABD'nin 2001-2015 yıllarında (Bush ve Obama Dönemleri) Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika dış yardım durumu, sektörleri, miktarları OECD ve USAID verileri çerçevesinde analiz edilerek değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ortadoğu-Kuzey Afrika, ABD Dış Politikası, Dış Yardım, Amerikan Dış Yardımları,

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Introduction

The beginning of the United States' interest in Middle East dates back to the 1770s, when it gained its independence. In the mentioned period, this geography was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. For that reason, the US made attempts to establish diplomatic relations and make treaties with the Ottoman Empire during the reigns of Benjamin Franklin, later president Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams. Middle East policy of the US at the beginning of the 20th century developed in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine. In those years, America generally maintained a neutral stance in the disputes in Europe and Middle East (Kocaoğlu, 1995, p. 98). The military, political and economic rivalries of the United States and the Soviet Union, having a say in the international system as two superpowers after the Second World War, were also reflected in Middle East geography.

Due to Its interests triggering Iran-Iraq War, the 1990 Iraq Attack and Israel's support in Middle East, and finally the shooting of the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001, the US's politics in Middle East reached its peak, and in this direction, the US occupied Iraq in 2004 by creating a New Strategy Document. The Bush administration, arguing that the biggest threat to the US came from Middle East, determined new policies towards the region and Its activities in Middle East gained great intensity. The aim of the US was to establish Its dominance in that region and to shape there in line with Its own interests. (Silahçioğlu, 2006, p. 19). The US abandoned the traditional foreign policy strategy of containment and deterrence after 9/11 and started to implement the pre-emptive strategy. (Akdemir, 2011, p. 316)

The Great Middle East Project (GMEP), which occupied an important place in the execution of US foreign policy, was designed to protect and develop US interests in the region. One of the goals of the GMEP was democratization. In order to realize that goal, the US aimed to transform the Great Middle East region into an information society on the grounds of ensuring democratization. For that purpose, it was

envisaged to reduce the illiteracy rate by half in the region where 800 million people live, to train one hundred thousand female teachers, to establish internet networks, to donate books to schools and to translate world classics into Arabic (Bal, 2008, p. 112).

In the course of time, the Great Middle East Project was transformed into The Greater Middle East Project to include North Africa, the Caucasus and Central Asian countries, and it was aimed to establish regimes compatible with the West, with various methods ranging from civil society movements to the use of force in the geography extending to China. (Bilgin 2008, p. 414). In June 2004, with the G8 summit held in the Sea Island region of the US state of Georgia, it was called „the Greater Middle East and North Africa Project“. It aimed at the realization of concrete demands like supporting education, attracting more women to the public sphere, strengthening democracy, preventing terrorism, drug and arms smuggling, giving more importance to human rights in Middle East. The US put forward that project after the Afghanistan and Iraq interventions. The pioneers of the project are the US Neoconservatives.

The project pursued the goals of restoring the distorted image of the United States, realizing the regional interests of the United States, and eliminating the alleged threats to itself and Its ally, Israel. The project supported the democratization discourse of the US as well as the restructuring of the countries of the region; It was expected that people of Middle East countries would reach a better situation according to the democratic and economic criteria. Thereby, while controlling natural resources on the one hand, the US would strengthen Its central position by determining the country regimes and its reflection at the international level on the other. (Bilgin, 2008, p. 415). As it is seen, the US had economic, strategic and political interests in the region and steers its plans in line with these interests.

The US's aggressive and unjust policies in Middle East by taking Israel by Its side in the "war against terrorism" is one of the foundations of

anti-Americanism; that attitude also motivated anti-American extremists and gathered supporters. The messages that George W. Bush gave after September 11 and the policies he followed, the failure in Iraq caused the image of the US to be shaken. (Ersoy-Öztürk, 2009, p. 6). The US has begun to be perceived as a "military monster" with the policies It implemented after 9/11. It globalized its own interests with a one-sided perspective, and this attitude brought imperial tyranny. That attitude of the US destroyed and marginalized Its image in the eyes of peoples of Middle East. (Johnson, 2005, p. 5). Thomas Barnett, in his book "Great Powers, America and the World After Bush", mentions the "seven major sins" that George W. Bush committed during his rule. (Barnett, 2009, pp. 5-35).

After Obama came to power, the negative reflections of the Bush administration and its practices were tried to be eliminated. It can be stated that during the Obama Era, the US tried to implement policies that were multilateral, based on diplomacy, focused on the use of soft power, adopted territorial rather than regional approaches, and did not ignore internal dynamics. (Dikmen et al., 2009, p. 23) With Obama's ascension to the presidency, the US's global strategic goal did not changed, but its tools towards the goals changed. It was evaluated that it was necessary to re-orient to Greater Middle East and to give importance to American diplomacy in Middle East anew (Silindir, 2009, pp. 135-137).

Considering the GMEP, Greater Middle East Project, negative image caused by Bush era, and Obama's use of soft power, it is important to reveal flow and amounts of the USA aids to the region, and to observe and analyze changes in type and amount of the aids. Thereby, aim of the present work is to examine relationship of US foreign aid to Middle East and North Africa with the US foreign policy. The work is limited with Bush and Obama Era since strategic goals (both middle east projects) started in Bush era and maintained partly in Obama era. Thus, the work answers how the US aid to the region progressed in line with US foreign policy.

Aids to be examined in the study are Official Development Assistances (ODA) given to low-income countries in the form of development assistance, and Official Assistance (OA) given to relatively wealthy countries such as Israel, Russia and Ukraine. In the first part of the study, the concept of foreign aid, its characteristics and types are briefly presented, and an overview of worldwide development Assistance is provided. In the second part, a general picture of the US development aid policy is drawn and its official development assistance in the years 2003-2015 is shown, and in the third part, data in relation to sectors and amounts of the US' s Foreign Aid to Middle East and North Africa during Bush and Obama era are evaluated in the light of OECD and USAID reports.

The Concept, Purpose, Characteristics, and Types of Foreign Aid

Foreign aid refers to the international movement of money, services, or goods from governments or international institutions for the benefit of the receiving country or its citizens. Foreign aid can be fiscal, military, or humanitarian and is considered one of the significant sources of foreign exchange. It is the voluntary movement of money or other resources from one nation to another. The transactions are mostly from developed countries to developing countries. A developing nation typically lacks a strong manufacturing base and is distinguished by a low value of the Human Development Index (HDI). Foreign aid may be offered as a contribution or a loan, which can either be a hard or soft loan. If the loan is in a foreign currency, it is termed as a hard loan.

Countries also offer foreign aid in order to improve their own security. Economic aid may also be used to discourage friendly countries from coming under the control of unfriendly governments or paying for the right to set up or use military bases on foreign soil. Foreign aid can be used to accomplish the political aims of a government, allowing it to obtain diplomatic recognition, to gain respect for its role in international institutions, or to improve the accessibility of its diplomats to foreign countries.

Foreign aid also seeks to promote the exports of a country and spread its literature, culture, or religion. Countries often provide aid to relieve the distress caused by man-made or natural disasters like drought, illness, and conflict. It helps to promote sustainable prosperity, create or reinforce political institutions, and address a range of worldwide concerns, including cancer, terrorism, and other violations, and environmental degradation (CFI, 2022).

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank prepared a joint statement on the Millennium Development Goals in April 2005. They indicated how developing countries and foreign aid donors need to make the "big push" in practice to achieve their goal of halving absolute poverty by 2015. Accordingly, it is thought that within five years from 2005, foreign aid given to low-income countries and Sub-Saharan Africa should at least double (IMF and World Bank, 2005, p.8).

The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) defines foreign aid as financial flow, technical assistance and goods in the form of grants or subsidized debt, designed mainly to support welfare and economic development -thus excluding non-development aid and military aid from the definition. However, although foreign aid is expressed as a form of concessional financing, most of it is not a grant, but is repaid with a certain interest rate on the principal.

Military aid is given to "assist the defense" of an ally or to "help a poor country maintain its dominance" within its territory. But, it is not included in foreign aid calculations as defined by the DAC. The DAC classifies aid flows into three broad categories based on the country groups to which aid is directed. Official Development Assistance from donor countries to low- and middle-income countries is the largest in terms of amount. Official Assistance is given to relatively wealthy countries such as the Bahamas, Israel, and Singapore, and countries of the former Soviet Union, with a per capita income of approximately \$9000. Finally, Private Voluntary Aid includes aid given by non-

governmental organizations, religious groups, charities and private companies (Radelet, 2006, p. 21)

Depending on the institutions giving aid, there exists two different types of aid. The first of these is bilateral assistance in the form of low-interest and long-term loans provided by the government of a developed country to the government of an underdeveloped country for the purpose of economic development. These aids can be in the form of program or project loans, but are generally conditional on the purchase of export goods of the donor country. Multilateral aid consists of loans from various international, economic and financial institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, African and Asian Development Banks, United Nations Development Programme (Seyyidoğlu, 2001, p. 702). Aids to be examined in this study are Official Development Assistances and Official Assistance.

Table 1: (OECD, 2015, p.289)

*An Overview of Worldwide Development Assistance
USA Million Dollars*

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total ODA	83	89	93	98	128	122	113
Aid based on National Income Percentage	0,23	0,25	0,25	0,25	0,32	0,30	0,27
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total ODA	126	127	134,8	132,4	127,6	134,5	70,6
Aid based on National Income Percentage	0,29	0,31	0,32	0,31	0,29	0,30	0,43

Table 1 shows the course of official development assistance from 2001 to 2014. It can be seen that the total aid to least developed countries (LDCs) increased from 2001 to 2006, decreased in 2007, increased in 2008 -2010, decreased in 2011-2013, finally in 2014' da decreased by a large margin.

When the table 2 is examined, it is noteworthy that the total aid

provided around the world increased nearly twice in 2007-08 compared to 2002-03. It is seen that amount of aid decreased in 2012-13 period.

Table 2 (OECD, 2015, p. 290)

DAC Donors 'Development Aid to Middle East and North Africa

Total Net % Expenditure

DAC MEM.CON.	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA		
	2002-03	2007-08	2012-13
Australia	4.7	14.7	3.9
Austria	12.3	43.1	8.4
Belgium	5.4	12.2	9.2
Canada	6.6	7.3	6.2
Czech Republic	40.0	12.2	13.4
Denmark	6.8	8.4	11.3
Finland	9.4	8.3	8.6
France	14.2	20.6	16.3
Germany	10.5	27.3	13.9
Greece	11.4	15.0	17.3
Iceland	9.9	6.8	10.4
Ireland	6.2	4.9	7.4
Italy	11.6	29.1	13.8
Japan	4.3	20.6	8.3
Korea	10.2	10.7	4.7
Luxembourg	10.5	6.7	7.1
The Netherlands	7.5	7.8	9.7
New Zeland	6.6	2.8	1.9
Norway	10.2	8.4	9.5
Poland	7.1	10.8	13.0
Portugal	5.9	17.3	11.1
Slovak Rep.	9.5	9.5	14.3
Slovenia	11.0	11.6
Spain	12.4	15.2	15.1
Sweden	6.9	8.1	10.9
Switzerland	5.5	9.6	9.2
United Kingdom	7.9	10.3	9.1
USA	20.9	25.7	13.1
Total DAC	11.5	18.9	11.2
DAC-EU Countries	10.1	18.1	12.3

US Foreign Aid Policy and Overview of Its Foreign Aid

The foreign aid of the US has been carried out by USAID (United States Agency for International Development) since 1961. The US, which aimed to eliminate Communism during the Cold War and used its aid for this purpose, changed the content of its foreign aid policy especially after the events of September 11 and increased the amount of foreign aid it provided. It emphasized the following principles of basic US foreign aid in the post-9/11 period

- Promoting development, in particular governance, institutional capacity and economic restructuring,
- Strengthening fragile or failed states
- Increasing humanitarian aid
- Assisting countries where the US has geo-strategic interests, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt and Israel
- Effectively fighting against global epidemics or diseases such as HIV/AIDS (Bealinger, 2006, p. 5).

After 9/11, the fight against terrorism has gained strategic importance in US foreign aid. Institutions responsible for foreign aid in 2002 (USAID, International Relations Committee in the Senate, Foreign Relations Committee in the House of Representatives) stated that about 30 states were fighting against terrorism, they underlined that these states should be given priority in foreign aid policy. Around the same time, the Bush Administration also stated that the fight against terrorism is the main priority area in foreign aid. Apart from this basic area, promoting economic development, reducing poverty and combating HIV/AIDS on a global scale have also been identified as key priorities. (Tanoff, 2005, pp.2-4).

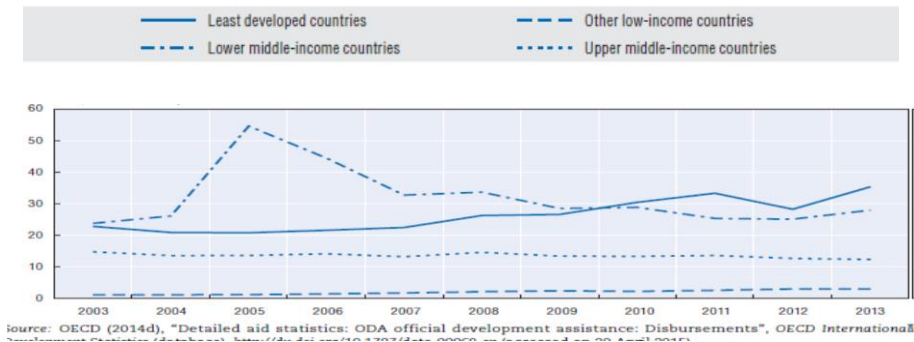
In the first period of the George Bush administration, he adopted

increasing foreign aid as a foreign policy tool. An attempt was made in the field of foreign aid during the George Bush era. With this program called the Millennium Struggles Account Program, studies on where and for what purpose foreign aid will be provided have been accelerated. (Vásquez, 2003).

- Fair Administration,
- Increasing investments
- Ensuring economic freedom clauses

In the official discourse, the foreign aid policies of the George Bush era were revealing the main objectives (Radelet, 2003, p. 104).

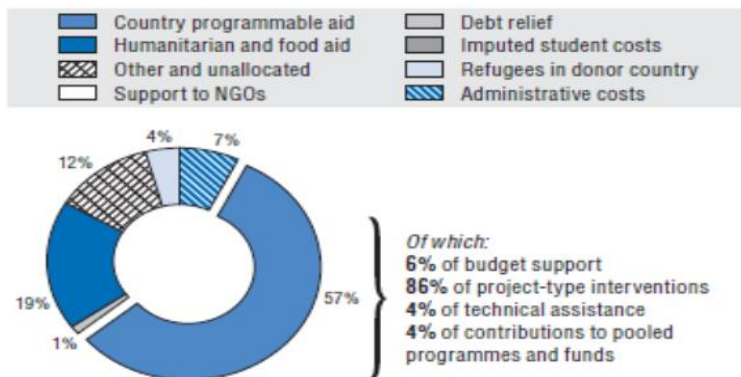
An Overview on Foreign Development Assistance of the US in 2003-2015



Graph 1: Bilateral Aids by Income Group Gross Expenditures (OECD, 2015, p. 290)

The increase in development assistance in the last ten years benefited all income groups, including the least developed countries. Despite nearly two-thirds increase in aid, only 4 least developing countries (Afghanistan, Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Sudan/South Sudan) benefited. There seems a decrease in aid to these countries in 2011- 2011, In 2013 an increase is seen again due to the Myanmar Debt Relief program.

The net aid provided by the US in 2014 was 32,7 million dollars. This figure represents 0.19 of the GDP and an increase of 2.3% since 2013. It is the world's 19th largest DAC donor by percentage of GDP and the largest by volume in official development assistance. 2013 The donation element of the total aid is 100%. In 2013, 57% of bilateral aid was programmed at the partner country level. Programmable aid share is higher than the DAC country average (54,5%). A high proportion of bilateral aid has been allocated to humanitarian and food aid. In 2012, half of bilateral aid was allocated to social infrastructure and services. In total, out of \$13,3 million, \$5,1 million was spent on population policies and programs, \$4.8 million on government and civil society, and \$4 million on humanitarian aid.

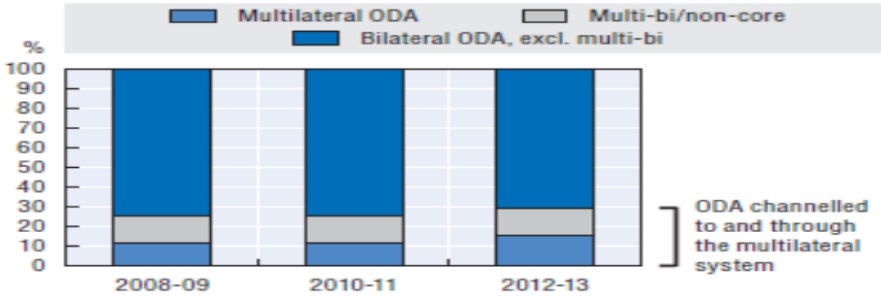


Graph 2: Bilateral aid sectors, 2013 Gross Expenditures (OECD, 2014, p. 379)

As it is seen in the graph 2, aid sectors include country programmable aid, humanitarian and food aid, debt relief, imputed student costs, refugees in donor country, administrative costs, Support to NGOs and other unallocated expenditures. The largest of these is country programmable aid with a rate of 57%, 19% allocated to humanitarian and food aid, 12% to other and unallocated expenditures, 7% to administrative costs, 4% to refugees in donor countries and 1% to non-governmental organizations. Of the 57% country programmable aid programs, 6% consists of budget support, 86% project-type interventions, 4% technical assistance, 4% contribution to pooled

programs and funds.

Aid Share through Multi-System: 2-year average gross expenditure

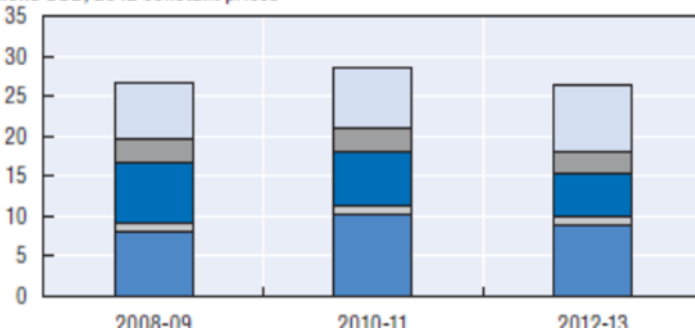


Graph 3: (OECD, 2014, p. 381)

In 2013, 86% of development aids were given bilaterally. The United States allocated 14% of its total aid to multilateral organizations as the main contribution, compared to the average of 27% of DAC member states. In addition, it channelled 16% of their bilateral aid to special projects implemented by multilateral organizations.



Billions USD, 2012 constant prices



Graph 4: Two-Year Average Gross Expenditures (OECD, 2014, p. 381)

As seen in the graph 4, in all three periods, the highest amount of aid was allocated to the least developed and low-income countries, and the least amount of aids to upper-middle and other low-income countries.



Figure 1: Average share of aid provided by the US in the period of 2012-2013 by sector (OECD, 2014, p. 381)

According to the Figure 1, in 2012-2013 period, 29% of budget was allocated to Education, Health and Population, 20% to other social infrastructure, 17% to humanitarian aid, 11% to unspecified, 8% to economic infrastructure, 6% to multi-sector, 6% to production, 3% program assistance, and 0% to debt relief items.

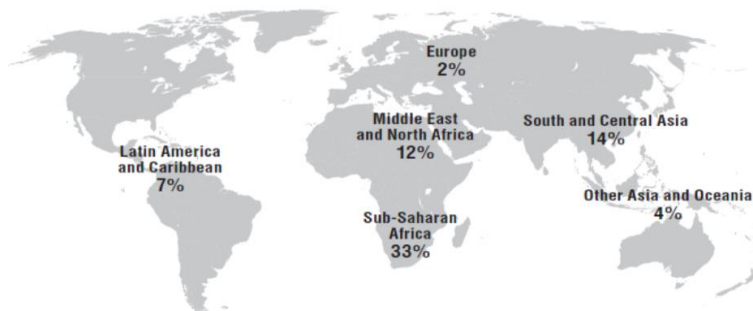
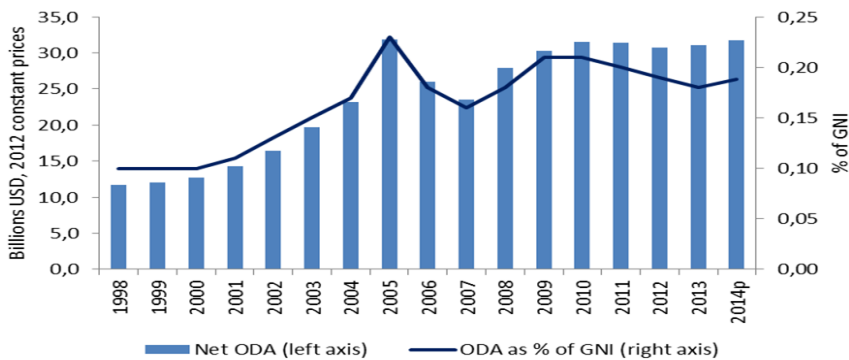


Figure 2: U.S. bilateral development assistance by region, 2012-13 average gross expenditure (OECD, 2014, p. 382).

Regionally, the highest values in foreign aid are seen in Sub-Saharan Africa with 33%, South and Central Asia with 14% and Middle East and North Africa with 12%. The lowest value in the aid provided by the US is the European region with 2%. According to these data, Southern Sahara Africa, where poverty is widespread and deep, takes the first place. There has been a significant increase in the amount of aid allocated to the region in parallel with the introduction of the

Millennium Development Goals. Amount of aid reached highest level in 2005. There seems a sharp decline in 2007. The amount of foreign aid declined below the level reached in 2003 at constant prices.

More than half of bilateral development assistance in 2013 was allocated to social infrastructure and services. Of this total amount of \$14 million, \$5.8 million was for population policies and programs, \$4.6 million for government and civil society support, and \$5 million for humanitarian aid.



Graph 5: 1998-2014 US Net Official Development Assistance: GNI share (OECD, 2015, p. 383)

According to the graph 5, the biggest increase in net development aids of the US was realized in 2005 with fixed dollar prices in 2012. The lowest values are observed in 1998. The aid, which started to rise in 1999, peaked in 2005. Similar values are also available in 2011 and 2014. But these values are seen after a normal rise. The aid, which was around 20.25 million dollars in 2004, increased to 30.25 in 2005, that’s an increase of 10 million dollars. Net ODA (Official Development Aid), which started to decline again after 2005, started to increase in 2008. There seems a similar situation in GDP.

US Foreign Aid to Middle East and North Africa in the Bush and Obama Era

Bush (2001-2009) and Obama period aids (2010-2015) to Middle East and North Africa are analyzed comparatively in the light of US foreign policy and the data in 2001-2015 USAID and OECD Reports.

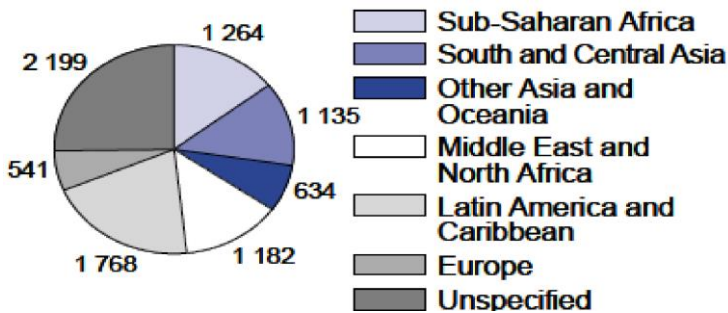
US Foreign Aid to Middle East and North Africa in the Bush Era

The Great Middle East and The Greater Middle East Project were launched in that period. After 9/11 September, US Foreign policy focused mostly on Middle East, which can be reflected in aids to the region. In the 2001 period, 3 of the 10 countries benefitting the most from US aid according to national income were Middle East and North African countries. Those are Egypt in the 2nd top with 808 USD m (United States million dollar), Israel in the 3rd top with 568 USD m and Jordan in the 7th top with 173 USD m (OECD, 2002).

Table 3 (OECD, 2002, p. 116)

Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA/OA (US\$ million)		
1	Russia (OA)	834
2	Egypt	808
3	Israel (OA)	568
4	Pakistan	438
5	Ukraine (OA)	246
6	Colombia	228
7	Jordan	173
8	F.R.of Yugoslavia	159
9	Peru	158
10	Indonesia	158

Although Russia was the country receiving the most aid as an individual country, Middle East and North Africa ranked higher in total aid with 1182 million dollars.



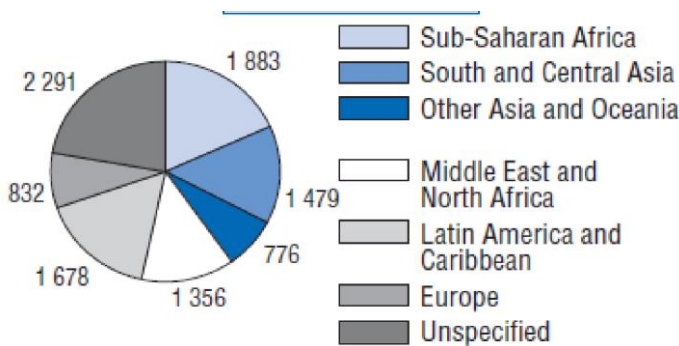
Graph 5 (OECD, 2002 p. 116)

As it can be understood from the graph 5, Middle East was the third region to receive the most aid after Latin America-Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa regions.

Table 4 (OECD, 2003, p. 102)

Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA/OA (US\$ million)		
1	Egypt	919
2	Russia (OA)	813
3	Israel (OA)	529
4	Pakistan	494
5	Serbia and Montenegro	353
6	Colombia	330
7	Ukraine (OA)	257
8	Jordan	225
9	Peru	188
10	Afghanistan	188

Of the 10 countries to benefit most from US aid for 2002, Egypt ranks first, Israel ranks third, and Jordan ranks eighth. In addition, since 2000, the amount of aid given to Egypt and Jordan seems to increase every year. Although Israel was one of the top 10 countries in 2002, the amount of aid it receives decreases every year (OECD, 2003).



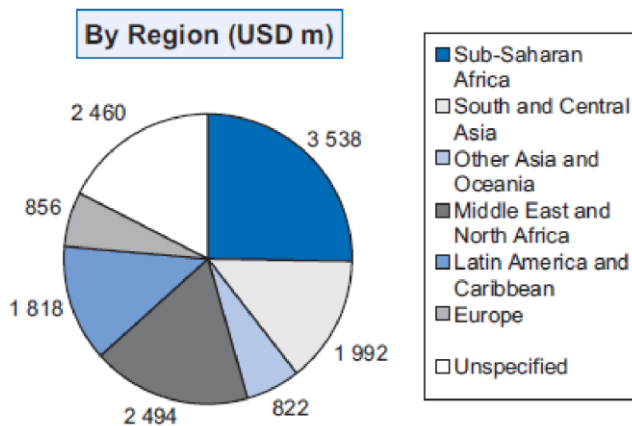
Graph 6 (OECD, 2003, p. 102)

In the graph 6, regionally, Middle East and North Africa ranks fourth after South and Central-Asia in the amount of aid.

Table 5 (OECD, 2004, p. 104)

Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA/OA (US\$ million)		
1	Egypt	831
2	Russia (OA)	808
3	Iraq	775
4	Congo, Dem.Rep.	749
5	Israel (OA)	666
6	Pakistan	656
7	Jordan	622
8	Colombia	513
9	Afghanistan	427
10	Ethiopia	374

According to the table 5, Egypt seems to have benefited the most from US aid in the 2003-2004 period. While 919 USD m of aid was allocated for Egypt in 2002, 831 USD m was allocated for It in 2003. In that period, Irak ranked among 10 top countries to receive the most aid for the first time and had been third country to receive the most aid after Russia. Totally, 4 Middle East countries, including Israel 5th and Jordan 7th, ranked among the top 10 beneficiaries of aid. Therefore, an increase was observed in the amount of aid to Middle East countries such as Iraq, Isreal and Jordan except for Egypt, compared to 2002 (OECD, 2004, p. 104).



Graph 7 (OECD, 2004, p. 105)

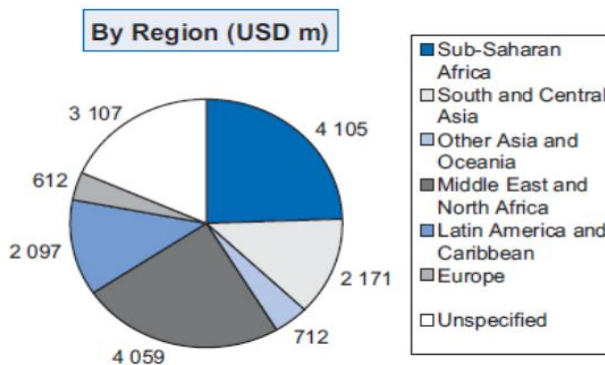
When considered regionally, Middle East and North Africa became the

second largest beneficiary region, after Sub-Saharan Africa, with 2494 USD m. The fact that Iraq was the critical target point for the US in that period and that It wanted to get the support of other Middle East countries for that aim accounts for the increase in the amount of aid.

Table 6 (OECD, 2005, p. 105)

Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA/OA (US\$ million)		
1	Iraq	2286
2	Congo Dem. Rep.	804
3	Egypt	767
4	Russia (OA)	737
5	Jordan	666
6	Afghanistan	632
7	Pakistan	590
8	Colombia	536
9	Israel (OA)	525
10	Ethiopia	500

As shown in the table 6, Iraq became the biggest beneficiary with 2286 USD m. This amount increased 3.5 times compared to the previous period. Egypt ranked the top 3rd with 767 USD m. However, this amount seems to be lower compared to the previous year. Jordan comes in 5th place. It received more aid than in the previous period. While Israel was in the 5th top as a beneficiary in the previous period, that time it fell to the 9th. In other words, 666 USD m aid decreased to 525 USD m.



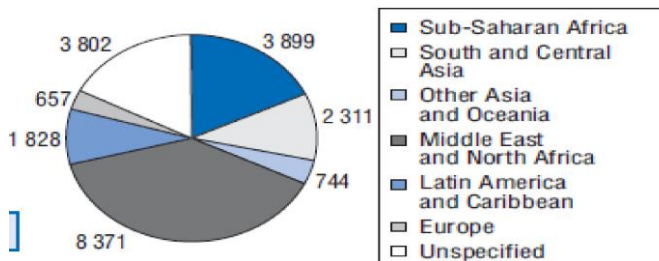
Graph 8 (OECD, 2005, p. 104)

According to the graph 8, Middle East and North Africa, as the beneficiary of US aid, came close to the 1st place. That lies in the political and economic strategic goals of the US such as Its desire to compensate for the great material damage it had done to Iraq, shaping the region as it wished, breaking the Anti-American thought emerged in the region and giving peaceful messages.

Table 7 (OECD, 2006)

Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA/OA (US\$ million)		
1	Iraq	6926
2	Afghanistan	1060
3	Egypt	750
4	Sudan	575
5	Ethiopia	552
6	Jordan	368
7	Colombia	366
8	Palestinian Adm. Areas	227
9	Uganda	225
10	Pakistan	224

As seen in the table 7, it is noteworthy that Iraq was at the top of aid beneficiaries by a large margin (6926 USD m). It is 6 times more than Afghanistan following itself. Egypt was ranked in the 3rd place, Jordan was in the 6th place, and the Palestinian Administrative region is in the 8th place. Since 2002, Afghanistan had been receiving increasing amounts of US aid. The amount allocated to Egypt and Jordan decreased compared to the previous year. Israel was not among the top 10 beneficiary countries for the first time in that period (OECD, 2006, p. 99).



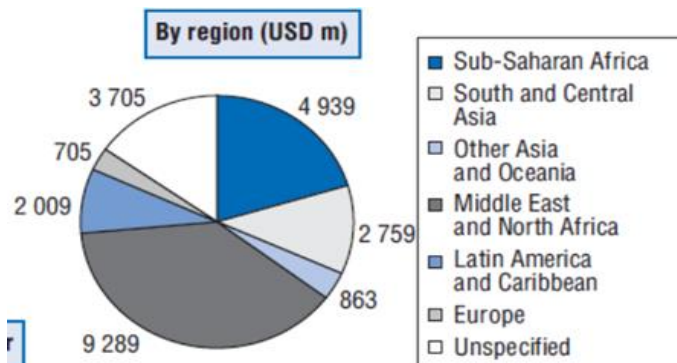
Graph 9: (ECD, 2006, p. 99)

As shown in graph 9, regionally Middle East and North Africa had ranked first for the first time as the beneficiary of US Aid. Of the total expenditure of 8371 USD m, 6926 USD m was allocated only to Iraq. This large amount was spent mostly for the reconstruction works of Iraq. During that period, Middle East received more than twice the amount of aid as its closest follower, Sub-Saharan Africa.

Table 8 (OECD, 2007, p. 100)

Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA/OA (US\$ million)		
1	Iraq	8005
2	Afghanistan	1361
3	Sudan	749
4	Colombia	588
5	Egypt	504
6	Ethiopia	498
7	Congo, Dem. Rep.	491
8	Nigeria	443
9	Pakistan	410
10	Jordan	346

According to the table 8, Iraq has received the highest amount of aid from the US in the period of 2006-2007 from until today as well as being the biggest beneficiary of ODA with 8005 USD m. Although Egypt was in the 5th place and Jordan was in the 10th place, the aid they received still decreased compared to the previous period (OECD, 2007).



Graph 10 (OECD, 2007, p. 91)

As three Middle East Countries received more aid than each other region, Middle East and North Africa ranked biggest beneficiary for the second time. It is almost twice as large as its closest follower, Sub-Saharan Africa.

Us Foreign Aid to Middle East and North Africa in the Obama Era

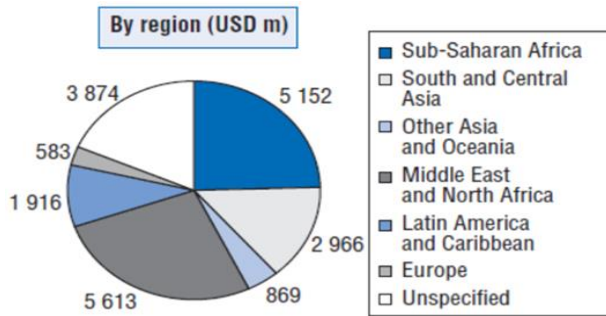
In that period, US maintains Its Greater Middle East Policy and depends majorly on soft power tools. Most aid expenditures are on democracy and governance, economic developments education and social services, environmental and health field, peace and security. Restoration work in Iraq still continues.

According to the table 9, although Iraq ranks first as a beneficiary, the amount It received in that period decreased by nearly 50% compared to the 2006-2007 period. Egypt received a higher amount of aid (541 USD m) compared to the previous period (504 USD m). During that period, Jordan is not among the top 10 beneficiaries.

Table 9 (OECD, 2009, p. 130)

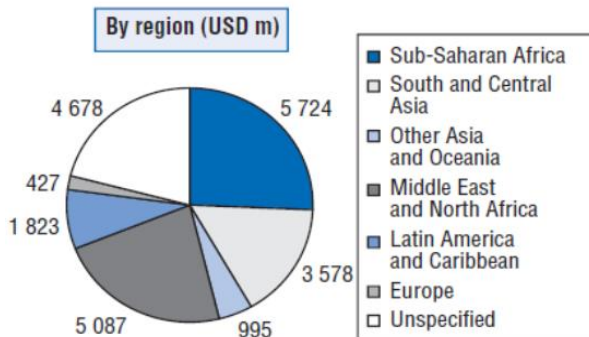
Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA/OA (US\$ million)		
1	Iraq	4266
2	Afghanistan	1459
3	Sudan	725
4	Colombia	562
5	Egypt	541
6	Nigeria	514
7	Congo, Dem. Rep.	486
8	Pakistan	465
9	Ethiopia	344
10	Kenya	304

As shown in graph 11, Middle East and North Africa has maintained its position as the region receiving the most aid for the third time in 2009.



Graph 11 (OECD, 2009, p. 131)

According to the graph 12, Middle East and North Africa dropped to the 2nd place in 2010 while receiving the most aid in 2006-2009. Still, 5087 USD m was a good figure in total. Regionally, Sub-Saharan Africa is in the 1st place, Middle East and North Africa is in the 2nd place and other Asia and Oceania is in the 3rd place in that period.



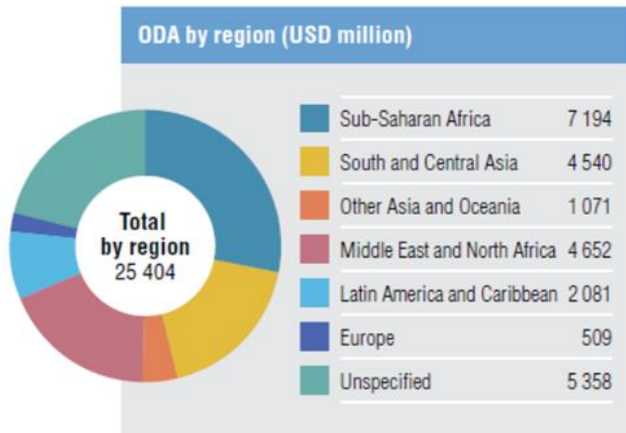
Graph 12: (OECD, 2010, p. 132)

Table 10 (OECD, 2010, p. 133)

Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA/OA (US\$ million)		
1	Iraq	3246
2	Afghanistan	1816
3	Sudan	779
4	Egypt	684
5	Ethiopia	592
6	Colombia	520

7	Pakistan	398
8	Kenya	383
9	Palestinian Adm. Areas	351
10	Uganda	327

As seen in table 10, Iraq is the biggest beneficiary in 2010, with 3246 USD m. It had maintained its position since 2005. While Egypt was in the top 5 among the beneficiaries in the last 2 years, it rose to the 4th place in that period. Palestine, which was not among the top 10 beneficiaries before 2006, rose to the 8th place in 2006. 5 years after this period, that is, in 2010, it received 351 USD m and became one of the top 10 beneficiaries with the 9th place.



Graph 13 (OECD, 2012, p. 99)

As seen in the graph 13, Middle East and North Africa in the 2nd place in 2010, fell to the 4th place in 2011. Of the total of 25404 USD m regional aid, 4552 USD m is reserved for Middle East and North Africa.

Table 11 (OECD, 2012, p. 100)

Rank	Recipient	Amount (US\$ million)
1	Afghanistan	2549
2	Iraq	2544
3	Sudan	901

4	Ethiopia	769
5	Palestinian Adm. Areas	667
6	Colombia	645
7	Egypt	552
8	Kenya	516
9	Pakistan	484
10	South Africa	451

According to the table 11, Iraq, which received the most aid in the years 2005-2010, is seen as the 2nd in 2011 ranking. It was replaced by Afghanistan with 2549 USD m. Palestine Administrative Areas had increased from 9th place to 5th place by receiving nearly twice as much aid compared to 2010. Egypt, on the other hand, fell from the 5th rank in 2010 to the 7th rank in 2011.

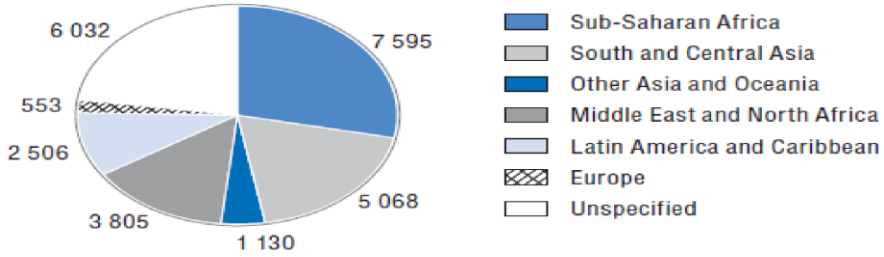
Table 12 (OECD, 2012, p. 100)

Top Ten Recipients of Bilateral Assistance (US\$ million)		
1	Afghanistan	2991
2	Iraq	1985
3	Pakistan	906
4	Sudan	840
5	Ethiopia	801
6	West Bank and Gaza Strip	783
7	Haiti	714
8	Kenya	579
9	Colombia	539
10	South Africa	527

As seen in the table 12, among Middle East countries, Iraq ranks second with 1985 USD m, West Bank and Gaza Strip ranks 6th with 783 USD m and Egypt is not seen among the top 10 beneficiary countries for the first time in 2012. Egypt having received uninterrupted assistance from the US since the 1990s, does not appear on the 2012 list.

According to graph 14, in 2012, Middle East and North Africa was the 4th region to receive the most aid from the US. Sub-Saharan Africa keeps its position as the first top. Europe was the smallest beneficiary. Moreover, 2.1 m dollars of bilateral aid was allocated for Middle East

and North Africa.



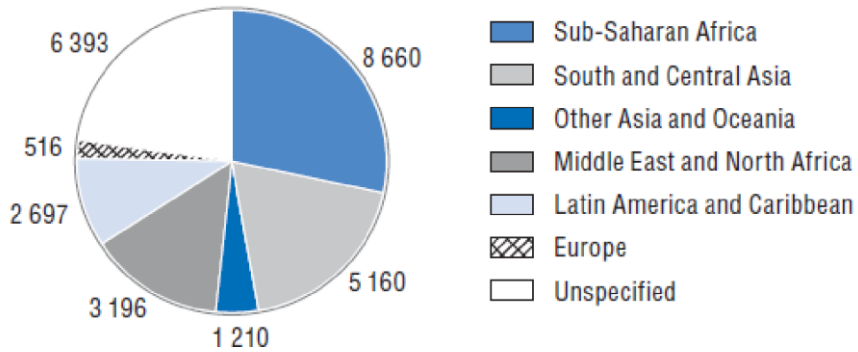
Graph 14 (OECD, 2012, p. 100)

According to the table 13, Iraq was in the 2nd place with 14443 USD and the West Bank and Gaze Strip was the 7th place with 673 USD m. Aid to both countries decreased in 2013 compared to 2012.

Table 13 (OECD, 2013, p.232)

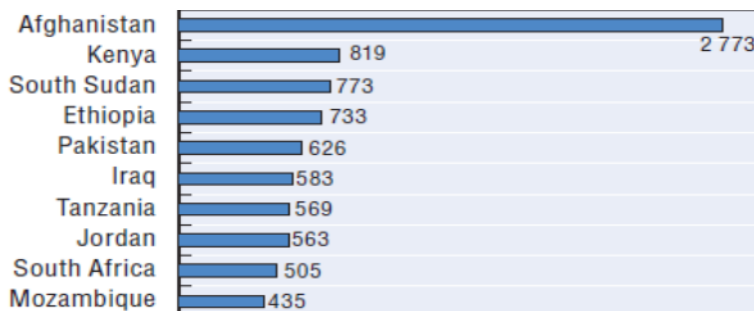
Top Ten Recipients of Aids by National Income (US\$ million)		
1	Afghanistan	2951
2	Iraq	1443
3	Pakistan	1237
4	Congo, Democratic Republic	1053
5	Haiti	864
6	Ethiopia	791
7	West Bank and Gaza Strip	673
8	Kenya	642
9	South Africa	547
10	Tanzania	496

As seen in the graph 15, Middle East and North Africa was still 4th region to receive the most aid in 2013.



Graph 15 (OECD, 2013, p. 233)

According to the graph 16, the aid to Iraq decreased approximately 3 times (583 USD m) compared to 2013 (1443 USD m) and fell to the 6th place. The West Bank and Gaza Strip were not among the top 10 aid recipients in 2014. Jordan, among the top ten for the last time in 2007, became one of the top 10 (7th place) countries receiving the most aid in 2013, 7 years later.



Graph 16 (OECD, 2014, p.85)

Share of Bilateral Aid by Region, 2011-12 Average, The US Gross Expenditure

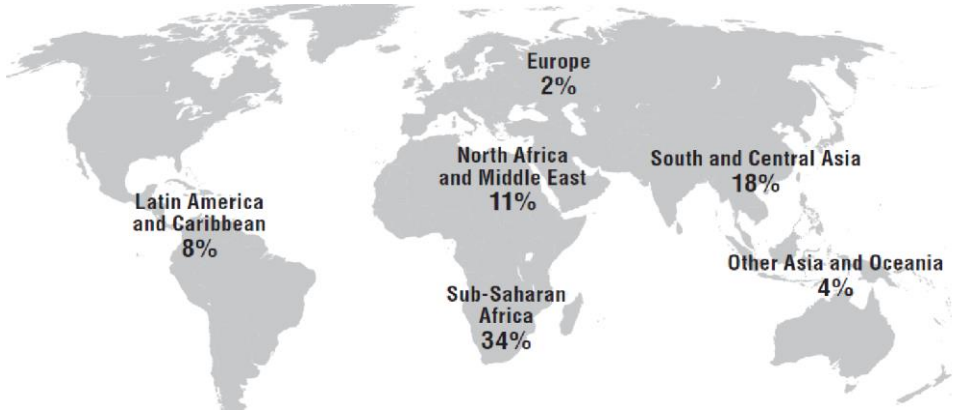
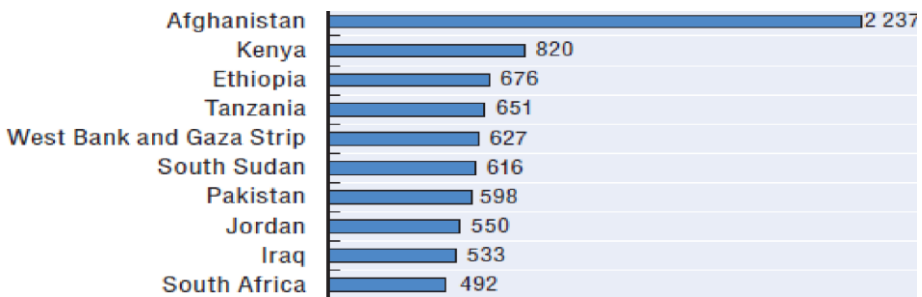


Figure 3 (OECD, 2014, p. 86)

As shown in the map, North Africa and Middle East was the 3rd region to receive the most aid with 11%. Despite that, the amount of aid given is low compared to 2012. Sub-Saharan Africa and South-Central Asia regions received the highest share of aid, respectively.

According to the graph 17, the West Bank and Gaza Strip was the 5th country to receive the most aid with 627 USD m, Jordan was the 8th country with 550 USD, and Iraq was the 9th country with 533 USD m, respectively, among Middle East countries. Egypt does not appear in that list.

Development assistance for bilateral countries: Gross expenditures in 2012-13



Graph 17 (OECD, 2015, p. 100)

Below, Middle East and North Africa is seen as the 3rd region to receive the most aid with a share of 12%.

U.S. bilateral development assistance by region, average gross expenditures in 2012-13

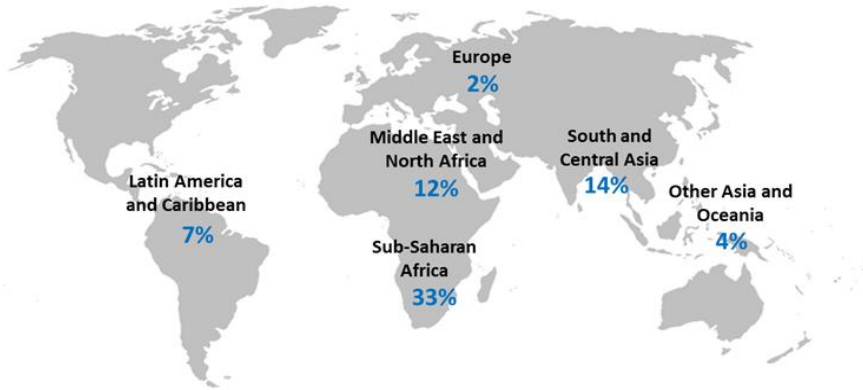


Figure 4 (OECD, 2015, p. 100)

Approximately \$6 billion of the \$35 billion financial aid provided by the United States in 2014 consisted of foreign military aid. According to the “2015 Fiscal Year Foreign Aid Report” prepared by the Department of States, the country to receive the most military aid in 2015 was Israel with 3.1 billion dollars. Following Israel, Egypt got \$1.3 billion foreign support from Washington.

Based on available USAID data, US aid expenditures in the fields of Democracy and Governance, Economic Development, Education and Social Services, Environment, Health, Peace and Security Expenditures and Program management in 2011-2015 are provided below. Each sector consists of sub-fields within itself.

Table 14 (USAID, 2022, p.55)

Democracy and Governance					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Civil Society	15.8	28.1	10.0	6.8	1.2
Good Governance	2.7	1.9	2.9	0.5	2.0
Political Competition and	1.3	10.8	3.9	8.0	5.1

Consensus					
Rules of Law and Human Rights	12.0	3.6	0.9	1.1	2.8
TOTAL- \$MILLION	31.8	44.4	17.6	16.3	11.1

If the "Democracy and Governance" sector is studied, it is seen that the most spent field in 2011-2013 is "Civil Society". In 2014 and 2015, "Political Competition and Consensus" comes first. "Civil Society" ranks 2nd in 2014 and 4th in 2015, that is, it is the field with the least expenditure. The biggest expenditure of this field was realized in 2012. As of 2013, total aid has decreased and the lowest expenditure of five years in total is seen in 2015.

Table 15 (USAID, 2022, p. 57)

Economic Development					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Agriculture	4.4	5.6	1.4	0.2	1.7
Economic Opportunity	0.0	5.8	8.2	6.2	0.4
Financial Sector	8.6	2.1	301.7	0.3	1.8
Infrastructure	-	-	0.2	0.0	0.0
Private Sector Competitiveness	5.3	17.3	23.2	14.6	10.9
Trade and Investment	0.2	1.3	0.1	4.9	3.4
Macro-economic Basis for Growth	-	-	190.4	0.6	-
TOTAL-\$MILLION	18.5	32.1	525.3	26.7	18.2

The largest aid expenditure in Economic Development is seen in 2013. In this period, "the financial sector" takes the largest share. It is followed by "macro-economic basis for growth" and "Private sector competitiveness". In total expenditure, after 2013, the years 2012, 2011 and 2015 come respectively. Therefore, the lowest aid expenditure is seen in 2015 with \$18.2 m. While "financial sector" constituted the item with the highest expenditure in 2011-2013, "Private sector competitiveness" came in 2012, 2014 and 2015.

Table 16 (USAID, 2022, p.58)

Education and Social Services					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Basic Education	15.2	15.5	17.6	12.4	12.4

Higher Education	9.5	9.1	9.1	6.7	9.1
Social Aid	0.1	9.0	11.3	1.6	0.5
TOTAL- \$MILLION	24.9	33.6	38.0	20.7	22.0

“Education and Social Services” was taken as a single item and divided into three separate fields within itself. Repeatedly, during the years 2011-2015, the most spent field is “Basic Education”. Higher education is the second highest spending field every year except 2013. “Social aid” constitutes the last item of aid, except for 2013. In total, the highest expenditure was made in 2013. While the total aid has always been on the rise since 2011, it decreased in 2014 and increased again in 2015. 2014 is the period in which total “Education and Social Aid” expenditures were the lowest.

Table 17 (USAID, 2022, p. 59)

	2011	2012	2013
ENVIRONMENT EXPENDITURE- \$MILLION	3.6	2.6	287.0

While the lowest environmental expenditure was observed in 2012, the highest expenditure was observed in 2013. No information is available about the years 2014-2015. Expenditure for 2013 alone (\$287 m) represents a very high amount.

Table 18 (USAID, 2022, p.60)

Health Expenditures -\$Million					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Family Planning and Reproductive Health	1.9	0.1	-	1.3	1.3
HIV and AIDS	0.6	0.1	-		0.1
Maternal and Child Health	0.6	-	0.1	3.6	7.6
Other Public Health Threats	4.2	0.1	2.5	0.2	2.0
Water Supply and Sanitation	12.5	15.9	16.1	6.1	6.4
Flu, Pandemic and	-	-	1.5	1.2	1.0

other threats					
Nutrition	-	-	-	-	0.7
TOTAL	19.8	16.2	20.2	12.5	19.2

In total, health expenditures are given in 2013, 2011, 2015, 2012 and 2014 respectively. Here again, as in other areas, the highest aid expenditures in 2013 are in health, too. To analyze sub-sectors, “Water Supply and Sanitation” consistently constitutes the aid item with the highest expenditure in 2011-2014. While this sector is seen in the second place in 2015, "Mother and Child health" takes the first place. It has been on the rise since 2013 and has moved to the top in health expenditures in 2015.

Table 19 (USAID, 2022, p. 61)

PEACE AND SECURITY EXPENDITURES	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Transnational Crimes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3
Counterterrorism	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.5	0.0
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.6	0.3

Peace and security expenditures have been included since 2013. The highest total expenditure was also made in that year. The decline, which started in 2014, decreased to the lowest level in 2015. Counterterrorism is the most spent aid item among the sub-sectors. It decreased in 2014 and no expenditure was made in that field in 2015. Aids that started in 2014 for “transnational crimes” increased in 2015. Totally, it still does not represent a high value.

Table 20 (USAID, 2022, p.63)

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT- \$MILLION	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	13.2	11.5	10.4	7.4	4.4

Program management expenditures, the necessary expenses for the

formation of the team to deliver the aid and for the path to be followed, were at the highest level in 2011. The amount of aid steadily decreasing every year since 2012, decreased to the lowest level in 2015. This means that the expenditures required at the initial level of program management decreased over time as the system settled.

To summarize aid expenditures, figures given in the table below emerge.

Table 21 (OECD, 2015, p. 100)

Million Dolar	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA			
	2002-03	2007-08	2012-13	2014-2015
USA	20.9	25.7	13.1	11

The US aid to Middle East and North Africa was in its normal course before 2002, but increased in the 2002-2003 period, which denotes tendency of the US to Middle East. 2007-8 term shows utmost focus of the US on the region for the aids peaked in 2007-2008 and decreases had been observed since 2010.

Conclusion

In Bush era, US aid to Middle East and North Africa was in its normal course in first two year. Aid flows into Middle East region increased after the 2003 US intervention in Iraq. Resources (aids) transferred for "restructuring" or "humanitarian" purposes for the countries that came out of war are also included in the scope of foreign aid, and they therefore increase during the war period (Karagöz, 2010, p.8). After the Iraq Intervention, US aids were directed mostly to Iraq and Afghanistan individually. While Jordan was consistently among the top 10 beneficiary countries until 2009, that position changed, that's, amount of aid decreased in 2009 and remained so until 2014. Iraq received foreign aid for the first time in 2003-2004, and since 2005, it had become the country receiving the most aid from the US. It maintained that position until 2010, and from that date until 2013, it

followed the 2nd rank. Isreal ranked top ten untill 2005. In 2006, Palestinian Adm. Areas took place of Isreal. Eygpt ranked top ten throughout Bush era. It can be concluded that The US' s Middle East and North Africa Projects was fulfilled substantially basing on Its high aid expenditures for the region.

In Obama Period, Middle East development aid, having reduced since 2010, gave signals that the US would gradually withdraw from the region, turned Its direction mostly towards Sub-Saharan Africa, North and South Asia, Oceania, and partially Latin America. The total amount of aid decreased compared to pre -2010 and the amounts of aid were decreasing more and more every year. That accounts for the economic troubles the US went through and the measures It took.

After 2014, amount of aid to Iraq decreased to lower levels. Despite that, It benefited from the aid in top ten. While Israel was one of the 10 countries to receive the most aid consistently before 2005, It lost that position from 2005 to 2013 and it can be seen that Afghanistan, Palestine, Pakistan and other Islamic countries took Its place. While Egypt was among the top ten countries to receive the most aid consistently before 2012, it did not keep Its position as of 2012. The biggest expenditure items were economic aid, education and social services and environmental expenditures, respectively. Although democracy and governance sector did not not rank first, it still pointed to the US's goal of achieving significant transformations in the region. In particular, aid expenditures in 2013 peaked. After that year, decreases in the amount of aid are observed. That expounds the fact that the aid provided to Middle East and North Africa region reached the saturation point, and Russia and China had risen, and a competitive field had opened for the US in South America, Africa and the Caucasus, and the US started to turn its direction to those regions. To conclude, during Obama era, the US Middle East Projects were maintained at decreasing rate with soft power tools.

When 2004 and post 2004 OECD Reports are examined, it can be seen

that most of the top 10 countries benefiting from US aid were predominantly Islamic countries, and more and more Islamic countries were included every year. It shows that the US tried to give the image that It was pro-peace and benevolent and tried to break the anti-Americanism in the Islamic world. It can be accounted in context of GMP and the Greater Middle East Projects.

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Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The Cases of Türkiye and Malaysia

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Abstract: This article makes a comparative analysis of the place of religion in political life in the cases of Türkiye and Malaysia. Türkiye has long maintained a tradition of secularism similar to the French model reputed for its opposition towards the extension of religion in the aspects of political, legal and administrative life. Secularism as such has been a major character of Turkish political and legal life, and it has long been backed by an influential class of statesmen, and legal and administrative mechanisms. Secularism in Türkiye has been undergoing a major change, however, for the last two decades of AK Party rule towards a more people-friendly model. Malaysian Constitution, on the other hand, for long identifies Islam as the religion of the state and recognizes it as a major source of reference in various arenas of political life. While the religion has a greater structural influence in some states like Kelantan and Terengganu, it has notable influence in all the Malaysian states within the context of a pluralist legal system. This article examines how two countries differ on the subject particularly, and seeks an answer to the differences partially, and locates them in such factors as British political traditions on Malaysia compared to the French influence on Türkiye; predominance of religious civil society organizations and activists in Malaysia compared to the secularist modernists in Türkiye; and Malaysian religious awakening and mobilization compared to the Turkish disillusionment with the religion at the elite level from the past until the mid-2000s.

Keywords: Turkish Politics, Malaysian Politics, Religion and Politics, Comparative Secularism,

Karşılaştırmalı Perspektifte Din ve Politika: Türkiye ve Malezya Örnekleri

Öz: Bu makalede Türkiye ve Malezya örnekleri üzerinden dinin demokrasilerde siyasal hayattaki yeri incelenmektedir. Türkiye’de uzun bir süre dinin siyasal, hukuki ve idari alanlarda yayılmasına karşı olmasıyla meşhur Fransız modeline yakın bir laiklik anlayışı hüküm sürmüştür. Bu haliyle laiklik, Türk siyasal hayatının önemli bir özelliği olmuş ve varlığını nüfuzlu bir devlet seçkinleri sınıfı ile yasal ve idari mekanizmalarla sürdürmüştür. Fakat bu gelenek iki on yılı aşan AK Parti iktidarı politikalarıyla ciddi bir değişim sürecine girmiş ve mevcut haliyle daha ılımlı bir görünüme bürünmüştür. Malezya’da ise anayasa ülkenin kuruluşundan bu yana İslam’ı devlet dini olarak tanımlar ve İslam’ı siyasal hayatın her sahasında önemli bir referans olarak kabul eder. Bu durum Kelantan ve Terengganu gibi bazı eyaletlerde daha etkili bir varlık gösterirken, çoğulcu bir hukuk sistemi çerçevesinde tüm Malezya eyaletlerinde egemen meşru bir özellik olarak karşımıza çıkar. Bu makale, ilk etapta bu iki ülkenin bu konudaki farklılıklarını tespit etmekte ve kısmen de farklılıkların gerekçelerini sorgulanmaktadır. Farklılıklar özetle Malezya’da İngiliz siyasi geleneğinin etkin olmasına karşın Türkiye’nin uzunca bir dönem Fransız tesiri altında kalmasına, Türkiye’de laik modernistlere karşın Malezya’da dini nitelikli sivil toplum örgütlerinin ve aktivistlerin baskınlık elde etmiş olmasına, Malezya’da dikkat çekici bir dini uyanış ve seferberlik tecrübesi yaşanırken Türkiye’nin özellikle seçkinler düzeyinde 2000’lerin ortalarına kadar dine karşı modernleşme sürecinde ciddi olarak hayal kırıklığı içinde olmasına dayandırılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Siyasal Hayatı, Malezya Siyasal Hayatı, Din ve Siyaset, Karşılaştırmalı Laiklik

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Introduction

This article offers a comparative examination of the interaction of religion and politics in the cases of Türkiye and Malaysia. Democracies display quite a variation in the way they accommodate religion in political life. Conflicts and confrontations never become absent among competing groups on the matter in the parliaments and the media. While some countries give official recognition to one or more religions by giving them a broad space of action in legal, administrative and political arenas, some others prefer to keep the religion out of politics much as possible. Britain and France could be cited as examples to two highly different traditions in democratic world regarding the way they manage this issue for while the religion plays such a significant role in British political life, French political life represents the case of a country where the religion is highly marginalized. In this regard, Türkiye is in the process of moving from a highly rigid secularist political system towards a comparatively moderate one without dropping the secularist principle from the constitution, however. Türkiye was very close to the French model until very recently with the religion being highly unpublic and private matter. The subject earned remarkable publicity from 1980s with unpopular bans and limitations on Imam-Hatip schools, headscarf and Quran courses. But unlike Türkiye, Malaysia exemplifies a country where the religion finds a great space of action in legal, administrative and political life where Islam is also defined as the official religion of the state. While in some states of the country attempts are offered to introduce Islamic criminal law, and not just civil law and administrative matters, in all the other states Islam serves as a significant source in legal and political life. The variation of two countries on the subject is often attributed to some historical circumstances, different experiences with the West, variation in the ideational and organization characteristics of political elites, civil society organizations and individuals.

Religion and Politics in Türkiye

The nature of relationship between religion and politics in the country, unique in some senses but sharing some common features with some other country cases, has taken form under the influence of some historical, ideological, political and global circumstances. The type of relationship between religion and politics displays variation across the Republican history indeed with noteworthy differences in periods like the single-party period from 1920s to 1950s, multiparty period from 1950s mid-1980s, the period from mid-1980s to early 2000s and the period after that characterized with the domination of AK Party in political life. It can be noted that the space of action and freedoms turned more favorable and amenable in every new period generally.

The single party period, lasting from mid-1920s to 1950s, witnessed the implementation of highly constraining state policies towards religion. The excuse was that the development of the country necessitated the minimization of the effect of religion in political and legal life. Failure to do so had led to the demise of the Ottoman state accordingly. Major anti-religious secular policies and practices are adopted in this period towards the religious institution some of which could be cited here as the abolition of the caliphate, renunciation of the Islamic law from all legal spheres in favor of modern western law, removal of the constitutional article indicating Islam as the religion of the state, adoption of the constitutional article of secularism along the French model, prohibition of Islamic cloths for men and women, and prohibition of going for pilgrimage for a period over ten years (Davison, 2002, pp. 220-238; Heper, 1981, pp. 249-251; Zürcher, 2007, pp. 172-173).

Turkish secularism adopted during the single party era, and still finding support in some political and social chambers today, was shaped under the heavy influence of French laicism originating from the French model of modernization, the Enlightenment philosophy, French Revolution, its Jacobinism and all the notions they nurtured against religion as a socially and politically inhibitive, exploitative and

authoritarian institution. For the ruling Republican Peoples Party (RPP), the Turkish people in general were deemed to be uneducated, ignorant and incompetent in political matters; they were prone to be misguided by traditional conservative blocs; and they thus had to be guided by an enlightened class of statesmen (Mağcupyan, 1998, p. 54; Lewis, 2002, pp. 267-271). Antireligious secularist practices continued with all their rigidity until the transition to multiparty politics in 1946 and DP's introduction to the government in 1950. Liberating policies were taken into implementation from 1945s onwards and such changes were introduced as the liberation of going for pilgrimage, introduction of elective religious courses in the schools, opening Imam-Hatip courses, and liberation of the recital of the azan in Arabic. Further changes and practices came during the ten years of DP rule from 1950 like the liberation of religious publication, rallies for new mosque-construction campaigns, recitation of Quran in the radio, opening of Imam-Hatip Schools (IHSs), and the increase in the hours of religious lessons in the schools. DP was in support of a more moderate conception of secularism and it had a more populist and democratic character at the background of these (Ahmad, 1994, pp. 440-442; Landau, 1978, pp. 248-254).

Such reforms continued during the Justice Party, formed after the closure of DP in 1960, which became the winner of the next 3 elections it participated, in form of the building new Imam-Hatip Schools and Quran Courses, promotion of religious education and publications, and employment of religion to combat radical leftist movements (Bozan, 2007, pp. 16- 17; Kırçak, 2001, pp. 60-61). After the DP, with the adoption of a new constitution and new laws, most of the liberating reforms are maintained, but secularism is strengthened with some institutional channels of influence to take the Turkish political life under influence until very recently. Article 2 and 68:4 of the 1961 Constitution defined Türkiye as a secular state and totally prohibited to base "the fundamental, social, economic, political, and legal order of the State on religious dogmas." Acts in violation of this article by the

persons and political parties were made punishable. The principle was further strengthened with the Army Internal Service Code of 1961 assigning the Turkish army the duty to intervene in the political process in such cases.

The Constitution established the National Security Council (NSC) too for the participation of the Turkish Armed Forces in the political processes through their recommendations and communications with the politicians by direct monthly meetings (Özbudun, 1999, pp. 108-110; Hale, 1994, pp. 272-273). The functions, capabilities and the composition of the NSC has been reformed substantially during the recent AK Party Governments for a democratically more acceptable status, but till then, the NSC exploited its opportunities generously to deliver the desired messages of secular Turkish army to the politicians via regular meetings and the press, and it was the major actor of the 28th February Process from the beginning with the National Security Document issued against political and social practices with religious character.

The Constitution allocated an institutional place to the Turkish judiciary too in the promotion of the classical anti-religious secularism via the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, and the public prosecutors. Supporting heavily the classical RPP view on the state-religion relationship until the recent AK Party reforms, the elements of the judiciary have been highly engaged with their acts of party closures of the earlier National Order Party, National Salvation Party, Welfare Party, Virtue Party and plenty of other sentences given to their members. Until recently, Turkish Judiciary tended to judge the cases pertaining to alleged violations of secularism with a remarkably rigid and intolerant perspective with a distaste for even the smallest degree of religious representation in public life.

Despite all those secularist practices and political mechanisms, attempts continued during and after the prime of Justice Party in

Turkish political life for greater rights and liberties for the religion also thanks to the elements of globalization and increasing wealth in the country from then. Necmettin Erbakan's National Salvation Party, established in 1972 to survive until the 1980 coup, was partly active in the process particularly when it was a part of the coalition governments in, for instance, increasing of hours for religious lessons in the schools, building new mosques and religious schools, and redesigning the school curricula in greater conformity with religious teachings. With that time, the imprinted notion of evolution and disingenuity of the religion in schoolbooks started to meet with some alternatives and lose its dogmatic validity in the school curricula.

Facing heavy criticisms by various rightist movements and intellectuals, the interest-based banking system did not experience such a change in Türkiye, but a parallel Islamic banking system made its introduction to the market during Turgut Özal's leadership in Turkish political life from mid-1980s. The interest-free banking system has grown substantially since then with such a reception from the society. And, in addition to that, the current AK Party government is waging an ambitious struggle to reduce the rate of interest by the Central Bank of Türkiye. In the ongoing state of global economic recession where almost all the world countries are raising the interest rates, the Turkish government has successfully decreased it to below 10% from around 25% in 2018. Important in this struggle has been the belief of the Turkish government that high interest is morally and politically unwelcome in addition to its inflationist and other negative economic influences. The party in the government has met with such an opposition by various cliques in this process with claims that it is ignoring the major principles of liberal economic management yet to its victory on a major economic goal that has been traditionally supporting.

Issues of religion and politics occupied a significant place in the party program and policies of Welfare Party (WP) too in the issues of IHSs,

headscarf issue, Quran courses and the other popular matters, but WP's ambitions on these matters went far over its capabilities in legal and political terms. The Party once came with a parliamentary proposal to introduce Islamic law in the country in the context of a plural legal system in 1997, but the proposal was rejected by heavy opposition from the rival parties of the left and the right (Refah Partisi, p. 4). As an important matter on the subject, the WP is closed on account of violating secularism during the course of the 28th February Process, its properties are confiscated and its leadership cadre are banned from politics. Most of the WP politicians collected around a new party named as AK Party and re-embraced earlier WP goals withing legal borders. AK Party won all the parliamentary and governmental elections it joined since then and problems never became absent with the secularist state elites despite all the efforts waged. Giving up the campaign for the introduction of Islamic law and statehood in the country, the party kept pressing on the major issues of religious politics as cited above and became successful in getting desired results with most of them.

The headscarf, as one of those major issues of concern, was prohibited in Turkish schools and universities by an official order in 1984, while until then it was banned just customarily by individual public actors. The ban on headscarf turned to a serious problem with its rising use among the female students from the late 1980s. The rising popularity of the headscarf is often attributed to what is called as the process of Islamic re-awakening in the country. Various aborted attempts were made for the removal of the ban in the parliament and through administrative initiatives since 2001 and eventually the ban is removed in 2007 during the presidency of Abdullah Gül (Kuru, 2009, pp. 187-193; Rabasa & Larrabee, 2008, pp. 62-63). The use of headscarf is now free in the Turkish schools as well as in the rest of the public sector and even in the police organization and the army.

Problems with IHSs have similarly been recovered in the same period by similar processes. The IHSs had suffered heavily from the 28th February regime, during which their secondary school division was forced to close, the graduates of their high school division had to suffer lower point calculations in the university entrance exam, they were forced to unite the classes for male and female students who were previously separated, and the use of headscarf was prohibited in all its divisions (Köni, 2018, pp. 84-85). All of these problems are recovered as of December 2011 and IHSs remain a kind of popular public educational institutions in Türkiye where the students learn classical Islamic sciences in addition to traditional modern sciences. In these schools, the curriculum includes courses like Arabic, Quran, the life of the messenger, Quranic exegesis, hadith and so on and so forth in addition to classical modern school courses.

The official state department of religion, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (Presidency of Religious Affairs), shortly named as Diyanet publicly, has witnessed major changes in Türkiye in the last 20 years. Currently, Diyanet has about 130.000 employees as mosque imams and auxiliary staff and it manages a budget of about 1 billion USDs every year on average provided from the national budget. It does not practice any political, administrative and legal duties unlike some of its counterparts in various western democracies; and it does not have any involvement in religious education in the schools, in the provision of teachers and course material in the process. It broadcasts via its official TV channel called Diyanet TV on subjects relating to non-political aspects of Islam and in the last few years it has undertaken a duty of providing kindergarten service to the children at the age group of 4 to 6 years. It has stepped into the Halal sector though with its involvement in the issuance of Halal certificate to the blends of food and related consumption items in cooperation with some other government offices and civil society organizations. Since 2018, Diyanet is allowed to register civil marriages in the country without being able

to judge over the cases of divorce and inheritance as an engagement in public civil matters at a preliminary level.

The Turkish government provides various private and public entities real estate donations through the General Directorate of Foundations without making a transfer of ownership of the property, however. The Directorate donates such real estate property for prolonged periods of time often from those properties donated by the people for specific purposes or from those properties transferred from unattended ownerless foundations. In this context, Türkiye Diyanet Foundation is allocated amounts of real estate properties in the value of about 115 million USDs in 2019 to be a major beneficiary of such allocations. Such allocations are not allowed to be used for commercial purposes and they don't cover any direct monetary support, construction or repair of religious places.

Religion and Politics in Malaysia

In Malaysia, Islam has been an important component of socio-political life for centuries and, before the establishment of modern Malaysian state, it was one of the major legitimacy sources of Malay kings to observe the Islamic law among the people and to distribute justice accordingly. This tradition was maintained even during the British colonial regime and it is preserved after the declaration of independence with the Constitution of Malaysia identifying Islam as the religion of the state. During its years of foundation, Malaysia did not have a powerful class of secularist political elites, nor does it have now, who considered secularism as an important necessity of the national modernization goal and therefore, unlike Türkiye and such other countries as Syria, Tunisia etc. with a majority Muslim population, Malaysia did not meet with such a campaign against the political and legal representations of Islam in public life. In independent Malaysia, Islam has occupied a gradually strengthening influence under the supportive effect of increasing literacy rate and

knowledge of Islamic resources, an active and growing Islamic civil society net, and also because of such international factors as the growth of a Middle East-educated class of Islamic Intelligentsia, and successful Islamic experiments in Iran and Afghanistan as sources of inspiration. What is often called as Islamic resurgence in Malaysia by some scholars gained speed in 1980s and made a peak with the election of Mahathir Mohamad as the Prime Minister of Malaysia and his service in the office for more than 20 years (Batumalai, 1996, pp. 57-71; El-Affendi, 2010).

As the head of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), Mahathir has supported the idea, in his two decades of term as prime minister, that Islam is an important part of Malaysian socio-political life and a fully secular political system could be terribly alien to the Malaysian people. UMNO, and much as that Party Islam se-Malaysia (PAS), since then support the view that Islam is a highly sophisticated and systematic religion with a highly developed legal and political system, which it has proved through centuries of exercise and refinement, and with a little bit of revision and synthesis, it could be successfully reconciled with contemporary political norms and institutions (Batumalai, 1996, pp. 60-63). Further to that, its implementation in Malaysia relies on the democratic consent of the people and it is not enforceable to the non-Muslims. Accordingly, if the Islamic norms make sense to the Malaysian Muslims, in part or whole, and if they want to be subject to it with their own free choice, they have to be respected from a legal and democratic point of view.

Islam has thus been in an institutional state of engagement with Malaysian public political life in its laws, bureaucracy, public administration, political institutions, parties and public social bodies. The establishment of Pusat Islam in 1980 was an important point in this process which was replaced by JAKIM in 1996, which is still in service today. Pusat Islam (and afterwards JAKIM) was given the duty to advice on, supervise, scrutinize and even enact the Islamic law in

Malaysia in cooperation with federal and state bodies. JAKIM is now active in many processes of the socio-political life of the Malaysian Muslims and it even has got a police force and powers of prosecution. It thus enjoys the capabilities to police and prosecute the Muslim Malays when there appears from their part violations of the laws laid on Islamic prerogatives and JAKIM can lead them into the trial room when necessitated accordingly (Liow, 2009, pp. 48-52).

In accordance with the operational principles of JAKIM above, the Muslims are, for instance, required to follow certain dress codes in much of the public places they may attend. Wearing headscarf and hijab is not an obligation for the ladies, but they cannot wear revealing clothes like short skirts, sleeveless shirts, shorts, t-shirts, clothes that leave the legs, arms and the back of the body open. That is indeed not only the case for Muslim ladies, but also for the non-Muslims who cannot wear in very revealing ways in much of the public offices. And, in addition, the men and the women cannot wear such clothes worn by the counter-sex for any purposes. In 2014, seventeen people were arrested in the state of Negeri Sembilan for cross-dressing at a wedding who were invited as wedding-planners and beauticians. The reason for their type of wearing was that they were transgender persons, but as such practices were not acceptable in Islam, they were arrested and their application to the high court for release was rejected for the reason that they acted in violation of religious enactment of their state (Dahlan & Faudzi).

Not less noteworthy than that, Malaysian justice system incorporates Sharia courts to judge the matters among the Muslims functioning at state level. Its jurisdiction covers over a wide range of areas including but not limited to inheritance, marriage, divorce, adoption, foundations and associations, religious taxes and charities, Malay customs, issues related with the mosques and apostasy (Dahlan and Faudzi). Various states of Malaysia, like Kelantan and Terengganu, have met with the challenge of the introduction of Islamic criminal

law. The Islamist party PAS is very popular in these states and it has won the local parliamentary elections against the other parties in many occasions. It holds the parliamentary majority in these states and it has passed the Islamic criminal law in the local parliaments as the most serious step of its implementation. It now maintains its diplomacy with the federal assembly for the ratification of the law, for such changes require the approval of the Malaysian Federal Assembly too to come into effect. But the PAS campaign for the matter is not so comfortable for there is an influential anti-sharia lobby in the country who defend that Malaysia is a secular country and argue that various criminal punishments in Islam are in conflict with contemporary human rights. They maintain, together with some moderate Islamists, that original Islamic sources date back from 7th century AC and that there has been tremendous changes in human life since then. And, in addition, Islam is open to re-interpretation and revisions based on the necessities of the time and change of the circumstances (Liow, 2009, pp. 58-63). The power and influence of this anti-sharia lobby is very remarkable indeed blocking the approval of the Islamic criminal code at federal level for long.

In states like Kedah, Perlis, Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu where the electoral majority is secured by UMNO or PAS, measures are taken towards the banning of alcohol sale, gambling and night clubs for the Muslims. In these states, such practices and activities are allowed to the non-Muslims only as the Islamic law binds the Muslims. But interestingly, it is noted by some surveys that in these states quite some of the non-Muslims are not disturbed with such highly conservative policies and some of them even support UMNO and PAS for they are impressed by the generous social services provided. They also express their pleasance with the notably low level of corruption by UMNO and PAS politics as a by-product. Islamic political practices, as they are followed in these states, and the Islamist politicians are found very fair, hardworking and honest. And the implementation of

Islamic criminal law does not generate any fears on them for it applies to the Muslims only (Hays, 2015).

Conclusion

To summarize, in this article, Türkiye and Malaysia are compared regarding the place of religion in political life. While both countries share a common feature of having a long history of relations with religion in political life, Türkiye breaks with the tradition and, starting with the early years of single-party period in mid-1920s, adopts a militant secularist political life by removing the religion from the political, legal and administrative life almost all together. The reactionism towards religion mitigates from the 1950s onwards by transition to democracy, but the regime remains highly stable as such until the introduction of AK Party in Turkish political life. Solving the epitomized problems of religion in the country like the headscarf ban, the marginalization of the IHSs and religious life and practices in the country in general, Türkiye has embraced a remarkably moderate mode of secularism. Malaysia, on the other hand, has adopted a characteristically religious trajectory of modernization since its independence in late 1950s by recognizing Islam as the official religion of the state, and acknowledging it as a major source of legal, political and administrative action. Islam is a major reference for civil law in all Malaysian states and attempts are made by various states to adopt Islamic criminal law enforceable for the Muslims. JAKIM acts as an important administrative actor in the country to monitor the observance of religious administrative and legal norms. Differences in the experience of two countries are located in this article with reference the following developments: Different roads of modernization adopted in two countries, Türkiye being impressed with the French model on the matter and Malaysia with the British model; predominance of secularist elites in Türkiye compared to the Islamists in Malaysia during the years of foundation; and the growing

impact of religious education and activists in Malaysia compared to the secularist nationalists in Türkiye.

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Sovereignty Disputes and Resource Discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean: A Conflict Analysis Perspective

Esra Dilek *

Abstract: Recent developments in the Eastern Mediterranean have redrawn attention to possibility for conflict over sovereignty and sea borders between neighboring countries in the region, including Turkey, Greece, the Republic of Cyprus (RoC), the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), Egypt, Israel, and Libya, among others. Especially since 2016, competition over energy resources has exacerbated the existing sovereignty disputes. Competing alliances and interventions by third parties such as the EU and member states such as France and Italy have complicated the prospects for the establishment of cooperative mechanisms in the extraction and distribution of energy resources. Considering that possibility for tensions have increased considerably, this paper provides an analysis of the recent developments in the Eastern Mediterranean from a conflict analysis perspective with a focus on Greece and Turkey as main regional stakeholders. After providing a brief assessment of the current context, the article analyzes the situation with regards to three main aspects: actors (including their positions, interests, issues, means of influence, and willingness to negotiate), dividers and connectors (strategic, political, socioeconomic, cultural, psychological), and drivers of conflict and peace.

Keywords: Eastern Mediterranean, Greece, Turkey, Conflict Analysis, Sovereignty Disputes.

Doğu Akdeniz’de Egemenlik Anlaşmazlıkları ve Doğal Kaynakların Keşfi: Çatışma Çözümü Perspektifinden Bir İnceleme

Öz: Doğu Akdeniz’de son zamanlarda yaşanan gelişmeler Türkiye, Yunanistan, Kıbrıs Rum Cumhuriyeti, Kuzey Kıbrıs Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, Mısır, İsrail ve Libya da dahil olmak üzere bölge ülkeleri arasında egemenlik ve deniz sınırları ile ilgili çatışma olasılığını gündeme getirmiştir. Özellikle 2016 yılından itibaren enerji kaynakları alanındaki yükselen rekabet bölgede var olan egemenlik anlaşmazlıklarını kızıştırmıştır. Bölgede oluşan rakip ittifaklar ve Avrupa Birliği ve Fransa ve İtalya gibi üye ülkeleri de kapsayan bölge dışı aktörlerin müdahaleleri, enerji kaynakların kullanılması ve dağıtılması ile ilgili işbirliği mekanizmaların kurulmasını güçlendirmektedir. Bölgede yükselen tansiyonu göz önünde bulundurarak, bu çalışma, Türkiye ve Yunanistan’a odaklanarak, Doğu Akdeniz’de son zamanlarda meydana gelen gelişmeleri çatışma çözümü perspektifinden incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bölgedeki şu anki durumun bir değerlendirmesini sunduktan sonra, çalışma bölgedeki durumu üç ana açıdan incelemektedir: aktörler (pozisyonlar, çıkarlar, konular, etki araçları ve müzakere istekliliği bakımından), ayrıştırıcı ve birleştirici unsurlar (stratejik, siyasi, sosyo-ekonomik, kültürel, psikolojik) ve çatışmaya ve barışa yol açan faktörler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Doğu Akdeniz, Yunanistan, Türkiye, Çatışma Analizi, Egemenlik Anlaşmazlıkları.

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Introduction

The Eastern Mediterranean has become a region of controversy in the last decade. Tensions related to the Cyprus issue and adjacent sovereignty claims between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean Sea constitute perennial issues that underlie the recent tensions. Since 2018, developments in the region about the delimitation of maritime zones and adjacent sovereignty issues have complicated the relations among neighboring countries in the region and especially between Greece and Turkey. Furthermore, Turkey's rivalries with its Mediterranean neighbors Israel, Egypt, and the UAE have contributed to a complex set of alliance politics between Greece and these countries, enhancing the disputes over sovereignty in the region. In tandem with the ongoing Cyprus dispute, the Eastern Mediterranean has increasingly become a region that presents risks for open confrontation. The most recent such instance took place in August 2020, when a minor collision happened between a Turkish warship escorting a survey vessel and a Greek frigate. While the collision did not escalate into open conflict, it underlined the need for assessing prospects for conflict and peace in the region from an analytical perspective and examine possible pathways for preventing and addressing future confrontational situations.

This study provides an analysis of the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean from a conflict analysis perspective by using the conflict analysis framework developed by Matthew Levinger (2013). Conflict analysis frameworks are useful analytical tools for assessing both risks for conflict and prospects for peace regarding a conflictual situation. In general terms, a conflict assessment is defined as "a systematic process to analyze and prioritize the dynamics of peace, conflict, stability, and instability" in a given conflict context (USAID, 2012). The aim of conflict analysis is to provide a diagnosis of the conflict situation and develop recommendations for an appropriate response. A variety of international policy institutions and organizations, including the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, the

United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and also governments, including the Government of the United States' Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF) and the Government of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) Conflict Assessment, have developed their own assessment tools. Conflict assessment frameworks are tools for both understanding the different aspects of a conflictual situation and also developing solutions to them through a multidimensional analysis. The assessment tool used here focuses on four main aspects: context, actors (including their positions, interests, issues, means of influence, and willingness to negotiate), dividers and connectors (strategic, political, socioeconomic, cultural, psychological), and drivers for conflict and peace.

This study offers two innovative aspects with regards to conflict analysis. First, while conflict assessment frameworks have been predominantly directed towards assessing internal conflicts, this study argues that such frameworks can be a useful tool for analyzing regional disputes involving a complex set of actors and cross-cutting issues. Accordingly, the Eastern Mediterranean offers the chance for an analysis at the regional level from a multidimensional perspective. Secondly, conflict assessment frameworks predominantly address conflict and post-conflict situations. Here, it is argued that conflict assessment tools can be useful for analyzing tensions that have the potential for escalating into conflict. While no open conflict exists in the region currently, the prospects for escalation are high; a situation that begs an analytical perspective. With this purpose, the article is organized as follows: the first part provides a brief analysis of the context in light of recent developments in the Eastern Mediterranean. The next part proceeds to conflict analysis with focus on three main aspects: actors, dividers and connectors, and drivers for conflict and peace. The final part concludes.

Context: Resource Discoveries and Recent Developments in the Eastern Mediterranean

Recent tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean are centred around the discovery of sizeable energy resources and adjacent claims of maritime borders. While the tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean regarding resource discoveries surfaced in the past decade, tensions between Greece and Turkey regarding the exploitation of maritime resources date back to the 1970s. In 1973, the Turkish government announced the start of exploration activities in the Aegean Sea in areas claimed by Greece. After the start of exploration activities in 1974 and rising tensions between Greece and Turkey, the prospects for solving the Cyprus issue through negotiations evaded when the Turkish army conducted a military operation to Cyprus (Axt, 2021).

The discovery of gas deposits in the Eastern Mediterranean region dates back to the late 2000s. Israel's gas explorations in the Leviathan, Tamar, Dalit, Tanin, and Karish fields have been main developments since 2009. The Tamar and Leviathan fields discovered in 2009 and 2010 respectively constitute the largest Israeli discoveries. In 2011, Noble Energy's discovery of the Aphrodite offshore gas field in Cyprus constitutes another large reserve discovery. While these discoveries await development in terms of drilling activities, the Italian energy company Eni's discovery of natural gas in Egypt's Zohr field in 2015 constitutes the largest discovery in terms of reserves to date and is currently under production. Following these developments, in 2017, Turkey announced a more active engagement in offshore oil and gas exploration and outlined its seismic studies and drilling operations (Stanic & Karbuz, 2021). In 2019, the Turkish Petroleum Corporation TPAO conducted several drilling activities in block 6 which the Republic of Cyprus claims to fall within its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) (Demiryol, 2019). Since 2019, Turkey has continued its drilling activities in parts that are contested between Turkey, the Republic of Cyprus, Egypt, and Greece.

The most recent confrontation in the Eastern Mediterranean was triggered by two memoranda signed by Turkey and Libya in November 2019, the first one demarcating the exclusive economic

zones of the two countries and the second dealing with military cooperation and more specifically Turkey's provision of military support to the government of Libya. At the core of the crisis is the issue of the Greece and Turkey's Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and associated maritime arrangements. Maritime delimitation arrangements in the Eastern Mediterranean date back to the early 2000s. The Greek Republic of Cyprus (RoC) signed delimitation agreements with Egypt in 2003, Lebanon in 2007 (not ratified by the Lebanese Parliament), and Israel in 2010. These agreements prepared the ground for the subsequent isolation of Turkey in the region and its recent offensive through exploration and drilling activities. Cyprus's maritime arrangements provoked Turkey's reaction since Turkey claims that the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus also has EEZ claims. In support of this position, Turkey signed a maritime delimitation agreement with the TRNC in 2011. Turkey further sustains its claim that islands, including Cyprus, cannot have the full extent of EEZ of 200 nautical miles. As such, Turkish EEZ claims in the Eastern Mediterranean are in conflict with the Republic of Cyprus's claimed EEZ.

Since the early developments in the discovery of sizeable energy resources in early 2010s, the interlinkage with the Cyprus question, the EEZ controversy, and the deteriorating Turkish-Israeli relations have been three main topics of concern (Grigoriadis, 2014). Especially regarding the Cyprus question, energy discoveries deepened divisions over sovereignty issues and complicated peace talks for solving the Cyprus conflict (Gürel & Le Cornu, 2014). Indeed, the 'hydrocarbonization' of the Cyprus problem has its roots in the early 2000s and the early discoveries regarding energy resources in the region (Kahveci Özgür, 2017). Turkey's rivalries with its Mediterranean neighbours Israel, Egypt, and the UAE have contributed to a complex set of alliance politics between Greece and these countries, enhancing the disputes over sovereignty. In tandem with the ongoing Cyprus

dispute, the Eastern Mediterranean has increasingly become a region of tension.

In accordance with their claims about maritime zones, Greece and Turkey have engaged in resource exploration activities. The RoC started exploratory drillings in its claimed EEZ in 2011 and announced new licensing rounds for drilling in 2012. Turkey issued a NAVTEX in January 2015 and later in March 2017 for exploration drillings in areas that are also claimed by the RoC. In 2019, Turkey sent seismic research vessels into waters claimed by the Republic of Cyprus. In the same year, Turkey submitted to the UN a maritime deal it signed with the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Libya and signed a Security and Military Cooperation Agreement with the same country. Greece, on the other hand, signed a partial agreement over maritime border with Egypt in August 2020. The Turkish-Libyan and Greek-Egyptian maritime deals mutually conflict with the claimed maritime jurisdictions of each set of countries. Greece also signed a defence accord with the United Arab Emirates in 2020.

These tensions reached their climax after a minor collision between Turkish and Greek frigates in summer 2020, leading to the most severe crisis between the two countries since the Imia/Kardak crisis of 1996 in the Aegean. In August 2020, Turkey sent a survey vessel (Oruç Reis) escorted by warships with the purpose of exploring oil and gas drilling. The vessel was followed by Greek frigates as it crossed the area from Cyprus to Crete. A mild collision took place between one of the Turkish warships and Greek frigates. Greece called the collision as an accident while Turkey accused Greece of an act of provocation. In September 2020, Greece deployed naval units on the island of Kastellorizo and announced military exercises with a NAVTEX in Chios, in violation of the demilitarized status of the island, conducted firing exercises on and around the island of Limnos. In December 2020, the UAE and Greece held military exercises off the coast of Alexandria (Al Monitor, 2020).

Relations between Greece and Turkey also strained over Turkey's exclusion from emerging regional cooperation fora that accelerated in the second half of 2010s. Early signs of exclusion were given when plans of the Eastern Mediterranean gas pipeline (EastMed pipeline), a project between Greece, the RoC, and Israel, became public in 2013. The accord for the pipeline was signed in January 2020. Turkey is also excluded from the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (East Med Forum), informally active since January 2019 and formally established in September 2020. The EastMed Forum, composed of Greece, Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Israel, France, and Italy, seeks to enhance cooperation amongst its members for the exploration and consumption of energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, the EastMed Forum was formed with Italian encouragement as a response to Turkey's escalation in response to Italian marketing activities of Egyptian natural gas since 2015. Turkey is also excluded from the Philia (Friendship) Forum that was convened in Athens on 11 February 2021 with the participation of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Greece, the RoC, Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and France. The timing of the Philia Forum, right after the 61st round of exploratory talks between the two countries in January 2021, signaled Greece's preference for stepping up its containment policy towards Turkey rather than adopting a more cooperative approach. Indeed, Greece's assertion over its positions came from another front, too. A few days before the exploratory meetings in late January 2021, Greece expanded its territorial waters in the Ionian Sea from 6 to 12 miles after negotiations with Italy and Albania. This move constituted an indirect warning towards Turkey (DW, 2021), signaling that Greece is assertive in its willingness to extend its territorial waters to both in the Aegean and in the Mediterranean.

Conflict Analysis

Having provided the context regarding recent developments in the Eastern Mediterranean, the following part offers an analysis of the situation in the region with a focus on Greek-Turkish relations based

on three main dimensions: actors, dividers and connectors, and drivers of conflict and peace. While a multiplicity of actors and their interests are central to the developments in the region, the analysis here is limited to main adversaries that hold great actorness potential with regards to efforts to build cooperative relations and develop models for efficient extraction and transport of energy resources.

Actors

In conflict analysis, the interests and power positions of key actors have a defining impact on how different groups interact with each other and their relations. Therefore, the positions and interests of key actors are central in mobilizing different groups around cooperative or competitive relations. In conflict analysis, the analysis of main stakeholders involves several dimensions: parties, positions, interests, issues/problems, means of influence/power, and willingness to negotiate. The Eastern Mediterranean is home to a number of states as actors in the recent developments, including Greece, Turkey, RoC, TRNC, Israel, Egypt, Libya, and Lebanon. Besides the regional states, the EU and member states such as France and Italy are stakeholders having economic and political interests in the region. The US constitutes a powerful out-of-the-region country with stakes in the discovery of energy resources. The US adopted the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act in December 2019, weighting in this way in favor of the East Med Pipeline and on the side of the RoC. As part of the partnership act, the US eventually lifted the decades-old restrictions on arms sale to the RoC in September 2020.

Here, the focus is on Greece, Turkey, the RoC, and the TRNC as main stakeholders. Greece and Turkey are kin-states to the RoC and the TRNC respectively. The RoC is a fully recognized state that is not recognized only by Turkey while the TRNC is only recognized by Turkey. Greece and the RoC are EU member states. The countries are entangled with the four-decades long Cyprus issue regarding the de facto partition of the island following a military intervention by

Turkey in 1974. Furthermore, Greece and Turkey are entangled in a dispute over a number of issues, including disagreements over the definition of EEZ in the Aegean Sea and the demilitarization of Aegean islands.

Table 1: Actors’ Positions, Interests, Issues, Means of Influence, and Willingness to Negotiate in the Eastern Mediterranean

	Positions	Interests	Issues/ Problems	Means of influence/ power	Willingness to negotiate
Greece	Definition of sea borders in accordance with UNCLOS	Expansion of EEZ Balancing against/ deterring Turkey	Threat perceptions from Turkey	EU membership Regional alliances (Egypt, Israel)	Low
Turkey	Rejection of UNCLOS Recognition of TRNC's EEZ	Exploitation of energy resources Aspiration to become regional power and an energy hub Protection of TRNC interests	Tensions with other regional states (e.g., Egypt, Israel) Exclusion from regional alliances such as EAST-MED	Military power Regional alliances (Libya)	High (Low since 2019)
Republic of Cyprus (RoC)	RoC's sea borders representing the island as a whole	Balancing against/ deterring Turkey Protection of sea borders	Insecurity emanating from Turkey	EU membership Regional alliances	Low
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)	Recognition of TRNC's sea borders and EEZ	Full recognition of TRNC and sea borders	De facto status/ unrecognition	Turkish military power	High (Low since 2019)

Turkey’s assertive approach to defending its maritime interests especially since 2019 has been driven by two main frustrations (ICG,

2021): its belief that Turkish Cypriots are excluded from potential energy riches, and, secondly, that other Mediterranean states are pursuing a containment policy against her. Turkey's position in the region rests on the rejection of UNCLOS and her call for recognition of TRNC's EEZ. The main interests underlying this position are the exploitation of energy resources and the aspiration to become a regional power and an energy hub for the region (Aydın & Dizdaroğlu, 2018). Based on these two main interests, Turkey is seen as having an offensive agenda in the Eastern Mediterranean (Axt, 2021). As a kin-state to the TRNC, Turkey also has an interest in the protection of TRNC interests including her sea borders and EEZ. Based on these interests, Turkey's main issues of concern are the tensions with other regional states (especially Egypt and Israel) and her exclusion from regional alliances especially since 2020. Turkey's main means of influence remains her military power, as revealed by her search and drilling activities since mid-2010s escorted by military frigates and gunboats. Turkey's shift to a coercive diplomacy in the region stemmed also from her sense of growing isolation from its NATO allies and also from the US after the lack of a robust response towards the 2016 coup attempt (Tanchum, 2021). Turkey's purpose in declaring its maritime deal with Libya in 2019 was to pressure the international community and countries in the region to an equitable settlement of maritime boundaries and by extension of resource-related activities (Tanchum, 2021).

Turkey's policy discourse towards Greece and Cyprus since 2017 has increasingly shifted to conflictual security frame (İpek & Gür, 2021), adopting an increasingly assertive, securitised and conflictual approach (Baysal & Dizdaroğlu, 2022). In line with this assertive approach, the Turkish government presented the doctrine of Blue Homeland (*Mavi Vatan*) in 2019 as an irredentist doctrine of national defence. With this doctrine, Turkey assumes a greater maritime role, feeling that she has been let down by its Western allies in Syria and elsewhere (Taş, 2022). The Blue Homeland map was illustrated during

an official celebration in 2019, depicting maritime boundaries comprising of 462,000 square kilometres and excluding out Cyprus and main Greek islands in the Aegean and Kastellorizo (Taş, 2022). The doctrine has resonated well with ultranationalist views in Turkey that are being fed with Greece's maximalist claims in the region. Greece's maximalist position is most prevalent in relation to the island of Kastellorizo: an island of two kilometers off the coast of Turkey that is 570 kilometers away from Greek mainland and measures 10 square kilometers is seen as entitled to EEZ generating 40 thousand square kilometers of maritime jurisdiction, leaving Turkey with 41 thousand square kilometers. These maximalist claims feed into the irredentist claims of Mavi Marmara espoused by ultranationalist views within the Turkish state (Çandar, 2020).

The TRNC contests maritime delimitation agreements by the RoC on the grounds that they do not represent the interests of the Turkish Cypriots. The main position of the de facto entity is the recognition its EEZ while the underlying interest is its full recognition as a state. The main problem with regards to the entity's position in the region is its unrecognized status and the fact that the conflict on the island remains unresolved since the 1970s. The TRNC mainly relies on Turkey's military power as a means of influence in the region. TRNC's willingness to negotiate remains low as a result of the unchanging positions of Greece and RoC regarding the status of the island. The TRNC has proposed on several occasions to work jointly with the RoC on developing the island's natural gas resources in 2011 and 2012 with no positive response by the RoC (Çıraklı, 2021). More recently in 2019, the TRNC President Mustafa Akinci proposed the establishment of a joint committee under the supervision of the UN, a proposal supported by Turkey, with no response from the RoC side.

Greece has focused on a strategy of strengthening international alliances with two main aims (ICG, 2021): deterring Turkey's assertive military posturing and countering a unilateral revision of the status quo by Turkey in the region. In order to strengthen its geopolitical

outlook as a small country in the region, Greece has developed five trilateral cooperation schemes in the Eastern Mediterranean involving the RoC: with Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan on a broad range of issues and at different levels including working groups and ministerial meetings (Tsardanidis, 2019). Greece's main position in the region rests on the recognition of EEZ in accordance with UNCLOS. Her main interests are balancing against Turkey in the region and also expanding the EEZ in accordance with UNCLOS (Kastellorizo). The main problem that the country faces in the region is threat perceptions emanating from Turkey's assertive approach. Greece has accused Turkey for engaging in revisionist, neo-Ottoman expansion agenda through gunboat tactics. Greece signed EEZ delimitation agreements with Italy in July 2020 and with Egypt in August 2020, confirming UNCLOS as the applicable law. Furthermore, Greece sees the EastMed pipeline as a means to protect and secure Greek sovereignty. In terms of means of influence, Greece mainly seeks to exert influence in the region through alliances with other regional countries and also through the EU. Being an EU member state along with the RoC, Greece has received the backing of the EU and member states such as France and Italy in her regional endeavors to protect her interests. Greece's willingness to negotiate is low, as she prefers arbitration through international courts for the solution of EEZ disputes with Turkey (including the dispute in the Aegean).

The RoC's main position is that she is entitled to represent the island as a whole in terms of the definition of sea borders. RoC's main interests include balancing against Turkey's assertive regional policy and protection of EEZ borders established through bilateral agreements with other countries in the region. With this purpose, the RoC has developed strategic ties with Israel since early 2010s, coinciding with Turkey's straining relations with the same country. In December 2010 the RoC and Israel signed a maritime boundary agreement demarcating their respective EEZs. RoC also secured a deal with Egypt with the aim of excluding the option for Turkey being the

transit country for gas although this was the cheapest option, because that would create dependency on Turkey and potentially compromise its sovereignty (Proedrou, 2021). RoC's main problem is insecurity emanating from Turkey. Main means of influence are- parallel to Greece- EU membership and alliances that the country has been building with states in the region since early 2000s. The RoC's willingness for negotiation is low. In line with these interests, RoC's priority in the region has been the establishment of the EastMed gas pipeline that would ship Cypriot gas to Greece and to Italy. EastMed would carry both Cypriot and Israeli gas, bringing in Greece as a transit state, building up a strategic alliance between RoC-Greece-Israel, and also building an infrastructure that the international community would have vested interest in protecting (Proedrou, 2021).

Dividers and Connectors

Dividers and connectors, referring to potential sources of polarization and cohesion between groups respectively, for a basic aspect of conflict analysis (Levinger, 2013, p. 95). Dividers are like fault lines that already exist in a society and with a trigger can easily escalate and cause earthquake, meaning that they can cause or exacerbate conflictual situations. Dividers and connectors are not only based on objective conditions but also on subjective perceptions of main actors in a conflict. Different actors might perceive different issues or processes as dividers and as connectors. Furthermore, dividers and connectors are dynamic and might change in different periods during the course of a conflict. Overall, dividers and connectors are changing categories that might polarize or promote cohesion in different periods within a conflict process.

Five main dividers and connectors are assessed here. First, *strategic dividers and connectors* refer to issues related to security and power (Levinger, 2013, p. 35). Second, *political dividers and connectors* refer to political power issues and institutional performance (Levinger, 2013, p. 38). Here, the regime type is important. While democratic institutions

might serve as connectors, non-democratic institutions might serve as dividers. Especially, authoritarian regimes suppressing opposition do not perform well for balancing interests and allowing competing voices to be heard. (Levinger, 2013, p. 38). Third, *socioeconomic dividers and connectors* refer to economic and social variables that might exacerbate conflict or might function as a means to mitigate conflict between opposing groups (Levinger, 2013, p. 40). Fourth, *psychological dividers and connectors* refer to mutual perceptions that may escalate or de-escalate conflict among rival groups. These include factors such as leaders' personal characteristics, perceptions of counterparts, communication patterns, and status competition (Levinger, 2013, p. 43). Fifth, *cultural dividers and connectors* involve issues of ideology, group identity, and religion (Levinger, 2013, p. 49). Cultural differences do not automatically translate into conflict but might form the basis for conflict in case they are constructed in a competitive and divisive manner.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, strategic dividers and connectors involve a number of issues. Firstly, disagreements over EEZs and competing sovereignty claims constitute a core strategic divider. Competing claims between Greece and Turkey cross cut their claims in the Aegean Sea and are also intrinsically linked to the status of Cyprus as a divided island. Regional competition for power, involving the main states of the region such as Israel, Egypt, Libya along with Greece and Turkey constitutes a second strategic driver for conflict. Already existing competition between Egypt and Libya, Turkey and Israel, and Turkey and Egypt constitute a strategic divider. Another strategic divider is related to Turkey's EU integration process. The stalling of accession negotiations in the 2010s has undermined cooperative relations between Turkey and EU members states. Finally, Turkey's hesitations for signing the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) agreement can be assessed as a strategic divider. Turkey is not a party to UNCLOS because the treaty's treatment of islands puts her in a disadvantaged position in relation to Greece

especially with regards to the Aegean Sea. In May 1995, Greece ratified UNCLOS with the purpose of supporting its intention to increase its territorial waters from 6 to 12 nautical miles in the Aegean. Ever since, Turkey has supported the position that islands do not generate full maritime zones and therefore are not entitled to 12 nautical mile territorial waters. On the other hand, a main strategic connector is the two countries' NATO membership. A further strategic connector is the EU and prospects for revival of Turkey's accession negotiations. Despite the stalling of the process since 2010s, EU membership still constitutes a strategic interest for Turkey and occasionally emerges in domestic political discourse as a reference point for mobilizing constituencies.

Regarding political aspects, democratic backsliding and increasing authoritarianism in Turkey can be seen as a central political divider (Esen & Gümüşçü, 2016) precluding cooperative foreign policy in the region. Another political divider is related to tensions rising from the treatment of mutual minorities in the two countries, namely the Muslim minority in Western Thrace in Greece and the Greek Orthodox minority in Turkey. Political connectors include the preservation of democratic institutions despite setbacks (especially in Turkey). Both Greece and Turkey have preserved democratic institutions despite periods of democratic backsliding. A related political connector is the positive transformation of civil-military relations in Turkey as a result of the EU-induced democratization reforms that were realized during the first half of 2000s.

Socioeconomic dividers include economic stagnation and related socioeconomic inequalities. Both countries have been facing economic stagnation in recent years, with Greece having been severely affected by the 2008 economic crisis and subsequent austerity measures imposed by the EU and Turkey entering a cycle of economic instability since the mid-2010s. The economic crises in both countries exacerbated socioeconomic inequalities. Another socioeconomic divider is the changing demographic structure in both countries as a result of

refugee flows and irregular migration. Since the start of Syrian civil war in 2011, both Greece and Turkey have received an exponential number of refugees and irregular migrants seeking to find refuge in Europe. Turkey is one of the countries hosting the highest number of refugees around the world and constitutes a main transit country for migrants aiming to migrate to EU and other European countries through its neighbor Greece. Socioeconomic connectors include expanding trade relations between the two countries (OEC, 2022). Another socioeconomic connector is the increasing tourism flows (CEIC, 2022). Both the volume of trade and tourism flows between the two countries have been rising in the last two decades, constituting an important socioeconomic connector.

Cultural dividers include religion and associated cultural differences. Greece is a predominantly Christian Orthodox country while Turkey is predominantly Sunni Muslim. This is reflected in cultural differences in lifestyle and worldviews. Cultural connectors include common historical ties dating back to the Ottoman period. A second cultural connector are commonalities in language emanating from the common past. Although modern Greek and Turkish constitute separate language families, there is cross-fertilization in everyday language.

Psychological dividers include mutual threat perception that has its historical roots in the Ottoman period and its dissolution. Enemy stereotypes in Greek collective memory are based on the struggle of nation-building as a battle against Ottoman rule starting after the collapse of the Byzantine Empire in the 15th century until the Greek independence in the 19th century. For the Turkish side, the war of independence was fought at the start of the 20th century against Greek expansion and irredentism (summed up as the 'Great Idea/ Megali Idea' constitute a memory of defeats and loss (Axt, 2021). More recently, the Cyprus question since the 1970s, crises in the Aegean in the 1990s, and mutual restrictive policies with regards to minority rights have contributed to threat perceptions in the two countries. A closely associated psychological divider is mutual distrust emanating

from past disputes and issues of controversy. On the other hand, an important psychological connector is societal level trust. A recent public opinion poll revealed that despite rising tensions in the last five years, majority of Greeks and Turks support the idea that Greek-Turkish disputes can be resolved through dialogue and conciliation (ELIAMEP, 2022).

Overall, the dividers and connectors are summarized in Table 2:

Table 2: Dividers and Connectors between Greece and Turkey

	Dividers	Connectors
Strategic	-EEZ and sovereignty disputes -Regional competition for power -Competition for natural resources -Stalling of EU process for Turkey -Turkey’s abstention from UNCLOS	-NATO membership -Turkey’s EU aspirations -Cooperation in the area of migration
Political	-Rising authoritarianism -Domestic political tensions -Treatment of minorities	-Maintenance of democratic institutions -Balanced civil-military relations
Socioeconomic	-Economic stagnation -Increasing socioeconomic inequalities -Demographic changes related to migration	-Trade -Tourism
Cultural	-Religion -East-West cultural divide	-Shared historical past -Commonalities in language
Psychological	-Constant threat perception -Mutual distrust	-Societal level trust

Drivers of Conflict and Peace

Drivers of conflict and peace refer to the questions of how do key actors within a conflict use dividers to promote conflict and how do actors use connectors to promote peace, respectively. They refer to the dynamic situation resulting from key actors’ mobilization of social groups around core grievances such as the perception that a group’s security is threatened, and institutional resilience, widely referring to the perception that social structures for mitigating the conflict and promoting cohesion are at place within a society (ICAF 2008).

Regarding the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, drivers of conflict are more prominent compared to drivers of peace. First and foremost, the existence of competitive political discourse has been a prominent feature of the Greek-Turkish-Cypriot relations over the last

two decades. Political actors in both states have maintained traditional nationalistic discourse emphasizing antagonism rather than cooperation with the neighboring state. Constant threat perception and mutual distrust have been core elements of political discourse in relation to the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean since 2018.

Recent energy discoveries constitute another driver for conflict. Main political actors frame energy discoveries within competing claims of sovereignty and sea borders, connected with perennial disputes over the Aegean Sea and Cyprus. This situation has been exacerbated as a result of alliance-building: how political leaders are building competitive alliances with the purpose of undermining competitor states and supporting an offensive approach. Rising security concerns in relation to EEZ delimitation and regional alliances have contributed to a security-oriented confrontational strategy instead of economic cooperation prospects (Demiryol, 2019). Recent securitization studies have pointed to energy consisting a distinct policy domain and sector that interacts with other security domains including military, political, economic, social, and environmental (Christou & Adamides, 2013). From this perspective, insecurities related to energy can have the potential to escalate to existential threats for states (Baysal & Dizdaroğlu, 2022; İşeri, 2019). Indeed, the Mediterranean region has been characterized as an (in)security complex, considering political, cultural, and socio-economic heterogeneity stemming from historical divisions in the region (İşeri, 2019). Unless constructive steps are taken for including all riparian states in inclusive partnerships, energy discoveries will likely constitute drivers for conflict rather than peace (İşeri & Bartan, 2019).

On the other hand, existing institutional structures have the potential of functioning as drivers of peace in the region. Especially, the role of the EU and NATO and political leaders' potential for mobilizing based on membership/association to these institutions constitute crucial drivers for peace. The role of such institutions as a driver for peace became apparent, for example, after Germany's diplomatic initiative

and NATO's call for technical dialogue in relation to rising tensions between the two countries after the 2020 collision and subsequent tensions. The EU Council, that was convened in October 2020, while reiterated its solidarity with its members Greece and Cyprus over developments in the Eastern Mediterranean and issued a warning for Turkey, also pointed to a positive political Turkey-EU agenda and continued cooperation in areas including trade and migration issues. Accordingly, energy discoveries still have the potential for becoming drivers for peace if existing institutional structures prepare the ground for cooperative relations. Regional alliances that would prioritize efficient exploitation of resources and the establishment of cooperative mechanisms for the extraction of resources can prove a driver for peace in the region.

Conclusion: Prospects for Conflict and Peace in the Eastern Mediterranean

This study provided an analysis of the recent developments in the Eastern Mediterranean based on conflict analysis framework provided by Levinger (2013) with the purpose of assessing prospects for peace and conflict in the region. The article analyzed such prospects with a focus on Greece and Turkey as main stakeholders along three main dimensions: actors, dividers and connectors, and drivers for conflict and peace. Overall, the analysis revealed that while actors present competing interests and are divided over strategic, political, socioeconomic, cultural, and psychological lines, points for cooperation still exist. Energy resource discoveries in the region have exacerbated disagreements over sea borders and sovereignty and have yet to contribute to the establishment of cooperative relations. However, such discoveries do not only have the potential for interstate cooperation but also domestic prosperity of the states in the region (Shaffer, 2018). Therefore, assessing possible pathways for addressing tensions and also integrating international legal frameworks (Stanic & Karbuz, 2021) and looking for possible negotiation frameworks could

act as a basis for developing cooperation based on joint economic interests rather than short term political aspirations.

Several policy recommendations for enhancing drivers of peace and lowering the strength of drivers of conflict can be assessed. Greece should reconsider her containment policy towards Turkey and refrain from moves that would further trigger security concerns of its neighbor. A way forward would be to work on ways to integrate Turkey into the Mediterranean forums that have been established in the last few years. This might come after strengthening bilateral relations through new high-level meetings and commitments for lowering tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean. At the same time, increasing the frequency of back-channel meetings will be key for discussing possible ways forward in relation to both the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey, on her part, should reconsider her assertive and hard power-based Mediterranean policy not only in relation to Greece but also in relation to its other Mediterranean neighbors and take steps for normalization. Recently, signs for normalization of relations with Egypt came after the initiation of exploratory talks in May 2021. Signs for normalization of relations with Israel were given after the visit of President of Israel Isaac Herzog to Turkey in March 2022. Similar normalization steps should also be taken in relation to Greece.

Finally, the EU's role in the Greek-Turkish relations and dialogue remains essential. The EU should seek balance between the interests of Greece and Cyprus as its member states and Turkey's interests and claims as an associate member. Reviving EU-Turkey relations with regards to accession negotiations would be an effective way of incentivizing Turkey for a more cooperative stance. Additionally, the EU could be instrumental in building a regional forum that would involve Turkey and Greece along with other Mediterranean countries. This forum can work on cooperation in various areas, including energy, migration, and trade, where interests intersect and prospects for cooperation can be high.

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