

Interdependence and Diversification: A New Framework for Turkish Foreign Policy

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Abstract: This study elaborates change in Turkish foreign policy since the end of the Cold War. This change was explained with interdependence and diversification concepts. Four main factors play a significant role in change of Turkish foreign policy orientation. After a brief introduction, these four factors (historical heritage and cultural factors, geographical location, political preferences, economic needs) were analyzed. In the second section of the study, interdependence and diversification in Turkish foreign policy are analyzed based on these factors. Due to economic needs and political preferences, Turkey entered into an integration process with the West. As a result of historical and cultural factors, it has been pursuing an active policy towards the Muslim world. Similarly, it initiated cooperation in many issue areas with the Turkic world due to strong ethnic and cultural connections. Finally, it developed close relations with regional countries due to historical heritage and geographical connections.

Keywords: Turkish Foreign Policy, Cultural Bonds, Geographical Location, Economic Needs

1. Introduction

It is widely accepted that the world is becoming a global village and borders of nation-states lost their original meanings because of the intensified globalization and interdependence in economics, politics, communications, and in human transactions. As a result of reciprocal effects, relationships among countries, and multiple channels of interaction, national sensitivity to outside developments increased. International relations became very complex and nation-states are linked to one another more than ever.

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The world politics is now a complex web of interdependencies. New theories of international relations were developed in order to explain changing international environment, in which the power of non-state actors increased and there is no hierarchy among agenda items (Koizumi, 1993; Gasiorowski, 1986; Keohane and Nye, 1977). Multiple channels such as multinational corporations, international organizations, transnational social movements, national and international interest groups, and bureaucratic institutions began to play significant roles. New actors claim different adjustments and diminish the strength of nation-states. However, even though all countries are interdependent, interdependence is asymmetrical comprising both positive and negative effects on states (Keohane and Nye, 1977). Largely, the stronger the state, the more benefit it gets. For a country in order to follow an interdependent foreign policy, it has to diversify its external relations.

Turkey as a middle power with aspiration to be a regional power is obliged to follow an interdependent and diversified foreign policy. The objective of this article is to develop a framework for and analyze the restructuring of Turkish foreign policy orientation. It argues that a revision of Turkish foreign policy is required given the changing domestic and international environment such as change of the definition of Turkish identity, increasing power of transnational Kurdish nationalism and political Islam, the coming back of the Ottoman legacy, the emergence of an independent Turkish world, and the enlargement of the Muslim world. The leadership group was utilized as level of analysis in this study. The Kemalist (1923-1983) and post-Kemalist (1983-1993 and 2002-2008, Özal and Erdoğan governments) leadership periods were compared.

The article is comprised of four sections. First, it proposes some arguments why Turkey needs to initiate an interdependent and diversified foreign policy. In the second section, it examines four main complementary alternative foreign policy orientations for Turkey. The last section includes concluding remarks and future perspectives for the country.

2. Motives for an Interdependent Policy

Four main elements, historical heritage and cultural factors, geographical location, political preferences, and economic needs, largely determine Tur-

kish foreign policy orientation. They combine to draw the country toward the Western (the United States and Europe) world, the Muslim world, the Turkish world, and the regional context (the Middle East, Central Asia, the Balkans, and Caucasia). Even though Turkey was unable to balance all these four orientations, it has to balance them in the future. Since the Cold War period and its bipolar system ended and the world has entered into an intense process of globalization, Turkey has to improve its relations with different actors of the world politics. The following factors create opportunities for Turkey and provide alternative foreign policy orientations. Turkey will be able to follow an interdependent and diversified foreign policy that will make it one of the leading middle range powers of the world, if it timely utilizes these complementary factors.

2.1. Historical Heritage and Cultural Factors

The Turkish Republic and its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire, carry a significant historical heritage and a rich cultural accumulation that enables the country to have diversified relationships. Its historical legacy requires Turkey to have close relations with the successor states of the Empire and to maintain its historical prestige. The Ottoman Empire was a cosmopolitan state both in administrative system and social structure comprising different cultural, religious, and ethnic entities. It was “a carrier of nomadic values, the last representative of great Islamic civilization which was enriched with a number of sub and side effects, Arabs in particular. Besides this, it was a part of ancient Greek and Anatolian civilizations and Europe by conquering the Romans, the Balkans, and part of Central and Eastern Europe” (Çalış, 2001: 169). Symbols, titles, concepts, and institutions that were used by the Ottomans carry signs of this inclusiveness. Therefore, Ottoman sultans were *Halife* (Islamic), *Padişah* (Iranian), *Hakan* (Turkish), and *Kayser-i Rum* (Roman) (Davutoğlu, 1999).

As mentioned by Çalış, “in spite of the ‘big forgotten’ in legal identity of Turkey, the Ottoman [state] began to enter Turkish foreign policy system as a significant input to be taken into consideration with warming up the Ottoman domain, especially after the Cold War. Decision-making mechanism is strongly influenced by this.” Çalış (2001: 170) claims that the Ottoman

legacy “is not just a ‘national’ political input but also a transnational factor occupying the agenda.” Thus, the Ottoman legacy can become the intersecting point of domestic politics and foreign policy. However, Kemalist Turkish leaders chose not use this historical legacy. They considered their history as a burden and preferred to be regional representatives of global powers and hence alienated from their region.

During the early 1990s, after the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, this historical heritage was largely discussed in Turkish media and academic circles since many political leaders such as Turgut Özal and many academicians began to think in terms of the “Ottoman vision.” Multi-religious, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic structures and multiple identities occupied the agenda of Turkish political leaders. Neo-Ottomanism emerged as an alternative way of thinking about the country’s politics and society.² In this context, one of the best examples of the impact of history on Turkish foreign policy was the break up of Yugoslavia and the ethnic cleansing of the Bosnians by the Serbs. The Serbs were/are considering Bosnian Muslims as descendants of the Ottomans and Turks. The impact of the Ottoman states is still alive in memories of regional peoples. As pointed out by Çalış (2001), at least the “specter” of the Ottomans patrols in Turkey and in contiguous regions, especially in the Balkans.

The Turkish Republic had been attempting to build a political entity restricted to today’s borders. Political leaders denied not only its historical inheritance but also involvement in other successor states of the Ottoman Empire and cultural connections with the “outside Turks” and the Muslim world. For them, this understanding was a precondition for nation-building process and creation of a modern nation-state. Nevertheless, this caused the emergence of other specters such as those of the cultural Turkism and the Muslim *ummah* in recent decades. These ghosts have always been visible to Turkish decision-makers. With the change of the definition of Turkism, abandoning “political Turkism” in favor of “cultural Turkism” with the emergence of the Muslim Turkish Central Asian republics, and popularization and democrati-

² For analyses of the Ottoman impact on modern Turkish thinking and politics see Çalış, 2001; Yavuz, 2001.

zation of domestic and transnational political Islam, Turkey began emphasizing these two dimensions. These new developments in Turkey's internal and external settings, the longtime political preferences of the official ideology in Turkey coincided with the weakening of the foundations of modernity and de-centered the West in Turkish foreign policy making (Kadioğlu, 1998).

2.2. Geographical Location

Turkey is part of several significant geostrategic and geopolitical regions of the world, namely the Middle East, the Black Sea, Central Asia, Caucasia, and the Balkans.³ Because of this geographical location and also its political and economic position, Turkey is obliged to develop interdependent relationships with other related actors of the world politics. As mentioned by Harris, "Turkey's geostrategic position, size, resource base, and population place it among the more important states of the world" (Harris, 1985: 7). The Balkans, Caucasia, and the straits, which connect Euro-Asian territory to the warm seas and to Africa, intersect in Turkey. Turkey connects two major geo-economic regions of the world, the Caspian Basin and the Middle East, to these regions (Davutoğlu, 2001: 116). Being located in a penetrated region, Turkish foreign policy is strongly influenced by regional developments.

Geostrategic and geopolitical characteristics of the region impose constraints on and create new opportunities for Turkish foreign policy. Turkey is very close to the Middle Eastern oil reserves, the natural resources of Central Asia, and has access to the Mediterranean and Black seas. It hosts two of the world's most strategic waterways, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelle straits. Turkey's geographical proximity to oil and natural resources has maintained and even enhanced its geopolitical significance (Ataman, 1999). Ataöv suggests that geographical location of the Turkish state strongly influences its foreign policy. According to him, "Turkey is an Asian, European, Balkan, Black Sea, Middle Eastern, Eastern Mediterranean, and a predominantly Muslim country. All of these attributes separately define parts of the 'Turkish totality' in the realm of international poli-

³ For an analysis of the impact of geography on strategic calculations of states and that of Turkey see: Davutoğlu, 2001.

tics” (Ataöv, 1992: 90). This position makes it difficult for Turkey to be identified with only one region and forces the country to follow a diversified and interdependent foreign policy orientation.

2.3. Political Preferences

Turkish foreign policy, like foreign policies of other states, has been strongly shaped by political preferences of its political leaders.⁴ One of the main determinants of Turkish foreign policy orientation has been political preferences for Westernism (Dağı, 1998: 162). Some observers emphasize this dimension and claim that Turkish foreign policy was/is an outcome of the Kemalist identity of the state and the Kemalist world-view, which required supporting a Westernist foreign policy orientation. Kemalist leadership nowadays is in a crisis of determining the new policy orientation since it began to follow a strictly anti-Western policy. With the increasing awareness of democratic and pluralistic understanding among the ordinary people, Kemalists now try to redefine Turkish political identity and prefer closer relations with non-Western and non-Islamic countries, which leave only some regional and Eurasian states.

Turkey had been following a strict Western-oriented foreign policy until the 1980s. As Vali points out “being European [was] neither a geographical nor a linguistic question; it relates rather to a way of life, mores, philosophy of life, in other words, to ideology” (Vali, 1971: 53). Atatürk explained that throughout history Turks always went towards the West and would continue in that direction (Kürkçüoğlu, 1981). For Kemalist political leaders, European countries were natural friends and Europe was natural arena to play international game and to form alliances. Turkey’s decision to enter into the European Union hence was a natural political act.

The Western orientation was declared in the main principles of Kemalism. Symbolized by the Six Arrows, the Kemalist principles consist of nationalism (*milliyetçilik*), secularism (*laiklik*), republicanism (*cumhuriyetçilik*), populism (*halkçılık*), statism (*devletçilik*) and revolutionism

⁴ For studies that take political preferences of political leaders into attention see: Calis, 1995; Çalış, Dağı and Gözen, 2001; Kedourie, 1996; Ataman, 1999.

(*inkılapçılık*) (Vali, 1971: 56). Most of them have lost their importance in theory and practice today, but secularism seems to have kept its relevance in the Kemalist ideology and the decision-making process of modern Turkish foreign and domestic policies. Acting according to the principle of secularism, Turkish leaders eliminated Islamic and theocratic foundations of the Ottoman regime to achieve Westernization during the Kemalist leadership. Mentioning the Muslim world and “outside Turks” had been considered “rupture from the West and reactionism” and “racism, chauvinism and Turanism” respectively (Ataman, 2002). For the same reason, Turkey turned its back to the Muslim world, i.e., refused to ratify the Agreement of the Charter of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in the 1970s since it “contains references to Islamic principles, the unity of the Islamic community, and solidarity of Muslims (Calis, 1995).

Even though the Westernization process was imposed on people by the government, Turkish people did not abandon their ethnic and religious identities derived from the past. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the leadership of Özal led Turkey to follow a policy that served as a bridge between the West and the East. With the Özalist understanding, Turkey does not emphasize Westernism as before due to increasing awareness of the people about other alternatives. Political preferences of Turkish leaders, the Özal leadership in particular, also began to change. However, the Özal leadership did not try to abandon this Western-oriented policy, he only added some other dimensions, and thus he diversified Turkish foreign policy orientation. Following a similar orientation with that of the Özal leadership, AK Party governments, especially under the leadership of Davutoğlu, promoted this new discourse and introduced a new multidimensional, multilateral and multilevel foreign policy. During the AK Party administration, Turkey has become to play an active and constructive role in regional and international politics.

2.4. Economic Needs

The state of a country’s economy and its level of development significantly determine its foreign policy behavior. By and large, a country with a diversified, stable, and powerful economy has more opportunities to follow a more independent foreign policy. The poorer the country, the more likely it

pursue a dependent foreign policy. Therefore, economic development is one of the main foreign policy targets that states try to achieve. Some perspectives of political economy such as the dependency and the world system theories concentrate mainly on economic profiles of countries while analyzing their foreign policy orientation (Gourevtich, 1978; Wallerstein, 1974; Gilpin, 1987). After the establishment of the Republic, Turkey had a fragile and backward economy. The first statement of the economic objective of the Kemalist leadership was full economic independence and self-support (Berkes, 1964). Atatürk declared economic independence as the indivisible part of full political independence since economic weakness and foreign debts was one of the main reasons for the Ottoman decline. Turkey followed a statist, nationalist, and protectionist economic policy to develop a new economic system that would allow the state enterprises meet economic needs of people. Economic institutions and enterprises directly concerned with public interest were nationalized (Ahmad, 1993: 152).

In spite of protective and nationalist economic strategy, the Kemalist leadership had to depend on foreign assistance to finance its social and economic projects and its economic development. Turkey has been a major recipient of economic aid from the West, the United States in particular. Eventually, the country became heavily dependent on foreign assistance. As mentioned by Tuncer, “the transfer of external resources has been between four and five percent of Turkey’s gross national product, as was over fifty percent of Turkey’s foreign exchange earnings annually, not taking into account the military grants” (Tuncer, 1975).

In the 1980s, the Özal leadership liberalized the economy and foreign trade, followed an export-oriented strategy, diversified the content and partners of foreign trade, encouraged foreign direct investment, and initiated the process of privatization (Ataman, 1999: 258-279). Although the Özal leadership restructured Turkish economy, post-Özal political leaders could not continue the initiated process; and today, the country still faces economic hardships and dependent on foreign actors. Turkey accepted the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to plan Turkish economy since without the consent of these institutions; it is very difficult for Turkey to adjust foreign debt.

3. New Imperatives and Opportunities

The end of the Cold War is a milestone for the world politics as well as for Turkish politics. It has dramatically changed the structure of international system, to which Turkey relied heavily on its institutions (Barkey, 1992). The new era has been dominated by instability, challenging transnational actors such as terrorism, ethnic movements and multinational corporations, and the increasing gap between rich and poor countries. New concepts such as civilizations and social identities were introduced to explain international politics and relations between actors of the world politics.

Changes both in external and internal settings such as the Özal leadership, the reemergence of Kurdish nationalism, change of international system, the demise of the Soviet Union, the rapid political transformation of the ex-Eastern Bloc, and the independence of the Turkish states provided an atmosphere to restructure Turkish domestic and foreign policy behavior. With the end of the Cold War, Turkey found itself besieged with threatening instabilities and also promising opportunities. Historical heritage and cultural factors, geographical location, political preferences, and economic needs draw Turkey to pursue the following complementary orientations.⁵

3. 1. Integration with the West: Economic and Political Preferences

Turkey has been a part of the West since the Treaty of Paris which was signed in 1856. The Republican Turkey also unilaterally chose to be part of European civilization after gaining its independence. First, it solved bilateral problems with European countries, including Greece. Then, it became member of the European establishments such as the Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the OECD.

The end of the Cold War brought a dramatic change to the European continent. Eastern and Central European countries began to democratize their political systems and liberalize their economic structures. Eastern and Central European countries applied for the membership of the European Union and

⁵ For different analyses and perspectives on Turkish foreign policy proposed by Turkish political leaders, intellectuals, and academicians see: *Yeni Türkiye, Türk Dış Politikası Özel Sayısı*, March-April 1995.

some of these countries participated to NATO alliance. European continent seemed to establish a homogeneous political and economic entity. Nevertheless, this change did not greatly influence the Turkish understanding of the West. European and Turkish securities are interdependent as it was during the Cold War period. However, the source, direction and nature of the threat facing both sides have changed. European states claim that the role and relevance of NATO diminished for European countries in the post-Cold War era. NATO was restructured and transferred into a universal alliance struggling against anti American states and forces. Therefore, the European Union (EU) does not want the US existence in Europe anymore. However, they still need Turkey in dealing with the Middle East and Central Asia.

Turkey under the leadership of Özal initiated a qualitative change in Turkey's position in the Western alliance and improved Turkey's relations with the US and EU simultaneously in order to prevent Turkish dependence on either side (the EU and the US). Turkey attempted to diversify its alliance pattern within the Western alliance in order to enhance Turkey's bargaining position (Ataman, 2002). With major structural transformations in political, economic, and social fields initiated in Turkey in the 1980s, Turkey improved its relations with the European Union. Turkey applied to the EU for full membership on 14 April 1987. Kemalist Turkish leaders considered the application as a major step toward Westernization. Most Turkish leaders, both Kemalists and non-Kemalists, expect that Turkey will significantly benefit from the full membership of the EU in political, economic and social development. Besides its contributions to Turkish economy, the EU membership can be evaluated as a counterbalancing move against possible US dependency (Ataman, 2002).

The full membership of the EU is not the only alternative for Turkey.⁶ If it solves its domestic problems such as the Kurdish issue, its economic stalemate, and the position of political Islam, Turkey can be attractive for many states and group of states. Still by keeping the priority of the European context, Turkey has to attach great importance to the United States, Black Sea

⁶ There are many groups that oppose the Turkish membership of the EU. Turkish military also declared alternatives for the EU. For the speech of General Secretary of the National Security Council Orgeneral Tuncer Kılınç and an evaluation of it see: Akgün, 2002.

Region, the Muslim world, and Central and Eastern Asia. This will increase the bargaining power and the maneuvering capability of the country.

Turkey has both geopolitical and historical imperatives to have close relationship with the West. Turkey has the capability to align with both the United States and the European Union, a position that even many European states lack the opportunity to play, because both sides attach great importance to the geostrategic and geopolitical position of Turkey. In today's multi-unipolar world, in which the US still leads the world as the only hegemon but challenged by several major powers such as China and Russia, the American support is vital for any state in the world. States need to bandwagon with the strongest state in the world. Turkey is no exception.

Turkey needs the US cooperation in dealing with regional matters too. For example, Turkey was able to persuade the United Nations to support the Security Council Resolution 649 regarding Cyprus issue. Similarly, the US put pressure on the EU in favor of Turkey on many problems. The backing of the US diminishes the Turkish dependence on the European states.

3.2. The Muslim World: Historical and Cultural Links

The Muslim world has been experiencing a process of fundamental change in geo-political and geo-cultural terms. First of all, the concept of the "Muslim world" has changed from being only an Afro-Asian concept to including both Afro-Asian and Euro-Asian dimensions (Davutoğlu, 2001: 250). Islam nowadays is located not only in MENA (the Middle East and North Africa) region but also reaches to the heart of Europe (Bosnia and Albania). Furthermore, Islam became the second largest religion in many Western countries, including the United States. It is increasingly challenging the hegemony of Western civilization. Turkey is expected to use its significant position to soften the tension between these potentially challenging and conflicting civilizations through pursuing policy of dialogue among civilizations. Turkey will benefit symbolically, politically, and economically from the dialogue between sides.

Turkey has to develop close relationships with the Muslim world due to historical, cultural, geopolitical and political imperatives. It is obvious that only by having good relations with the Muslim world as well as with the

West could Turkey achieve a constructive role in establishing a channel of communication between the West and the East.⁷ Turks had been leading the Muslim world for centuries and many Muslim states, including the most part of Saudi Arabia, was under the Ottoman control. Therefore, Turkey needs to improve its position in the contexts of the OIC, the Developing-Eight (D-8), and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). It can play a leading role in these organizations and use these platforms for its interests.

Compared with the refraining policy of the Cold War era, Turkey began to pursue a more active and independent policy toward the Muslim world with the end of the Cold War. One of the significant indications of this orientation was the active involvement in the activities of the OIC. Turkey improved its relations with the organization and used it as an international platform for foreign policy issues such as the Cyprus, Turkish minorities living in Greece and Bulgaria, and the Bosnia. Turkey even called for additional meetings to discuss these problems. Turkey played the main role in the acceptance of the Central Asian Muslim states to the organization. It tried to free the OIC from the Arab domination and inter-Arab conflicts by opening its doors to the vestiges of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and to the Turkish republics. Finally, Turkey succeeded in selecting Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu as the secretary general of the organization.

Even though it has been inactive for years due to Iran's tense relations with the West and unexpected regional developments, a complementary multilateral institution that was dominated by Muslim states and has improved relations with Turkey is the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). Turkey pioneered the establishment of ECO among Northern belt Muslim countries including Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. Turkey encouraged the Central Asian Muslim countries and Afghanistan to join the organization, making it a powerful regional organization. ECO will provide opportunities for Turkey to reach the Asian depths (Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan), a source of many strategic material resources.

⁷ The meeting bringing the European Union countries and members of the Conference of the Islamic Organization organized by Turkey in Istanbul at the beginning of the year 2002 was a symbolic milestone for Turkey in functioning as a bridge between the two worlds. Representatives from 88 countries attended the meeting.

3.3. The Turkish World: Ethnic and Cultural Bonds

After a long-time policy of silence and negligence, Turkey grasped the opportunity to lead the Turkish world after the collapse of the Soviet Union to enter relationships with the Central Asian states. Throughout the Soviet era, Turkey was unable to contact with these states because they were part of the Soviet Union and due to the iron curtain between the two blocs. With the end of the Cold War, Turkey abandoned its traditional isolationist policy toward the Turks of Central Asia. It became the first state that recognized the Central Asian Turkish states, and with its market economy, relatively democratic system, and ethnic and cultural bonds Turkey was seen as a model to be emulated.

While Turkey encouraged Turkish republics to enter international institutions such as OIC and ECO, it initiated bilateral and multilateral cooperation in many issue areas exclusively with these states. In the first several years after their independence, Turkey and the newly established Turkish states signed over 300 agreements covering such diverse subjects as civil aviation and prevention of double taxation (Zurcher, 1997). Turkey founded the Turkish Cooperation Development Agency under the administration of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1992 to organize Turkish relations with these countries, to foster cooperative opportunities, and to arrange Turkey's financial and technological assistance.

Not only the Turkish state but also private companies and Turkish non-governmental organizations involved in fostering relations. Hundreds of Turkish companies operated in the markets of these countries and many joint ventures have been created in different sectors. Sides have exchanged thousands of students. Turkish media expanded into the new states. The volume of trade between Turkey and these countries boomed. Turkey benefits from the Turkish republics in many ways. First, it does not feel itself isolated in the international arena anymore. Turkey is now symbolically the leading state of the Turkish world. Central Asian Turkish republics and Turkey agreed to act together in many international organizations. They constituted a voting bloc in international platforms. Second, with the introduction of Central Asian and Caucasian oil to international markets, Tur-

kish dependence on the Middle Eastern oil decreased. Turkey initiated projects carrying oil and natural gas from these states to Turkey. Third, Turkish states provided potential opportunities for the growing Turkish industrial market. They are a huge market for Turkish goods and services. Fourth, ethnic and cultural links with these countries increased Turkey's geostrategic and geopolitical significance since the United States and European countries try to use Turkey to reach the region.

Turkey should develop an independent Central Asian foreign policy, not the continuation policy of the United States. For the long run, Turkey has to compete with Russia, Iran, and somewhat Pakistan over the region. If Turkey pursues a policy that reflects strategic preferences of the West, then it will lose tactical flexibility in the region. Furthermore, close relations with the Turkish world should not cause tension between Turkey and other regional states.

3. 4. The Regional Context: Historical and Geographical Connections

Turkey has the opportunity to lead regional arrangements in the Black Sea area, the Balkans, the Middle East, and Caucasia. Turkey had been securing the stability of these regions for centuries and it needs to revive its historical position. It cannot be indifferent about developments in its contiguous regions. If Turkey thinks to be active in the region, it has to be the vanguard of the establishment of regional organizations. It has the advantage of utilizing geographical proximity in entering relationships with these regions.

Turkey has actually been leading the formation of regional initiatives from the beginning. As a newly established state, it was concerned about its security and national integrity, and with regional institutions, it tried to protect itself from transnational and international threats. It also aimed to benefit from regional initiatives to foster its economic development. Therefore, it became part of the Balkan Pact, the Saadabad Pact, the Baghdad Pact, the Regional Cooperation and Development, the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization.

Turkey began to change its "back seat position" toward the Middle East. Beginning in the 1980s, Turkey has been in the process of changing its traditional policy. As mentioned by Barkey, there are four reasons for the im-

provement of relations with the Middle Eastern states. First, the Kurdish insurgency in Turkey and its connections with Iraq, Iran, and Syria forced Turkey to involve in Middle Eastern politics. Second, the water issue emerged as a significant political and strategic regional question. Turkey planned the “peace water pipeline project” supplying Turkish waters to regional countries in 1988. It attempted to contribute to the peace talks between the Arabs and the Israeli state (Ataman, 1999: 182). Third, global changes in the strategic, geopolitical, and geo-economic balance and its regional implications shifted regional calculations. Fourth, continuing regional problems such as the uncertainty of the future of Iraq, the instability in the Gulf and the Arab-Israeli conflict provide opportunities for Turkey to play a regional role (Barkey, 1992).

At the end of the Cold War, Turkey led the establishment of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) and the Blackseafor, an orientation that was ignored for decades. As pointed out by Ataöv, “the new détente and the changing taking place in the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet successor states and in the Eastern European countries have brought depth and untried dimensions to Turkey’s relations with them” (Ataöv, 1992: 115).

The BSEC Organization was established in Istanbul on 25 June 1992 after the summit meeting organized by Turkey. The principal objective of the organization is to transform the region into a peaceful, prosperous, and stable region. Instability, distress, and poverty in the region are against Turkey’s interests. The region offers a huge market potential for trade, contracting works, and joint ventures (Ataöv, 1992). It is considered as a significant part of Turkey’s outward orientation and cooperation. The BSEC was an important step in bringing many conflicting states together and improving political, economic, and social cooperation at the state as well as societal levels. It facilitated integration of Turkey with the ex-Soviet and the Balkan states. For Turkey, it can also be considered as the second door opened to Europe. However, it is not an alternative to the European Union, but a complementary project.

Turkey initiated the formation of the Black Sea Cooperation Duty Group (Blackseafor). Then Turkish Commander of Naval Forces Salim

Dervişoğlu invited all littoral states on the Black Sea to create a naval force. Blackseafor was created on 2 April 2001 with an international agreement signed by Turkey, Russia, Romania, Ukraine, Georgia, and Bulgaria. It mainly deals with rescue, humanitarian aid, mine search, and environmental issues. It is decided that this force will have a commander, be able to make operations, and work with the United Nations and the Organization of European Security and Cooperation (Boztaş, 2001).

Blackseafor will bring benefits for Turkey in several ways. First of all, it will provide an opportunity for Turkish military to come together with the Russian military forces, which will allow Turkish military to know closely the long-time threat Russian power. Second, the military dialog between the two countries will increase the Turkish influence in the region. Turkey will find better ways to interact with its neighbors that will help its image in the region. Third, the security of the natural gas pipeline that brings natural gas from Russia to Turkey will be protected collectively. Fourth, Turkey's impact on regional countries will increase with this multilateral force.

4. Conclusion

Turkey has to develop different policy options that makes it ready to answer the “otherwise.” Changing patterns in the world and in the region may necessitate new alliance formations, which may lead superpowers to establish new alliance patterns with other countries. Geopolitical and geostrategic significance and preferences of states change overtime. For instance, the United States may change its regional partner of the Middle East overtime as a result of changing circumstances. The US has actually been closer to Russia after September 11 in its fight against radical Islamic movements and transnational political Islam. Likewise, even Israel may change its alliance pattern depending on future developments in the region. Turkey should be ready to new circumstances. It should not remain insensitive to possible international changes as it experienced during the sweeping changes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Turkey has to take into consideration historical heritage, cultural factors, geographical location, political preferences, and economic needs for its foreign policy orientation. As mentioned by Çalış (2001: 175), a “zero sum

logic doesn't and cannot have an alternative. The biggest risk is the lack of alternatives". Considering only one of these factors will create problems and constraints for the country. Instead of thinking in a "zero-sum logic" in today's complex world, Turkey has to combine all elements that facilitate its foreign policy behavior. Throughout the Cold War period, Turkish governments emphasized their political preferences and neglected their historical legacy and cultural factors. During the 1960s and 1970s, Turkey experienced difficulties in some foreign policy issues such as the Cyprus Question due to the lack of alternatives. It has to be recognized that different foreign policy orientations such as Europe and the West, the Middle East and the Muslim World, and Central Asia and the Turkish World are not contradictory or competitive, but they are complementary.

Turkey initiated some alternative relationships to its Western alliance in the 1980s and 1990s. While Turkey continued its close relationship with the United States and the European Union during this period, it entered close relations with the Muslim and Turkish worlds and pioneered the establishment of regional organizations such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Organization and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). The article claimed that Turkey needs to create alternative alliance patterns and economic networks to its Western partnership and diversify its foreign policy not only in political but economic and cultural spheres.

Today, Turkey needs to build up a network of alliances (military, political, and economic) based on the principle of interdependence, because it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to follow a pure "national" and "independent" foreign policy in political, economic, and social areas in today's globalized and interconnected world. The most rational and pragmatic policy is to have an interdependent relationship with the actors of the world politics and try to change and exploit situations and positions in its favor. Therefore, it is required to enter transnational and international transactions more than ever. Turkey's strategy for the future is restructuring its foreign relations, considering a number of alternatives with the power centers and the establishment of a hinterland in which long-time cultural, economic, and political links are secured.

Özet: Bu çalışmada Türkiye'nin Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde geçirdiği dış politika değişimi ele alınmıştır. Bu değişim karşılıklı bağımlılık ve çeşitlilik kavramları ile açıklanmıştır. Bu yöndeki bir dış politika eğiliminin oluşmasında dört temel faktör rol oynamaktadır. Çalışmanın giriş bölümünden sonra bu dört faktör üzerinde durulmuştur. Bunlar, tarihi miras ve kültürel faktörler, coğrafi konum, siyasi tercihler ve ekonomik ihtiyaçlardır. Çalışmanın ikinci bölümünde bu dört faktör bağlamında Türk dış politikasındaki karşılıklı bağımlılık ve çeşitlilik analiz edilmiştir. Türkiye, ekonomik ihtiyaçlar ve siyasi tercihler dolayısıyla Batıyla yakın ilişkiler içinde bulunmuş ve Batıyla bütünleşme süreci içine girmiştir. Tarihi ve kültürel bağlar dolayısıyla İslam dünyasıyla yakın ilişkiler kurmuş ve aktif bir siyaset izlemeye başlamıştır. Güçlü etnik ve kültürel bağlar kullanılarak pek çok alanda Türk dünyasıyla işbirliği kurulmuştur. Son olarak da tarihsel miras ve kültürel bağlantılar nedeniyle bölge ülkeleriyle yakın ilişkiler geliştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Dış Politikası, Kültürel Bağlar, Coğrafi Konum, Ekonomik İhtiyaçlar

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