

**JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN
POLICY DURING THE IRAQI CRISIS IN 2003**

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ABSTRACT

JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY GOVERNMENT’S FOREIGN POLICY DURING THE IRAQI CRISIS IN 2003

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The objective of this thesis is to analyze the foreign policy of the Justice and Development Party government during the Iraqi Crisis in 2003. In this context, the aim is to find out the answers to the questions of “how did the JDP government react to the Iraqi Crisis in 2003 and what were the driving forces pushing the government to act in such a way, how did the JDP government’s policies evolved Turkey’s relations with the US and the EU, did the JDP government try to evolve the traditional foreign policy orientations of the Turkish Republic?” Accordingly the thesis contains four main parts. In the first part of the study, the categorization in the international system in geostrategic and geopolitical terms and general tendencies in Turkish foreign policy are studied. In the second part of the study, the political identity of the JDP and the reasons of categorizing the JDP as a centre-right party are discussed. In the third part, the general attitude of the JDP government in some foreign policy issues and the assumptions of

Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu -the Chief Advisor to the Foreign Minister in foreign policy- are scrutinized. In the forth part, Turkey's relations with the US and the EU during the Iraqi Crisis in 2003 is discussed. Accordingly, this thesis has reached to the following conclusions: First, the JDP has acted in conformity with the traditional concepts of Turkish foreign policy to a major extent, the concerns shaping the Turkish foreign policy toward Iraq since the first Gulf War of 1990-1991 continued to determine the calculations of Turkish actors during the Iraqi Crisis of 2003. Second, the JDP government pursued a two-pronged, dual policy to meet the demands and expectancies of the US, the EU, the Muslim countries and international and internal public opinion.

Keywords: Iraq, Turkey, the JDP, Turkish Foreign Policy, the Iraqi Crisis, the US, the EU.

ÖZ

ADALET VE KALKINMA PARTİSİ HÜKÜMETİNİN 2003 IRAK KRİZİNDEKİ DIŞ POLİTİKASI

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Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

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Bu tezin amacı, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP)'nin 2003 Irak Krizi'ndeki dış politikasını incelemektir. Bu bağlamda, amaç şu sorulara cevap bulmaktır: “Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi 2003 Irak Krizi'ne nasıl tepki verdi, AKP'yi bu şekilde davranmaya iten sebepler neydi, AKP hükümetinin politikaları Türkiye-Amerika Birleşik Devletleri (ABD) ve Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği (AB) ilişkilerini ne yönde değiştirdi, AKP hükümeti geleneksel Türk dış politikası yönelimlerini değiştirdi mi?” Tez dört ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölümde, geostratejik ve geopolitik anlamda Türkiye'nin uluslararası sistemdeki yeri ve Türk dış politikasındaki genel eğilimler çalışılmıştır. İkinci kısımda, AKP'nin politik kimliği ve merkez-sağ bir parti olarak categorize edilmesinin sebepleri tartışılacaktır. Üçüncü kısımda, bazı dış politika konularında AKP hükümetinin genel tavrı ve Dışişleri Bakanı Baş Danışmanı Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun görüşleri incelenecektir. Dördüncü kısımda, 2003 Irak Krizi boyunca Türkiye'nin Amerika

Birleşik Devletleri ve Avrupa Birliđi ile ilişkileri incelenecektir. Böylelikle, bu tez çalışmasında şu sonuçlara varılmıştır: İlk olarak, AKP hükümeti geleneksel dış politika kavramlarıyla –Batı yanlısı, statüko yanlısı, meşruiyet yanlısı—uyumlu bir şekilde hareket etmiştir. 1990-1991 Körfez Savaşı süresince Türk dış politikasını şekillendiren kaygılar 2003 Irak Krizi’nde de Türk hükümetinin kararlarını belirlemede etkili olmaya devam etmiştir. İkinci olarak, AKP hükümeti hem ABD’nin hem AB’nin hem de Müslüman devletlerin ve uluslararası ve ulusal kamuoyunun talep ve beklentilerini karşılayabilmek için iki yönlü politikalar uygulamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Irak, Türkiye, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Türk Dış Politikası, Irak Krizi, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Avrupa Birliđi.

To my dear mother Şükran and father Kemal

and,

to my sister Sıla

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The struggle against international terrorism at the global level initiated by the United States of America following the terrorist attacks on Washington, D.C. and New York City on September 11, 2001 has once again brought Turkey's geopolitical and geo-strategic importance to the forefront. The US has redefined its security policies to include asymmetrical threats, a new type of threat whereby small actors in the international system such as terrorist groups inflict serious damage on great powers. While terrorism has topped the new threat perceptions of the US, countries with a background of supporting terrorism have been described as the "axis of evil" and it has been declared that there will be a ruthless struggle against them. For this purpose, what is now known as the Bush doctrine, the national security strategy of the US is to launch "preemptive strikes" aimed at destroying potential threats before they become active. The Bush doctrine was successfully applied for the first time in Afghanistan where Al-Qaeda, the prime suspect of September 11th terrorist attacks, was based. The Taleban regime controlling the country has been removed from power by a military operation led by the USA and a pro-US government representing all factions within the country has been formed. After Afghanistan, developments such as the supposed Iraq-al-Qaeda links, the anthrax cases and the dispute over UN arms inspections in Iraq, led to Iraq becoming the next target in the US fight against terrorism.

Traditionally, Turkey has been considered as an important country because of its geographic location between Europe, the Middle East and Asia, which gives Turkey an easy access to major energy resources. Moreover, thanks to its character as a modern Muslim country, Turkey stands as a bridge between Western and Islamic civilizations.

When the Iraqi Crisis arose in 2003, the Justice and Development Party (JDP) was in power after winning the elections of November 3, 2002. This early general election not only eliminated a lot of political leaders from the Turkish political scene, but also left more than 90% of the members of the parliament (MP) elected in 1999 outside the parliament. Justice and Development Party (JDP), which had ranked first in opinion polls since the day it was established, had won a landslide victory. Thus, the country had finally gained a single-party government for the first time in 15 years. In one sense, voters had eliminated such parties as the Motherland Party (MP), the Democratic Left Party (DLP), and the True Path Party (TP) that had been governing the country for a long time, and also the Nationalist Action Party (NAP) that had been struggling to become compatible with the system. In less than a year since its establishment, the JDP - -said to represent the “other Turkey” and to speak for the masses against political elitism-- had managed to secure 34% of the votes and 363 seats in the parliament in the first election it competed in. The RPP (Republican People’s Party), meanwhile, had been left outside the parliament in the previous election due to the 10% threshold, and had hoped to form a single party government; it received 19.4% of the votes and became the single opposition party with its 178-seat group in the parliament.

Although the JDP with its 2/3 majority in the parliament has officially emerged as a new party, reformists who had abandoned the Islamism-based “National View” movement -- politically active in Turkey since the 1970s-- form the bulk of the team. In what some refer to as a post-modern coup during the Welfare-True Path coalition government period; the Constitutional Court outlawed the Welfare Party (WP) on January 16, 1998 for being the focal point of anti-secular activities. Within the framework of the Virtue Party (VP) established afterwards in lieu of Welfare, the National View has for the first time in its history suffered a division of views on political style between “traditionalists” and “reformists”. The reformist group suggested that the VP had to pursue a more realistic, pragmatic and softer policies and demanded that the intra-party democracy must be improved to give greater voice to the youth rising within the movement. The power struggle within the party reached a critical point when current Prime Minister Abdullah Gül from the reformist wing declared his candidacy for the leadership of the

party against Recai Kutan in the first important party congress and received 45% of the delegates' votes. Ways had already parted at that point. The factor that accelerated the dissolution was the outlawing of the VP by the Constitutional Court on June 12, 2001 for almost exactly the same reasons the WP was outlawed. Hence, the thirty-year old monolithic Islamist political movement had disintegrated with the emergence of the traditionalists as the Felicity Party (FP) and the reformists as the JDP.

The JDP appeared as a candidate, demonstrating that what failed during the Welfare Party era, which is the coexistence of Islam with democracy and Islam with secularism, could now be achieved. When questions about foreign policy and security strategies were posed, JDP officers emphasized two issues: Firstly, that they aimed at building a wall of peace around Turkey by improving political and commercial relations with all neighbours (and Iraq in the meantime). Secondly, they would first consult with relevant units (such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the General Staff) in possible foreign policy crises. Party leader Tayyip Erdoğan sent the message to both domestic and international public opinion that the JDP would not alter the general characteristics of Turkish foreign policy and the party's objective was to join the EU --the "liberty, security and prosperity" bloc-- in order to develop the country politically, economically and also socially.

The main assumption of the thesis is that during the Iraqi Crisis the JDP government, by protecting the traditional vision in Turkish foreign policy --formulated as being *pro-Western*, *pro-status quo* and *pro-legitimacy*-- pursued a two-pronged and dual policy to meet the demands of the US, the EU, the Muslim countries and international and internal public opinion. The JDP government faced a dilemma: On the one hand, the United States pressed Turkey to give assistance during the Iraq Operation. On the other hand, world public opinion, in particular the Arab countries and other powers including France, Germany, China and Russia openly rejected any operation against Iraq. Although the JDP was an Islamist-rooted party, it wished to avoid its predecessors' faults (Virtue and Welfare Parties), and therefore its relations with the Middle East had

been guided largely by national interests --defined by security, material and political benefits-- rather than by ideological or religious affinities.

The thesis consists of four chapters. The first chapter discusses the categorization of Turkey in the international system in order to understand the JDP government's foreign policy comprehensively during the Iraqi Crisis. In this chapter the general tendencies in Turkish foreign policy and main principles of traditional foreign policy approach of Turkey will also be stated.

In the second chapter the political identity of the JDP, which is in a clear break from the long-running National View tradition, will be discussed. The reasons of categorizing JDP as a centre-right party will also be discussed.

In the third chapter, the general attitude of the JDP government in some foreign policy issues and the assumptions of Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu who is the Chief Advisor to the Foreign Minister in foreign policy will be discussed in detail. The 1990-1991 Gulf War and the construction of Northern Iraq as a security issue will be explained and the heavy agenda that the JDP government had to cope with will be discussed.

The fourth chapter focuses on Turkey's relations with the US and the EU during the Iraqi Crisis in 2003. In the context of EU-US relations it is claimed that the dynamics of the Turkey-US alliance have changed to a great extent, especially in the post-9/11 period. Turkey seems to be pursuing a more independent and assertive policy and reluctant to allow the use of its military bases in actions in the Middle East and the Gulf, except when these operations are seen clearly to serve Turkish national interests. Turkey is trying to become an independent security actor in the region.¹ As Erickson argues, "the clear goal of the new Turkish defence policy is to develop a dominant regional military capability with an autonomous military production system capable of supporting unilateral action in pursuit of national security. The end is a force structure

¹ Edward J. Erickson, "Turkey as a Regional Hegemon-2014: Strategic Implications for the United States," *Turkish Studies*, 5(3), Autumn 2004, p.39.

that can project power outside of Turkey and to develop an internal production system that can free Turkey from the restrictions of arms suppliers.² In short, Turkey wants to see a more balanced partnership, one that would benefit both sides, not only the US.³ This approach, of course, is quite contrary to the perception of the alliance during the Cold War years. In the context of Turkey- EU relations it is claimed that the developments concerning the Iraqi Crisis, which set Turkey-US relations on a troubled path, ironically brought Turkey closer to the EU. First of all, these developments enabled the political leadership in Turkey to give impetus to the reformation process by weakening the anti-EU coalition and underscoring the importance of Turkey's European orientation. Secondly, they indicated that the democratic system worked in Turkey even under heavy US pressure. Finally, they made it harder to justify the arguments often heard in policy circles, particularly in France and Germany that Turkey is too pro-American and could serve as a US "Trojan horse" if it enters the EU.

Taking into account the above mentioned points, the key questions that should be raised are, "how did the JDP government react to the Iraqi Crisis in 2003 and what were the driving forces pushing the government to act in such a way, how did the JDP government's policies evolved Turkey's relations with the US and the EU, did the JDP government try to evolve the traditional foreign policy orientations of the Turkish Republic?"

With the intention of trying to answer the above-noted questions through a descriptive method, this thesis aims to analyze the foreign policy of the JDP government during the Iraqi Crisis in 2003.

² Ibid., p. 33.

³ Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs Sorunu* (Ankara: Yüzyıl Yayınları, 2000), p. 388.

CHAPTER II

TURKEY AND GENERAL TENDENCIES IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

First of all we should look at the categorization of a particular state in the international system to understand the general principles and trends of that particular country's foreign policy. The continuities and changes in that state's foreign policy can not be examined comprehensively without grasping the geo-strategic, political, economic and demographic aspects of the state in question together with the general historical conjuncture of the international system. This suggestion fits well in order to understand Turkish foreign policy under previous governments and also the Justice and Development Party (JDP) (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP) government.

Turkish domestic politics witnessed a landmark event on November 3, 2002, when the JDP gained the vote majority to establish a single-party government, overthrowing the Democratic Left Party, the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and the Motherland Party, as well as removing the True Path Party and the Virtue Party from the Assembly.

After the JDP's dramatic victory, many discussions arose about the new government's way of acting in the domestic and international sphere and their effects on Turkish foreign policy. Addressing to the Islamist experience under Refah-Yol (Welfare-Path) Government established by the Islamist Welfare Party (Refah Partisi, RP) and the center-right True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi, DYP), many analysts claimed that the single-party government under JDP could lead towards a more Islamist-oriented foreign policy, as opposed to a Western one which would create clashes with Turkey's military establishment and therefore end up creating political turmoil within Turkey and its region. Whether the JDP would act in accordance with the "traditional Turkish foreign policy" or not, thus emerged as a serious question.

As an overall introduction, the general principles of Turkish foreign policy shall be examined in this section together with the Turkish Republic's categorization as a state in international system. Through this, it becomes possible to understand whether the JDP is clashing or not with the traditional trends and principles of Turkish foreign policy and foreign relations.

2.1. Categorization of Turkey in the International System

According to its geographical location, demographical potential, political, economic, social and military capabilities, experts, scholars and politicians have produced a variety of analyses of Turkey's role in the international system. When we evaluate the books and articles written by Turkish and Foreign experts, we encounter various definitions for Turkey. In this section, we will examine all these categorizations.

The first definition, which is generally shared among retired ambassadors and military officials, describe Turkey as a "central state". For instance, according to Onur Öymen, who is now a deputy in Turkish Grand National Assembly and a retired ambassador, Turkey due to its various merits is one of the leading and most powerful countries of the world in the 21st century.⁴ Öymen argues that Turkey possesses significant advantages in demography, geographical location, economy, military power, democracy and domestic stability, which are the main indicators of national power.⁵ He also draws attention to the youthfulness and dynamism of the Turkish population; the size of the Turkish army, second in Europe after Russia and seventh in the world after China, the United States of America, Russia, India, South Korea and North Korea; the development rate of the Turkish economy; the strategic location of Anatolia; its natural resources; and the democratic culture of Turkish society in the framework of a 200-year-long modernization project.

⁴ See Onur Öymen, *Türkiye'nin Gücü* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2003). For his similar arguments look at Onur Öymen, *Geleceği Yakalamak* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, Güncelleştirilmiş Yeni Baskı, 2002).

⁵ Öymen, *Türkiye'nin Gücü*, pp. 51-214.

Ahmet Davutoğlu, a professor of International Relations and the chief advisor to the Foreign Minister, formulates Turkey's categorization as a "central state" in a different way. Davutoğlu in his books and speeches argues that Turkey is a Western country as a candidate to the European Union, and an ally of the USA. He also points out that it is an Asian and Middle Eastern country due to its historical background and geographical depth. These identifications put Turkey in the center of West-East axis. Turkey also has a northern dimension due to its membership in Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). However, it has neither the advantages of a low increase rate in population and a high GDP per person like those of North, nor does have the problem of an unbalanced rate of increase in population and unskilled labour like those of the South. Therefore Turkey is also at the center of North-South axis, which, together with West-East axis, puts Turkey at the center of the world.⁶ To sum up, it is clear that these two explanations are Turkey-based and the influence of Turkey as actor in international relations is affected by its own potentials. The "national power" determines the category of that state in the international system.

According to another categorization, Turkey is neither a powerful state nor a small state but a "middle power". Though the use of this term is widely observed in many studies on Turkish foreign policy, there is no specific definition of it. Indeed the term is controversial. Moreover, in the literature the terms of "regional powers" and "pivotal states" are also used in relation with middle powers. According to William Hale, middle powers have a mixture of military strength, economic resources and level of development.⁷ Taking power "as the ability to force other states to take actions which they would not otherwise have taken", Hale argues that middle powers, unlike small states, can act relatively independently in international system; may force weaker states if they are geographically proximate; and --if the international conjuncture is suitable-- may resist the greater powers.⁸ He also claims though middle powers have some sort of

⁶ Keynote Speech by Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Third METU Conference on International Relations, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 26.05.2004.

⁷ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy: 1774- 2000* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), p. 1.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

regional power, when they face a threat to their security by a major power, they may either try to create manoeuvring room for themselves by exploiting the balance of power between major states or spend effort in forming defensive alliances which transfer the state in question into a satellite if the alliance is forged with greater states.

The nature of the international system and the situation of hegemonic powers determine the level of autonomy that the middle powers enjoy. For instance, according to Raymond Aron, in a period like the Cold War when there is a strict bi-polar structure, “it is neither possible nor realistic for middle powers to pursue a foreign policy independent from the poles”.⁹ Following this point, Prof. Dr. Baskın Oran argues that the categorization of Turkey is a hard task as it is located in such a geography that requires dealing with multi-dimensional threats, engaging in series of linkages and getting involved in various interests.¹⁰ On the other hand Turkey does not reflect qualities of major or small states. According to Oran, Turkey is a strategic middle power with above-average military strength and an average economic development. In this view the strategic environment that the middle power is located in, serves special advantages and disadvantages to a middle power depending on its strength. For Turkey, the strategic dimension has three factors.¹¹ First of all Turkey lies at a very strategic point between the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus, which together may indeed be named as another “Bermuda’s Devil Triangle”.¹² Also Turkey is surrounded by neighbours the majority of whom present problems. The Turkish Straits are of universal value. Secondly, Turkey is at the intersection point of five regional security chambers namely; Europe, the Balkans, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Caucasus. These chambers have no geographical frontier between them and each brings dilemmas to Turkish foreign policy. For instance,

⁹ Raymond Aron, *Peace and War - A Theory of International Relations* (New York: Anchor, 1973), pp. 125-127.

¹⁰ Baskın Oran, “Türk Dış Politikası’nın Teori ve Pratiği” in Baskın Oran (ed.) *Türk Dış Politikası - Kurtuluş Savaşı’ndan Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 8th edition, 2003), p. 29.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-27.

¹² Baskın Oran, “80 Yıllık Türk Dış Politikası’nın Teori ve Pratiği”, *Radikal* 80. Yıl, 29 Eylül 2003, p. 30.

in the Mediterranean Turkey faces the challenge of being encircled by Greece from the West and Cyprus from the south. Together with these two, twelve islands could block Turkish access to the open seas. In this situation Turkey should on the one hand protect its interests while on the other hand refraining from causing tensions with Greece, which may endanger its European journey.¹³ Thirdly, as a similar approach to that of Davutoğlu, Oran argues that during the Cold War, the East-West axis, which was composed of strategic, political, economic and cultural clashes, crossed over Turkey. Since 1980s, newly emerging axis of North-South based on political economy covered Turkey horizontally. According to Oran, while Turkey sided with the West in the first axis, diplomatic will is not enough to make a selection in the second one.

In their controversial book “Turkish Foreign Policy in the Age of Uncertainty”, F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser define Turkey as a “pivotal state”. According to them, due to its population, location, economic and military potentials, but especially with its capacity to affect regional and international stability, “Turkey is a pivotal state *par excellence*” like Mexico, Brazil, Algeria, India and Indonesia.¹⁴ While emphasizing the power and the manoeuvring room for pivotal states, the writers put significant emphasis on their capacity to be a source of stability in their regions and the whole international system. Larrabee and Lesser also points out to one distinctiveness of Turkey among the other pivotal states. Turkey as opposed to other pivotal states “is a member of Western strategic club, principally through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) but also through its evolving relations with the European Union (EU)”.¹⁵ In this framework the writers believe that Turkey has an important role in the interests of the West not only through its foreign policy but also its internal developments.¹⁶ An impoverished, politically instable Turkey directed by nationalist sentiments would be the main cause of instability in its neighbourhood.

¹³ Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁴ F. Stephen Larrabee & Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty* (Pittsburgh: RAND, 2003), p. 2.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 188.

When we look through all these perceived categories of the Turkish Republic in the international system, it can be said that Turkey is a middle power or a pivotal state with a very strategic environment and location. It has a population that is dynamic and young when compared with those of European countries; though being re-structured under IMF programs, has an instable economy; possesses the second largest army in Europe after Russia and seventh in the world; is in the process of democratization due to the European integration process; and has a relatively stable political and social domestic atmosphere in comparison to that of the mid-90s. Last but not least, Turkey has made significant achievements in its human rights standards. This has serious implications for national and international security. In the post-Cold War era, domestic security has been linked to international security. The instability in the domestic affairs was also leading to instability in the international affairs. Hence, a regime disrespectful of the rights of its citizens is seen as the main source of problems for its region and international system as a whole.¹⁷ The improvements in human rights in Turkey in the last six years have positively affected the state-citizen relations and this led to improvements in its relations with the neighbouring countries.

Turkey as a central state found itself at the core of the discussions about Iraq because of its geographical and historical depth that it was not able to escape from. Because of its unique role and historical responsibilities in the region, Turkey could not remain aloof to the developments in its proximate land basin of the Middle East. When Turkey did act in the crisis, it had to avoid acting in a way that would undermine its central position, and relegate itself to a peripheral role. According to Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu Turkey had to develop its vision as an active agent. Moreover Turkey had to refrain from prioritizing one axis of its foreign relations over others. Rather Turkey had to calculate the implications of its Iraq policy on other dimensions of its foreign policy, and maintain its relations with other regions and powers in line with its own vision about Iraq.¹⁸

¹⁷ İhsan Duran Dağı, *Batılılaşma Korkusu* (Ankara: Liberte Yayınları, 2003), pp. 116-117, 120-122, 128-129. Also see from the same author, *Human Rights, Foreign Policy and the Question of Intervention, Perceptions*, June-August 2001, pp. 105-119.

¹⁸ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Türkiye Merkez Ülke Olmalı”, *Radikal*, 26 February 2004.

2.2. General Tendencies in Turkish Foreign Policy

Historically speaking the Turkish foreign policy since the early years of the republic has depended on three important principles:¹⁹ First of all, the Turkish foreign policy has been always *status quo* oriented. Turkey has never challenged the physical configuration of the international system. In other words Turkey has never tried to change any international border in the system and never tried to challenge the balance of power in the international system except its stance in the Cyprus issue. Secondly, in line with the first principle, Turkish foreign policy has always been based on “legitimacy”. Once the rules of the international system are established, Turkey acts in conformity due to its anti-revisionist tradition and its category as a middle power. According to Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Pazarcı, Turkey since the Ottoman Empire has incorporated international law in its foreign policy and finally established a special advisory unit in its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which deals with certain questions based on international law.²⁰ The third principle of the Turkish foreign policy can be labeled as Westernism, or being pro-Western. Turkey has always wanted to see herself in the western camp. The Kemalist modernization/ Westernization programme deeply affected this pro-Western foreign policy understanding. The history of Turkish foreign policy --with some exceptions can be aligned with all Western-centered developments such as NATO membership, the Turkish-American strategic partnership, and Turkey’s historic aim of becoming part of Europe.

Former Foreign Minister İsmail Cem says that nearly all Foreign Ministers start their occupation with the same phrase, “as if they were an ‘inaugural oath of office’ or a ‘pledge of allegiance’: ‘Turkey has a traditional foreign policy which will remain unchanged’”.²¹ Turkey indeed has an established foreign policy tradition rooted not only

¹⁹ Baskın Oran, “1945-60 Batı Bloğu Ekeninde Türkiye” in Baskın Oran (ed.) *Türk Dış Politikası-Kurtuluş Savaşı’ndan Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980*, pp. 496-498.

²⁰ Hüseyin Pazarcı, “Türk Dış Politikasının Yönlendirilmesinde Uluslararası Hukuk Etkeni”, in Faruk Sönmezoğlu (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2nd edition, 2001), pp. 697-701.

²¹ İsmail Cem, *Turkey in the New Century - Speeches and Texts Presented at International Fora (1995-2001)* (Nicosia: Rüstem Publishing, 2nd edition, 2001), p. 1.

in 1920s but also in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire. Though the new Turkish Republic made a clear break with its predecessor in terms of political and territorial qualifications, the attitudes of the new state's ruling elite, as well as the ordinary citizens, were affected by the experiences of the Ottoman period. According to William Hale, there were some "inescapable" solutions to be drawn from the fall of the Ottoman State:

First, the future Turkish state would have to draw a firm line round those territories which it could reasonably expect to defend, either by itself or, if absolutely necessary, with the support of allies [with similar interests]. (...) Ethnic Turks outside these borders could not be protected. Secondly, the nineteenth-century experience encouraged a highly suspicious attitude towards any expressions of religious or ethnic separatism by non-Muslim or non-Turkish minorities remaining in Turkish territory [due to] perception that, in the past, such movements had been used by rapacious foreign powers as a mask to hide their own imperialist ambitions.²²

On the other hand, Şaban H. Çalış employs a more identity-based approach to Turkish foreign policy. According to him, Turkey has a foreign policy, which seeks its identity in the dilemmas of East/West, Traditional/Modern and Islam/Secularism.²³ But according to Çalış, it is not the Turkish national identity that gives shape to Turkish foreign policy but actually the state identity of the Turkish Republic. Regarding this point, Çalış argues that the founding elite of Turkey struggled to create a Western state and a Western nation. In a way, reaching the Western level has been "The Red Apple" of the Turkish Republic.²⁴ In this manner, foreign policy has been an instrument towards achieving this goal. This identity pattern remained unchanged though Turkey and the world were subject to dramatic political and economic transformations. As an objective pattern, the state identity, according to Çalış, as the totality of actions, principles and ideas that a state aligns itself with, resulted in a foreign policy which remains the same regardless of

²² William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy: 1774- 2000* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), pp. 38-39.

²³ Şaban H. Çalış, "Ulus, Devlet ve Kimlik Labiretinde Türk Dış Politikası", in Şaban H. Çalış, İhsan D. Dağı & Ramazan Gözen (eds.) *Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Gündemi – Kimlik, Demokrasi, Güvenlik*, (Ankara: Liberte Yayınları, 2001), p. 3.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

the nature and composition of the governments that formulate it.²⁵ On this account, the author doesn't make a differentiation between Turkish governments in their foreign policies:

The process of rapprochement with West started in 1930s with Atatürk. (...) [the Republican People's Party] was the leader of the military-economic-political integration movement with West while [the Democrat Party] accomplished it. (...) The leaders, who see each other as eternal enemies, with very different foreign policy motivations had to pursue the traditional line and vision of Turkish foreign policy. (...) Even Erbakan could do nothing about the relations with Israel.²⁶

To sum up this section, it can be said that the Turkish Republic has a traditional vision in its foreign policy being affected by the lessons from the collapse of the Ottoman Empire that Hale draws attention to. The main principle of Turkish foreign policy has been its pro-Western standing in the course of time. Though periodically there are calls for change, Turkish foreign policy has remained pro-status quo and defensive mainly due to presence of Soviet Union as a great threat in the atmosphere of Cold War. With the end of the Cold War and removal of the Soviet threat, Central Asia and the Caucasus emerged as significant attraction fields for Turkish foreign policy.²⁷ In this era, the ambition to regain influence on the former lands of Ottoman Empire has been on the agenda of some Turkish politicians. This trend, entitled "neo-Ottomanism", envisaged a new understanding both in domestic politics and foreign policy. While at home, under the title of the "Second Republic" Turgut Özal tried to establish a new political identity and culture by re-formulating Turkish nationalism and providing more political and cultural tolerance to ethnic and religious differences as in the case of Ottoman Empire, on the other hand he tried to intensify the relations with the Balkan, Caucasian and Middle Eastern countries by removal of the trade barriers.²⁸ In sum, neo-Ottomanism

²⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁷ F. Stephen Larrabee & Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, p. 99.

²⁸ M. Hakan Yavuz, *Değişen Türk Kimliği ve Dış Politika: Neo-Osmanlılığın Yükselişi*, in Çalış, Dağı & Gözen, op.cit., p. 61-62.

had an ambitious foreign policy understanding and for this reason its objectives were clashing with the capacities of a pivotal state.

CHAPTER III

THE POLITICAL IDENTITY OF THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY (JDP)

The results of the November 3, 2002 general election demonstrated a major turnover in Turkish politics. The Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), which was established only 15 months before the general election, in August 2001, received the majority of the votes, and thus gained the majority of parliamentary seats.

Most of the founders and members of the JDP came from the National View (Milli Görüş) tradition. National View came into existence in Turkish political life with the foundation of the National Order Party (Milli Nizam Partisi, MNP) in January 1970. The party was shut down in May 1971 because of its intention to create an Islamic state in Turkey. In its place, the National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi, MSP) was founded in October 1972, becoming the coalition partner of the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP) headed by Bülent Ecevit in 1974 and then a member of the Nationalist Front coalition governments headed by Süleyman Demirel in 1975 and 1977. After the 1980 military coup d'état, the MSP was closed down.

The Welfare Party (Refah Partisi, RP) was founded in 1983 and became popular in the 1990s as the successor of the MSP. RP won 19 percent of the vote in the 1994 local elections and 21.4 percent of the national vote in the 1995 general elections. RP led a coalition government with the True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi , DYP) headed by Tansu Çiller, which lasted for only 11 months. After the military intervention of February 28, 1997, Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the RP and prime minister, resigned, and the party was closed down by the Constitutional Court in 1998 and was replaced by the Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi, FP). The FP was also closed down by the Constitutional

Court, in June 2001. A group of MPs and some party administrators of the Virtue Party left it in order to found a new party, which became in August 2001 the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP).

According to Fulya Atacan, “in the 1970s the MSP claimed that ‘moral development’ was the main requirement and basis for ‘material development.’ Like many developmentalist approaches at that time, MSP believed that industrialization and particularly heavy industry were the only way to reach the living standards of the developed countries. In addition, the MSP supported laicism in the framework of freedom of thought and belief”.²⁹ She also points out that MSP defended the establishment of closer ties with Muslim countries; education based on ‘modesty, morals and virtue;’ religious education; prohibition of population control; support of the measures to increase population growth; and equal distribution of industrialization throughout the country.³⁰

She asserts that “in the post-1980 period, the RP considered democracy as a means to reach a realistic end of ‘felicitous order’ (Saadet Nizami). The party also promoted an economic model called ‘just economic order.’ Although the party claimed that it was in favor of a free-market system, it opposed capitalism. The party rejected Western civilization and membership of the European Union (EU). Like the MSP, the RP also considered Zionism as the source of evil. The party suggested a common market created with other Muslim countries, and advocated the idea of “Greater Turkey,” which meant that Turkey would follow an independent foreign policy from the West and would be economically powerful.”³¹

After the declaration of the “February 28 decisions” by the military-led National Security Council and the closing down of the Welfare Party for violating the secularism

²⁹ Fulya Atacan, “Explaining Religious Politics at the Crossroads”, *Turkish Studies*, 6(2), June 2005, p. 188.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

³¹ *Ibid.*

principles of the Constitution, the Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi, FP) was established in December 1998. “According to the FP, Turkey had human and material resources to be developed but the main shortcoming was democracy. The FP advocated democracy, liberty, human rights and the rule of law. It also emphasized the importance of dialogue, tolerance and respect for diversity of opinions. In contrast to the MSP and the RP, the Virtue Party adopted a positive approach to the EU and to the United States.”³²

All these pro-Islamist political parties were founded on what is called the idea of the National View. All these parties were consisting of different Islamic and conservative groups which led to internal problems and conflicts. The first split in the National View movement was materialized with the foundation of the JDP.

According to Simten Coşar and Aylin Özman the JDP can be viewed as “an offspring of the National View tradition”. They also assert that this argument was confirmed “in the denial of the leading members of the party that they represented a radical break from the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi, RP)–Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi-FP) line at the first congress of the Virtue Party. Contesting the Virtue Party leader Recai Kutan in the congress, Abdullah Gül, currently Minister of Foreign Affairs in the 59th government had then emphasized the need for a change rather than a radical transformation of the party identity.”³³ Coşar and Özman, by making a quotation from the S. Bozkurt’s article “Milli Görüş Yol Ayrımında”, point out that both Abdullah Gül --now the Prime Minister of the 59th government-- and Bülent Arınç --now the head of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA)-- had strictly rejected the prospect of carrying the party to the ‘centre’:

³² Ibid.

³³ Simten Coşar and Aylin Özman, “Center-right Politics in Turkey After the November 2002 General Election: Neo-Liberalism With a Muslim Face”, *Contemporary Politics*, 10(1), March 2004, p. 62.

“Changing the identity of the FP would mean committing suicide . . . We are not obliged to become a centre-right or centre-left party. FP can only become a centre party by its own specific outlook . . . It shall neither be marginal nor ideological. However, we also say ‘no’ to those who propose that the party be a mass party; it shall be a party of identity and belief.”³⁴

According to Coşar and Özman, the only difference between the two strands -- traditionalists and reformists-- was spelled as one of ‘political style and discourse’. Ahmet Yıldız^{*} argues that “the Virtue Party acted more as a ‘party of transition’, and after the closure of the party the two strands were organized in different parties. While the ‘traditionalists’ formed the Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi, SP), the ‘reformists’ formed the JDP.”³⁵ Coşar and Özman point out that:

The differences between the two wings were more strongly emphasized after the formation of two separate parties and party spokespersons were keen to underline the distinctiveness of the JDP with regard to democratic credentials both in party structure and in the approach to the (re-)definition of politics.³⁶

Through rejecting the National View movement, the JDP members claimed that they established a totally new party and that the JDP was not an Islamic party. Moreover, some JDP members tried to develop a new ideology called “democratic conservatism” in order to differentiate this party from the National View. There is no doubt that the founders of the JDP were very determined to cooperate with the establishment. In its party program, the JDP showed a strong need to declare its loyalty to the republican values and the “indivisible unity of the Turkish Republic.” It also promised not to use religion or ethnicity, both of which were considered as two main threats to the Republic by the National Security Council, as a tool for its political goals.³⁷ This fact is actually

³⁴ S. Bozkurt, “Milli Görüş Yol Ayrımında”, *Yeni Binyıl*, 10 May 2000.

^{*} Ph.D., Turkish Grand National Assembly Library Research Service, Istanbul.

³⁵ Ahmet Yıldız, ‘Politico-religious Discourse of the Parties of the National Outlook in Turkey: A Critical Perspective’, *Muslim World*, Vol. 93, No. 2, April 2003, pp. 187–209.

³⁶ Simten Coşar, Aylin Özman, “Center-right Politics in Turkey”, p. 62.

³⁷ The JDP concludes its program with the saying that “God will help our people.” The second religious saying in the program is in the introduction and it says, “With the help of God, everything will be better with us.” Apart from these, there is no indication of Islam in the program, www.akparti.org.tr/program.

reflected in the writing style of the party program, which is highly apologetic, consisting of statements wholly in line with the February 28 decisions.³⁸

In this respect the JDP from its foundation onwards has been presented as a political party at least aspiring to a centrist location in the political spectrum. This became all the more manifest during the election campaigns. In his public statements the party chairperson Recep Tayyip Erdoğan insistently emphasized the conciliatory stance of the party. Briefly, in his words, the JDP aims to ‘. . . re-build the fragmented identity of the centre-right in Turkey’.³⁹ Nur Vergin expresses the main traits of this identity as follows:

“[Center-right] is a platform formed by the people who avoid excess... these are the people who search for ‘sound’ [policies]. Sound, that is, center-right is a locus composed of sound people, in some respects, who express mild demands. They are conservatives, but they do not pay tribute to fanaticism. They are religious, but they do not like fanaticism. They stand at a distance from the state, they want to change [state] structure, but they do not even imagine causing harm. They adhere to their traditions, but they inherently have an enormous will to change. They want freedom, but they do not overlook the destruction of order. They have developed national sentiments, but they oppose ethnicity or racist nationalism. They are against state control over the economy, but they aspire to a regulatory state. They support democracy to the extent that it does not threaten the unity of the state.”⁴⁰

In the party programme, election manifesto and ‘urgent action plan’ of the JDP, three outstanding categories --which are not unfamiliar to Turkish centre-right parties-- come to the fore. The first feature, which can be described as the ‘synthesising tendency’, is related to the self-definition of the party. The JDP defines itself as democratic, conservative, reformist and modern. With the ‘democratic’ aspect, the emphasis is on ‘a vision of Turkey . . . where differences are perceived not as a source of conflict but as richness’. The conservative feature of the party is expressed in the perception of ‘Turkish society as a big family with a common fate, sharing bitter and sweet

³⁸ See Fulya Atacan, “‘Yaramaz’ Muhalefet, ‘Uslu’ İktidar: Saadet Partisi-AKP Parti Programları”, *İktisat Dergisi*, No.431 (Nov. 2002), pp. 60–66.

³⁹ Metin Sever, “Merkez Sağ Geleceğini Arıyor, 5”, *Radikal*, 17 October 2002.

⁴⁰ Metin Sever, “Merkez Sağ Geleceğini Arıyor, 7,” *Radikal*, 19 October 2002.

memories’.⁴¹ The party promises to provide the means for ‘the reproduction of the values that form the identity of this family in the light of contemporary developments’. The reformist and modern aspects are lumped together in the assertion of the will to prepare Turkish society to meet the challenges of globalization. This means ‘furthering the technological and economic approach that was prevalent in the eighties . . .’ and especially enhancing ‘. . . political and economic integration with the European Union’. In fact, integration with the EU has been used as an umbrella symbol that embodies the democratic, reformist and modern aspects of the JDP’s identity. In party discourse, the Copenhagen Criteria are taken as a reference point for ‘the fulfilment of the freedom of thought and expression, abolishing the obstacles, which limit freedom of enterprise, transparency in government, strengthening of local government’.⁴²

Bora Kanra argues that “the public image of an Islamic party created by the Welfare Party was challenged by the JDP, which branded itself as a centre-conservative party committed to secular principles. He explains the change in the JDP by arguing that:

During the election campaign, religious themes, including the scarf issue, were put in the background in favour of economic and anti-corruption themes. Women candidates harbouring a modern look (wearing no scarf) were introduced and brought forward. However, more important than the image the JDP created was the change in their understanding of the relationship between Islam and the state. The party leadership was keen not to run a religious agenda. The muddling of Islam with politics was seen as the main reason for the stagnation of the relationship with broader sections of the Turkish electorate. During the election campaign, the JDP continuously reiterated its loyalty to the main principles of the secular system. This continued after the election as well.⁴³

In its attempt to forge a conservative democratic identity the party pays special attention to the compatibility of Islam “as a social entity and part of tradition, rather than an ideological approach” with democracy.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi Programı, www.akparti.org.tr/program.

⁴² AK Parti, Herşey Türkiye İçin: Seçim Beyannamesi.

⁴³ Bora Kanra, “Democracy, Islam and Dialogue: The Case of Turkey”, *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 40, Issue 4, September 2005, pp. 527-528.

⁴⁴ Y. Akdoğan, *Muhafazakar Demokrasi* (Ankara, 2003), pp. 112-124.

Bora Kanra stresses the intention of the JDP for keeping the state and the government neutral in terms of religion and separating the political and religious affairs. Kanra by setting the arguments of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan puts it that:

In one of his conference speech, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan said that the JDP's predecessors (referring to the tradition of the RP, the FP and the SP) were acting as a 'political community', on the basis of a certain ideology and appealing only to supporters of that ideology. Erdoğan described this as dangerous politics of polarization and drew a clear line between religion and politics. He asserted that establishing a party in the name of religion would be an injustice done to the religion and he reiterated that the solution to this problem is to maintain a secular system. Secularism, Erdoğan described, provides an essential tool to regulate the balance between religion and politics by keeping the state neutral and at an equal distance to all faiths and religions.⁴⁵ One week later, Erdoğan repeated his views to a different audience within a different context. Attending a business conference in Saudi Arabia, Erdoğan said "I do not find the idea of an Islamic common market to be a good one. Whatever happens, we will not base relations on ethnic and religious roots. Polarisation will emerge if we start to establish institutions as such."⁴⁶

Kanra argues that as the most fundamental secular principle, the separation of religious and political affairs, is of primary importance to the enhancement of democratic aspirations in Turkey. This is a clear paradigm shift in Islamic politics, responding to the conditions of the day. With the JDP breaking from the long-running National View tradition, Islam has lost its backbone role in Turkish politics. Kanra by making quotations from Mümtazer Türköne, states "that the reason behind the JDP's clear break from a politics oriented to Islam is their determination to escape from the pressures of the Kemalist elite and the state. The JDP leadership found a once and for all solution, that is, the social, political and economic rights of Muslims could only be protected under a Western universal law system based on the protection of individual rights."⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Available at <http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/01_12_04/dom.htm#d4>, accessed on 10 March 2004.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Mümtazer Türköne, "3 Kasım: Bizans Düştü", *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 70 (2002), pp. 5–10.

The EU accession process was the main issue in foreign policy agenda of the JDP. Erhan Doğan tries to explain the reason of the JDP's efforts for EU accession. He puts it that:

The JDP target of EU accession is in accordance with Turkey's traditional foreign policy orientation which has been towards the West. Until recently, this pro-western foreign policy orientation was a source of conflict between pro-western elites and extreme nationalist and Islamist political parties due to the distant attitude and orientalist discourse of the western world regarding Turkey, and also the collective national memory of the contribution of western powers to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. It also formed the basis of an identity crisis, and so for the JDP it has become an opportunity to release tensions and close gaps that had formed. It is a useful ideological tool in avoiding conflict between different parties in the country caused by religious and ethnic differences and the secular–anti-secular axis. The EU quest is also compatible with the political targets of the party. It would supply the necessary financial resources and know-how to transform the Turkish state and Turkish society into a more open, democratic and developed place. The expected inflow of foreign capital after the start of accession negotiations is expected to increase government income from tax, and as a result of the expected increase in real investment, the rate of unemployment would decrease, a factor the JDP considers to be of great importance.⁴⁸

According to Binnaz Toprak, the JDP will not revert to its Islamic origins. She states that the JDP leadership defines the party's identity as conservative democrat and is extremely careful to avoid controversy over issues of secularism. As mentioned above, the party leaders have been actively pursuing Turkey's application for accession into the European Union and have initiated a number of constitutional and legal changes designed to extend civil liberties, recognize minority rights and curtail the power of the military in politics in order to meet the standards set forth in the EU's Copenhagen criteria. At the same time, the JDP has shied away from following populist politics and has abided by the terms of the IMF agreements, the result of which has been gradual recovery from the worst economic crisis of the republican period that erupted in 2001. Toprak puts it that:

⁴⁸ Erhan Doğan, "The Historical and Discursive Roots of Justice and Development Party's EU Stance", *Turkish Studies*, 6(3), September 2005, p. 431.

In general, the JDP seems sensitive to consensual politics and Tayyip Erdoğan's leadership style avoids the kind of polarization and tug-of-war between adversaries that was so characteristic of political leaders in the past. It is a paradoxical twist of history that it is the JDP of Tayyip Erdoğan, given its roots in Islamist politics of confrontation, which came up with a new understanding of political life which pays attention to the special attributes of modern democracies, namely, discussion, bargaining and compromise.⁴⁹

To sum up, under the rule of democratic-conservative JDP government the fundamental principles of the Turkish foreign policy --securing EU membership, cementing NATO ties, securing relations with the US, quelling the remnants of the PKK, moderating radical political Islam-- have not changed. During the Iraqi Crisis in 2003, the JDP government orchestrated the demands coming from the US, the EU and the Muslim countries in a balancing way in the lead-up to the Iraq war, opposition to the war was as much a European stance as it was an Islamic one. In the following chapters of this thesis the main driving forces of the JDP's Iraq policy and its effects on Turkey-US and Turkey-EU relations will be discussed.

⁴⁹ Binnaz Toprak, "Islam and Democracy in Turkey", *Turkish Studies*, 6(2), June 2005, p. 184.

CHAPTER IV

TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY UNDER THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY (JDP) AND THE IRAQI CRISIS

4.1. General Attitude of the JDP Government on Foreign Policy Issues

With the general elections of November 3, 2002, Turkish domestic politics witnessed radical changes. While almost all of the existing political parties lost their seats in the Turkish Parliament, JDP gained the power to establish a single-party government. Though the founding members of this party were from the Islamist background, in the course of time it appeared that JDP claimed to have “abandoned the ideas for the construction of an alternative social and political order”⁵⁰ with the motto of “we have changed”. Actually this was the point which led to severe discussions on the “identity” of the party in question. Pointing out the fact that the members of the JDP were coming from the political Islamist tradition of the Welfare Party (or even the National Salvation Party - MSP), secularists --especially Kemalists-- regarded this party as a continuation of the same movement, which was thought to have been “slain” in the post-modern military coup of February 28, 1997. On the other hand, most liberal intellectuals accepted the transformation of the JDP founders and perceived it as a conservative central party.⁵¹ According to this view, JDP is a product of an overall redefinition of Turkish political Islamists who are now in search for a rapprochement with the West “as a part of an effort for re-thinking modern political notions like democracy, human rights and integration into the globalization process including the EU-membership”. Whether

⁵⁰ İhsan Duran Dağı, “Rethinking Human Rights, Democracy and the West: Post-Islamist Intellectuals in Turkey”, *Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, 13(2), Summer 2004.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Islamist or not, the rise of the JDP to power as a single party, created anxiety both in the domestic and international sphere about the possible tendencies of Turkey's foreign policy despite the declarations by party officials that JDP was not a party against the system.

In order to understand Turkish foreign policy under the Justice and Development Party, we must first look at the official documents. The Election Declaration reflects the traditional Turkish foreign policy. In this document, JDP makes it clear that the relations with Europe would remain at the highest ranks of the foreign policy agenda.⁵² Also JDP states that in case of a victory in the election it would take whatever measures necessary to guarantee the position that Turkey deserves in the European Security and Defence Identity. In terms of relations with Greece, JDP proposes a rather functionalist understanding while assuming that “the intensification of economic relations with Greece would enable providing solutions to more complex political problems”.⁵³ In terms of the Cyprus problem, JDP suggests the “Belgian model” consisting of two sovereign societies and one state. To describe relations with Islamic countries, JDP officials use the term “a special significance” and vow to struggle to increase the international status of Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) to bring it to a more respectable level.⁵⁴ As for the troublesome situation in Iraq, JDP aligns itself with the official foreign policy and draws attention to the fact that division of Iraqi lands would cause problems in the Middle East.⁵⁵ Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan also mentioned this point while declaring the program of the 59th Government. As for the Cyprus issue, Erdoğan on behalf of his government claims that “the status-quo in the island has to be changed for guaranteeing the well-being of the Turkish Cypriots”. Admitting that Turkey failed to respond to the needs of Turkic states in the Central Asia, he indicates that Turkey would launch new policies towards Balkans and Central Asia on the basis of their mutual historical and cultural background.

⁵² See Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, *Herşey Türkiye İçin: Seçim Beyannamesi*, p. 82.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

4.2. The Theoretical Roots of the JDP Government's Foreign Policy: The Views of Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutođlu

Behind the scenes, it is believed that Prof. Ahmet Davutođlu is the main personality in JDP's foreign policy formulation together with the existing Foreign Minister Abdullah Göl and the former Foreign Minister Yařar Yakıř. After the November 3 elections, Davutođlu became the Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister holding the office that time and was granted the title "ambassador". Examining Davutođlu's ideas will give us the guidelines to understand the JDP government's foreign policy.

As Prof. Davutođlu has not appeared in the popular media, his books are valuable in giving insights into his ideas. He has written four books but two of them are very instructive in his approach to Turkish foreign policy and the international system. In his book entitled "Global Depression – Speeches on September 11 (Küresel Bunalım – 11 Eylül Konuřmaları)" Davutođlu gathers his speeches on the September 11 atrocities and the post-Cold War international system.⁵⁶ Throughout the book Davutođlu pays special attention to several specific arguments. First of all, according to him the parameters of the post-Cold War international order have not been set yet.⁵⁷ In line with this, he argues that the collapse of the Berlin Wall, symbol of the Cold War, created only a glimmer of hope for the reconstruction of an international order based on mutually shared norms and principles. However, this optimism "has fallen prey to the power-based strategic struggle" which led to the collapse of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.⁵⁸ From this point he works toward the conclusion that today there are no permanent resolutions to the conflicts but only cease-fires such as the Dayton Peace Process in the Bosnian Conflict, the current situations in Karabakh and Kosovo, and the Middle East

⁵⁶ Ahmet Davutođlu, *Küresel Bunalım: 11 Eylül Konuřmaları* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2nd edition, 2002).

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. ix.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Peace Process.⁵⁹ These are all the “frozen” versions of the chronic conflicts without permanent peace treaties.

Secondly, Prof. Davutoğlu argues that the philosophical side of the 9/11 events has never been discussed.⁶⁰ To make his point he criticizes Francis Fukuyama’s “The End of History” thesis and Samuel Huntington’s “The Clash of Civilizations”. As a reply to Fukuyama, Davutoğlu proposes five concepts of depression, which according to him, must be challenged before declaring “The End of History”: (1) *Ontological depression of security and freedom and ontological alienation*, (2) *Epistemological depression of Enlightenment*, (3) *Axiological depression of mechanism-morality imbalance*, (4) *Ecological depression* and (5) *Depression of cultural pluralism*.⁶¹ Building on this classification Prof. Davutoğlu argues that the formula of “rationality, science, progress” has been challenged in the course of time as the mechanisms that were built by the rational man turned out to be instruments of massive destruction. For instance, the nuclear bombs dropped to Hiroshima and Nagasaki was created by the same rationality that built and destroyed the World Trade Center.⁶² On the other hand, Davutoğlu argues that the 9/11 events showed clearly that the search for security has not been finalized, but rather that a new stage has been opened as the people of the USA learned that even America was not safe from terrorism.⁶³ Though Fukuyama declared the victory of West, it was that West had failed to solve the problems stemming from ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, Mezar-ı Serif, which are according to Davutoğlu, “our cities”. For him, “it doesn’t matter whether it is Bosnia or Bursa that is bombed”.⁶⁴ Hence, “The End of history” has not yet come because human beings could not meet their demands for security and freedom. As for “The Clash of Civilizations” concept, the main deficiency

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. x.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 6.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 8-9, 36-37.

⁶² Ibid., p. 43.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 11, 39, 98-102.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 19.

according to him is that while the USA should lead the way toward the unification of all mankind by taking contributions from Chinese, Islam and Indian civilizations, it has created a global polarization by its use of the motto of “the West and the Rest”.⁶⁵ At this point he makes references to Richard Falk’s argument that the civilizations excluding the other ones are bound to fail.⁶⁶ In his perception, “the actors at the center of Globalization want to control the passive actors of political economy by international organizations such as IMF but they do not want their participation”.⁶⁷

Thirdly, Davutoğlu thinks that the phrase “the Islamic World is filled with depressions” is a misleading phrase. He argues that the Islamic world has no military, economic or technological capabilities that could threaten the Western World.⁶⁸ According to him the Islamic World has a geographic location which is comprised of eight straits that enable the flow of trade, the world’s most important oil and natural resources and the intersection points of civilizations. Davutoğlu at this point argues that today the Islamic World faces a great mentality challenge. Modernity itself is a product of Western culture, but globalization can provide a chance for Islam to deliver its message to mankind in spite of the obstacles of the psychological feeling of defeat because of colonialism and the presence of a “defensive reaction” in the minds of Muslims.⁶⁹ According to him, there appear to be three types of reactions to globalization: (1) A *stoic* reaction which envisages the construction of the new order on a philosophical background; (2) A *cynical* reaction which suggests dealing with the question of “what is my local reality?” rather than universal reality and (3) An *epicurean* reaction of maximizing individual pleasure whatever the new order is.⁷⁰ Davutoğlu argues that in

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 47, 85.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 32.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 119.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 50-52, 128-129.

line with the Stoic reaction, the West should step out of its self-centric egoism, and a new language together with a suitable philosophical background should be founded.⁷¹

Fourthly and lastly, Davutoğlu deals also with Turkey in the framework detailed above. Davutoğlu, as he does in his second book, identifies Turkey as a “deep country” in terms of geography and history.⁷² For this very reason, Turkey is seen both as a torn country and a pivotal country. According to Davutoğlu, one cannot talk about the history of the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East without making reference to Ottoman history. Following the end of the Cold War, Turkey should face three parameters.⁷³ First of all, after the collapse of bipolar structure, geo-political power vacuums have occurred and these are all in Turkey’s neighbourhood. Secondly, there emerged a distribution problem between various powers with the process of globalization. Thirdly a geo-cultural challenge is being experienced all over the world and Turkey is at its center. In this manner, Turkey’s political geography clashes with its geo-cultural and political economical map. According to Davutoğlu, Turkey faces the problem of acting within the scope of a nation-state while adapting to the geo-political and economic obligations brought about by globalization.⁷⁴ This problem prevents Turkey from being limited to its political geography. A country that has once occupied the center would no longer accept being on the periphery. In his understanding, there is little difference between Istanbul, Sarajevo, Grozny, or Baghdad for they belong to the same geopolitical and civilizational map, i.e. Islamic world in general and Ottoman cultural zone in particular. Turkey’s fate and story is very much integrated into the trajectory of the Islamic world. In his readings, Turkey emerges as a central country, with a unique geopolitical positioning and historic cultural role. Turkey has to overcome the dilemmas stemming from the incompatibility between its political boundaries –being confined to a nation state- and its geo-cultural and historical breadth– its imperial legacy. Compounding Turkey’s inbuilt

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 129.

⁷² Ibid., p. 136.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 140-141.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 149.

contradictions is the challenges posed by the globalization. To overcome the contradictions in its identity and reformulate it under the pressure of globalization, Turkey needs to participate in globalization process as an active agent, drawing on its own geographical, historical and cultural depth, and fertilizing Western modernity with the Ottoman-Islamic civilizational heritage. To do so requires a change in dominant political culture through a mission, driven by elites, conscious of the country's rich, multi-dimensional historical heritage, and dynamism and expectations of its people.

Following this point, Davutoğlu speculates on Turkey's foreign policy motivations, reasoning that because of globalization, it is no more possible for Turkey to live within the status quo. For him, Turkey should prevent two negative reactions to globalization: (1) Accepting it as fate and "setting its sail to the sea as a leave"⁷⁵ which means losing control over the process of globalization and (2) perceiving it as an outer fact and isolating from the external world. Turkey should make use of its historical and geographical depth while participating in globalization not as a subject but as an object. This is, according to Davutoğlu, a mission of Turkey's elites, not its people. On the other hand, Turkey can't claim that its history starts with the foundation of the Republic. "You belong to that history and that history belongs to you".⁷⁶ However Turkey was caught unprepared by the new conditions after the Cold War. This led to severe deficiencies in her foreign policy formulations which, as Davutoğlu says, perceived this country as a "central country" rather than a "bridge country": At the center of Eurasia but on the axes of north-south and east-west Turkey is a country of the Middle East, the Caucasus, the Balkans and the Mediterranean. The path is open for Turkey to the highest possible degree through comprehending its local values and its unity including diversity.⁷⁷

Davutoğlu in his book entitled "Strategic Depth - Turkey's International Positioning (Stratejik Derinlik- Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumlanması)" tries to meet the lack of

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 156.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 183.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 195.

strategic theories that incorporate with Turkey's own deep historical and geographical background.⁷⁸ Davutoğlu, building on Huntington's thesis, claims that today the world is witnessed to a new wave of activism in terms of civilizations due to the dynamics of globalization. In this atmosphere, "Turkey should use its historical, strategic and geographical depth [which would] endow Turkey with a central state status."⁷⁹

Davutoğlu, throughout the book, pays special attention to the historical heritage of the Ottoman Empire. According to him, the new Turkish state that was founded around new principles in the beginning of the century should face the geo-political and geo-cultural obligations of its Ottoman heritage. Davutoğlu concludes that these obligations would be helpful in re-shaping the Turkish strategic mentality.⁸⁰ Following this argument, he points out the fact that due to Turkey's Ottoman historical and geo-political background, it is neither possible nor valid to defend Turkey within its frontiers. For him, "the defence of Eastern Thrace and Istanbul starts from Adriatic and Bosnia-Herzegovina while that of Eastern Anatolia and Erzurum starts from Northern Caucasus and Grozny".⁸¹ Actually this point constitutes a part of Davutoğlu's criticism of *static* foreign policy. For him, Turkey should combine the geo-strategic importance of its location with the historical background from the Ottoman Empire and pursue an *active* foreign policy. Davutoğlu mainly argues that throughout the years, Turkey has pursued a foreign policy that had only one direction. For instance, entering the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO) has provided security for Turkey vis-à-vis the Soviet Union but by remaining under this security umbrella Turkey neglects the other alternative power centers and its own area of influence.⁸² For him, this uni-axis foreign policy turned out to be a static one and Turkey faced great difficulties even after the Cold War era. At this

⁷⁸ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik – Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 11th edition, 2003), p.11.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 563.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 23.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 56.

⁸² Ibid., p. 71.

point domestic political culture turns out to be an important factor. According to Davutoğlu, the peripheral role for Turkey that the dominant political elite has been pushing for, doesn't fit with the Turkish society's historical accumulation, realities and its expectations from the future:

Uni-directional and uni-axis domestic political culture and a foreign policy dependent on it, prevents Turkey from developing a political and diplomatic attitude which makes use of multi-directional historical experience and which can easily adapt itself to alternative scenarios.⁸³

Davutoğlu believes that because of a *static* and *defensive* perception in foreign policy, Turkey missed great opportunities that it could gain due to its strategic depth. According to him, Turkey is at the center of a struggle for power among naval and land forces in East-West and North-South directions. For the latter, Turkey is the intersection point of two important land transition regions (the Balkans and the Caucasus) and a sea transition region (the straits) which link Eurasia to warm waters and to Africa as well as the Middle East and Caspian regions. For the East-West direction, Anatolia is the most valuable part of the peninsula that surrounds Eurasia.⁸⁴ This geo-political location should be seen not as an instrument of pursuing a pro-status quo foreign policy but as an active one that can transform regional actorness into global sphere:

A foreign policy tradition that selects the comfort of status quo instead of the intensive tempo that a dynamic foreign policy would bring, let alone turning regional power into global effectiveness, can not even preserve its frontiers.⁸⁵

4.3. Turkey in the Iraqi Crisis of 2003

After explicating the JDP's general attitude and the theoretical roots of the government's foreign policy, this part of the thesis deals with various factors playing role in the attitude of the government during the Iraqi Crisis in 2003.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 92.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 116.

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 117-118.

It is possible to categorise factors that shaped the decisions of the government broadly as internal and external. Internal ones emanated from the tension between Kemalism and Islam. The Justice and Development Party which had won the November 2002 elections, was composed of members of an Islamist party. This created a tension between the Kemalist establishments and the Government. As a second factor public opinion played a determining role, particularly considering the Islamist constituency of the JDP government. On the other hand external determinants were also somehow linked to another ‘crisis’ situation inside the country, namely the Kurdish question. Turkey’s unconditional help and cooperation with the West during the Gulf crisis in 1990-91 had created, contrary to expectations, severe problems for Turkey. Simultaneously Northern Iraq had been “constructed” as a “national security” issue by Turkey. Moreover, Turkey was increasingly divided between discontent and suspicion towards US policies particularly with regard to Northern Iraq. In this thesis it is argued that a combination of all these factors resulted in Turkey’s hesitant attitude in the beginning of the Iraqi Crisis, which led to a refusal to cooperate with the US in Iraq.

The following pages will detail these arguments, starting with a brief description of the events during the Gulf War of 1990-91, specifically to reveal the reasons behind the discontent and mistrust towards the US, and the construction of the northern Iraq discourse. Secondly, the domestic determinants of Turkey’s course by describing the heavy domestic agenda that the new government had to cope with will be discussed.

4.3.1. The 1990-1991 Gulf War and the Construction of Northern Iraq as a Security Issue

One of the main issues in shaping the foreign policy decisions of Turkey has been the legacy of the Gulf War in 1990-91 in northern Iraq⁸⁶, which has remained high on the Turkish agenda since then. In accordance with Weldes’ argument about the constructed nature of national interest, an independent Northern Iraq “had to be made to mean

⁸⁶ Cemalettin Taşkıran, “Türkiye ve ABD’nin Irak ve Ortadoğu Politikaları”, *Stradigma*, 1(8), 2003, available at <www.stradigma.com>

something before it was possible for ...state officials to know what to do about ...it, or, for that matter, before it was possible to know whether anything needed to be done about it at all".⁸⁷ This was shaped by the previous experiences of ethno-political claims and particularly by the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) and the Gulf War in 1990-91. However, it is necessary to explicate the menace that threatened Turkey and how this menace was constructed.

According to Bozdağlıoğlu, the end of the Cold War resulted in an identity crisis in Turkey brought about by the sense that the country did not have a clearly defined role anymore.⁸⁸ After defining its role as a country on the Western camp to contain Soviet expansion for almost half a century, the end of the Cold War, reducing Turkey's geopolitical importance, created a search for a new role in foreign policy. The Gulf War, as the first post- Cold War conflict, was perceived as a chance to reassert Turkey's importance to and alliance with the West, particularly by the hawkish president Turgut Özal. The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq on August 2, 1990 deeply affected the balance in the region and constituted a vital menace to the oil interests of Western states in the Persian Gulf.⁸⁹

The Gulf War could be a watershed in Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle East or would at least revealed a deviation from the traditional '*distant and cautious*' approach. "By deciding actively to side with the Allied forces against Iraq, the Turkish president, Turgut Özal, made a conscious choice in changing *seven decades of Turkish policy of non-involvement towards the Middle East*".⁹⁰ According to Müftüler the future of US-Turkey relations and Turkey's search for a new regional role were the decisive

⁸⁷ Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests the United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 2.

⁸⁸ Yücel Bozdağlıoğlu, "Identity Crisis and the Struggle for Recognition in Turkey", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, 23(2), 2000, p.19.

⁸⁹ Gülnur Aybet, *Turkey's Foreign Policy and Its Implications for the West: A Turkish Perspective* (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1994), p. 15.

⁹⁰ Meltem Müftüler, "Turkey's New Vocation", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, 22(3), 1999, p. 6.

factors in shaping the Turkish policy during the Gulf crisis.⁹¹ The initial reaction of Turkey to the Gulf War, however, was still cautious. It perceived the issue as a problem mainly between two Arab countries. Robins argues that “the overriding consideration for the traditionalists was that Turkey would have to continue to coexist with Iraq and more widely with the Arab people, long after the crisis was over and the US forces had returned home.”⁹² It is also possible to claim that same idea was at work after more than ten years during the American attack against Iraq in 2003.

However, “unexpectedly strong and united reaction in the United Nations”⁹³ put pressure on Turkey to do more than merely condemn Iraq. With a Security Council Resolution calling for an economic embargo against Iraq President Özal, despite the government’s reluctance, declared that Turkey would close the Kirkuk- Yumurtalık pipeline in accordance with the UN decision 661. Considering that two out of Iraq’s three operating oil pipelines passed through Turkish territory, Turkey’s decision was a vital element in the success of the economic campaign against Saddam. As soon as it became evident that economic measures would not be enough, the military option became inevitable, bringing more problems to the agenda Turkey’s foreign policy makers. Should Turkey send troops to the Gulf to lend a hand to the coalition forces and should coalition forces be allowed to use NATO bases in Turkey for offensive operations? The Turkish constitution requires the approval of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), before sending troops abroad. Despite Özal’s willingness, the TGNA did not allow him to send troops at first. Özal’s ambition even resulted in the resignation of the Chief of General Staff and two ministers, which is an unusual occurrence in Turkish politics. However, on January 17, 1991, the TGNA approved a decision to give war powers to the government, which also paved the way for the use of NATO bases against Iraq.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 6.

⁹² Philip Robins, “Turkish Policy and the Gulf Crisis; Adventurist or Dynamic?”, in Clement Dodd (ed.), *Turkish Foreign Policy; New Perspectives*, (Cambridgeshire: The Eothen Press, 1992), p. 77.

⁹³ William Hale, “Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis”, *International Affairs*, 68(4), 1992, p. 683.

Iraq had been made to retreat from Kuwait. However, Saddam Hussein remained in power and attempted to reassert his power throughout the country by repressing rebellious groups. Despite the fact that Özal was planning to benefit from allying Turkey with the West and thus demonstrate it was a “country to be trusted” --which he famously described as “Turkey would get three by putting one”-- it received not thousands of dollars, but thousands of Kurdish refugees from northern Iraq instead, settling in Turkey’s Iraq border. As a result of Saddam’s move to repress the irredentist Kurdish groups, by the middle of April in 1991 700,000 Kurdish refugees have massed at the Turkish border. Turkey played an important role in the adoption of the UN Resolution 688 and the launching of Operation Provide Comfort. Turkish decision makers were seriously concerned over the consequences of a mass influx of Kurdish refugees on the security of an area which was already suffering from separatist Kurdish movements. Turkey’s reluctance to permit the establishment of refugee camps on its soil was more likely motivated by fears of PKK infiltration and most importantly, the possible influence of rebellious Iraq Kurds on the Turkish Kurd population.⁹⁴ By the end of May 1991 the military wing of Provide Comfort grew to more than 20,000 troops from 11 countries. Operation Provide Comfort generated a strong sense of security and protection that was needed to ensure voluntary repatriation and refugees gradually returned. But this safe haven established by the Operation Provide Comfort, according to Turkish government, while appeasing a major concern, triggered the emergence of another one. It was the establishment of a Kurdish regional government in northern Iraq. As a result “during the summer and autumn of 1991, domestic politics again began to affect Turkish policies on the Kurdish problem, and the Middle East in general”.⁹⁵

In the end, Turkey was left to cope with severe economic losses caused by the closure of Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline, loss of revenues of tourism and the loss of trade with Iraq. In addition Turkey found itself with a neighbouring de facto Kurdish state, which was the last thing Turkey wanted; and despite its efforts, Turkey had to deal with mounting

⁹⁴ Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict* (London: Frank Cass, 1997), p. 158.

⁹⁵ Hale, op.cit, p. 689.

criticism by the West about its treatment of refugees as well as its own Kurdish population. An independent Kurdish state was seen as a menace to Turkey's territorial integrity and as a stimulus for Turkey's own Kurdish population --if not for independence, at least for more recognition, cultural rights or autonomy. Moreover, it did provide the PKK with a safe heaven from which to launch its violent actions against Turkey. In the domestic arena, Özal faced strong criticism. According to Aybet the opposition also argued that Turkey should have bargained for taking more from the West before applying the sanctions and cutting the pipeline.⁹⁶

Another important result of the Gulf War was the remaining distaste and mistrust towards US policies, which played an active role in the latest crisis. "Far from the new strategic relationship Özal had envisioned, the Gulf War had left a legacy of complexity and resentment in bilateral relations".⁹⁷ Turkey felt unappreciated for its help and uncompensated for its losses. On the other hand, increasing US involvement in the Kurdish issue made Turkey remember the Sevres Agreement, specifically the US role in it increased Turkey's suspicions about American strategy. Turkish authorities were not informed about nor allowed to participate in secret meetings between the US and Kurdish leaders, which add fuel to suspicions.⁹⁸ These factors all played an active role in Turkish foreign policy during the Iraq crisis in 2003. As a result, as Erik Knudsen correctly puts it, "Ankara saw the necessity of breaking ranks with Washington over the situation in north Iraq."⁹⁹

4.3.2. Heavy Domestic Agenda and the JDP

The JDP government, no doubt, was one of the major participants in the Iraqi Crisis. Therefore, after reviewing the experiences of the 1990-91 Gulf War it is necessary to

⁹⁶ Gülnur Aybet, op.cit, p. 17.

⁹⁷ F. Stephen Larrabee, & Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy*....., p. 166.

⁹⁸ Erik L. Knudsen, "The Quagmire of Northern Iraq: The Clash of United States, Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish Interests", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, 26(4), 2003, p. 30.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

examine the crowded agenda that the JDP had to cope with, in order to understand its actions, called “indecisive” or “irrational” by several authors during the crisis.¹⁰⁰ In this part of the chapter it is argued that since the government was forced to juggle a number of issues at the same time, it actually acted in such a way as to fully maximize the countries’ gains and minimize the harms in each sphere of foreign policy agenda.

Fifteen months after being founded, the JDP became the winning party in the November 3, 2002 elections by taking 34 percent of votes and gaining 363 seats out of 550 in the Assembly. After more than a decade, Turkey had a single-party government; moreover, only two of the parties could manage to enter the Assembly, the JDP and the Republican People’s Party (CHP), which was again an exceptional situation for Turkish politics.

Despite its success in the elections, the JDP had to overcome various complexities and the heavy agenda of domestic and international politics, which Robins claims “resulted in confused priorities, limited attention and capacity overload”.¹⁰¹ One major problem was the detrimental effects of the economic crisis which deepened in February 2002, and as a result of which the Turkish lira lost 50 percent of its value and millions of people lost their jobs. On the other hand, the JDP had to face with the fact that the leader of the party, Tayyip Erdoğan could not take part in elections because he had been convicted of inciting religious hatreds in 1998 after reading a poem in the Eastern province of Siirt. This made him ineligible to become the prime minister, since according to Turkish Constitution Article 76, a person convicted of “involvement in ideological and anarchistic activities” would not be allowed to enter into elections. Erdoğan had to wait until the necessary amendments in the constitution had been made to allow him enter the Assembly. He was elected in an election re-run on March 9th of 2003. For that time the country was ruled literally by two prime-ministers, as Erdoğan could not enter the assembly and therefore Abdullah Gül was given the responsibility to form the government. Therefore, the government was mainly preoccupied with the domestic

¹⁰⁰ Gareth Jenkins, “Muslim Democrats in Turkey?”, *Survival*, 45(1), 2003, pp. 46-66.

¹⁰¹ Philip Robins, “Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad: Turkey Between Copenhagen and Iraq”, *International Affairs*, 79 (3), 2003, p. 548.

agenda to enable Erdoğan to become prime minister. However, at the same time, besides the developments on the Iraq-US nexus in the Iraqi Crisis, the international agenda of the JDP was also full. The Cyprus issue, which was on the foreign policy agenda of Turkey from the 1950s, was ripe for a chance due to the Greek side's application for EU membership in the name of whole Cyprus and the negotiations on the Annan Plan were continuing to solve the Cyprus issue before Greek-Cypriots' EU membership. Also there was a forthcoming Copenhagen Summit of the EU, as a result of which Turkey was hoping to receive a definite timetable for starting negotiations to become a full member. As Robins puts it, Erdoğan and Gül were "fully absorbed by the early tasks of government and of Copenhagen, so little attention was devoted to Iraq until December".¹⁰²

Relations of Islamist governments with the West have rarely been without complexities. As Barchard argues, "when Turkish governments contained a notable proportion of men with strongly Islamic backgrounds (e.g. in the 1950's and at present), paradoxically pro-Western policy orientations have been at their strongest".¹⁰³ During the Democrat Party's rule, Turkey became closely allied with the West –also with the effect of the structural changes in the international security environment. However, Erbakan's parties, from the National Order to the Welfare Party, constituted a fundamental challenge to this situation. Erbakan, with his strong belief in the necessity and capability of Turkey acting as a leader in the Islamic world, denounced the relations with the West, particularly EU membership. The JDP's main cadre, coming from the tradition of Erbakan's parties, were expected to hold a similar line. However, despite still stressing the Islamic identity of their party, AKP leaders seem to take lessons from Erbakan's destiny, particularly from the 1997 "post-modern military coup" of February 28, 1997 leading to the outlaw of Welfare Party by the Constitutional Court on January 16, 1998 for being the focal point of anti-secular activities. Indeed, Tayyip Erdoğan after being sentenced to jail because of his reading a poem, which allegedly encouraged the masses

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 561.

¹⁰³ David Barchard, *Turkey and the West* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), p. 8.

to stage a religious revolt against the existing order, frequently asserted that “he has changed”. Parallel to his change, his party also developed a differing attitude towards the West, compared to previous Islamist parties. JDP leaders stressed their intention to support Turkey’s bid for membership in the EU. İhsan Dağı argues that the Islamist groups much later than the Kurdish ones realized that relations with the West and particularly EU membership could create the space they needed to realize their interest with the prospering democracy and liberalism in the country.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, despite their support for the efforts made to secure Turkey’s EU membership, the new government did not deny the need to develop better relations with the Middle Eastern countries. Soner Çagaptay says that “since most of the JDP’s rank and file members originating from the Islamist RP [Welfare Party], the JDP can be seen ... as an offshoot of the RP”.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, a possible American war against Muslim Iraqi people would not be welcomed, neither by the constituency of the JDP, nor by several backbenchers of the party. Therefore the cabinet needed to work hard to legitimise possible cooperation with the US government.

Moreover, the JDP government, dealing with the heavy domestic and international agenda, was faced with increasing pressure from the US administration. In that sense, Putnam’s term, “*two-level game*” is useful to describe the actions of the government. According to Ian Lesser “one of the leading aspects of recent change in Turkish security policy has been the role of public opinion in the evolving concerns of security elites”.¹⁰⁶ Differing from the Cold War years, public opinion that has also become more diversified became more prominent in foreign policy making. The Iraqi Crisis can also be taken as a proof of that. During the period of negotiations various groups ranging from extreme left to the right were united in defying American war plans and rejecting Turkey’s active participation to war. In Turkey, as elsewhere in the world, massive anti-war

¹⁰⁴ İhsan Duran Dağı, “Islamic Political Identity in Turkey: Rethinking the West and Westernization”, available at <http://www.policy.hu/dagi/project.htm> , accessed on 30 August 2003.

¹⁰⁵ Soner Çagaptay, “The November 2002 Elections and Turkey’s New Political Era”, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 6(4), 2002, p. 44.

¹⁰⁶ Ian O. Lesser, “Turkey in a Changing Security Environment”, *Journal of International Affairs*, 54(1), 2000, p. 184.

demonstrations were taking place. During the negotiations, therefore, the government was on the one hand trying to increase the benefit, or as it is mostly put, reducing the amount of loss, while on the other hand, it had to handle delicately the pressure emanating from domestic politics and to use each set games as leverage for the other. The protracted bargaining process on the part of the government, which even got the attention of the American press in the shape of humiliating cartoons as a sign of resentment from the US side, showed the US' failure to perceive the seriousness of the complex situation that JDP leaders found themselves in, having to persuade both the backbenchers of their party as well as public opinion in general.

Besides the US' underestimation of the negative public opinion in Turkey, the JDP seemed to overestimate the importance of Turkey's contribution to the military operation. The main discourse of JDP since the beginning of the negotiations with the US had been Turkey's attempt and the chance to avert the war. It would be wrong to blame the naivety of the decision makers. Though some circles were in a position to miscalculate the military capacities of the US, it is possible to claim that the image of a government that works for peace was a valuable asset both in domestic and international politics. Therefore, the government was preparing for a military operation while simultaneously demonstrating its eagerness to find a peaceful solution. Indeed, overestimating the importance of Turkey in a military operation, combined with the US' failure to understand the government's difficulty in persuading even its own MP's lengthened the discussions, thereby further alienating both parties.

Last but not least, the attitude of other participants in foreign policy-making played a crucial role. According to William Hale, the number of those who engaged in Turkish foreign policy has increased in number, particularly after 1960s, to include the President, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the National Security Council, including commanders of the armed forces.¹⁰⁷ President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, who was elected on May 2000, has been an increasingly influential force in Turkish politics. The

¹⁰⁷ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy: 1774- 2000* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), p. 205.

effect of his being a former Chief of the Constitutional Court became more evident in his insistence on the necessity of establishing the legality of the operation against Iraq, which he mainly equated with a UN decision. Therefore, the President was clear in his objection to Turkey's participation in an operation that lacked international legitimacy. Indeed, President Sezer reiterated his opinion that Turkey should insist on international legitimacy before a decision was taken by the Assembly, even on the day before the Parliamentary vote on a government motion to allow the deployment of foreign troops as well as sending Turkish soldiers abroad. In a parallel manner, the main opposition party the Republican People's Party, which was initially formed by Atatürk and has been an ardent defender of the Kemalist principles, also made it clear that they would vote against the authorization for the deployment of US troops on Turkish soil.

However, after maintaining a low profile attitude during the early part of the Iraqi Crisis, the most important blow came from the military. It was then that the conflict between the Kemalist military and the Islamist government manifested itself. Jenkins correctly argues that "whatever Erdoğan may say to the contrary, the JDP is seen as a religious party not just by its opponents but by most of its supporters".¹⁰⁸ Even though, the government reiterated their respect for Kemalist principles in every instance they could not make the Kemalist establishment believe in their metamorphosis. Jenkins also argues that "the Turkish General Staff decided as early as summer of 2002 that, ultimately, it would have no choice but to support the US logistically and probably militarily". Although his verdict is disputable he is correct in claiming that "however, it [the Turkish General Staff] delayed giving Washington a firm commitment, partly in the hope that a peaceful solution could still be found and partly to improve its bargaining position in discussions with the US about compensation for Turkey's losses as the result of the war".¹⁰⁹ Moreover, Jenkins also says that "despite increasing US frustration, the Turkish military was content to wait and allow the JDP to take responsibility for what would be

¹⁰⁸ Gareth Jenkins, "Muslim Democrats in Turkey?", *Survival*, 45(1), 2003, p. 60.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

an unpopular decision”.¹¹⁰ The most obvious support for Jenkins’ argument is the fact that, even though the government deliberately postponed the voting in the Assembly to a date after the National Security Council (NSC) meeting --the highest level at which security matters are discussed and an advisory decision declared afterwards-- after its meeting held one day before voting of the Assembly, NSC chose to adopt a *low profile attitude* and refrained from making *bold sentences*.¹¹¹ As Robins also puts it “the Turkish military, though intentionally adopting a low profile both with an eye to the stipulation of the Copenhagen criteria and so that the JDP government might take responsibility for unpalatable war preparations”.¹¹² The military’s low profile can be explained by two factors, both its insecure feeling toward the Islamist government, and an internalisation of EU norms after long criticisms about its involvement in politics. However, considering that the military had asserted itself in the Cyprus issue just a few months before, the first option becomes more realistic. Yet, whatever the reason for the military’s deference to the government, it should be considered a positive step for the democracy in Turkey. Even though it may be just a political manoeuvre, it bears the possibility of becoming more institutionalised.

In the end, the TGNA did not allow either the deployment of US troops or the sending of Turkish soldiers to Iraq. To sum up, the government’s discourse mainly revolved around the threat emanating from Northern Iraq and the PKK, Turkey’s geographical importance, the inevitability of a US operation, and its efforts to find a peaceful solution to the problem. However, against the backdrop of the unpleasant experiences of Gulf War in 1990-91, and then President Özal’s submissive conduct and the criticism he received in return, were all factors in shaping JDP government’s decisions. Moreover, even though neither the army nor the government was willing to get involved in a war against Iraq, still the everlasting clash between Kemalist establishment and Islamist government was at work, which in return weakened the government’s argument both in

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ *Hürriyet*, 28 February 2003.

¹¹² Philip Robins, “Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad: Turkey Between Copenhagen and Iraq”, p. 563.

the eyes of its constituency, general public opinion and particularly with the backbenchers of the JDP.

In a nutshell, the concerns shaping Turkish foreign policy toward Iraq since the first Gulf War continued to determine the calculations of Turkish decision-makers during the Iraqi Crisis of 2003 as well. In that sense one could discern a strong continuity in the main principles of Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the Iraqi Crisis.¹¹³ This continuity at the same time suggested that the lessons learned from the Turkish experience with the almost unconditional support for the United States in 1991, and subsequent negative consequences of the war on Turkey had continued to haunt decision-makers. To a large extent, the JDP leadership adopted these same basic parameters, and operated from a mindset similar to that of the establishment. There was almost no questioning of the country's so-called "red lines" on Iraq, formulated earlier during the Ecevit government in collaboration with the bureaucracy [1. Protecting the territorial integrity of Iraq. 2. Preventing the division of Iraq along sectarian or ethnic lines that would give rise to an independent or confederal Kurdish state (with the oil-rich city of Kirkuk as its capital), thus supporting aspirations for a similar entity from Turkey's own extensive Kurdish population. 3. Protecting the /Turkish-speaking Turkoman minority which resides primarily in northern Iraq.] The JDP leadership continued to approach the problem from the same perspective, focusing exclusively on the security challenges, and economic hardships to be caused by the war on Iraq. The events in the Iraqi Crisis of 2003 reveals that Turkish foreign policy has not shifted away from its cautious and noninterventionist policy, and also showed that the situation in Gulf War in 1990-91 was an exception.

¹¹³ See, <<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ai/iraqpolicy.htm>>

CHAPTER V

TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION DURING THE IRAQI CRISIS IN 2003

During the Cold War, Turkey internalized its pro-American and anti-Communist stance within the context of pro-Western foreign policy and cooperated with the West against the Soviet threat. The end of the Cold War finished the monolithic understanding of the West; and the US-EU cooperation started to break down.

According to Stephen Walt the reasons for the US-Europe coalition during the Cold War were as follows: the Soviet threat, the American stake in the European economy and the generation of political elites that had developed the habit of working together in a common endeavour.¹¹⁴ But these conditions changed with the end of the Cold War. The European countries -now bored of the US taking the role of the arbiter in their region- wanted to develop independent foreign policies in specific areas such as the Middle East. The crux of the question lay with the differing perspectives of a global superpower and individual EU member states.¹¹⁵ In other words though other reasons, such as trade are important, the formal cause of the rift is the structural conditions of the post-Cold war international system. Put briefly this is a uni-multipolar system with one superpower and several major powers.¹¹⁶ As Huntington argues “the settlement of key international issues requires action by the single superpower but always with some combination of other major states; the single superpower can, however, veto action on key issues by a

¹¹⁴ Stephen Walt, “The Ties that Fray”, *National Interest*, Winter 1998, p. 9.

¹¹⁵ See, Stuart E. Eizenstat, “Issues in US-European Relations”, *Nixon Center Perspectives*, Vol.3, No. 6, 16 October 1998.

¹¹⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Lonely Superpower”, *Foreign Affairs*, March-April 1999, p. 36.

combination of other states”.¹¹⁷ Along with the US as superpower of the international system, there are now other regional powers such as the German-French condominium in Europe, Russia in Eurasia, China and potentially Japan in East Asia.¹¹⁸

The rift between the US and Europe affected Turkish foreign policy during the Iraqi Crisis. On one hand, Turkey emphasizes the importance of the traditional strategic cooperation with America. On the other hand the EU membership has become the ultimate aim of the Turkish foreign policy. Turkey fell into a dilemma having to make a choice between America and Europe.

5.1. Turkey-US Relations during the Iraqi Crisis

5.1.1. Evaluation of the Transformation of Turkey-US Relations from the Cold War to the Iraqi Crisis in 2003

5.1.1.1. The Turkish-American Alliance in the Cold War

The origins of the Turkish–American alliance appear to contradict Ole Holsti’s argument that “geographic conditions do not appear to play a significant role in alliance making.”¹¹⁹ Turkey’s strategic position was its main asset and was the major reason for the Turkish–American alignment during the Cold War period.

In the Cold War period, Turkey’s objective to contain the imminent Soviet threat was coupled with a similar concern of the US, which feared Soviet expansion into the Middle East where oil was the most important strategic concern of the US. In this respect, Turkey’s geostrategic position was crucial for the containment of such ideological and territorial expansion. As a result, US military analysts reached the conclusion that

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ole R. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 111.

Turkey was “the most important military factor in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East” and that “the Soviet expansion would have a serious impact on the vital interests of the USA.”¹²⁰

There were a series of developments that followed the strategic convergence of interests of the US and Turkey as two allied countries. The Truman doctrine, the Marshall Plan aid to Turkey, the Korean War in 1950 to which Turkey sent troops, Turkey’s becoming a member of NATO in 1952, and the signing of the Military Facilities Agreement formalizing the opening of US military bases in Turkey are the most significant developments.

Although there seemed to be a perfect convergence in the interests of the two countries, the alliance from time to time suffered from the imbalance between a superpower and a medium-sized regional power. The alliance suffered from major drawbacks in the 1960s because of the Jupiter missile crisis, the Opium issue and the Johnson letter. However, the major turning point in bilateral relations was constituted by Turkey sending troops to Cyprus in July 1974 and the subsequent arms embargo imposed by the US. The arms embargo, which lasted for three years, was a slap in the face for Turkey and had very negative consequences for the alliance. Turks viewed this as an intervention in their domestic affairs, and anti-American sentiment grew. Turkey responded to the suspension of US military aid by closing down all American military installations on its territory, including air bases, naval facilities, early warning radar stations and intelligence gathering facilities directed towards the Soviet Union. This development was significant in the sense that it made Turkey realized how uni- dimensional its foreign policy had been so far and how dependent it was on US military aid. As a result Turkey tried to improve its relations with the Soviet Union.

It can be concluded that there was no sense of reciprocity; the alliance was not formed on an equal partnership principle since there were no constant common interests. Turkey

¹²⁰ Richard. C. Company, *Turkey and the United States* (New York: Praeger, 1986), p. 80.

played the role of a smaller and weaker ally bound to the aid of a superpower in military and security terms in order to protect itself from outside threats and therefore exposed its dependency on US military aid and support.

5.1.1.2. The End of the Cold War: From “Alliance” to “Partnership”

The end of the Cold War, marked by the disintegration of the Soviet Union, opened another phase in Turkish–American relations. American policy makers needed to find an alternative rationale for a policy of active global diplomatic and military engagement. A new threat definition was made as early as 1990 by President George Bush who stated that “Our enemy is uncertainty and instability”.¹²¹ This view was further strengthened by Colin Powell who stated that “the post-Cold War world will be a more dangerous place for the US than the Cold War world because of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in hostile states, anti-American regimes in the Third World, drug traffickers, anti-democratic insurgents and terrorism.”¹²²

Because of the changing priorities of the US and an increasing budget deficit at home, the US Congress made a major policy shift in the early 1990s by ending the grant military aid program for Turkey, converting what was previously grant military aid to low interest loans (at no less than five percent interest) for purchases of military equipment; and reducing the overall military aid levels of each of these countries by ten percent compared to the previous fiscal year.¹²³

Aylin Güney states that “in 1991 a new phase opened in the Turkish–American relationship, referred to as an ‘enhanced partnership’. The basic nature of this new relationship can be defined as extended cooperation in the political field, an increase in

¹²¹ Quoted from President Bush’s May 4, 1990 Speech at Oklahoma State University.

¹²² Ted Galen Carpenter (ed.), *America Entangled: The Persian Gulf Crisis and its Consequences* (Washington DC: Cato Institute, 1991), p. 13.

¹²³ Richard F. Grimmet, *CRS Report for Congress: Military Assistance to Base Right Countries* (Washington DC: Library of Congress, January 28, 1993), p. 5.

diplomatic consultations and an emphasis on enhanced economic partnership in compensation for the decreasing emphasis on security and defence-related matters.”¹²⁴

The first challenge to this new world order came with the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. The US and its western allies formed a coalition against Iraq to force it out of Kuwaiti territory. For Turkey, which felt somehow resentful of the changing priorities of the US, this was a unique opportunity to reassert its geostrategic importance in the eyes of its ally. Thus, Turkey, without hesitation, immediately joined the coalition, the Turkish–Iraqi border was closed, cutting off one of the main land routes into Iraq, and the pipeline from the north of Iraq to the Mediterranean was blocked. On January 17, 1991, the day the US-led offensive started, the Turkish Parliament passed a government motion stating that the Turkish armed forces and foreign bases in Turkey could participate in military actions against Iraq, effectively signalling the opening of a second front from the north. In the meantime, Turkey agreed to open up İncirlik airbase to the disposal of the coalition forces to make raids on Iraqi territory. Turkey’s policy during the Gulf War was mainly directed by Turgut Özal, the Turkish President, who made no secret of his wish to assume an active role in the war.

It can be argued that the 1990s were years when both sides questioned the strategic importance of Turkey for the US. What is quite important to note is that Turkey also continued its multi-dimensional policy and made membership to the EU an important priority. Although the US supported this desire and hoped that the EU would consider Turkey as a future member of the EU, there was still important convergence in the views of Turkey and the US concerning an emphasis on NATO. While the EU was trying to form its own security and defence identity, one can observe that the US, the UK and Turkey were basically opposed to the idea of decreasing the role of NATO and the use of NATO forces for EU-led operations.

¹²⁴ Aylin Güney, “An Anatomy of the Transformation of the US-Turkish Alliance: From Cold War to Iraq War”, *Turkish Studies*, 6(3), September 2005, p. 345.

In 1999, the United States began to give the relationship a new title: “strategic partnership,” a concept that was first voiced during the visit of President Clinton to Turkey. According to the US ambassador to Turkey, Robert Pearson, this term represented a broad recognition in both the executive and legislative branches of the US government of the increasing responsibilities of Turkey regionally and globally. It also recognized that the US has a significant stake in Turkey’s ability to integrate into the global economy, moving closer to Europe, and contributing to the stabilization of a troubled region.¹²⁵

5.1.1.3. Post-September 11 Period: The War on Iraq

The US’s international strategy during the post-9/11 period has been characterized, to a great extent, by preventing rogue states from threatening the US, its allies and its friends with weapons of mass destruction, and the fight against terrorism, if necessary through pre-emptive strikes. In this respect, in Colin Powell’s words, the US strategy is one of partnerships that strongly affirm the vital role of NATO and other US alliances.¹²⁶ Turkey is seen as one of the most important forward bases through which these policies will be implemented. So, one can observe that Turkey has been given an important role in this new vision of the second Bush administration.

The war on Iraq waged by the US in March 2003 had very important repercussions for the long-lasting strategic partnership between the two countries by creating a serious crisis of confidence on both sides. The nature of the alliance has been linked to the extent to which Turkey fitted the new policy structure of the US towards the rest of the world and the extent to which Turkish perceptions converged with those of the US.

To sum up, it can be argued that the nature of Turkey-US relations has changed since the end of the Cold War and later the September 11 events with the changing security

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 346.

¹²⁶ Colin L. Powell, “A Strategy of Partnerships” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.83, No.1 (January–February 2004), p. 25.

environment and threat perceptions of both countries. In the following part of this chapter the reasons of Turkey's suspicious and distrustful attitude will be discussed in detail.

5.1.2. The Major Concerns Shaping the Turkish Foreign Policy During the Iraqi Crisis

When faced with the American determination to go to war, Turkish policy makers had to evaluate whether the war was in Turkey's interest, or whether Turkey's policies coincided with American plans for intervening in Iraq. On this point, it seems that there was almost a uniform position among the policy makers, including the JDP leadership. In hypothetical terms, it could be said that a possible American operation in Iraq would have presented both assets and liabilities for Turkey. Although there were some hawkish views that the opportunity of the war could be seized to boost Turkey's role in the region, such as reclaiming the Turkish rights over the oil-rich cities of Mosul and Kirkuk¹²⁷ overall the policy actors reacted to this development negatively.

Also there was a point of view that saw the fortunes of war, rather than the challenges presented by it. This idea was represented rather to a limited extent, and was also heavily employed by American politicians to urge Turkey to cooperate with the United States. It criticized the myopic nature of the Turkish debate. If Turkey was to free itself from being distracted by its worries about the short-term risks and have a broader strategic vision, as the argument goes, it would realize that in fact Turkey's interests in Iraq coincided with those of the United States. Therefore in the long-run, Turkey would benefit from assisting the coalition. Politically, the regime change would reduce the risks to Turkey's security emanating from Iraq. The normalization of the politics in the region would also open new windows of opportunity and boost Turkey's economic ties with the region, thus helping heal the negative economic consequences of the war.¹²⁸ More to the

¹²⁷ "Yazıcıoğlu: Kerkük ve Musul'a Girelim", *Yeni Şafak*, 15 October 2002.

¹²⁸ See <<http://www.csis.org/turkey/event020306.htm>>

point, already at that time it was obvious that participating in rebuilding contracts in Iraq, which was likely to be a lucrative business area, would be conditional upon the degree of cooperation with the warring coalition. According to this hawkish view as stated above, all in all, it was in Turkey's best interest to act alongside its decades-old strategic partner and the global hegemon, namely the United States. Thus, there were also opportunities to be reaped "if Turkey could think and act strategically." Nonetheless, this hawkish view remained a minority view and Turkish policy makers were extremely cautious not to give the appearance of pursuing a selfish agenda in Iraq even when they were engaged in negotiations with the United States simultaneously.

Turkish policy-makers perceived the upcoming crisis as creating more troubles than opening up opportunities; therefore they maintained Turkey's traditional *status quo* oriented foreign policy and avoided revisionism. The domestic, regional, and international conditions, which were unfavourable to actively assisting actively the American agenda in Iraq further added to Turkey's caution over daring. Therefore the dominant mood in Turkey, which was largely shared by the majority of policy-makers, was to make every attempt to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in order to avoid war because the war would likely affect the country's national interests negatively. In more specific terms, the major concerns that shaped the thinking of Turkish policy makers could be briefly discussed as follows.

5.1.2.1. Security-Related Concerns of the JDP Government

The first set of factors is mainly security related, specifically Turkey's greatest headache, the Kurdish problem. According to the official line of reasoning, the indeterminate status of Northern Iraq posed several challenges to Turkey's national security. The power vacuum, created by the policy of no-fly zones and safe havens imposed by the Allies in the aftermath of the Gulf War, had led to a situation whereby the separatist Kurdish elements in Turkey, organized under the PKK, used the region as a rear base to conduct terrorist activities inside Turkish territory. As a result, countering the threat stemming from the region was one of the priorities of Turkey throughout the

1990s. Turkish policy mainly took the form of interventions in the region and maintaining a military presence there. Turkish policy makers were worried that in the event of a war, Turkey might have to suspend its military operations against PKK formations or abandon its military positions. Another by-product of the situation in Northern Iraq had been the embryonic Kurdish state that slowly but gradually took shape within the *de facto* autonomous region imposed by the American policy on Iraq. The eventual emergence of an independent Kurdistan had been one of the nightmare scenarios for Turkey. Thus, the Turkish elite had consistently underlined its respect for the maintenance of Iraq's territorial integrity. Turkey had employed a number of different policies in tackling this double-edged Kurdish challenge, ranging from intervening in Northern Iraq in pursuit of PKK militants manipulating different Kurdish groups against each other. Nonetheless what is obvious is that, from a Turkish perspective, finding a lasting solution to this contradictory situation was conditional upon the restoration of Baghdad's full control over the whole of the country, ending the authority vacuum in the Northern Iraq. That, however, and by default put Turkey and the United States at odds with each other.¹²⁹

The Turkish concern to protect the rights of Turkomans in Northern Iraq was one of the determinants of its policy toward Iraq.¹³⁰ Promoting the cultural and social rights of a Turkish people had a certain rationale of its own. However Turkey's real motives lay elsewhere. Turkey was worried that the Kurdish majority might dominate the politics of Northern Iraq in the post-Saddam era and could establish full control over the region. In this sense, strengthening the role of Turkomans was seen in the interest of Turkey as it would counterbalance the power of the Kurds in the region. Moreover, because the oil-rich cities of Mosul and Kirkuk were traditionally seen as Turkish cities, and part of *the National Pact (Misak-i Milli)*, constituting the territorial basis of modern Turkey, the control of those cities by Kurds and their Kurdification at the expense of Turkomans

¹²⁹ "Irak'tan Türkiye'ye Kuzey Irak uyarısı", available at <<http://www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr>> (Newsportal), 6 March 2002.

¹³⁰ Tarık Oğuzlu, "The Turkomans as a Factor in Turkey's Foreign Policy," *Turkish Studies*, 3(2), 2002, pp. 139-148.

posed a related challenge for Turkey. Therefore a significant part of Turkey's demands was about the representation of the Turkomans in the post-Saddam government, and the prevention of Kurds from acquiring the control and administration of Mosul and Kirkuk. However, needless to say, Turks would have preferred the continuation of the *status quo* –if not the restoration of Baghdad's full control in the region- over setting sail to an uncertain war, likely to shake the political and geographical map of the region. Therefore, Turkey declared the respect for the sovereignty, and maintenance of territorial integrity of Iraq as the guiding principle of its Iraq policy.

5.1.2.2. Economy-Related Concerns of the JDP Government

The second set of factors is related to economy. The first Gulf War dealt a great loss to Turkey economically; much of Turkey's trade with the region diminished as Turkey lost its lucrative Iraq market, and was deprived of the revenues from pipelines through its territory. These were mainly due to the regimen of U.N.-imposed sanctions demanded by the United States. Once the war was over, Turkey's demands were forgotten and it was left alone to deal with its economic problems. Therefore, in many instances the Turkish governments had been lobbying for the phasing out of U.N. sanctions on Iraq, and trying to enhance relations with Iraq in order to compensate for economic losses that had resulted from the embargo. Most of these attempts were met with American criticism. As in the security-related concerns, whereas Turkey's stakes lay in the normalization of economic relations with Baghdad regime and reinstating its authority over the country, the United States insisted on dual containment policy.

In order to better understand the economic concerns in Turkey's calculations, one has to look at how economy has become *the* central issue in Turkish domestic politics. In the run-up to the 2003 war, Turkey had undergone major financial crises and had been trying to recover through several IMF stabilization programs, supported by the United States. Indeed, the whole chain of events by which Turkey was drawn to November 2002 elections and the JDP rose to power was directly related to the inability of the shaky coalition governments to deliver a solution to the severe economic crises. The

disillusionment of the Turkish public with the existing political parties led to the landslide electoral victory of a newly-established party. With all these memories in mind, possible implications of the war on Turkish economy were a major worry as the constantly deteriorating life standards had made economy the number one priority for Turkish people in their everyday life. The war was expected to cause a huge increase in oil prices, severely damaging the Turkish economy due to the country's heavy reliance on fossil energy sources from the Middle East. Moreover, given that earlier crises were caused by the unstable financial sector, if the war erupted in the region the stock markets would likely destabilize due to the outflow of foreign investment, triggering the chain reaction of economic crisis. On the other hand, tourism had established itself as one of the driving sectors of the Turkish economy. The crisis in the region would likely deter foreign tourists from visiting the country, causing a significant loss in foreign income, and further deepening a likely crisis. Furthermore, because the JDP government initiated a new economic program, maintaining economic stability was a prime concern for Turkey.

In order to evaluate the ability and success of a power governing the country, one should look at the government's degree of success in managing Turkish economy. Because it was assumed that the war in the region would severely affect the Turkish economy and undermine Turkey's attempts to boost trade with the Middle East, economic considerations further heightened Turkey's desire to prevent the war.

After enumerating all these concerns on the part of the Turkish government, the process of negotiation with the US during the Iraqi Crisis will be evaluated in the following part of this chapter.

5.1.3. Negotiation Process with the US During the Iraqi Crisis

The events of September 11, 2001 further enhanced the strategic value of Turkey as a Muslim country that could be a model liberal market economy and secular democracy to the Islamic world beset by Islamic radicalism, repression and economic failure.

Moreover, Turkey contributed to the forces stabilizing Afghanistan after the Taliban had been defeated in 2002. In short, Turkey had become a net contributor or exporter of hard and soft security. Also she was the only NATO country that bordered Iraq. Taking into account all these factors makes it clear why, when the US-led coalition decided to intervene in Iraq in March 2003, without a clear mandate from the UN and with the opposition of EU member states, France and Germany, and also Russia and China, the US demanded the assistance of Turkey.

Moreover, due to its critical importance to the American war plans there was no way that it could isolate itself from the discussions on the war. Last but not least, its long-standing alliance relations with and dependence on the United States made total disengagement extremely difficult. Consequently, the American diplomatic *blitz* to get Turkey on board made the no-war option practically untenable for Turkey. Thus, it became necessary for Turkish decision makers to come to terms with the reality of cooperating with the United States in one way or another, and to develop a justification for this policy.

It had long been discussed that a war in Iraq fought in two fronts, south and north, would minimize both the losses to the US and reduce the time needed to achieve its goal. Therefore, the American government planned to open a front in northern Iraq in addition to the south. However, in order to open the northern front there American troops would have to be transferred to that region. The first and easiest option available to US decision-makers was to send the troops via Turkey by deploying some US marines in the eastern part of it, which neighbours northern Iraq. Hence, long before the military operation started, the negotiations between Turkey and US were underway. This chapter will explicate what happened during the negotiations prior to the TGNA's voting on October 7, 2003 and how Turkish decision-makers arrived at their Iraqi policy.

Being a neighbour of Iraq and a long-standing ally of the US, Turkey found itself at the centre of US war plans. There was increased diplomatic interaction between Turkey and the US. In this context, US Vice President Dick Cheney visited Ankara in the early

spring of 2002. This was followed by the visit of US Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz on December 6, 2002.¹³¹ On the other hand, on January 25, 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell met with Turkish Prime Minister Abdullah Gül and the chair of the governing Justice and Development Party, Tayyip Erdoğan, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.¹³² Following Wolfowitz's visit, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers paid a visit to Turkey on January 19, 2003.¹³³ All those meetings were aimed at testing the prevailing mood in Turkey regarding the upcoming war and primarily persuading Ankara to grant American troops the right to pass through its territory.

“The re-emergence of conflict between Iraq and the US was [...] always likely to be viewed with discomfort in Turkey”.¹³⁴ However, during Wolfowitz's visit, it had been reported in the Turkish press that Turkish officials had offered help such as the use of Turkish airspace and certain military bases and facilities in the event of war against the Saddam Hussein regime; but it was also mentioned that Turkey was eager to help find a peaceful solution to the problem.¹³⁵ Turkey has repeatedly emphasized its willingness to find a peaceful solution, particularly within the jurisdiction of international law, has been the phrase, repeated over and over by Turkish authorities during these visits, sending messages both to domestic and international public opinion. Ankara, still having faith in being able to find a peaceful solution to the Iraq problem, held a regional forum covering neighboring countries to Iraq within this scope. It was stressed in the final statement of the meeting, which brought foreign ministers of Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Jordan together on January 23, 2003, that war should not be regarded as an alternative to finding a solution for the Iraqi Crisis. The Iraqi

¹³¹ *Hürriyet*, 7 December 2002.

¹³² *Zaman*, 26 January 2003.

¹³³ Soner Çagaptay, “Why Are the Turks Hesitating on Iraq”, *Policywatch*, No:704, 27 January 2003, available at <<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/watch/policywatch/policywatch2003/704.htm>>

¹³⁴ Philip Robins, “Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad: Turkey Between Copenhagen and Iraq”, *International Affairs*, 79 (3), 2003, p. 560.

¹³⁵ *Hürriyet*, 17 February 2003.

administration was called to fulfill its responsibilities to restore peace and stability in the region in the forum's final statement. Meeting of neighboring countries to Iraq was held for four times throughout the year.

However, as the US increased pressure on Turkey, it became clearer to Ankara that a war may become unavoidable. Therefore, negotiations had started between the two countries to determine the "requirements and costs" of cooperation, which would be labelled the "most complicated negotiations of Turkish history" by the press.¹³⁶

Negotiations were held on several tracks, which can mainly be categorized as political, economic and military issues. In the political sphere, the main controversy was about post-Iraq War conditions. Turkey stressed particularly two issues in this sphere, firstly to make sure that the American operation would not threaten the territorial integrity of Iraq; and secondly to guarantee the well-being of the Turkoman population both physically and politically in post- Saddam Iraq.¹³⁷ The existing and future situation in northern Iraq had great importance for the Turkish authorities.

The second issue was related to compensating for losses incurred by Turkey because of the operation. Economic negotiations were one of the most exposed dimensions. It was claimed that there existed an unbridgeable gap between the amounts that Turkey expected and the US proposed. Ankara, mindful of the losses incurred during the Gulf War in 1990-91, as well as the economic crises of November 2000 which became acuter in February 2001, pressed for greater economic aid. Although different figures have appeared in the American and the Turkish press, it is thought that the US initially offered four billion dollars but eventually increased it to six billion dollars. However, the loss projected by Turkish officials over five years came to eight billion dollars. The gap between the parties and intense discussions shall be claimed as a result of Turkey's willingness to make US compensate the losses of Gulf War of 1990-1991 as well as the

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ See, Tarık Oğuzlu, "The Turkomans as a Factor in Turkey's Foreign Policy," *Turkish Studies*, 3(2), 2002.

ones that will be incurred. This situation received wide coverage in US media, much of it critical and reducing the concerns of Turkish government only to economic gains –in particular a cartoon published in an American newspaper that showed Turkey as a belly dancer willing to take more money from Uncle Sam; this cartoon was taken up by the Turkish press, heightening anti-American feelings in the society.

During the third tier of negotiations, a group of diplomats and members of the military from both sides had taken part in discussions on military issues. This involved discussions about the numbers of US troops to be deployed in Turkish soil, the way they would be transferred to northern Iraq, rules that would guide their functioning, as well as the content of cooperation between Turkish troops to be deployed in Northern Iraq besides US troops. One of the sensitive issues within this category was the issue of the command of Turkish troops that would enter northern Iraq.

While the negotiations were continuing, the US government acted on its strong belief that the outcome would be positive and was continuing its military deployment near Turkish coasts. Before the discussions were finalised, five warships full of military equipment had already anchored in the East Mediterranean at the edge of Turkish territorial waters, while several others were on the way.¹³⁸ This was also interpreted as a move to increase the pressure on the Turkish government to speed up its decision. However, despite the Turkish government was reiterating that it would not mean an engagement to the war as a party, TGNA's decision to allow US technicians to come to the country in order to upgrade U.S. bases, taken as early as 6th of February,¹³⁹ raised US hopes.

However, while the negotiations with US were taking place, equally intense discussions were taking place within Turkey. Like many countries, Turkey was racked by popular demonstrations against a possible US invasion of Iraq. Generally the US' intended

¹³⁸ *Hürriyet*, 27 February 2003.

¹³⁹ *Hürriyet*, 7 February 2003.

invasion of Iraq was seen as purely the result of a desire to control oil production rather than humanitarian, idealistic considerations of wanting to end brutal repression, promote democratization, and dismantle weapons of mass destruction. Public opinion was also adversely affected by the perception that Turkey was being portrayed in the United States as a greedy country merely trying to profit from the situation. Not only was public opinion against a war and Turkey's involvement in it, but the President of the Turkish Republic Ahmet Necdet Sezer and the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) were all stressing the illegitimacy of such a war and the necessity for Turkey not to take part in it.¹⁴⁰ However, the most troublesome of all such objections, were of course the ones coming from the members of the JDP. While the ruling JDP had gained close to a two-thirds of parliamentary majority in the November 2002 elections, it resembled a coalition of three smaller parties: one representing protest votes to punish the former government, a second associated with the party leadership's moderate view of Islam (a sort of Christian Democrat version of Islam), and a third with a more ambitious and conservative Islamic agenda. These frictions within the JDP weakened its ability to push hard in support of the intervention. While the speaker of TGNA, Bülent Arınç, also one of the founders of JDP was emphasizing the necessity of fulfilling international legalities, a member of the Cabinet, Vice Prime Minister Ertuğrul Yalçınbayır, was claiming that Turkish democracy would be strengthened if the TGNA would reject US demands.

The Turkish government, after more than two months of intense negotiations, declared that, though not totally satisfactory, an agreement had been reached with US officials (*Hürriyet*, 26 February 2003). However, according to Turkish Constitution Article 92¹⁴¹, to enable deployment of foreign troops as well as sending Turkish soldiers abroad, the approval of TGNA is necessary. Hence, the government felt it had to reach an agreement as a precondition for bringing two government motions to the Assembly, one of which

¹⁴⁰ *Hürriyet*, 20 February 2003.

¹⁴¹ Article 92 states that a parliamentary vote is necessary for allowing foreign troops into Turkey, or sending Turkish troops to another country. English translation of the Constitution is available at the web page <<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupc/ca/cag/I142.htm>>

would enable deployment of 62,000 US troops in Turkey as well as 255 war planes and 65 US helicopters and the other for sending Turkish troops abroad, namely to northern Iraq.¹⁴² Yet, the government performed one last manoeuvre by delaying the discussion of the TGNA to a date after the monthly National Security Council (NSC) meeting, which is the highest institution where the security issues of the country would be discussed. The NSC headed by the President would have a meeting with attendance of the Chief of General Staff as well as four army commanders and certain ministers. Even though the NSC is defined as an advisory board to the government, since it is the main platform that the army would clearly announce its decisions about the security issues, it has been highly influential in Turkish politics. However, the government's manoeuvre did not yield results, since the NSC, after its meeting held on the last day of February 2003, chose not to make any bold decisions about the situation. It revealed that Turkish military deliberately chose to maintain a low profile attitude during the Iraqi Crisis.

In the end, while the government motion allowing the renovation of air bases and harbours in the country was approved, the Assembly refused to allow US troops to come to Turkey or to send Turkish troops abroad at its meeting held in March 1, 2003. The decision of the TGNA created shock waves all through the international community. The decision also shocked the US government and the US military, which had been confident that in the end Turkey would act in a way befitting a long-standing ally. Indeed, the United States had already begun preparing for the troop deployment on the basis of a previous Turkish government decision. This aggravated the disappointment. The irony, of course, was that this decision was the result of the workings of a democratic process which the United States had long urged on Turkey. In general, the US government accepted the decision and tried to limit any damage to bilateral relations as well as to its own war effort.

The US Operation Iraqi Freedom started on the March 20, 2003 without opening a northern front; the Coalition Forces reached Baghdad in nearly two weeks and

¹⁴² *Zaman*, 3 February 2003.

maintained control in Baghdad without encountering stiff resistance. On May 2, 2003 US President George Bush declared victory in the war on Iraq.

By the summer of 2003, the inability to restore order and stability in Iraq well after the end of formal hostilities led to increasingly urgent calls in the United States for Turkish assistance. This time the US government appeared to handle the issue more carefully in terms of Turkish sensibilities and also authorized the potential release of \$8.5 billion in credits without openly linking it to Turkish troop deployments in Iraq. The military and the government wanted to make this deal but public opinion continued to oppose any involvement in Iraq, fearing Turkey would be seen as helping to entrench a US occupation. In an effort to legitimize Turkish involvement in the eyes of the public, both the government and the military stressed that Turkey's role would be a humanitarian one emphasizing the restoration of public services. A frequently employed expression was trying, "to put out the fire in the neighbour's house."

The security elite's immediate concern was the repercussions that chaos and instability in Iraq could have on Turkey. They feared the break-up of Iraq and the emergence of a Kurdish state. They argued that sending troops would block these outcomes while guaranteeing Turkey a place at the negotiating table where Iraq's future would be discussed.

These officials were particularly disturbed by the prominent Kurdish presence in the US-appointed Governing Council in Baghdad at the expense of the Turkoman presence, which they attributed to the Kurds choosing to cooperate closely with the United States. There was also deep concern about the fact that the PKK had again started operations in towns along the border with Iraq and threatened further attacks deeper into Turkey. The security elite scrutinized every American move and statement concerning Northern Iraq and concluded-- contrary to US government statements-- that the United States was conspiring to set up a Kurdish state. Hence, a military presence in Iraq was required to counter this danger.

During this negotiation process, Turkey-U.S. relations were strained one more time when American soldiers raided Turkish Special Team Office in Sulaymaniyah and detained 11 Turkish soldiers and brought them to Kirkuk on July, 4th 2003. It was claimed that the soldiers were detained upon information claiming that some Turkish people would launch an assassination attempt on Kirkuk Governor. Both Ankara and Washington launched intensive initiatives in spite of the July 4 holiday. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan wanted the US Vice President Dick Cheney to intervene in the issue, Chief of General Staff Gen. Hilmi Özkök had the same conversation with NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe General James L. Jones, while Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Gül wanted the same thing from the US Secretary of State Colin Powell. The Foreign Ministry wanted the United States to release the soldiers rapidly and to start necessary procedures against the American officials who had caused this incident to happen. Detained soldiers were released and brought to Baghdad on July 6 and to Suleymaniyah on July 7 2003. Prime Minister Erdoğan said that the incident was overcome with a diplomatic courtesy. Meanwhile, a delegation from the Foreign Ministry investigated the office in which Turkish soldiers were detained. Gen. Jones came to Ankara after those developments and held meetings with high-ranking military officials. The two countries decided to establish a joint commission to investigate the incident upon the suggestion of Gen. Jones. The Commission decided to improve coordination and cooperation in Iraq and agreed to take every measure to prevent the repetition of similar incidents in the future. The same statement was later approved by the United States as well. It was learned later that the US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld had sent a letter to Prime Minister Erdogan, regarding the detention of 11 Turkish soldiers in the north of Iraq, mentioning that the Washington administration had not been aware of the incident. The letter also expressed the importance given to Turkey-US strategical partnership and friendship, the respect for the Turkish Armed Forces and also the sorrow over the incident.

After this Sulaymaniyah incident, Foreign Ministry Undersecretariat Uğur Ziyal and then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül went to Washington to negotiate Turkey's role in the restructuring of Iraq. The first official demand by the United States for soldiers from

Turkey was formulated during Gül's meetings in Washington and US Central Command Chief Gen. Abizaid conveyed the same demand during his meetings in Ankara.

At the end the motion to send Turkish soldiers to Iraq was accepted by the Turkish parliament on October 7, 2003 with 358 votes against 183 votes and two deputies abstained from voting. This time the ruling party voted almost unanimously for the resolution, though the opposition Republican People's Party opposed it. The decision, however, was instantly met with opposition both in Turkey and Iraq. The Governing Council of Iraq (and particularly its Kurdish members) made it clear that Turkish troops were unwelcome. There were also hints that Turkish troops might meet with violence in northern Iraq.

There was also opposition within Turkey, which was not just limited to the general public. The president continued his opposition on legal grounds while a prominent member of the ruling party and president of the Foreign Relations Committee, Mehmet Dülger, remarked, "No mother in Turkey would accept her sons dying in place of American GI's." Both the Arab and European media carried articles opposing Turkish military involvement on the grounds that it would aggravate the situation. Even the highest US official in Iraq, Paul Bremer, reasoned that Turkey was a former colonial power in Iraq and that it was natural that there should be domestic resistance. His decision to oppose Turkish troop deployments embarrassed the US government.

While Ankara was saying that it was not very eager to send soldiers to Iraq, Washington noted that it had some hesitations and incapability in itself in regard to the issue of deployment of Turkish soldiers in the region. Possible reasons for the delay in the process in spite of Ankara's being ready, were shown as the United States' being unprepared as the motion was accepted faster than expected and its not convincing the groups in Iraq and its concerns that Turkish soldiers could cause an instability in the region. In the end, following those uncertainties, the government decided not to use the authority it had taken from Parliament to send soldiers to Iraq.

Although this led to resentment in Turkey and criticism from Gül, it was also a relief for the government and a "win-win" situation for it. First, it had helped repair the damage with the United States, since now Turkey had offered to help in Iraq. Second, it had pleased the military and security establishment by seeing through the parliament a policy they had advocated. Third, by not having to send troops it avoided antagonizing public opinion. Fourth, the outcome allowed the government to avoid a situation that could have led to friction with the EU and the Middle Eastern countries. Finally, it avoided a potential armed confrontation with the Kurds in Northern Iraq.

5.1.4. From a “Strategic Partnership” to a “Partnership For Democracy” in the Middle East

The relations during the Iraqi crisis makes it clear that, as there was no longer a common threat perception regarding communism or the expansion of the Soviet Union, the cohesion of the strategic partnership between the US and Turkey had been greatly damaged in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 periods. This fact was also pointed out by Wolfowitz at the beginning of 2004: “Our strategic partnership has changed. It is no longer as it was before. In the past, this relationship was based on a military basis. Only military relations used to be discussed. This era is now closed. Military relations, of course, do exist but the new strategic partnership is not based on a military field but rather on democracy and politics”.¹⁴³

In fact, both sides clearly failed to see that the other had changed in important ways since they had cooperated during the Gulf War in 1991. More broadly, the two countries that had forged a Cold War alliance against a common Soviet threat found their interests diverging sharply in the case of the war in Iraq. In the post-9/11 period, the parameters of the relationship have considerably changed and Turkey has started to pursue a more realistic approach regarding its relations with the US. For instance, in recent years, Turkey has imposed restrictions on US operations out of Incirlik since it is particularly

¹⁴³ *Turkish Daily News*, 31 January 2004.

sensitive about the use of the base for combat operations in the Middle East and the Gulf.

Although she is governed by an Islamist-rooted political party –JDP- Turkey rejects being identified as “moderate Islamic”, stating that it is a secular and democratic state. Therefore, apparent efforts to boost Turkey as a country where Islam and democracy can successfully coexist and could play a central role in the US-led Greater Middle East Initiative was challenged by the Turkish secular elite. For this elite, although the initiative, aiming at encouraging democratization in the Muslim geography, was useful and appropriate, Turkey would not be a model of a moderate Islamic country in the project and Turkey had no claim to be a model country.¹⁴⁴ Secretary of State Colin Powell’s reference to Turkey in April 2004 as an “Islamic Republic” once again revealed Turkey’s sensitivity regarding the matter. The statement provoked widespread criticism from Turkey and American officials were reminded that Turkey was a secular democracy in which religion was a private affair. This crisis ended when Powell retracted his statement.

It is possible to conclude that the dynamics of the Turkish–US alliance have changed to a great extent especially in the post-9/11 period. Turkey seems to be pursuing a more independent and assertive policy and seems to be very sensitive to allowing the use of the bases in actions in the Middle East and the Gulf, except when these operations are seen clearly to serve Turkish national interests. In short, Turkey is trying to become an independent security actor in the region.¹⁴⁵ As Erickson argues, “the clear goal of the new Turkish defence policy is to develop a dominant regional military capability with an autonomous military production system capable of supporting unilateral action in pursuit of national security. The end is a force structure that can project power outside of Turkey and to develop an internal production system that can free Turkey from the

¹⁴⁴ *Turkish Daily News*, 1 March 2004.

¹⁴⁵ Edward J. Erickson, “Turkey as a Regional Hegemon-2014: Strategic Implications for the United States,” *Turkish Studies*, 5(3), Autumn 2004, p. 39.

restrictions of arms suppliers”.¹⁴⁶ In short, Turkey wants to see a more balanced partnership; one that would rest upon pillars that would benefit both sides, not only the US (Uslu, 2000: 388). This approach, of course, is quite contrary to the perception of the alliance during the Cold War years.

5.2. TURKEY-EUROPEAN UNION RELATIONS DURING THE IRAQI CRISIS

Turkey is located right on the fault line between Europe’s “Kantian” world and the Middle East’s “Hobbesian” world. The “Kantian” world symbolizes a geography characterized by stability, security, pluralist democracy, the rule of law and economic prosperity.¹⁴⁷ In this area states define their relations within the bounds of rules, norms and habits that emphasize peaceful resolution of conflicts and a determination to find “win-win” solutions to issues. The Middle East is characterized by many conflictual areas such as Chechnya, Cyprus, Greece and Turkey, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Armenian-Azeri conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh. Relations among states are characterized by deep mistrust, poverty, absence of cooperation and periodic resort to violence.

During the Iraqi Crisis of 2003 Turkey, as a neighbour to Iraq, kept away from the unstable, chaotic and risky zone by not participating in the US intervention in Iraq. In this chapter, it will be discussed why Turkey chose to stay out of a quagmire in the Middle East and a military operation to Iraq within the context of Turkey-EU relations.

Since the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* or AKP) government came to power in November 2002, Turkey has covered significant ground in adopting reforms in order to meet the Copenhagen criteria. The Copenhagen European Council summit acknowledged these developments and adopted a decision to consider opening accession negotiations with Turkey in December 2004.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁴⁷ Kemal Kirişçi, “Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy”, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 8(1), March 2004, pp. 39-40.

Turkey has never before been this close to achieving its forty-year-old aspiration of joining the EU as a full member. This would also be the sealing of an almost two-century-long process of Westernization and effort to create a modern, secular and democratic society. But, the chaos and instability created by the U.S. intervention in Iraq put a lot of pressure on Turkey's relations with the EU.

On March 1, 2003 the Turkish Parliament rejected the motion which allows the deployment of the Coalition Forces' troops in Turkish territory. By rejecting this motion, the government managed to stay out of Iraq and shied away from using "Hobbesian" or confrontational means of foreign policy in contrast to the Turkish policy of a few years back. The Turkish parliament's decision to refuse to support the U.S.-led coalition was viewed as a manifestation of greater democracy in Turkey and a weakening of the pro-U.S. military's power.

During the negotiation process with the US, there was also the erosion of the influence that the traditional central players in foreign policymaking, such as the military and civilian hardliners, have enjoyed. Elected officials are today more likely to have their views and interests taken into consideration than was the case in the past. Furthermore, public opinion and civil society have been able to make their voice heard on foreign policy issues and exercise some degree of influence.

The significant reason of Turkish policy makers' attitude was that the legitimacy of the Europeanization efforts of the JDP since its accession to power in the late 2002 has increased in the eyes of the public opinion. As a result of this the allegedly pro-American forces in Turkey, mainly the army, did not play a constructive role in the management of bilateral relations on the eve of the Iraqi Crisis in 2003. Turkey's need to become further integrated with the EU increased with the beginning of the Iraqi Crisis.

Turkey can cope with the security challenges of the international and regional environment just by being fully integrated into the EU. According to Tarık Oğuzlu this

Europeanization process will bring the democratization route to Turkey and it will also increase its bargaining power vis-à-vis the United States.¹⁴⁸ He argues that “the degree of US-Turkey interdependency is highly skewed in favour of the United States, and a weak and non-Europeanizing Turkey would not be able to stand up to American demands, whereas more balanced interdependent EU-Turkey relations would serve Turkey’s interests better”.¹⁴⁹

The developments concerning the Iraqi Crisis, which set the Turkey-US relations on a troubled path, ironically brought Turkey closer to the EU. First of all, they enabled the political leadership in Turkey to give impetus to the reformation process by weakening the anti-EU coalition and underscoring the importance of Turkey’s European orientation. Secondly, they indicated that the democratic system worked in Turkey even under heavy US pressure. Finally, they made it harder to justify the arguments often heard in policy circles, particularly in France and Germany that Turkey is too pro-American and could serve as a US “Trojan horse” if it enters the EU.

Furthermore, the “anti-EU coalition” has been negatively affected by the adverse development in Turkish-American relations. With the US effectively based in Iraq, the ability of the Turkish military and security establishment to develop an independent line of policy towards Northern Iraq has largely disappeared. Moreover, the security-oriented Turkey-US-Israel triangle, which was perceived as the natural alternative to deep integration with the EU by “anti-EU” coalition, came under serious challenge. Given this background, the JDP has been able to press ahead with EU-related reforms at full speed during the course of 2003 and during the summer of 2003.

The March 1, 2003 decision against deploying US forces helped to move Turkey closer to the position of the core Franco-German alliance that naturally constituted the dominant force within the EU bloc. This situation constituted an interesting development

¹⁴⁸ Tarık Oğuzlu, “Changing Dynamics of Turkey’s US and EU Relations”, *Middle East Policy*, 11(1), Spring 2004, p. 100.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

in the sense that the core Franco-German alliance was less receptive to future Turkish membership, whereas countries like Britain and Spain, that favoured a looser pattern of integration in the EU, provided stronger support for Turkish membership. What was striking in this context was that members of the EU that supported the American initiatives in Iraq were also the countries that felt at greater ease with the potential Turkish membership.

The JDP government has walked on a diplomatic tight rope since the beginning of the crisis in Iraq, and it is essential that it strike a delicate balance between Turkey's own security interests, the necessities of its close alliance with the US, its European orientation and the public demands.

The EU and Turkey in the war's aftermath are concerned with ensuring a peaceful and stable Iraq for the interests of all. In Iraq, post-conflict nation building is an extremely complicated and complex process. While the US succeeded in achieving a swift military victory through its unilateralist approach, winning the peace and creating long-lasting stability will be the real challenge. In tackling this challenge, in addition to involving Iraqis themselves genuinely and substantially in the governing process, a multi-lateralist approach will be much more fruitful. Within this context, enhancing collaboration in all dimensions of the Turkey-EU-US triangle will be very effective.

In shaping the future of the Middle East, what is really needed is to access critically the aspects of continuity and radical transformation in the international context and to try to strike a delicate balance in the Turkey-EU-US triangle. On the Turkish side, there should be a simultaneous and pro-active effort to enhance relations with both sides, not at the expense of each other, but in a mutually re-enforcing way. It is also essential for Turkey's American and European allies to realize that it would be too costly for either side to alienate and isolate Turkey. Furthermore Turkey could play a significant role as a predominant Muslim and secular country in a volatile region vital for both American and European interests.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

After the September 11 attacks, the US administration, with the support of the EU, Russia, China and Central Asian states, launched military operations against the Taliban regime and the Al-Qaeda terrorist group in Afghanistan. Turkey had supported the US-led Coalition forces during the operation. But during the Iraqi Crisis and US-led unilateral operation in 2003, which lacked a UN mandate and international legitimacy, Turkey acted in a cautious and noninterventionist way.

In order to understand comprehensively the JDP government's foreign policy actions, the thesis also discussed the JDP government's political identity. It is argued in the thesis that the JDP --by rejecting being a pro-Islamist party and effectively severing its Islamist roots-- define itself as a democratic, conservative, reformist and modern centre-right party and the Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan reveals himself as a master of the "Turkish Synthesis" of Kemalism and Islamism.¹⁵⁰ It is argued that the JDP government acted as a centre-right party that is "a platform formed by the people who avoid excess... these are the people who search for 'sound' [policies]. Sound, that is, center-right is a locus composed of sound people, in some respects, who express mild demands. They are conservatives, but they do not pay tribute to fanaticism. They are religious, but they do not like fanaticism. They stand at a distance from the state, they want to change [state] structure, but they do not even imagine causing harm. They adhere to their traditions, but they inherently have an enormous will to change. They want freedom, but they do not overlook the destruction of order. They have developed national sentiments, but they oppose ethnicity or racist nationalism. They are against state control over the economy, but they aspire to a regulatory state. They support democracy to the extent that

¹⁵⁰ Thomas Smith, "Between Allah and Atatürk: Liberal Islam in Turkey", *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 9 (3), September 2005, p. 317.

it does not threaten the unity of the state.”¹⁵¹ Taking into account the above mentioned characteristics of a centre-right party that fit also to the characteristics of the JDP, during the Iraqi Crisis the government did not formulate its foreign policies in contrast to the traditional Turkish foreign policy.

The concerns shaping Turkish foreign policy toward Iraq since the first Gulf War of 1990-1991 continued to determine the calculations of Turkish actors during the Iraqi Crisis of 2003 as well. In that sense one could discern a strong continuity in the main principles of Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the Iraqi Crisis. This continuity at the same time suggested that the lessons learned from the Turkish experience with the almost unconditional support for the United States in 1991, and subsequent negative consequences of the war on Turkey had continued to haunt policy-makers. To a large extent, the JDP leadership adopted these same basic parameters, and operated from a mindset similar to that of the establishment. There was almost no questioning of the country’s so-called “red lines” on Iraq, formulated earlier during the Bülent Ecevit government in collaboration with the bureaucracy [1. Protecting the territorial integrity of Iraq. 2. Preventing the division of Iraq along sectarian or ethnic lines that would give rise to an independent or confederal Kurdish state (with the oil-rich city of Kirkuk as its capital), thus supporting aspirations for a similar entity from Turkey's own extensive Kurdish population. 3. Protecting the /Turkish-speaking Turkoman minority which resides primarily in northern Iraq.] The JDP leadership continued to approach the problem from the same perspective, focusing exclusively on the security challenges, and economic hardships to be caused by the war on Iraq. The events of the Iraqi Crisis of 2003 reveals that Turkish foreign policy has not shifted away from its cautious and noninterventionist policy, and that the situation in the Gulf War of 1990-91 was an exception.

It is argued in the thesis that the JDP has acted in conformity with the traditional concepts of Turkish foreign policy to a major extent. Above all, the JDP didn’t

¹⁵¹ Metin Sever, “Merkez Sağ Geleceğini Arıyor, 7,” *Radikal*, 19 October 2002.

formulate policies in contrast to pro-Westernism. In fact, the JDP government has proven to be one of the most pro-EU parties in the political history of Turkey. It has continued to aggressively promote Turkey's accession and has made the EU issue the centrepiece of its political program. The rejection of the resolution on March 1, 2003 was not an anti-American move but a result of concerns over the legitimacy of the government and the party in the eyes of Turkish and international public opinion. It must be kept in mind that the same deputies later accepted the resolution to send troops to Iraq on October 7, 2003. Moreover, the Greater Middle East Project (GMEP), interpreted officially as an effort by the US to democratize the Middle Eastern countries and integrate them with the world economy through local entrepreneurship, is also an American initiative to which some Muslim-majority countries like Turkey are partners. As for the pro-status quo principle, the JDP didn't emerge as a challenge to the present balances in the region. Actually Turkey tried to adapt to the new balances in the Middle East with its participation in GMEP. This policy can be interpreted as a product of a pivotal state's ambition to adapt to the possible- new status quo, which is actually planned by the hegemonic state. Lastly, the JDP pursued a stable attitude in terms of international legitimacy, excluding the March 1 resolution. The government justified the second resolution --accepted on October 7, 2003-- by making a reference to the UN Security Council Resolution 1483.

The JDP tried to formulate a multi-dimensional foreign policy approach which led to a shift away from the traditional Turkish foreign policy. The discourse of multi-dimensional foreign policy had always been on the agenda of each government in Turkish Republican history. It is argued that basically, in contrast to the one-dimensional, completely pro-Western foreign policies of the former governments, the JDP had to pursue a multidimensional foreign policy in order to minimize the cost of the emerging turmoil in the Middle East region, and maximize both Turkey's national interests and its leverage in the EU membership process. However, the JDP benefited by Prof. Dr. Davutoğlu's strong theoretical background in international relations and foreign policy, added a new dimension to traditional Turkish foreign policy making, named as neo-Ottomanism. The neo-Ottomanism envisages a supra-territorial thinking,

which requires exerting Turkey's influence over the former lands of Ottoman Empire. Davutoğlu's and the JDP's ideas are informed by this movement in Turkish foreign policy. However, it is noteworthy that neo-Ottomanism after the end of Cold War emerged as an effort to have a more say in the new status quo. The effort of the JDP in the post-9/11 atmosphere is similar to this trend. The JDP tried to pursue a multi-dimensional foreign policy, which puts significant emphasis on increasing the international status of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) on one hand and joining the EU on the other. However, pursuing a foreign policy in a sense that Davutoğlu has formulated in his book, *Strategic Depth*, which would turn Turkey into a regional and even global state, is not possible for a pivotal state like Turkey. A proper study of Turkey should be the one, which deals with the potentials and geo-strategic location of Turkey in a regional context. It must be kept in mind that "the capabilities and expectations gap" is a serious challenge for a pivotal state in its foreign ambitions.

This study aimed at an analysis of the JDP government's foreign policy acts during the Iraqi Crisis in 2003. As it was argued in the thesis through accelerating Turkey's EU membership process, maintaining friendly relations with the European power centres as well as with the US, engaging in economic and political cooperation with the surrounding Muslim countries, and applying a two-level game the JDP government tried to gain political legitimacy and leverage vis-à-vis the secular military-civilian elite in Turkey, improve the advantage of its pro-Western identity, meet the conflicting demands of the US, the EU and the Muslim neighbours.

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