

A GRAMSCIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF THINK TANKS IN  
FOREIGN POLICY MAKING

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **A GRAMSCIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF THINK TANKS IN FOREIGN POLICY MAKING**

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This thesis aims to analyze the role of the think tanks in the foreign policy making process in Turkey. Also, this thesis aims to provide an overview of how think tanks are used in Turkey reflecting on a new perspective for their future use. In this sense, it is intended to find a theoretical approach that aims to explain the think tank phenomenon on Turkish foreign policy making. To do that, think tanks in Turkey are compared to similar examples in America, England, Central Asia and Latin America.

In contrast to the other studies in the literature, this one proposes to analyze the complex liaison between think tanks and foreign policy making by making use of a holistic approach based on a Neo-Gramscian perspective. In this respect, to make this analysis on a holistic theoretical understanding possible, this thesis delves into the historical development of the think tanks in Turkey, and analyzes their economic resources.

**Keywords:** think tanks, pluralist and elite theory, Neo-Gramscian, Turkey

## ÖZ

# DIŞ POLİTİKA YAPIMINDA DÜŞÜNCE KURULUŞLARININ ROLÜ ÜZERİNE GRAMSCIYAN BİR BAKIŞ

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Bu tez, düşünce kuruluşlarının Türkiye'deki dış politika yapım sürecindeki rolünü analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca bu tez, düşünce kuruluşlarının Türkiye'de nasıl kullanıldığına ilişkin genel bakış sunmayı ve gelecekteki kullanımılar için yeni bir bakış vermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu anlamda, Türk dış politika yapımına ilişkin düşünce kuruluşu olgusunu açıklamayı amaçlayan teorik bir yaklaşımın bulunması amaçlanmaktadır. Bunun için Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşları Amerika, İngiltere, Orta Asya ve Latin Amerika'daki benzer örneklerle karşılaştırılmıştır.

Literatürdeki diğer çalışmaların aksine, bu çalışma, Neo-Gramsciyan bakış açısından dayalı bütünsel bir yaklaşımından yararlanarak, düşünce kuruluşları ile dış politika yapımı arasındaki karmaşık ilişkiyi analiz etmeyi önermektedir. Bu bağlamda, bütüncül bir teorik anlayış üzerinde bu analizi mümkün kılmak için, bu tez Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının tarihsel gelişimini incelemekte ve ekonomik kaynaklarını analiz etmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** düşünce kuruluşu, çoğulcu ve elit teori, Neo-Gramsciyan, Türkiye

To my son  
Ali Aslan GÜNEL

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Who do the think tanks serve? This dissertation will try to answer this research question with the help of the Gramscian approach by focusing on the Turkish case in a comparative manner. The dissertation will also ask whether think tanks aim to influence foreign policy makers or public opinion, and whether think tanks aim to produce objective knowledge or manipulate the public opinion. This dissertation argues that think tanks serve as a legitimization tool of foreign policy makers in order to create a public consent for the sustainment of the hegemony.

Across the world, think tanks have been increasing in quantity and with every passing day, they are becoming more and more participated in the policy making process of various states. The reason for this is that, as can be seen in the later stages of the thesis, think tanks in Turkey are not exactly think tanks and have a hybrid and unique structure. Most of the works concerning the think tanks are done by American scholars and that leads academics to consider and analyze the improvements that only take place in the USA. In Rich's view, a little less than a dozen academic works with American think tanks at their center have been issued since 1970.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, a great number of books have been printed regarding the different types of non-governmental organizations other than think tanks, particularly about the interest groups. A comparative analysis of these forms has been quite finite. Despite their importance in influencing the policies, think tanks have not been given the academic interest that they deserve. In fact,

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 5.

think tanks, attract even less academic attention in Turkey.<sup>2</sup> The main problem is the quality of the studies rather than the limited number of studies. Unfortunately, discussions about think tanks are gathered around the debates about the definition of think tanks in Turkey. The complexity of securing a consensus on definition and classification of such forms may well be the reason why there is a shortage of academic work about think tanks.

Presenting an overall picture of think tanks scattered globally is the main goal of this thesis. Located at its center is the discussion of the description of “think tank”. Making only one kind of description for multiple kinds of think tanks does not suffice, given that think tanks around the globe differ considerably in design, political importance, organizational structure, and field of interest. For this reason, it is claimed that there is no single definition or classification of think tanks. And again, for this reason, a more holistic perspective is adopted instead of a single theoretical framework. Among the existing approaches, this thesis argues that Gramscian theoretical understanding is the most effective way to understand think tanks. In this context, various descriptions of “think tank” and types of taxonomy to sort out think tanks from around the globe are analyzed. This thesis searches for the reasons of how and in which ways those think tanks came into being as well as how they multiplied around the world before moving on to examine the actions undertaken by think tanks and their implications. One another concern of this thesis is to make the roles and effects of think tanks in the foreign policy making clear. In this respect, it uses, an analytical method to shed light on the theoretical dimensions of external policy making.

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<sup>2</sup> Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu and Ersin Onulduran, “Foreign Policy Institute and the Genesis of Think-Tank Culture in Turkey”, *Contemporary Issues in International Politics: Essay in Honour of Seyfi Taşhan*, (Ankara: Foreign Policy Institute, 2004), pp.1-4.; Serhat Güvenç, “*Türkiye’nin Dış Politikası ve Düşünce Kuruluşları*”, *Sivil Toplum Örgütleri ve Dış Politika*, eds. Semra Cerit Mazlum ve Orhan Doğan, (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncıları, 2020); Çağrı Erhan, “Düşünce Üretim Merkezleri ve Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol.2, No.6 (Summer 2005), pp.59-63; and Suat Kınıklıoğlu, “Turkey’s Think Tank Scene”, *Turkish Daily News*, 27 December 2005

The rapid rise of think tanks can be seen globally in recent times. It can be stated that this increase in number and quality of think tanks stemmed from the change in the international system with issues becoming more complex and structures required to provide information to the decision makers becoming less sufficient. When considering the foundation of a great number of think tanks since the end of the 1990s, it can be seen that the process is much the same for Turkey. Despite the mushrooming of the think tanks in number, and apart from quite a few works, only a number of studies has been yet undertaken in Turkey. Thus, the object of this thesis is to make a comparative study of the political impact of think tanks both in Turkey and U.S, Britain, Central Asia and Latin America. It will also examine their establishment and evolution. Finally, it will analyze whether a think tank culture has evolved in Turkey.

Having multiple plans and aims, the think tanks differ to a great degree in their size, monetary funds, constitution, personnel makeup, political importance, and field of expertise. In fact, the main problem is that the institutions or organizations that do not possess necessary qualifications of think tanks in real terms, and that do not fulfill the sufficient criteria in this sense, call themselves think tanks. In addition to this, it can also be said that various institutional and cultural establishments in different countries exert influence like think tanks and have similar capability or chance for influence and policy. On the one hand, some think tanks can insist to offer “academic” or “technical” solutions to financial and social problems without any “biased” or “ideological” motives, the rest are seen to be explicitly biased or ideology-based. While some of the think tanks are “academic” in view, others are involved in policy stands on a more regular basis. Global usage of the term varies strikingly. The definition has been used as think tanks are classified as NGOs. No available single description seems to be enough to explain all the actions and implementations carried out by think tanks.

One other objective of this thesis is to demonstrate the distinctive prospects of international correlations among:

- What is the impact of think tanks on foreign policy making;
- What are the major ways they use to affect the foreign policy makers;
- What is the difference between giving policy tips (counseling) and lobbying.

Domhoff in his book “Who Rules America?” claims that every institution with no profit expectation takes their part in bringing out the outline of the society in either this or that way and thus, in assisting to design the political atmosphere. Norms for what is pleasant, significant and “elegant” are determined by cultural and urban-based foundations.<sup>3</sup> The substantial role is played by the elite universities even in deciding the significance of what to teach, learn and search for, and specialists and professionals for the most part are educated by them in the country. But still, the most immediate and significant impact derive from the institutions, think tanks, and policy negotiation establishments themselves. The opinion, critique, and policy advice provided by them make their way along with diverse courses such as pamphlets, books, regional discussion teams, mass media, and even the public information sections of the big companies to the common people. Moreover, the supplies that they possess transmit to state organizations through different channels of which will be summarized below.<sup>4</sup>

It is an assumed task of think tanks to advise new policies to be adopted concerning financial and governmental issues. It is an undeniable fact that think tanks try to guide decision makers especially regarding important foreign policy and financial matters, and highlight their own agendas or the agendas and

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<sup>3</sup> William G. Domhoff, *Who Really Rules?: New Haven and Community Power Reexamined* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1978), 57.

<sup>4</sup> James G. McGann, *Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the United States: Academics, Advisors and Advocates*. (New York: Routledge, 2007)., p. 9

sensibilities of their financiers. While performing this function, the reports prepared by think tanks for the decision maker on the subject they deal with are, of course, advisory and valuable. The point is that think tanks are important, they are valued in proportion to the quality of their work, but they do not always act impartially in doing so. Think tanks procure funds by making use of well-off benefactors, institutions, and organizations to lease specialists generated by the elite universities' major departments. The concepts and suggestions crafted by the specialists are disseminated via pamphlets, books, essays in popular magazines and papers, and best of all, conferences held by different policy discussion organizations with the attendance of the specialists themselves.

Think tanks work in very different organizational styles and legitimate frames. Forming taxonomies that categorize think tanks concerning their research plans, personnel structure, and fundamental organizational objective is helpful.

Because think tanks are more common in developed and developing countries, academics have used various theories to grasp the mechanism of involvement by think tanks in the policy making progress and their implications. While some depend on elite theories and pluralist to explain the ways think tanks are embedded in the political area, other organizational approaches are also used to shed light on their effects.

The elitist approach maintains that think tanks are *elite foundations* working in favor of the institutions and benevolent sponsors to improve their political and financial stakes by depending on their specialists and close-sustained connections with policymakers.<sup>5</sup> Although this understanding of elitist theory is correct regarding the functioning of think tanks, it has to be analyzed in the context of the social reality which is needed to be investigated. This understanding will bring us closer to the Gramscian point of view and enable us to better understand what the reality is regarding the position of think tanks.

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009) p. 30

The studies of Ricci, Dye, Domhoff, and Pescheck<sup>6</sup> can be cited as examples of implementation of the Elite theory. These studies not only claim that think tanks are not the foundations that have no political affiliations and assume only the role of delivering knowledge, but also argue that they have nothing to do with improving the quality of democracy. What should be noted here is that activities of think tanks result in many different outcomes but the main aim of these organizations is neither to bring democracy to countries, nor to produce knowledge. They (the elite) argue that political and financial leaders exploit think tanks for their long-term benefits. The thesis tries to express that the exploitation relationship is not one-sided and that the adopted policy stand may change on the basis of time and context, and even in some cases one side has the characteristics of both stands. They stress to link the administrative structures of the institutional, military, and managerial policy settings. One of the assignments of the think tank's is to devise agreement among elites and to assist them in their political dealings and disagreements. Moreover, especially the ones that deal with advocacy issues, think tanks are attacked due to their actions, which seem more like a speaker of a group to affect the foreign policy makers. In this context, the Neo-Marxist viewpoint could be helpful. The Neo-Marxist viewpoint shows the capability of think tanks to shed light on the problems of the political-economic structure and to work up long-term projects to turn the such problems into community policies that are steerable in a more convenient way. Hence, the dominant role of capitalism is backed by think tanks. While the neo-Marxist point of view also leads us one step closer to reality, we can only get the clearest photograph in the context of think tanks from the Gramscian perspective. The reason is why Gramscian perspective is better than Neo-Marxist perspective is the fact that while Neo-Marxists are ignoring the social relationship on foreign policy making, Gramscian perspective covers the social parameters of foreign policy making.

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<sup>6</sup> David Ricci, *The Transformation of American Politics: The New Washington and the Rise of Think Tanks*, 1993; William G. Domhoff Who Rules America? : Power and Politics, 2002; Josheph Peschek, Policy-Planning Organizations: Elite Agendas and America's Rightward Turn, 1987.

In Tugrul Keskin and Patrick R. Halpern's view, elite associates do not see it necessary to reserve governmental seats for themselves.<sup>7</sup> On the contrary, they rely on elected and appointed government officials to get their jobs done in lieu of them. Here, the researchers focus on the function of how think tanks are being used by the ruling elite, or how power is delegated. However, the main point that needs to be investigated is not how think tanks act, but for what purpose they act. Utilizing symbols like beneficence or benefiting from democracy's opportunities, such as elections, the elite can manage to direct people in mass according to their political and financial interests.

Elite Theory believes that think tanks deliver studies and proposals that will be settled in the Capitol Hill. To Domhoff what lures the scholars about think tanks is that they:

ensure an environment for specialists in different academic circles to let them engage fully to their alternate policy studies without any interruption from the regular teaching, commission gatherings, and other similar activities that comprise of their regular work conditions<sup>8</sup>

As for the second theoretical approach, throughout the available literature, the pluralist outlook is prevalent. Think tanks are conceptualized by pluralists as a market full of opinions, that are designed only for ideas which are not a real part of practical discussions. Then, with further interpretation done by the elite theorists, these ideas are rounded up. The fact that pluralist theory is so popular with regard to think tanks and many publications have resorted to this theory, again supports Gramscian understanding. The think tanks themselves are already trying to present themselves in line with the arguments defended by the pluralist theory. In this context, a relationship is established between pluralist theorists and think tanks. Therefore, the researcher has to investigate what reality is rather

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<sup>7</sup> Tuğrul Keskingören and Patrick R. Halpern. "Behind Closed Doors: Elite Politics, Think Tanks, and U.S. Foreign Policy." *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2005, pp. 99–114

<sup>8</sup> Domhoff, *Who Rules America? Challenges to Corporate and Class Dominance*, p. 52.

than how it looks. We can only achieve this understanding from the Gramscian point of view. Pluralist approaches are especially interested in observable disputes and explicit exercise of power. In this respect, think tanks are nothing more than agents of discussions as long as they sustain competition among each other and with other actors to influence foreign policy making. Robust rivalry in the realm of ideas together with the race for securing funds is reflected by the number and varieties of global think tanks. Studies of Abelson, Stone, McGann and Weaver,<sup>9</sup> can be given as examples of the pluralist perspectives. They argue, in their studies, that think tanks arbitrate the opinions and play the role of mediators, providing linkage between ideas and practices. Since think tanks are numerous, all standing for the plurality of the opinions, not one single think tank or any group solely prevails over others. There is a rivalry among think tanks over the financial and other types of resources. Therefore, this theory claims that mushrooming of think tanks is beneficial for the future of democracy. Against this backdrop, decision makers get the chance to become familiar with multifarious ideas.

According to the Pluralist theory, think tanks are labelled as a group among many in the market place of opinions which is getting more and more congested with every passing day. They are conceptualized as different groups of actors in competition for interest and sympathy from people and policy makers.

The Statist Approach argues that think tanks have quite humble parts to play in designing the policies. According to this concept, representatives of think tanks are not supposed to talk in the name of the government. What the “statist paradigm” persists on is that the government should have the ability to move freely without diverse communal and bureaucratic oppression. The error in Statist understanding is its insistence on state’s ability to choose what it wants

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<sup>9</sup> Donald E Abelson., *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, 2000; Diane Stone *Capturing the Political Imagination: Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, 1996; James G. McGann, and R. Kent Weaver (eds.). *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalyst for Ideas and Action*, 2000

from among the various products of think tanks. Because think tanks are presented as if they were independent structures producing ideas in the free market. This is not logically possible. As it does not only need commercial resources to conduct their works, but also need access to information, or to convey the product they prepare to the decision maker. Under these circumstances, it can be clearly observed that a think tank that is not well-connected with the decision maker's is not sustainable. The proposals and products in line with the interests of the financial supporters will not exist despite the will of the funder. Many think tanks are considered powerful as long as they are accepted by the state.

Think tanks are claimed to be crucial elements in foreign policy making. However, to assess the degree of their effect or implications on foreign policy making is not that simple. In this regard, this thesis uses a distinctive theoretical perspective to examine think tanks. The main conviction in this thesis is that the available theoretical aspects do not suffice to expound the complicated interlinkages between think tanks and foreign policy makers. Hence, in order to better comprehend the roles played by think tanks on foreign policy making, it is necessary to re-assess available theoretical approaches. In other words, even though the elite theory is rather crucial to comprehend military-industry complex, for instance, it is important to introduce a novel approach on think tanks and foreign policy making by using the Gramscian approach.

### **1.1. Methodology**

This work employs an investigatory social questionnaire technique. The questions will be on think tank's functions, structures etc. Questions are designed to be answered by academics, decision makers, politicians, bureaucrats. Thus, an attempt is made to draw an accurate picture of these organizations in real life beyond theory. Although the interviewees respond to the questions by reflecting their own point of view, the researcher tries to take an independent stance and

draw a picture as accurate as possible by melting all the information in a single pot. In this way, investigatory research helps us define models and makes us capable of naming these social phenomena.

To be able to fully comprehend the world of think tanks, a multi-method research design will be used in this thesis. During my research, I have come across to “restricted” records in the archives and organizations. I had little chance to bring them together and study. I have also used the private memoirs of several founders of think tanks to be able to get a chronological flow of events. Due to the lack of archival sources, it has been necessary to resort to any available secondary work on this topic.

From all around the world of think tanks, I met with a wide range of people including specialists, researchers, high-level officials, and had the chance to conduct oral interviews. Depending on the dedication and talkativeness of the interviewee, the shortest interview was no less than thirty minutes. The places chosen for the interviews for the most part were the working places of the interviewees and before the meeting, their consent was taken regarding the recordings.

A direct investigation was implemented by me in various think tank environments. I participated in different think tank happenings such as panels, discussions, lectures, symposiums. I monitored lectures and debates during these happenings and carried out unofficial conversations with think tank personnel, their workers, attendees, and watchdogs for think tank activities.

The principal objective of this thesis is to investigate the position of think tanks regarding their functions in foreign policy making. The role of the think tank is not meant to describe how it influences decision makers. Think tanks are organizations that both affect and are affected. While pushing decision makers to make decisions in line with their own agendas, they are under the influence of

the other parts of political structure. There is a reciprocal and bilateral relationship rather than a one-way street in which only a think tanks' unilateral impact is concerned. While the state apparatus uses various think tanks in line with its own interests, think tanks bring their own agendas in front of political decision makers. On the one hand, legitimacy is provided for the decisions of the decision maker. On the other hand, decisions of the decision maker can be guided by the agenda formed entirely by a small interest group through the think tank. In some cases, the agenda of the decision maker and that of the think tank overlaps, creating an environment of cooperation. The more the think tank develops a cooperative environment, the more it will be accepted by the decision maker.

Among the reasons why think tanks differ so much from one country to another are the political cultures, sociology, openness to different views, economic development levels, how active that country is in world politics, and lack of specific information that can be provided by think tanks. In this context, what is the possibility of Turkey's possessing a think tank culture in comparison with the US and the other examples in the world? How is it possible to apply the available theoretical perspectives to the Turkish think tanks? Or is it necessary to have new perspectives to comprehend the role of think tanks and their close relations with government organizations? To shed light on this close relation, this thesis attempts to analyze think tanks' financial and political dimensions. Is there any independent establishment in Turkey for think tanks to generate information? Or are the think tanks completely loyal to the government regarding the financial and political issues? This thesis argues the impossibility of having any think tanks in Turkey free from either state or elite because think tanks are considered as the means for them to implement their agendas. In this context, this study puts forward one more question: what is the nature of the relationship between think tanks and foreign policy makers, is it one-sided, or reciprocal? The answer to this question is closely related to how one perceives think tanks. Stating that think tanks are one-way tools of the elite would not reflect the truth correctly. To

conclude, when Turkish think tanks are compared with their foreign counterparts, their unmatched structure is revealed immediately.

## **1.2. Organization**

The first chapter introduces the theoretical approach. Although the other approaches are discussed in this chapter, this thesis uses Gramscian approach to grasp the role of think tanks in the foreign policy making. While the other approaches focus on the influence of the think tanks on the foreign policy makers, they neglect the social and economic aspects of the interlinkage between policy makers and the think tanks. This thesis aims to reveal the role of think tanks in foreign policy making by showing the role of think tanks in recreating social consent, which is vital for the maintenance of the capitalist system

The goal of the second chapter is to frame a extensive outlook for think tanks all over the world. Before anything else, it aims to provide a definition of “think tank”. The main reason for that is the significant differentiation of the think tanks in the world depending on variations in personnel, economic dimensions, expertise, and political importance. No single definition seems to suffice for any organization with such distinctive features. Different descriptions of think tanks are examined in this chapter. Special attention is devoted to definitions that are in use for Turkish think tanks, by searching out the of kinds of taxonomies used for think tanks and analyzing the methods applied to classify them in this regard. By a comparative study of think tanks’ roles and actions in the Western World, Central Asia, Latin America and Turkey, the chapter will shed light on where think tanks first appeared and how they have proliferated. The chapter will also analyze how think tanks influence the foreign policy makers. It will examine the means used by think tanks to affect policy making and assess the possibility to gauge this effect. The question of procuring financial resources for think tanks is the final discussion point of the second chapter. To explain this, it talks about the

financial resources utilized by think tanks and the degree of influence that economy plays over the functions think tanks assume.

Historical improvements in the USA, Britain, Central Asia and Latin America are given a special part in the third chapter. In order to understand the development of think tanks in Turkey, it is believed that analyzing think tanks in these states and regions will provide a general framework. On the one side, the USA and Britain will demonstrate how traditional and rooted think tanks were founded and operate. On the other hand, Central Asian and Latin American think tanks are quite similar to Turkish think tanks in a way that they were developed and linked with foreign policy making. Last but not least, it is hard to pick one state in those regions to study, since, like Turkey, think tanks are still evolving. Therefore, instead of individual states, regions as a whole are chosen. Think tanks in the US are quite different from the remaining ones in the world. They possess the capability of providing either a direct or indirect impact on the foreign policy making process. Moreover, think tanks are functionalized by the policy makers themselves for political suggestions thanks to the mutual trust built in the country. The think tanks in the US may intervene with the foreign policy making process in five significant ways: 1) Novel concepts and policy choices are produced by them, 2) A great number of specialists are sustained by think tanks to make use of them as state officials at some point, 3) Crucial negotiation stages for debates are proposed by them, 4) Countrymen are trained by them about the realities of the globe, 5) They add a positive contribution to the endeavor of the officials whose goal is to find solutions to disagreements.<sup>10</sup> Apart from all these duties mentioned, there is one more job for them, which is the most significant one at the same time; to define original and crucial topics that might come to the US' agenda in the near future, as well as to present their knowledge of the new topic to the policy makers as information.

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<sup>10</sup> James G. McGann, "Think Tanks and the Transnationalization of Foreign Policy", *U.S. Foreign Policy Agenda: An Electronic Journal of the U.S. Department of State* Vol. 7, No. 3 (November 2002): p. 13

Also, the other examples of think tanks that are analyzed in the second chapter create a baseline to compare the Turkish experience with the other think tanks in the world.

In this respect, aside from the Turkish case, there will be other cases which will be compared to think tanks in Turkey. In order to understand the general framework, it is crucial to study think tanks in the western world. In this case, American and British cases will be studied in the following chapter. In addition to those cases, Central Asian and Latin American cases will be investigated in this thesis. The reason why Central Asian and Latin American cases are chosen is the fact that both of them have a similar background when it is compared to think tanks in Turkey. How think tanks are established, evolved and positioned in three of the cases are quite analogous, thus it is very important analyze them in order to grasp the social and economic relations between think tanks and foreign policy makers.

In the fourth chapter, the evolution process of think tanks in Turkey is discussed. The timing and circumstances of their emergence in Turkey are examined. The evolution process is investigated in four different stages. Special attention is devoted to explain how the specific circumstances of each stage have influenced the appearance of new think tanks in Turkey. In doing so, it first describes the think tank scene in Turkey, and then it assesses the possibility of crafting a think tank culture in Turkey. It provides a typology of Turkish think tanks and comes up with five groups. It also investigates their legal standing and their financial resources. In this respect, it makes a comparative examination of the think tanks in terms of the types of roles and activities undertaken in Turkey.

To sum up, there has been a rise in number of literatures about think tanks in Turkey in recent years. However, the most of the studies limits themselves by focusing on definitions or political relations between think tanks and policy makers. This study, firstly, brings a different approach to think tank studies by

using Gramscian concepts such as hegemony, consent or organic intellectuals. While doing that, comparing Turkish case with the other cases that are studied in this thesis indicates the economic and social relations between think tanks and foreign policy makers as Gramsci stipulates. Secondly, this thesis also looks from a contrasting perspective to think tanks in Turkey when it is compared to the other studies, dealing with think tanks in Turkey, in the literature.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Agreeing upon that think tanks became popular after World War II is actually accepting changes in the international political landscape. In a sense, the emergence of think tanks is an inevitable result of underreporting by bureaucrats, which under normal circumstances have been deemed sufficient. However, after the Second World War, the types of actors and international relations have become more complex. While the Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucrats tried to convey up-to-date information to political decision makers in the clearest way, they could not adequately cover the background of political events for various reasons.

The necessity of being posted to different countries constantly prevents foreign ministry bureaucrats from always making thorough evaluations about host countries. On the other hand, it is obvious that bureaucrats may not make an extra effort, as their doing their jobs well or not will not cause a reduction in their salaries. The best assessment of the country of residence will require long-term presence in those countries, as well as knowing its history, handling the subject in the context of other issues, learning its language to be able to read the local resources. These reasons will cause think tanks to offer better quality products from time to time. If you look carefully, it can be easily seen that there is a rivalry between foreign ministry bureaucrats and think tank experts. While it is unlikely that an unqualified expert will continue to work in a think tank, there is no need for a bureaucrat working in the foreign units of any ministry to be of high quality and possess many qualities. Think tanks are exemplified as modern kinds of bridges between academic research and the political sphere. For the policy making, there is a need to get the knowledge, and information and think

tanks may provide large amounts of it.<sup>11</sup> “Throughout the period in which USA dominated the power on the issues of the world and the Cold War progressed, the proliferation of Foreign Policy think tanks was observed”.<sup>12</sup> The Cold War and the globalization aftermath have increased the intensity and diversity of relationships among international actors, as well as their depth. This, in return, increased the diversity of think tanks as far as their numbers and thematic areas are concerned. At the same time, this change indicated that the dependence of political decision makers on think tanks started to increase.

As Donald Abelson asserts, defining the accurate effect of some organizations on particular policy resolutions is hardly possible. The problem of creating a daily connection between policy suggestions given by various think tanks and resolutions offered by policy makers stems from the procedural complexities. However, by pointing out the interrelationships among think tanks, politicians, and communities, it seems possible to find answers about their role in the political process. According to him, what think tanks are striving to do is to form public view and design public policy by contesting for dominance and status at the regional, governmental and national range.<sup>13</sup>

As this dissertation also underlines, it is difficult to determine the degree of think tanks’ influence on decision makers and society. It is still necessary to evaluate many variables in order to detect this effect.

In order to assess the effect or relatedness of think tanks through certain steps of policy making course, different signs such as media quotations, assembly-based and conventional testimony, and deliberations with state divisions and organs

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<sup>11</sup> Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, (London: Frank Cass, 1996), pp. 6–7.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 18

<sup>13</sup> Abelson, “Think Tanks in the United States”, in *Think Tanks Across Nations. A Comparative Approach*, ed. by Diane Stone, Andrew Denham, and Mark Garnett, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 107-108

are exploited by academicians. If one wants to get informed about the degree of some foundation's visibility and the way it is gained, it would be helpful for them just to look at their level of media appearance produced by think tanks and their showing up in front of the legislation boards.<sup>14</sup>

The introduction of think tanks into scholarly circles as a topic of examination, even in the US circles, is a comparatively recent event considering the term's background which goes further back in time.<sup>15</sup> Medvetz<sup>16</sup> claims that the liminal foundational personalities of think tanks, which placed them among issues of conventional scholarly fields like political science, history, and sociology, is the reason for this shortage of attention, especially in the academia.<sup>17</sup> Academics who worked on the elite theory, such as sociologist C. Wright Mills and G. William Domhoff<sup>18</sup>, were the first ones to pioneer research on think tanks. Current research on think tanks by Medvetz is also crucial. To start with, it is important to know that Medvetz<sup>19</sup> classifies the think tank studies under three categories based on the theoretical perspective used: the elite theory, pluralism, and institutionalism.

In the first category, it is asserted that think tanks should not be seen as impartial research organizations. On the contrary, they should be seen as tools of the

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<sup>14</sup> Donald E. Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> The early usages of the phrase that vaguely refers to a scorning statement about one's brain or head, which can be found on both newspaper articles and novels, traces to the late nineteenth century in American popular discourse. The more specific sense of the word referring to a kind of organization debuted to the English Language in 1958.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 25–29.

<sup>17</sup> For another interpretation on why think tanks historically have drawn little attention of social scientist, also see Rich (2004), p. 6-10.

<sup>18</sup> Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, p. 30.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

governing class in order to realize their political agenda. According to C. Wright Mills,<sup>20</sup> think tanks are portrayed by the elite theory as the ‘intellectual machinery’ of a tightly related power web of political, military economical and institutive elites. To illustrate, Domhoff<sup>21</sup> discusses in his renowned book on American power elite that:

In accordance with the big banks and institutions in the institutive circle, the organizations, think tanks, and policy argument groups in the web of policy planning deliver the institutional foundation for the application of power in the name of all big revenue-generating assets.

As this citation shows think tanks are seen as profoundly lobbying establishments under the cover of impartial research organs. What is asserted here is that they are just tools at the disposal of the web of well-off people and powerful elite. The task assigned them in this model is to perform “the hardest and most crucial thinking in the web of policy planning”.<sup>22</sup> In harmony with this type of statement, think tanks are examined by Peschek supporting the “oligarchic model”,<sup>23</sup> of policy making, put forward by Dye and Domhoff, as practical providers of research and policy suggestions as well as energetic practitioners with connections to power holders and policy movements.<sup>24</sup> Thus, they mirror and mold the idea-based change and political reformations when important financial transitional cycles take place.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 22.

<sup>21</sup> Domhoff, *Who Rules America? Challenges to Corporate and Class Dominance*, p. 103.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 87

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 88

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 90

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 92

## 2.1. Elite Theory

The elitist approach claims that think tanks are establishments that function for the people who sponsor them to improve their political and financial sources by utilizing their expertise and knowledge. As Medvetz stated, it should not be forgotten that the main purpose of think tanks is to create impact.<sup>26</sup> To be able to talk about impact, one party will have to create a state that will change the situation of the other. This definition also reveals the fact that think tanks are powerful as long as they have an impact on the target audience, that is, when they are accepted. This dissertation intends to explain this actual situation. It is the demonstration that think tanks act in line with the needs and wishes of an interest group and that they are tools to change the mindset of decision makers or society. In order to make an impact, the think tanks must demonstrate that they are impartial or would not be manipulated by anyone. The acknowledgment of the facade of think tanks or in other words, the image of what they do has a value for them to stand out among other think tanks. Otherwise, the main purpose is to make an agenda setting for a group. Elite theorists could not sufficiently explain their main purpose in revealing this mindset behind think tanks. This shortcoming can only be understood from a holistic point of view and from Gramsci's point of view. As stressed by elite theorists, Peschek, Dye, and Domhoff, crucial players in the power elite are personalized by think tanks. A handful of people comprising the groups of institutional managers, policy makers, and opinion makers reserve the power of decision making for themselves. In Stone and Garnett's view, the unilateral focus of the elite theory in prominent organizations with permanent links to political parties is the reason for its complexity.<sup>27</sup> Neo-Marxists, in a similar manner with the elite theorists, merely exemplify the most well-known think tanks to evidence that governmental answers are inevitable to capitalist questions. Hence, the left's conflict is with

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<sup>26</sup> Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, p. 11

<sup>27</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, pp. 101–102.

right-wing organizations and their benefactors who propagate deregulation like no-state-intervening free markets. According to Stone and Garnett, to gain revenue and maintain its interests, the capital follows dominant schemes.<sup>28</sup> In the think tank categorization of neo-Marxists, these organizations work as governing tools of the capital holders who enjoy the collective policy lead in media, politics, and economy to form the public view in their favor.<sup>29</sup>

The effort to create a public view is actually another method of creating pressure on decision makers. Or, from a different point of view, it is the service of think tanks to shape the mindset of the people in order to ensure the legitimacy of the decisions taken by political decision makers. The decision maker will be able to choose the method of ensuring the public acceptance of a policy s/he follows, in other words, her/his legitimacy through the think tank.<sup>30</sup>

The literature argues that generous benefactors or representatives of corporate interest use think tanks to find a platform in the media, academia and to have links with important political figures and bureaucrats. According to the Elite Theory, to be able to realize the political and financial interests of their benefactors and the ruling class, think tanks utilize the above-said links.<sup>31</sup> It will not be as easy to determine the ties of ruling elites with think tanks. This bond is established in a very professional manner. Retired bureaucrats, who have served in the state for a long time and know the general strategy and decision-making structures of the state, will be able to take part in the board of directors of think

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<sup>28</sup> Stone and Garnett, "Introduction: Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance," in *Think Tanks Across Nations*, ed. by Diane Stone, Andrew Denham, and Mark Garnett, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 8.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 11

<sup>30</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, pp. 104.

<sup>31</sup> Donald E. Abelson, *A Capitol Idea: Think Tanks and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), pp. 97–99.

tanks and ensure that the products are produced within the framework of the needs of the institutions they have just retired, and that they pass into the hands of the young bureaucrats who need products. Recently retired senior staff will make even the top echelons of the military bureaucracy or foreign affairs bureaucracy vulnerable to the influence of think tanks. Think tanks will open the door to high-level bureaucrats or well-known academics with the financial and moral opportunities they provide. All they need to do is to ensure that the think tank has a permanent connection with the decision makers, on the other hand, to transfer all the knowledge and experience they have acquired throughout their lives to young experts working in the think tank, to ensure that the products produced can be any kind of publication and are of high quality.<sup>32</sup> No one will consider whether the product is in line with the original purpose.

The think tank also creates appreciation and sympathy as it fulfills a duty needed by many. Rather than spending years investigating the issue in detail, senior military or civilian bureaucrats just present the ready-made product prepared by think tanks to the highest decision makers. For this reason, think tanks serve as bridges between academia and the professional world. In this context, one has to talk about the military-industry relationship, or iron triangles,<sup>33</sup> that form a sworn-in public of scientists, administrators, and ex-politicians, knocking the doors of officials for implementing their elitist plans and protecting their economic stakes.

Think tanks undertake several tasks, like generating new ideas, establishing links between universities and the state agencies, presenting multiple choices for the politicians, and offering various skilled persons for new administrations and

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<sup>32</sup> Stone and Garnett, "Introduction: Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance," p. 24.

<sup>33</sup> For details, please take a look Gordon Adams' work for Reagan administration

retirement posts for the old ones.<sup>34</sup> It is necessary to admit that think tanks are usually qualified to fulfill many functions, for instance like measuring the public's response to new ideas or to the generation of new ideas. However, one should be careful in assessing the 'bridge metaphor' (which connects universities and state agencies). If it is accepted that universities are centers of knowledge production and that they perform this function without any discrimination, it is necessary to accept the assumption by repeating the differences between think tanks and universities. Think tanks and universities differentiate in many aspects, such as staff, structure, purpose, tool, resource, etc. It should not be forgotten that think tanks have many good qualities. It is able to report an issue more quickly than the lecturers in universities in appropriate formats in accordance with the requests of the decision makers. Highly-qualified experts try to create the best products by using academic methods. Sometimes, an academic who is assigned to a think tank becomes the spokesperson of the state or the interest group to which he is affiliated, using his academic title. Many ideas, official theses, which cannot be expressed in a formal or official language, can be brought to national or international agendas by the affiliated think tanks under the guise of independence. Therefore, think tanks can be open to the influence of any state institution, interest group or intelligence agencies. It would not be wrong to assume that state institutions may try to have access to many areas that they have difficulty in entering by using think tanks.

Thanks to their close affiliation with the nominees, especially in times of election campaigns, think tanks are thought to be masterminds of various new or even creative agendas. Moreover, it is also claimed that think tanks are accountable for the political and economic agendas of to-be-elected management teams.<sup>35</sup> In short, think tanks have entered a void created by huge bureaucracies and time-

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<sup>34</sup> Howard Wiarda, *Conservative Brain Trust. The Rise, Fall, and Rise Again of the American Enterprise Institute* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009), p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Donald E. Abelson and Christine M Carberry, "Policy Experts in Presidential Campaigns. A Model of Think Tank Recruitment," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1997), p. 680.

consuming government applications to ensure the provision of useful services and make policy recommendations on issues that government and parliament officials cannot spend time dealing with. The background, the history, the context, which state officials are having trouble to spare time on, are all ensured by think tanks.<sup>36</sup> That is the reason why, for instance, the Heritage Foundation was built up more like a newspaper rather than a university and it employs mostly young professionals rather than well-rooted academics.<sup>37</sup>

The assumed task of think tanks is to form and shape the public view and policy. Creating public opinion is not the ultimate goal of think tanks, because it must be purposeful, so an overall perspective and grammar are needed to understand the ultimate goal<sup>38</sup>. The reason why influencing public opinion is not purpose is the fact that think tanks are emerged to affect foreign policy making thorough complex relationship with foreign policy makers and their sponsors.

Donald Abelson argues that the Brookings Institution or the Council on Foreign Relations are owned by elite policy-planning institutions.<sup>39</sup> Of course, all of the think tanks cannot have the means to develop the agenda of an elite, even if the political network is regarded by elite theorists as being mastered by the governing class to enhance their political, economic, and social goods.

The elite theory may sound attractive to its endpoints, but there is not much that it talks about the effect of think tanks in various phases of policy loop. Moreover, it does not provide anything more about how to assess the influence of think tanks in policy making. Sadly, there is not much of an understanding

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<sup>36</sup> Wiarda, *Conservative Brain Trust. The Rise, Fall, and Rise Again of the American Enterprise Institute*, p. 4.

<sup>37</sup> McGann, *The Competition for Dollars, Scholars and Influence in the Public Policy Research Industry*, p. 27.

<sup>38</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, p. 51.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 52

given by the elite approach on how the well-oriented links allow think tanks to affect public policy.<sup>40</sup>

Think tanks also provide the description of the limits for the policy discussion. They propose designs and choices, and make new ideas known. They are also assistive in closing the spaces among agencies and between the scholarly and policy centers and offering suggestions to policymakers. It is necessary to admit that think tanks are closing a gap and doing it well. Because, in order for the think tank to reach its goal, the product must be of high quality and acceptable. Otherwise, they will not be able to get ahead of the other institutions they compete with and will not be able to attract the attention of the public or decision makers. Its survival lies in the quality of its work. In this sense, it would not be wrong to say that think tanks are hybrid structures. Presenting the product in the context of a provision may prevent it from being sold. This is the main reason that think tanks cannot exist in every country. There must be sufficient wealth, qualified politicians and decision makers who can make use of valuable information, and an information infrastructure that will help them produce all kinds of reports. These are the basic material infrastructure required for the formation of think tanks. In addition, there is a need for a suitable political environment and mentality. They are doomed to disappear over time. Lastly, they work to train media, policy makers, and community.

Among the most crucial players in Washington D.C., together with interest groups, political parties, and lobbying companies, according to former neo-conservative Wiarda from AEI, think tanks are the newcomers.<sup>41</sup> Agreeing with the views of elite theorists such as Joseph Peschek, Thomas Dye, and William Domhoff, there is not only a systematic bilateral relationship between think tanks and policy elites, there is also collective work between them to compose a

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 52-55

<sup>41</sup> Wiarda, *Conservative Brain Trust. The Rise, Fall, and Rise Again of the American Enterprise Institute*, p. 5.

country's foreign policy making. The point expressed by elite theorists at this point is important. Since the relationship between think tanks and policy making elites is not one-dimensional or reciprocal, but also multi-dimensional. There are many ways and means of bonding as well as many parties to the relationship. The stronger this relationship is established between the parties, the more the think tank can get results by serving its purpose, and it can force the decision maker to make decisions in line with the opinions of the groups it represents. Explanation is needed so that the word coercion does not have a wrong meaning in this sentence. Think tanks do not use coercion in their activities because they have no means. Think tanks present their products in the best way and reveal that they are the best solution to a problem or the presentation that best describes the problem. In this way, senior bureaucrats who either report directly to the decision maker or to the decision maker think that they are doing their job best in an easy way. At this point, it can be said that think tanks steal a role from many bureaucratic agencies that cannot do their job properly.

According to Donald Abelson, think tanks work as a basin in which skills are collected in the name of to-be-elected state presidents and their administrations to rely on, especially in the USA.<sup>42</sup> It is a necessity for think tanks to include many experts, academics or bureaucrats who are experts in their fields. This will increase the impact of the think tank while extending its life span.

As soon as the high ranked policy makers leave their office, they find their seat at this kind of research organization and that is why think tanks are shown as elite organizations with robust structures to affect public policy.<sup>43</sup> The important point for the bureaucrats to gain a position in think tanks as soon as they retire is that they can take part in the marketing of the product, which maintains the warmth of their relations with the institutions they work for. The longer this

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<sup>42</sup> Kubilay Arin, *Think Tanks: The Brain Trusts of US Foreign Policy*, (Berlin: Springer, 2014), p. 46.

<sup>43</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, p. 50.

period, the less likely it will be for think tanks to reach decision makers or elite bureaucrats. Bureaucrats, who are valuable in many countries and institutions, are involved in plans for what they can do during the retirement process before they retire. There are many reasons for this, from insufficient pensions to the fear of losing many of their privileges attached to their jobs, from meeting the needs of family members to satisfying their own egos. “Organizational methods make way for the networks to counteract in a more convenient way to the well-structured rich, talented, knowing pressure units rather than disorderly structured, defectively funded, and untalented ones.”<sup>44</sup> Contrary to the assertion of the Marxists, stating that interest symbolizing capital prevail networks, the elite theory claims that only several key players prevail these networks.

Peschek, Dye, Domhoff, Delgado, or Krugman, although they are not Marxists, still provide a helpful point of view regarding the way the class power is inserted into political governance via the intermediary role of non-governmental policy-designing organizations. In what ways and how strongly think tanks will serve the interests are determined by the interest groups. This can work for the benefit of a class or group, or for developing a particular idea. Class governance is regarded as a complicated course by several Marxists. In the lead of Antonio Gramsci, financial, political, cultural, and juridical players and organizations are embedded into a dominant union.<sup>45</sup> Through supporting the views of the governing class as a common benefit of the community, professionals are of help to create and sustain their ideology. In the content of the Gramscian concept, however, the dominance is never unquestionable. Together with methodological

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<sup>44</sup> James A. Smith, *The Idea Brokers: Think Tanks and The Rise of The New Policy Elite* (New York: MacMillan Press, 1991), p. 3.

<sup>45</sup> Joseph G. Peschek, *Policy-Planning Organisations. Elite Agendas and America's Rightward Turn* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), p. 14–15.

setbacks, which are impossible to be maintained completely by the power elites, there is also permanent dissension to the class governance.<sup>46</sup>

The definition of the community thought of the American Enterprise Institute might well be given as the governing class Gramscianism. According to Gramsci, in the contemporary capitalist community class, governing depends both on government oppression, forced financial networks, and dominance of a system of merits, ideas, and decency in tune with present happenings.<sup>47</sup>

The functions of the think tanks might be penning regulations, designing public speaks or attestations, and present the policy alternatives for decision makers that before was the task of state policy makers.<sup>48</sup> The elite theory claims that think tanks volunteer to present their policy proficiency and links with key actors at the disposal of well-off donors to enlarge their political plans in return for a great number of grants given by them.<sup>49</sup> “There is also a possibility that think tank functionaries impose their views on the elected ones on how to make choices on different matters.”<sup>50</sup>

Nowadays, they have been enjoying large prominence in political circles. A considerable number of them have joined active politics in the US by quitting their seats. They have made use of forums, conferences, lectures, congresses,

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 29

<sup>48</sup> Wiarda, *Conservative Brain Trust. The Rise, Fall, and Rise Again of the American Enterprise Institute*, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, pp. 50–52.

<sup>50</sup> Wiarda, *Conservative Brain Trust. The Rise, Fall, and Rise Again of the American Enterprise Institute*, p. 4.

articles in renowned papers, to commercialize their views to reform public policy both on internal and external stages.<sup>51</sup>

The elite theory assumes that research organizations are used by governing classes to implement power. Thanks to neoconservative academics, conservative groups in the US try to direct and invigorate the public view. To put into effect a policy alteration and gain hegemony in the political agenda using their media scope, their policy entrepreneurship is applied. Think tanks continue to be dependent on funds from state or corporate organizations, despite the unanimous coherence of American electorate in their political views.<sup>52</sup> What a political organization will require from any research establishment is bound to be partisan in kind to prove and confirm their ideas and views academically. What is crucial for think tanks when choosing their personnel is not their academic properties, but their ideological consistencies.<sup>53</sup> It seems that a solid academic career is not enough to become an expert in a think tank. Having a good academic career may be a personal step forward, but the main determinant is the ideological background. Even this statement is a proof that think tanks are not pure and independent knowledge generating structures. The works they undertake are considered by the community as connected to institutional interests and conservative policy worlds.

## 2.2. Pluralist Theory

Openly contrary to the elite theory, the pluralist thesis defines think tanks as of the foundational sort, in between other societal groups which compete to

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<sup>51</sup> Abelson, “Think Tanks in the United States,” p. 108.

<sup>52</sup> John C. Goodman, “National Center for Policy Analysis,” in *Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the United States: Academics, Advisors and Advocates*, ed. James G. McGann (New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 120.

<sup>53</sup> James G. McGann, *Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the United States: Academics, Advisors and Advocates* (New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 15.

influence public policy, such as lobbying institutions, labor unions, social movement establishments, identity-based associations and so on, not as means of a governing class.<sup>54</sup> At the beginning of his book, Andrew Rich, for instance, provides this comparatively better opinion of think tanks.<sup>55</sup>

When it comes to ante-evaluation in most cases, there are not many specialists that are bad at policy making. This assessment was correct for more than half of the twentieth century; specialists carried out these responsibilities. Specialists maintained their impartiality in appearance, even though their studies were resorted to by some to the political ends. Opinions and policy plans that were well made and down-to-earth were proposed by specialists and thus assistive to the decision makers in the long term.<sup>56</sup>

Rich attacks the role of current ones in the policy making process in the last section of his book.<sup>57</sup> It is largely possible to encounter such a complaint in the pluralist circles regarding the “devolving” role of specialists. As prescriptive power is accredited to policy specialists by the pluralists and thus the policy making process is rationalized by the former, pluralists frequently rebuke the conversion of “unbiased” policy specialists to “biased” theorists.

According to Abelson, the fundamental discrepancy between these two aspects is that, while elite theorists consider think tanks as knots in a tightly-knit web of policy planning, the pluralists, on the other hand, generally exemplify them as “collective utterance among many” in the political world.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, pp. 8–9.

<sup>55</sup> Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise*, p. 24.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 3

<sup>57</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes* p. 204

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

From the pluralist perspective, pure motive causes the problem; to ponder impartially or to regard only the self-ascribed-identity of think tanks as unbiased generators of expert information, contrary to means of a kind of will. Different from the elite theory, what the pluralists largely do is to abstain from attributing any fundamental structure or function to think tanks. However, thanks to the several assertions by them about the think tanks, at times separating a think tank from among wide struggle units becomes out of question.<sup>59</sup> According to Lukes, “that various kinds of players and interest units get into rivalry eventually to affect the decision-making course in diverse matters where ‘no governing elite or power is dissipated in a pluralistic way’ is the assumption on which the pluralist literature is established.<sup>60</sup>

Pluralist theorists highlight the visible faces of think tanks and their functions with their basic definitions. They argue that different think tanks operate within the framework of acceptance by decision makers or society in a pluralist understanding. However, aside from an effort to explain what think tanks are, what is ignored here from Gramsci's point of view is to reveal what these structures serve and for what purpose. To provide a general definition that would cover a large number of different think tanks, and to adopt a descriptive approach would simply mean to underestimate the complexity of think tanks and their actual functions. Pluralist Theory ignores social relationships between think tanks and their sponsors which is a very crucial aspect for Gramscian understanding.

### **2.3. Agenda Setting Theory**

Although the Agenda Setting theory is a very specific theory, the reason why it is discussed here is that the theory greatly helps us understand the functions of

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<sup>59</sup> Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, p. 93

<sup>60</sup> Stephen Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), p. 9.

think tanks and contributes to this dissertation's attempt to create a holistic perspective. It contributes by revealing Gramsci's understanding more clearly.

This theory was put forward by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972 in *Public Opinion Quarterly*.<sup>61</sup> It was written as an academic work during the election campaign in the time of presidential rivalry between Democratic trustee Lyndon B. Johnson and Republican challenger Richard Nixon, of whom former was unseated by the latter in 1968. Thanks to the location that it took place in, it is better known as the "Chapel Hill Study". Among inhabitants of Chapel Hill in North Carolina, 100 of them were surveyed by McCombs and Shaw about their opinions regarding 'the most important issues of the election and how that compared to what the regional and national media reported as the most crucial matters'.<sup>62</sup> At the end of their research, they came up with the theory, Agenda-Setting Function of the Mass Media, which claimed that mass media design public agendas by imposing them what to think about.

This theory is explained as:

Editors, personnel, and broadcasters take a crucial part in re-forming political actuality when it comes to presenting the news. Readers get to know not just about the presented topic, but also the degree of significance to ascribe to them via the amount of its exposure through the news. The significance of the matters can well be decided by mass media by mirroring the sayings of the nominees throughout the campaign. Therefore, it can easily be said that the mass media determines the "agenda" of the campaign.<sup>63</sup>

McCombs and Shaw's research produced many works on agenda-setting. There has been a huge number of studies in terms of the application of this theory ever since its first publication, and nowadays an addition to this theory came into play

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<sup>61</sup> Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald E. Shaw, "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media" *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (1972), p. 177.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 178.

as the Second Level Agenda Setting.<sup>64</sup> Even if the news media comprise the preliminary aim of this theory, there are times that it has been implemented to different sections of media with messages intended to be conveyed to viewers.<sup>65</sup> To apply the theory to this dissertation, it will be sufficient to change the actors and the message conveyed. When media organizations, think tanks, media-produced broadcasts are replaced by the products of think tanks, the audience and the public with decision makers, it turns out that the agenda setting theory underscores a relationship similar to that of think tanks with decision makers. Taking the aspects of the agenda setting theory that allows us to see the picture more clearly will help us understand think tanks better. The theory's forerunners can be observed in Walter Lippmann's classic book of *Public Opinion* published in 1922.<sup>66</sup> Whether we acknowledge it or not, the theory of agenda setting has always been around since the earliest times of the media.<sup>67</sup> A long time ago, Walter Lippmann was already penning studies about what is called today as "agenda-setting", but then he had no idea about the term itself.<sup>68</sup>

Even though there was no particular reference to the term by him in 1963, Bernard Cohen is still accredited with purifying Lippmann's studies into this theory.<sup>69</sup> According to his claim, it may not be possible for the media to impose on people what exactly to think, but it ascribes great chances for the possibility of making people what to think about. It is clear that decision makers cannot

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<sup>64</sup> McCombs and Shaw, "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media", p. 178

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>66</sup> Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt, 1922), p. 25

<sup>67</sup> Stanley J. Baran and Dennis K. Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future* (London: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2012), p. 24.

<sup>68</sup> Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, p. 27

<sup>69</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 27.

decide what decision will be made. However, think tanks can ensure that decision makers do not go over a topic. By creating a public opinion on this issue, it can create a political opponent. Analysis can be presented on this subject in the hands of bureaucrats in a ready manner. Moreover, by enabling these reports to reach decision makers, it can influence decision makers' decisions and thinking.<sup>70</sup> It is known that interest groups that have power in the international arena act as large cartels and that some power centers have reached the power to have a great influence on media organs, think tanks and bureaucrats at the same time. Many large power groups have international connections, establish a certain academic infrastructure through their universities, and create public opinion with their media cartels are the subjects of many studies. Cohen goes on to say that the world will not be similar for already dissimilar people "thanks to the roles of writers, editors, and publishers of the paper they read" in designing maps for them.<sup>71</sup> The view that was translated afterwards into the agenda-setting theory by McCombs and Shaw, had been reflected by Cohen in the first years of the 1960s.

Despite the previous relevance of Maxwell McCombs in this area, it was first Cohen and then Donald Shaw<sup>72</sup> whose studies affected McCombs when working at UCLA. In the presidential election campaign of 1968, the theme of agenda-setting was first put into practice by McCombs and Shaw in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Lippmann's view of building images in our minds by comparing the matters on the media agenda with key matters on the indecisive agenda

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 29

<sup>71</sup> Bernard C. Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (New York: Harcourt, 1963), p. 71

<sup>72</sup> Rogers, E. M. and J. W. Dearing. "Agenda-setting research: Where has it been, where is it going?" *Communication yearbook 11*. ed. by James A. Anderson. (Newbury Park: SAGE, 1988), p. 557

electorate was studied by them.<sup>73</sup> They concluded agenda-setting by clarifying that conspicuousness of news agenda is significantly in harmony with the agenda of the electorate.<sup>74</sup> The higher the influence of the media on voter behavior, the more detailed field studies are done, and also the more effect think tanks have on decision makers can be revealed.

Another work is by G. Ray Funkhouser, a comparatively less prominent academic, with common objectives to those of McCombs and Shaw's at around the same period when those authors were trying to formalize their theory.<sup>75</sup> It is even known that all three of them, McCombs, Shaw, and Funkhouser, submitted their results to the same conference. However, the first article published was the one that was submitted by McCombs and Shaw.<sup>76</sup> Funkhouser's article was published afterward and is not given as much regard for his agenda-setting findings as McCombs and Shaw got. Everett Rogers grounds this on two fundamental reasons.<sup>77</sup> Before anything else, there was no official name given to the study by Funkhouser. Secondly, he did not track his study much after his first article. There is an additional claim by Rogers which explains that while McCombs and Shaw are two lucky scholars with a lot of people around them interested in agenda-setting studies, Funkhouser's position was marginalized thanks to geographical reasons at Stanford.

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<sup>73</sup> McCombs and Shaw, *The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media*, p. 13

<sup>74</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 29.

<sup>75</sup> Ray G. Funkhouser, "The Issues of the Sixties: An Exploratory Study in the Dynamics of Public Opinion," *Public Opinion Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 1 (1963), p. 69.

<sup>76</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, p. 116.

<sup>77</sup> Everett Rogers and James W. Dearing, *Agenda-Setting* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1966), p. 559.

The definition of agenda-setting can be made as follows: it is the consciousness-raising and concern of the public related to remarkable matters by the news media. There are two fundamental assertions on which the Agenda-setting theory relies on.<sup>78</sup> The first one is asserted that real happenings are selected and reformed by media rather than mirrored as they are. For instance, a closer look to news stories reveal that they are never presented in an orderly way, instead, the most salient and extraordinary ones are chosen by directors and ordered according to their attractiveness degree to the viewer. Think tanks also make an issue that is deemed important more specific through high-level guests and academics. The second assertion is that the level of the importance of the event will depend on the exposure amount of each news, that is, the ones enjoying more time on the news will be seen as extremely important to the viewers. To put it another way, what agenda setting does exactly is not exposing people how to think, but exposing them to what to think about.<sup>79</sup>

With the development of technology and communication skills, think tanks that employ talented experts are capable of carrying all kinds of views to the top level of social perception.<sup>80</sup> Today, social sharing by Brookings or a leading think tank will be followed by many academics and bureaucrats around the world and will become trending. The most important point in the concept of an agenda-setting role among others is the time allotted for this event. Moreover, it is important to say that each communication channel has its agenda-setting capabilities.

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<sup>78</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 31.

<sup>79</sup> Rogers and Dearing, *Agenda-Setting*, p. 559.

<sup>80</sup> Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise*, p. 18.

**Table 1.** Agenda Setting Types

Agenda Setting Types		
Public Agenda Setting the public's agenda is the reliant changeable	Media Agenda Setting the media's agenda is conceived as the reliant changeable	Policy Agenda Setting elite policy makers' agendas are conceived as the reliant changeable

Three different kinds of agenda setting are specified by Rogers and Dearing.<sup>81</sup>

1. public agenda-setting: In this type, the agenda of the public is  
reliantly changeable (the conventional hypothesis). When the public determines  
the agenda for which stories are considered important.

2. media agenda-setting: In this type, the media's agenda is regarded as  
reliantly changeable. (aka. agenda constructing). When the media determines the  
agenda for which stories are considered important.

3. policy agenda-setting: In this type, the agenda of policy makers is  
regarded as reliantly changeable (aka. political agenda-setting). when both the  
public and media agendas influence the decisions of public policy makers<sup>82</sup>.

In Rogers and Dearing's view, public agenda setting and media agenda setting is  
the focus of the study of mass communication – for instance McCombs and  
Shaw, 1972. However, the study of policy agenda setting has mostly been given  
poor attention by political scientists. In this respect, the authors' advice, given to  
mass communication scholars, is to take a more elaborated stand against how the  
media and public agendas might affect the agendas of elite policymakers.<sup>83</sup> In  
other words, it should be the task of academics to learn from the President or

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<sup>81</sup> Rogers and Dearing, *Agenda-Setting*, p. 561

<sup>82</sup> Rogers and Dearing, *Agenda-Setting*, p. 560.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 561

members of the U.S. Congress the channels from which they acquire news and the extent of its effect.

Walgrave and Van Aelst, following the advice of Rogers and Dearing in 2006, established an elementary theory of political agenda-setting aiming to study determinants that might affect agendas of policy makers.<sup>84</sup>

For agenda-setting to take place, the conceptual process of “accessibility”<sup>85</sup> is necessary. It suggests that if the frequency and time frame of an issue is increased in the media coverage, it will bring an increase in the mind of viewers regarding the accessibility of that issue. People, when asked about the most crucial event taking place in a country, provide answers related to the issues that benefit from respectable coverage on the news media, that is, they answer with the most accessible knowledge embedded to their mind by the media. If an example should be given, the poll of FOX News about the birth certificate of President Obama can be said to be a good one, which showed that 37 percent of Republican respondents did not believe that Obama was a natural-born citizen, while 12 percent of Democrats said otherwise.<sup>86</sup> According to the agenda-setting theory, this result mainly stemmed from the insisting coverage of FOX News about the birth certificate matter which did not find that much coverage on other channels.

To be able to affect viewers through the agenda-setting, it is important to provide nonstop coverage of the issue in different contexts and messages, but all the

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<sup>84</sup> Stefaan Walgrave and Peter Van Aelst, “The Contingency of the Mass Media’s Political Agenda Setting Power: Toward a Preliminary Theory,” *Journal of Communication* Vol. 56, No. 1 (2006), p. 92.

<sup>85</sup> Shanto Iyengar, “The Accessibility Bias in Politics: Television News and Public Opinion,” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* Vol. 2, No. 1 (1990), p. 3.

<sup>86</sup> Blanton, Dana. Executive: Fox News Poll: 24 Percent Believe Obama Not Born in U.S. 7 April 2011. 10 December 2014. <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/04/07/fox-news-poll-24-percent-believe-obama-born> reached on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017

same matter from the general perspective. So, only limited coverage will be of no use in this regard.<sup>87</sup>

Generally, the mass-media coverage and specifically the agenda-setting both have the strong capacity of shaping people's ideas regarding other people's thoughts, and thus the tendency to ascribe more significance to the matters largely covered by mass media becomes prominent among them. There is also a name for this theory, which is called Schemata theory.<sup>88</sup>

With the proliferation of agenda-setting theory articles, together with more academics interested in the topic, the involvement of active role of media settings<sup>89</sup> as well as participation of public<sup>90</sup> and policy makers<sup>91</sup> to the process became apparent. The discrepancy between agenda-setting and agenda-constructing was defined by Rogers and Dearing on the grounds of the hegemonic role of the public or media. To this respect, an agenda "setting" means the impact of the media<sup>92</sup> agenda on community<sup>93</sup> and conveyance of the

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<sup>87</sup> Rogers and Dearing, *Agenda-Setting*, p. 562.

<sup>88</sup> Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, "Turbulences in the Climate of Opinion: Methodological Applications of the Spiral of Silence Theory," *Public Opinion Quarterly* Vol. 41, No. 2 (1977), pp. 145–146.

<sup>89</sup> Lutz Erbring, Edie N. Goldenberg, and Arthur H. Miller, "Front-Page News and Real-World Cues: A New Look at Agenda-Setting by the Media," *American Journal of Political Science* Vol. 24, No. 1 (1980), p. 27

<sup>90</sup> Engel G. Lang and Kurt Lang, "Watergate: An Exploration of the Agenda-Building Process," in *Agenda Setting: Readings on Media, Public Opinion, and Policymaking*, ed. David Protess and Maxwell E. McCombs (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 279.

<sup>91</sup> Dan Berkowitz, "Who Sets the Media Agenda? The Ability of Policymakers to Determine News Decision," in *Public Opinion, the Press, and Public Policy*, ed. David J. Kennamer (Westport: Greenwood, 1994), p. 93.

<sup>92</sup> Rogers and Dearing, *Agenda-Setting*, p. 595.

media's agenda to the publics. An agenda "constructing" means the involvement of "the certain extent of interrelation" between the mass media and community<sup>94</sup> and their collective work in affecting public policy.<sup>95</sup>

By putting in the terms policy agenda-setting and policy agenda-constructing, Berkowitz has performed a more elaborate analysis of the agenda-setting and policy agenda-constructing theories.<sup>96</sup> According to him, the application of policy agenda-setting seems still suitable when the mere connection between media and policymakers is examined by academics. Berkowitz argues, on the other hand, that it is policy agenda-constructing if the issue is not only about adding a topic to the policy makers' agendas, but also if the media stand for just one indicative of public belief.<sup>97</sup>

With the improvement of the agenda-setting theory, properties that define the object are stressed by academics. Each object that reserves its place on an agenda comprises of many properties with conceptual constituents, like the knowledge defining the personalities of the object and impressive constituent covering tones (affirmative, unfavorable, impartial) of personalities on agenda.<sup>98</sup> As a leading vanguard on agenda-setting, McCombs has struggled to enlarge and improve the theory by procuring connections with other types of theories on media such as

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 97

<sup>94</sup> Lang and Lang, "Watergate: An Exploration of the Agenda-Building Process," p. 449.

<sup>95</sup> Rogers and Dearing, *Agenda-Setting*, p. 566.

<sup>96</sup> Berkowitz, "Who Sets the Media Agenda? The Ability of Policymakers to Determine News Decision," p. 92.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>98</sup> McCombs and Shaw, *The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media*, p. 17

the framing theory. His new theory is called as second-order agenda-setting.<sup>99</sup> According to this new theory, there are two stages or orders in which agenda-setting functions: the object level and the attribute level.<sup>100</sup> The consideration of the traditional agenda-setting is at the object level and the effect of media displays on the objects has been evaluated (for instance, issues nominees, happenings, and questions). We are imposed by the media of “what to think about” during this process. Moreover, we are also imposed by the media of “our way of thinking” about certain objects. To do this, the media uses second-order “attribute agendas”. They also tell us what is crucial and what is not.<sup>101</sup> What is more, the discrepancy between the second-level agenda-setting and conventional agenda setting stems from the reality that the former centers on attributes of conspicuousness and it assigns the most significant importance to the changeable factors of the public’s attribute agenda among others.<sup>102</sup>

Understanding the agenda setting theory is important in grasping how think tanks fulfill their functions. Because think tanks also bring various issues to the agenda of the decision maker or the society, and present the reality not as it is, but as the think tank wants to show it. There are two elements here: bringing certain issues to the agenda of decision makers with certain events organized, bringing the case to the forefront by the way experts get to know that issue, forming the mindset of the decision maker or bureaucrats, and then determining the action style with the proposed solutions. Many think tanks attach importance to their appearance in the media in order to increase their efficiency in taking advantage of media organizations while performing their activities. At this point, an argument

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<sup>99</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 36.

<sup>100</sup> Maxwell and McCombs et al., “Candidate Images in Spanish Elections: Second-Level Agenda-Setting Effects,” *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* Vol. 74, No. 4 (December 1, 1997), p. 712,

<sup>101</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 36.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 38

emerges on whether the framing theory should be classified under agenda-setting as “second-level agenda-setting.” According to the views of McCombs, Shaw, Weaver, and their colleagues, functioning as a “second-level” or subsidiary effect, framing should be seen as a portion of agenda-setting<sup>103</sup>. However, the claims of Dietram Scheufele contrast.<sup>104</sup> According to Scheufele, there are different theoretical limits and differing conceptual means (accessibility vs. attribution) for the framing and agenda-setting course and in addition to this, they are bound to produce distinct outputs (perceptions of issue significance vs. interpretation of news issue).<sup>105</sup>

Regarding the attribute agendas (frames), the operatives of the agenda-setting course (framing process), and agenda-setting impact (framing impact)<sup>106</sup>, according to McCombs` claim, there are mutual interests between second order agenda-setting and framing. The properties of framing and second-level agenda setting are listed by Weaver as follows:

Shared aspects:

- What is important to them is not the reporting level of given events or objects, but the ways how events or other objects are portrayed.
- The most remarkable or important perspectives of concepts or displays of the objects of concern are put under the lens by both.
- Both are concerned with “how to think” instead of thinking about the object directly.

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<sup>103</sup> Dietram A. Scheufele, “Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing Revisited: Another Look at Cognitive Effects of Political Communication,” *Mass Communication and Society* Vol. 3, No. 2–3 (August 1, 2000), p. 297

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 298

<sup>106</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, 38.

Dissimilarities:

- It can be claimed for the framing that a large variety of comprehensive process – ethical assessments, daily judgment, appeals to principle, and suggestions for solution of problems—all seem to be covered in contrast to second-level agenda setting (the importance of the attributes of an object).<sup>107</sup>

There is a great amount of discrepancy between framing and accessibility-based types (for instance, agenda-setting and priming)<sup>108</sup> according to Scheufele and Tewksbury. The assumption is that how an event displayed in the media can directly affect the way people comprehend it, that is, the distinction between what is thought about an event and how it is thought. Through the course of news production, information processing, and media effects, the distinction between framing and agenda-setting becomes visible in their performances.

From the news production standpoint, even though both frame-constructing and agenda constructing ‘resort to macroscopic links busied with message building instead of media impact’, frame constructing is mostly interested in news production rather than agenda constructing<sup>109</sup>. To put it another way, the way that forces and groups in the community work to reshape public discourse on a certain issue by creating domineering labels is more interesting in terms of framing than traditional agenda setting.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> David Weaver, “Thoughts on Agenda Setting, Framing, and Priming,” *Journal of Communication* Vol. 57, No. 1 (March 1, 2007), p. 143.

<sup>108</sup> Dietram A. Scheufele and David Tewksbury, “Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models,” *Journal of Communication* Vol. 57, No. 1 (November 9, 2006), p. 11.

<sup>109</sup> Weaver, 2007, p. 145

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

Besides, news processing implies that to be able to generate their impacts, varying circumstances are required in processing messages for framing and agenda-setting. The care of the viewer given to the messages of the media comprises more framing effect, but as for the agenda-setting, it is mostly interested in recurrent exposure of the messages.

Consequently, the location of the impact is presented as follows; it is very easy to specify the impacts of agenda-setting because people, by using their minds, can call on events displayed through media in recent times, but framing decides the degree of media exposure which is inserted into the people's mind storage.<sup>111</sup>

If one considers these mutual properties, he/she may well claim that the framing effect is the appendage of agenda-setting. To put it another way, the assumption that defines the formation about choosing "a limited amount of conceptually connected attributes" for media representation, according to these mutual properties, can be seen as the process of conspicuous transition of issue attributes (that's to say, second-level agenda setting).<sup>112</sup> That's to say, framing is subsumed under agenda setting in McCombs and his colleagues' view. To be able to reach some understandings regarding certain aspects of framing theory, McCombs argues that the agenda-setting theory should be integrated with the elitist theory.<sup>113</sup>

But the views of Price and Tewksbury differ. For them, agenda-setting and framing are constructed upon distinct theoretical premises. Contrary to the basis of agenda-setting on accessibility, framing is related to the applicability; that is to say, the tie between message characteristics and stocked opinions or anyone's

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 146

<sup>112</sup> McCombs et al., "Candidate Images in Spanish Elections: Second-Level Agenda-Setting Effects," p. 167.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 175.

information.<sup>114</sup> Here, the examples of the implementation of accessibility-based statement of agenda-setting on second-level agenda-setting can be seen. In other words, the task of accessibility is to pass the conspicuity of issue attributes (i.e., second-level agenda setting).

When it comes to the framing effect, according to experimental results, the main determinant regarding the influence of frames on public perceptions is the conceived significance of particular frames instead of the promptness of calling for frames. In other words, how the framing impact comes to exist has distinctive characteristics from that of the second-level agenda-setting which is assumed to occur (i.e., accessibility). According to an argument of Scheufele and Tewksbury on a relevant script, due to the different responsibilities of accessibility and applicability on media effects, “the difference between their effects provides observable advantages in the way to comprehend and estimate the effects of active information circles.”<sup>115</sup>

When all put together, integrating framing into agenda setting seems out of question partly thanks to their basis on distinctive theoretical premises, and unreasonable partly because combining them may bring up the problem of disregarding the means to clarify different media impacts.

The question of how agenda-setting takes place concerning its psychological functionaries is the issue that has been given growing attention.<sup>116</sup> According to the argument of Price and Tewksbury, the agenda-setting impacts take

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<sup>114</sup> Vincent Price and David Tewksbury, “News Values and Public Opinion: A Theoretical Account of Media Priming and Framing”, *Progress in the Communication Sciences*, Vol. 13, (1997), p. 185.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 189

<sup>116</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 41.

accessibility-type of information processing as their basis.<sup>117</sup> The description for the accessibility has been about the “extent” and “time” of the exposure that a person is subjected to on particular issues.<sup>118</sup> Particularly, people individually strive to render less conceptual effort when developing societal impressions, because their attitude is quite possibly dependent on already available information.<sup>119</sup> As it can be grasped from this point of view, people will show ever more tendency to use information already available when deciding on particular issues.<sup>120</sup>

The memory-based model takes its root from the concept of accessibility. It is presumed that people, when deciding, tend to use already available or easy to retrieve information from their minds.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, Tversky and Kahneman claim that people’s personal decisions are imminently connected with the easiness of recalling the events.<sup>122</sup> People trace back things that are easy to recall in their minds when making judgments on a particular issue. To this respect, what agenda setting does is to locate certain issues in people’s minds where they can retrieve the information when shaping personal ideas about the issues.

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<sup>117</sup> Price and Tewksbury, *News Values and Public Opinion: A Theoretical Account of Media Priming and Framing*, p. 188.

<sup>118</sup> Kim S. T. Lee, “New Functions of Internet Mediated Agenda-Setting: Agenda-Rippling and Reversed Agenda-Setting,” *Korean Journal of Journalism & Communication Studies* Vol. 50, No. 3 (2006): p. 194.

<sup>119</sup> Rogers and Dearing, *Agenda-Setting*, p. 571.

<sup>120</sup> Iyengar, “The Accessibility Bias in Politics: Television News and Public Opinion”, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, Vol. 2, No. 1, (1990), p. 8.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>122</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 365.

The difference in the focus of framing from that of agenda-setting and priming derives from its application of people's pre-formed cognitive sketch.<sup>123</sup> The task of framing is to introduce a particular part of the issue to people's interest to bring them into a similar kind of understanding.<sup>124</sup> Moreover, another way to influence the viewer's point of view might be the media's purposeful use of some frames. This may appear like an attribute of agenda-setting. Stressed points or attributes of an issue in the media are seemingly studied by both of them. It is even claimed by some academics that framing ought to be regarded as an appendage of agenda setting.<sup>125</sup>

On the other hand, Goffman argues that to comprehend the happenings around them, people dynamically categorize and explore their lives<sup>126</sup>. These categorizations and explorations then comprise the people's personal pre-formed and interminable schema.<sup>127</sup> The way of exerting impact on the viewer's thoughts about issues is implemented by framing via summoning explicative signs on a par with the people's pre-formed schema, not by provoking some aspects more noticeable than others.<sup>128</sup> Also, Baran and Davis argues that 'framing is when these explicative signs level with or activate people's pre-

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<sup>123</sup>Scheufele, "Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing Revisited: Another Look at Cognitive Effects of Political Communication," p. 305.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 302

<sup>125</sup> McCombs and Shaw, *The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media*, p. 77

<sup>126</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 368.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 369

<sup>128</sup> Scheufele, "Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing Revisited: Another Look at Cognitive Effects of Political Communication," p. 302.

formed conceptual schema'.<sup>129</sup> In this case, applicability means discovering the relationship between the information conveyed through the media and the perspectives of people exploring the topic.<sup>130</sup>

The difference between the applicability and accessibility models put forward by Kim and his colleagues is quite significant from the standpoint of the issue of conspicuousness.<sup>131</sup> According to the assumption of framing, without taking into consideration the conspicuousness of an issue, every individual will possess their personal commentary about an issue.<sup>132</sup> It puts the “terminological or semantic discrepancies” of the definition of an issue under the lens. Conversely, it is presumed by agenda-setting that when making decisions, people will only have access to salient issues in their memories provided by media. When all put together, the accessibility of issue salience renders the two models of information processing distinctive.<sup>133</sup>

It is quite possible to comprehend the role of think tanks in political agenda-setting using the agenda-setting theory under these conditions. In this context, we have two perspectives about think tanks and their effect on re-forming the public view. The task of the first one is to filter the policy areas in foreign policy. As it can be guessed, the number of external policy fields in foreign policy making is difficult to ascertain. The primary concerns of foreign policy makers are related to finding solutions following kinds of problems: What is urgent? or what is

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<sup>129</sup> Baran and Davis, *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, p. 371.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 372

<sup>131</sup> Lee, “New Functions of Internet Mediated Agenda-Setting: Agenda-Rippling and Reversed Agenda-Setting,” p. 178.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 179

<sup>133</sup> Scheufele, “Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing Revisited: Another Look at Cognitive Effects of Political Communication,” p. 305.

crucial for the economy? In this regard, suggestions or ideas put forward by think tanks are purified and problems are filtered by them again. Despite the rather restricted amount of effect of think tanks on the community, there might be better effects on foreign policy makers and also through filtering; they may benefit from a part of the agenda-setting.

There is a close connection between the first aspect given above and the second one, too. First of all, the policy agenda is filtered out by think tanks for policy makers. At the end of the refinement process, however, a lot of remaining issue options that policy makers must deal with can still be found. From this point, what is important, such as issue, subject, country, etc., to start with is determined by think tanks. To put it another way, think tanks may well direct the foreign policy makers towards the policy aspect that required urgency. During this course, think tanks could change the agenda of foreign policy makers.

Yet, it should be kept in mind that not all the think tanks may have the capability of forming the political agenda. The factors like financial adherence, intellectual fame, or shared political features are the determiners of differing connection between think tanks and foreign policymakers. In addition to this, when contrasted among various countries, a variation is observed regarding the effect of think tanks on agenda-setting. In my opinion, Agenda Setting Theory lacks the necessary understanding of how think tanks and policy makers inter-relate. Instead, it focuses on psychological aspect of foreign policy making which is not the most essential part of it.

#### **2.4. Neo-Gramscian Perspective**

Social and financial grip in the hands of the elite is not regarded as the basic characteristics of think tanks' re-forming powers by their sponsors. Even though organizational limits are assumed to spare little range for agency or freedom,

Gramscian thinkers still believe that these think tanks are not always working for the sake of capital.<sup>134</sup>

According to the neo-Marxist perspective, think tanks are more of the output of caste-awareness than of political elites or social accord.<sup>135</sup> Thomas Clive argues that the centrality of caste and caste clash in the Marxist political economy is presumed by this approach. Accordingly, it is important to emphasize here the Gramscian type of analysis of hegemony. In this perspective's sphere, the ideological device limits the variables of opinions, discussion, and rhetoric in non-governmental and stately<sup>136</sup> societies. For example, a neo-Gramscian outlook of the societal task of think tanks is presented by Hartwig Pautz. As indicated by this author, collectively working systems have proved effective in policy making. What is related to the influence of the think tanks in forming policies are agencies, views, power orders, and contents.<sup>137</sup>

John McLevey, Thomas Medvetz, and Dieter Plehwe in their studies have shown theoretical outlines covering economics as well as power interactions from a critical standpoint. The interaction between funding and the politics of policy knowledge has been examined by McLevey in Canada.<sup>138</sup> A complicated truth is put forward by his discoveries which explain that think tanks are neither “the

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<sup>134</sup> Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, p. 24.

<sup>135</sup> Clive S. Thomas, *Research Guide to U.S. and International Interest Groups* (London: Praeger, 2004), p. 47

<sup>136</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 101

<sup>137</sup> Hartwig Pautz, “Revisiting the Think-Tank Phenomenon,” *Public Policy and Administration* Vol.26, No. 4 (August 5, 2011), p. 425.

<sup>138</sup> McLevey John, “Think Tanks, Funding, and the Politics of Policy Knowledge in Canada,” *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne de Sociologie* Vol. 51, No. 1 (January 21, 2014), p. 54.

puppets of institutive-political benefactors nor representatives of many rivals interest groups".<sup>139</sup> It is necessary to agree with Levey's findings and statements at this point, because think tanks are not a toy in the hands of interest groups that fund them. Relationship level should not be oversimplified. There is a more complicated relationship between the parties. Think tanks shape the aspirations of the groups they serve, with the best of their expertise. The determination of the service or think tanks on how to achieve the desired goal is at the forefront. On the other hand, discourse 'is an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to think tank' as Maarten Hager argues.<sup>140</sup> He states that:

Discourses frame certain problem; that is to say, they distinguish some aspects of a situation rather than others. The ideas, concepts, and categories that constitute a discourse can vary in character: they can be normative or analytic convictions; they can be based on historical references; they can reflect myths about nature. As such, discourse provides the tools with which problems are constructed.<sup>141</sup>

It is significant to emphasize that the most frequent way of conceptualizing think tanks, among others that had prior analysis, are those led by pluralist and elite theory notions. According to the assertion of the former, policy pluralism, large attendance, and participation of policy actors such as citizen empowerment, are all favored and heartened by think tanks.<sup>142</sup> There is a competition among tanks to acquire an impression on decision makers in independent and distinctive democratic communities regarding their policy offerings in the marketplace of

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 71

<sup>140</sup> Hager Maarten, *Discourse Coalitions and the Institutionalization of Practice: The Case of Acid Rain in Great Britain*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press), p.56

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p.57

<sup>142</sup> Madoka Nakamura, "Introduction," in *NIRA's World Directory of Think Tanks* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), p. 12.

opinion.<sup>143</sup> Sometimes an opinion has triumphed just because it is better than others.<sup>144</sup> Schneider's ruling that thinks tanks can, "to a great extent, lend contribution to the quality and diaphaneity of policy making processes, to implanting of political tradition, and finally, to the increasing confidence in a transparent democratic procedure" is classic of the pluralist opinion about think tanks.<sup>145</sup>

Yet, already in place think tanks hinder 'rivalry' for the prominence of opinions and exaggerate distinctiveness of policy perspectives, putting effort into treating power dis-symmetries.<sup>146</sup> Some kinds of more crucial think tanks analysis are probably permitted by elite theory. The concern of these elite theorists is interference with the elites' management of administrative, military and systemic power. What think tanks, usually funded by institutions or individuals, do is to implement research and policy planning in the interests of their sponsors and communicate them to decision makers.<sup>147</sup> The question regarding think tanks' suitability with representative democracy is voiced by elite theory by blaming them on charges of edging the political parties and the assembly 'out of the

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<sup>143</sup> McGann, *Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the United States: Academics, Advisors and Advocates*, p. 112.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 117

<sup>145</sup> Jiri Schneider, "Think-Tanks in Visegrad Countries: From Policy Research to Advocacy," p. 24, accessed November 11, 2017, <http://www.policy.hu/schneider/RPFinal.pdf>.

<sup>146</sup> Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process.*, p. 17

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 23

margins,<sup>148</sup> and thus, emphasizing the presence of power dis-symmetries as ‘ideas with menace to their all-time interests.<sup>149</sup>

Although real think tank types exhibit heterogeneous structure, according to elite theory assumption, however, they are nearly homogeneous in their works and productions.<sup>150</sup> “Tight social histories, mutual elite assets, social isolation of the individuals who are in charge of stately tools are all the features that comprise the focus of Elite theory in order to deduce a daily correlation between social and financial standing and political power”.<sup>151</sup> Hardly enough autarchic importance is associated with opinions. This focus is attacked by Dunleavy and O’Leary because of its nature which asks who the elite are and with whom they interplay, instead of asking ‘how they move, and what kinds of interactions they have, what assets they have, and how coherent they are as a unit’.<sup>152</sup> The elite theory puts effort to seek out the real faces of the pre-defined official power holders, which questionably ‘pre-assumes previous knowledge of the real elite beforehand the empirical research’, by revealing their covers with the presupposition of the existence of ‘real power holders’.<sup>153</sup>

According to a view championed by some, the pluralist and elite theory approaches are considered less crucial and complicated than the Gramsci-

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<sup>148</sup> Raymond J. Struyk, *Reconstructive Critics: Think Tanks in Post-Soviet Bloc Democracies* (Lanham: Urban Institute Press, 1999), p. 42.

<sup>149</sup> Denham and Garnett, “Think Tanks, British Politics and the ‘Climate of Opinion’”, (London; Bristol, Pa.: UCL Press, 1998), p. 197.

<sup>150</sup> McGann, *Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the United States: Academics, Advisors and Advocates*, p. 71

<sup>151</sup> Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, p. 30.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 31

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

inspired outlook. It not only treats the power relations and dis-symmetries seriously but also esteems the importance of the ideal role. Therefore, it informs that interests and many-folded disputes can be turned into ideological ones with the assistance of scientific proficiency.<sup>154</sup> Worldly forces together with political subjectiveness are regarded as built-in and by the agency of the ideological applications by the Gramscian concept, contrary to the structure of Marxists with the support of the hegemony of financial establishments, it emphasizes the political superstructure.<sup>155</sup> The opinions and physical circumstances in the neo-Gramscian perspective are unconvertible objects to one another and are permanently connected.<sup>156</sup> To be able to comprehend the functioning of think tanks in late-capitalist communities, the best way to go would be the Gramscian notions of dominancy, rhetoric, civil community, and ‘the intellectual’ as reference points. If Louis Althusser’s term<sup>157</sup> is adapted, it can be said that think tanks are ideological tools inserted in civil communities in which re-generation of approval for the present social setting takes place.

Contrary to other theories, the true function of think tanks as a means of recreating social consent in maintaining the current social order can only be understood with a Gramscian understanding. Otherwise, we constantly ask the wrong questions in our attempt to understand think tanks. Pluralist theorists try to explain the products and activities of think tanks. Elite theorists emphasize that think tanks are at the service of elites or interest groups. However, the main problem is to focus on the real function of think tanks as an ideological device in

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<sup>154</sup> Pautz, “Revisiting the Think-Tank Phenomenon,” p. 420.

<sup>155</sup> Jacob Torfing, *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe and Zizek* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1999), p. 22

<sup>156</sup> Robert W. Cox, “Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method,” *Millennium* Vol. 12, No. 2 (June 1, 1983), p. 168.

<sup>157</sup> Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, by Fredric Jameson, Ben Brewster, and Louis Althusser (NYU Press, 2001), p. 53

maintaining the current social order and establishing social consent. With the help of daily social implementation, civil society organizations such as commercial groups, religious units or schools and research centers promote livelihoods or create an unconvincing power interaction between social forms. This is managed by them via the introduction of legalizing rhetoric of dominant or dominancy-oriented setting.

The think tank provides the legitimacy of the rhetoric before the society and the decision maker in the recreation of the dominant order. These discourses are conceived as ‘covering a group of policy ideas as well as an interactive process of policy building and intercommunication’. <sup>158</sup>

The dominance is described by Gramsci as the crux where the ‘political, academic, and ethical leadership over alliance units’ is applied by the ‘hegemonic essential group’ with the least conflict and even with the permission of most other societal groups.<sup>159</sup> In Gramsci's words, the crucial point is that there is the least conflict and the creation of social consent on the target audience. In such a way, the dominant order realized that using force is no longer enough to maintain itself, and that consent is a necessary factor in maintaining control of the mass. However, a team of professionals who can perform this job in the best way is needed, such as think tanks of the dominant structure, in order to obtain the consent of the target audiences. The fact that think-tanks constantly emphasize their neutrality is one of the important indicators that they are not neutral at all and that this is their biggest problem. The reason why those who work as experts in think tanks all over the world are chosen from among the generally accepted high-level academics or bureaucrats is also their efforts to hide themselves by bringing their neutrals to the fore. The ideological message created in order to ensure that social consent is formed in all segments of the

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<sup>158</sup> Pautz, “Revisiting the Think-Tank Phenomenon,” p.422.

<sup>159</sup> Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p. 161.

society should be conveyed through all kinds of communication so that general social consent can be obtained. On the other hand, as a product of the consent effort, it can be easily seen that think tanks specialize according to the region they are located in or the fields in which they operate and try to use the language of the target audience. In this sense, think tanks are organized locally, despite the fact that they may have international linkages. Detailed analysis that appeals to all levels of expertise will ensure the approval of the target audience.

“The thought and implementation of a community melts or comes to equality exactly in this time”<sup>160</sup> Gramsci refers to his own experience in fascist Italy but it is applicable for any kind of attempts for the continuation of hegemony. For this reason, coalitions and concessions, which are formulated to merge distinctive social means into dis-symmetrical ‘historical’ and ‘power units’, explain dominance.<sup>161</sup> Torfing<sup>162</sup> mentions it as a “course through which a novel common personality is produced”. Interactive political tactics processing these historical units and thus sustaining dominant equality comprise Gramsci’s emphasis. The social groups of historical units should resume this equality utilizing permanent deliberations, thanks to its unstable nature. When a group of policies seems to make sense, this agreement is reached, and associates of the historical unit embrace it as profitable and the trustworthiness of the other options is restricted. Should the need arise to repeat Gramsci’s remarks, think tanks as civil society foundations, can be claimed to be hearts of ‘creation, of illumination, of dispensation’ of views that do not merely ‘come’ to every person’s mind. On the contrary, as the means in the political struggle for the

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Dieter Plehwe, Bernhard Walpen, and Gisela Neunhöffer, “Introduction: Reconsidering Neoliberal Hegemony,” in *Neoliberal Hegemony: A Global Critique*, ed. Dieter Plehwe, Bernhard Walpen, and Gisela Neunhöffer (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 3.

<sup>162</sup> Torfing, *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe and Zizek*, p. 108.

dominant equality, they require points in which they are generated and from where they can be dispersed.<sup>163</sup>

The significance of agency is also strongly pointed out by Gramsci in the political battle which is derived from the emergence of information and consciousness. For this reason, what is crucial here is the notion of the intellectual. If one applies this notion to the study of think tanks, it may well mean that think tanks must be seen as inevitably related to the development of capitalism and the emergence of specific social classes. It would not be wrong to say that think tanks need social classes formed by the development of capitalism in order to come to life. For this reason, when considered within the framework of common definitions, it is seen that the structures that present themselves as think tanks assume this quality only in developed capitalist economies. As think tanks have also come to life with the presence of powerful interest groups in the truly developed capitalist economy. It is also for this reason that when the countries and regions in this thesis are compared, it will be seen that the examples in the underdeveloped or developed countries measure themselves against the examples in developed economies, but they do not have these qualities. Taking a typology of think tanks in a country by taking them into consideration, and creating a picture for that country by classifying all the detailed information will be nothing but reflecting the current situation. Comparison and analysis made from a certain theoretical framework will only be able to provide real perception. As perceived from Gramsci's analysis, the think tank needs an advanced capitalist system and its associated specific classes to fully come to life. In this sense, according to most academics, countries with strong capitalist democracies were where think tanks first showed up, and they are still in the development process in the countries with liberal market democracies.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>163</sup>Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p. 192.

<sup>164</sup> Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, p. 38.

Gramsci argues that:

The exact social group born to life with fundamental task on the original dominion in the sphere of financial generation, brings into existence in addition to itself at least one or two layers of intellectuals that bestow it uniformity and consciousness of its function in the financial, social as well as political areas. Together with its own self, the capitalist enterpriser has generated the industrialist technician, the expert in economy of politics, the arranger of a novel tradition and a novel legitimate network.<sup>165</sup>

As can be seen from Gramsci, think tanks are a result of the developed capitalist economy and its class structure. The need for the functioning of the new system has led to the birth of think tanks. The environment necessary for the formation of this structure can only reach this maturity at a certain level of the capitalist order.

So, philosophers or ‘orators’ of ‘grand narratives’ are not think-tank intellectuals.<sup>166</sup> However, they have relevance in policy details and politics. The best description for think tank analysts can be as follows: they comprise a fragment of the web of ‘organic intellectuals’ of capitalism among whom civil servants, technicians, policy specialists, or legal specialists can also be included. Fulfilling technical, directive, and organizational needs of society are their duty, and they are ‘perpetual persuaders’<sup>167</sup>

It can be stated that think tanks host organic intellectuals with discursive legitimization ability. According to Georgina Murray and Douglas Pacheco’s view:

In the survival of advanced capitalism, which partly bases on its ability to legitimize itself discursively in cultural, moral, ethical, and intellectual spheres,

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<sup>165</sup> Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p. 193.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p.5

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., p. 334

think tanks have fulfilled a role rested on such comprehension as gatekeepers according to.<sup>168</sup>

Think tanks were analyzed as united actors among several within the discursive copy of the dominance of liberalism or economic theory by alternative neo-Gramscian (e.g., Blank, 2003; Desai, 1994; Gamble, 1989; Overbeek, 1990). Consequently, Alex Demirovic claimed that:

Think tanks are exceedingly associated with a collection of tools for reorientation of the state in a neoliberal way: via an unofficial application of policy suggestion the state is reorganized and management over the state is saved by the socio-economic class light-emitting diode "dominant bloc".<sup>169</sup>

The think tank creates the necessary discourse for the liberal order to come to life again and again. There are critics of such an approach. Some in the representational processes have referred to the neo-Gramscian identification of think tanks as the result of a social order selected as the inactive instrument of a mobilizing capitalist class.; in this respect, think tanks' wide degree of autonomy and their profound ideological diversity is dominated out (e.g., Stone, 1996).<sup>170</sup> As for the others, they blame neo-Gramscian for demonizing the think tanks. Here lies an attempt to understand the functions of think tanks rather than demonize them. However, the characteristics of think tanks, such as the organization of the network of civil society actors and the understanding of the interrelationship of thought and material conditions, can be seen in the analysis of neo-Gramscianism. Various think tanks, their often-conflicting views and different policy recommendations on policy issues mean that they allow many interests to be clarified, so that they can reach an agreement to form a ruling group. Neoliberalism, and the think tanks fortifying it, is a good example. It illustrates well that the special diversity of "neoliberalism" makes it so successful

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<sup>168</sup> Pautz, "Revisiting the Think-Tank Phenomenon", p. 423.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., p. 424

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

in generating mutual rhetoric across historical groups from different parts of different social groups.<sup>171</sup>

It will be tried to understand what the real role of think tanks are, through several concepts included in Antonio Gramsci's work called Prison Notebook.<sup>172</sup> If the concepts in question are used as a means of understanding, we can understand the real role of think tanks in society behind their apparent functions. The consent of the society is needed to establish, protect or develop the ruling classes' hegemony. Although the ruling class has the means of power, consent is a necessary and necessary quality in order to maintain its hegemony. The ruling class needs organic intellectuals to form the consent of civil society. The reason why think tanks value the intellectuals they recruited from the academic world so much is that organic intellectuals try to be impartial and use the title of an academic seeking the truth in order to gain the consent of the society. The ruling class uses all the facilities of the superstructure to obtain the consent of the base. It is not possible to think of think tanks other than integrated state with other institutions and organizations of the state, although they seem independent. Think tanks need bureaucrats, decision makers, academics, an established political structure, media organs and a global structure while carrying out their activities. The service of the think tank for the ruling class is to manipulate ideas, to interpret reality in line with the interests of the ruling class, and to protect the hegemonic order created on a global scale. In all kinds of global hegemonic crises, think tanks have adapted themselves to the new order and started to assume different roles. The product created by the think tank for the ruling class is to create cultural tyranny in line with the interests of this structure. It is

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<sup>171</sup> Dieter Plehwe, "Neoliberal Hegemony," *European Journal of Sociology* Vol. 46, No. 3 (December 1, 2005), p. 560

<sup>172</sup> These concepts are: hegemony, cultural hegemony, crisis of hegemony, ruling class, manipulate ideas, consent, coerce, integrated state/integral state, state, civil society, base, superstructure, organic intellectuals.

possible to see these concepts at every point, from the first use of the think tank to its evolution, from examples in different countries to their changing functions. In this respect, it is thought that the concepts of grammar are important for understanding think tanks. In this sense, instead of understanding think tanks with a single theoretical perspective, a holistic perspective has been adopted. On the other hand, think tanks prioritize to legitimize the decisions that are taken by the policy makers. Hence, they do not basically aim to shape public policy, unlike they claim. Because, in most of the cases, they do not have the capacity and need to shape the public policy. In this sense, Gramscian understanding rightly underlines that think tanks' main function is to legitimize the decisions that are taken by decision makers in order to sustain the hegemony.

All in all, Gramscian understanding covers the parts that the other theories miss. While Elite theory ignores how the relationship between think tanks and their sponsors is established, Pluralist theory does not mind this relationship at all. On the other hand, Agenda Setting theory focuses on psychological aspects of social relationships. However, Gramscian approach emphasizes the social relationship between think tanks, policy makers and sponsors of think tanks. Moreover, it reveals how think tanks function as an apparatus of hegemons in foreign policy making.

## **2.5. Other Approaches**

### **2.5.1. The Statist Approach**

The theories, covered in the previous section, are the ones that are most commonly used in the study of think tanks. However, there are other approaches that need to be mentioned. For instance, the Statist approach actually argues that unlike other theories, the state takes a more independent and powerful stance. It is not easy to defend the assumptions of statist approach as of today because bureaucrats working in state institutions are insufficient to produce solutions to

the problems faced by the state. It can be said that the theses of the statist approach were more easily defended in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the mechanism and functioning of the state lost its independence in current world. However, it is beneficial to examine all approaches.

The statist approach assumes that although the public and civil society may impose some pressures / restrictions on the behavior of administrators and elected officials, the state maintains a certain degree of sovereignty and operates according to its own basic principles<sup>173</sup>. This approach seeks to clarify and evaluate the level of impact on government policy that think tanks may have. Think tanks and NGOs play a modest role in influencing public policy with respect to the state's authority and autonomy.<sup>174</sup>

This approach argues that the state functions autonomously of external pressure. It is very hard to influence on the state the agenda of think tanks or NGOs. The statist approach provides a framework to understand why some think tank employees are requested to work for the state. The state is seeking to co-opt people from NGOs and think tanks when the state views them as having significant impact over popular opinion. Co-opting those figures will also foster the credibility of the efforts of the administration. This approach puts much emphasis on bureaucrats and foreign policy makers and underestimates the role of social relationship between think tanks and foreign policy makers.

### **2.5.2. The Organizational Approach**

Organizational approach presents two distinct approaches to the evaluation of think tanks as entities have emerged. The first approach focuses on individual think tanks and on the evolution and evolving positions of think tanks in

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<sup>173</sup> Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, p. 45

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

particular countries, which includes a wealth of knowledge about the existence and mandate of the organization.

The second approach reflects on how individuals try to affect policies at various points of the decision cycle. Not all think tanks are active at various points of the policy cycle: articulation issues, policy development and policy execution. Any think tanks are involved in getting the topic on the agenda by articulating issues, while others are joining the loop at a later point. The structure acknowledges the plurality of think tanks within a country.<sup>175</sup> This approach is very limited in terms of understanding the role of think tanks on foreign policy making and can provide a comprehensive framework to analyze.

### **2.5.3. Policy Network Approaches**

Several concept groups and theories, which are applied when accounting for opinion foundations and their roles and motives, exist, but they lack the methodical approach that elite theory, structuralism, and neo-Gramscian approaches possess. These kinds of organizations hint at particular webs (civil bureaucrats, army staff, newsagents, etc.) that bring together the think tanks in an official or unofficial content to acquire political usually may be put under the overall heading as the Policy Network: Epistemic Communities, Advocacy Coalition, and Discourse Coalition. These notions are highly crucial in the sense that they help think tanks identify their ideas and sound meaningful.

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<sup>175</sup> Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, p. 47

**Table 2.** Policy Network Approaches

Policy Network Approaches		
Epistemic Communities  *the structural role of information *occasional opinions as an expression for the composition and alteration of regimes	Advocacy Coalition  *comparatively investigating long-run utilization and Implementation of information	Discourse Coalition  *the cohort of a group of storylines

#### 2.5.4. Epistemic Communities

In order to distinguish think tanks from different types of organizations, it is necessary to provide information about these clusters. Epistemic communities are especially helpful in dealing with problems with a technical nature. Usually, they guide manufacturers to achieve acceptable standards by framing and institutionalizing subject areas. Epistemological communities supply policy innovation. The position taken by the community through the concept of decentralization and influence plays an indirect and direct role in policy coordination.

Policy evolution happens in four steps: ‘policy innovation, diffusion, selection, and persistence’.<sup>176</sup> Epistemological communities outline the most effective answer to an issue through framing. The definition of interest is very vital, and as a result, there are many different definitions of government priorities.

Priority determination is actually important for all institutions. Priority is also a sign of how much resources the government should devote to which problem. In this context, intervention by interest groups in determining priority is extremely valuable. If we consider sharing as the moment of decision, then it is the scene of

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<sup>176</sup> Diane Stone, “Non-Governmental Policy Transfer: The Strategies of Independent Policy Institutes”, *Governance*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (December 17, 2002), p. 46

a struggle between different organizations which want a piece from the same cake. The whole struggle is about influence.

One of the essential types of international institutionalization is indicated in the international regimes and the two different schools of conceptual theory with their distinctive features regarding their notion of knowledge. The argument put forward by the latter is that there is a high level of ambiguity in terms of the results of the decision-makers' moves in the atmosphere of effective international freedom. This kind of ambiguity necessitates the call for knowledge of a specific manner: "portrayal of social or material process, their interaction with other processes, and the possible outcomes of the move".<sup>177</sup> The portrayal here calls for the implementation of scholarly or technical ability. As a result of this necessity, systems of specialists who have the capability of detailing and ensuring this type of knowledge emerged. Thanks to the decision makers' demand for policy proposals, they enjoy high level of political impact both on a national and international stage. The scale of this impact is so wide that their influence may reach to international organizations.

Specialists each with different histories comprise of the epistemic society, however, those specialists have to agree on an "adequately solid assertion regarding a division of information which is esteemed by the community",<sup>178</sup> and their acknowledgment in a particular area of proficiency is fundamental for such an assertion. Every associate in an epistemic society shares the mutual faith of prescriptive values that tell the motivation behind the struggle for a political movement of that kind. Furthermore, the common concept of legitimacy is encompassed by them, besides this conception is identified from inside and make new arguments exposed to inward reality checks. With this ground provided, then they can shed light on the complicated correlation and connection among

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 48

<sup>178</sup> Dieter Plehwe, "Think Tank Networks and the Knowledge–Interest Nexus: The Case of Climate Change," *Critical Policy Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (2014), p. 101.

available policy alternatives. Thus, this process turns the epistemic societies into a link with the ability to provide ring service for the opinions from communities to states and among countries.<sup>179</sup> Therefore, experts, who introduce new opinions into political organizations under control, are known as “cognitive baggage handlers” and “gatekeepers”.

### **2.5.5. Advocacy Coalition**

The advocacy union, which is the theoretical approach put forward by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, gives a cognitive outlook for studying long-term use and implementation of the information.<sup>180</sup> In this approach, think tanks lead the way for some players to incorporate all political dispositions into political rhetoric persuading policy makers to identify a policy problem is the objective of policy entrepreneurs. Henceforth, think tanks have to assess messages, pleas, and meetings with officers to direct the agenda. The political society is aimed by the experts in an attempt to deliver their matters by sensitizing the people.<sup>181</sup> On that account, what researchers do in think tanks is link the answers to questions, raise the conscious awareness of politicians regarding the problems, and urge decision makers to apply their policy offerings for their own sake.

### **2.5.6. Discourse Coalitions**

When it comes to “discourse unions (coalition)”, it is easily seen that this rhetoric is not free from any social context in which they are built. On the contrary, it is better to see them as “a particular set of opinions, notions, and classification, all of which are generated, regenerated and turned into a specific

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid., p. 103

<sup>180</sup> William G. Domhoff, *Who Rules America? Challenges to Corporate and Class Dominance* (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2010), p. 34.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

group of applications and through their material and societal facts becoming meaningful".<sup>182</sup> It is possible to portray building of the rhetoric as a disputatious endeavor.<sup>183</sup> The finishing point of any rhetoric may well prevail in the total structure of a completely different discussion on a specific matter.<sup>184</sup> What is revealed as the goal of research using discourse-analytical tools is no other than this "career" of irregular structures itself. To put it another way, it is unfolded by the discourse analysis of how a specific comprehension of a policy question has acquired the prevalence and authoritarian standing, whereas remaining denigrated, edged out or suppressed.<sup>185</sup> The task of discourse analysis is to discuss the things that are aired and the conditions in which these are aired. It tries to understand the written works in terms of their social histories, and lastly checks on their context together with addressees. Then, the following questions pop up: What is a 'discourse union', and what way it is formed? The community of a group of themes together with players who air them and applications that suit them is called a discourse union.<sup>186</sup> But these all should be orchestrated around rhetoric. As put forward by Hager, the concept of storyline is essential.<sup>187</sup> Discourse unions make clusters under this setting, it is a productive kind of narration that let the players come to terms with different discursive schemas for them to make sense of a particular material or societal event. According to the disposition of the policy problem in question, associates of the discourse union,

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<sup>182</sup> Maarten A. Hager, *The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 44.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Maarten A. Hager and Sven Kesselring, "Democracy in the Risk Society? Learning from the New Politics of Mobility in Munich," *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1999), p. 22.

<sup>185</sup> Hager, *The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process*, p. 46

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p. 47

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p. 49

with commonly conceived ideas about the content of danger, emergency or event, organize the union at all hands.<sup>188</sup> Thanks to the lack of full-grown theories by more than half of the political actors to assign meaning to the material and societal environment, an impressive storyline can be defined as one that reduces a policy matter and turns an immense number of facts mingled with prescriptive claims and merits<sup>189</sup> generally, with complicated nature into a compact one. Therefore, this kind of shortcut takes the form of precept for the rise of an extensive merger of various players. The claim of those who participate in the storyline is that the rest of the members in the union comprehend what they mean. But the bilateral comprehension claim, though prevalent, is frequently wrong and that is the thing that keeps the discursive chaos under the dark. The meaning of the storylines may be understood quite disparately by the players even in the times of attending common storylines.<sup>190</sup> It is the storylines, which albeit decreases the complication to the extent that widely and broadly distinct unions can come into existence around them, and enjoys the ability to boost political alteration by re-defining meaning when embraced by the associates of a discourse union. For the purpose of this dissertation, the discourse union concept is the right one, since it helps us conceptualize the think tanks as only individual players among many others that are unfamiliar with each other or without any one-on-one relations. Analytic papers, web blogs, and media remarks can be given as templates of think tank manufacturers that add to storylines and with these storylines discursive unions can be composed or empowered. Moreover, think tanks can provide physical quarters for a diverse type of political players to meet and produce common storylines.

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p. 50

<sup>189</sup> Frank Fischer, *Reframing Public Policy: Discursive Politics and Deliberative Practices* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 43.

<sup>190</sup> Maarten A. Hager and Wytske Versteeg, "Performing Networks," *European Political Science* Vol. 4, No. 3 (2005), p. 347.

The advocacy coalition approach sees the whole process of influencing policy decisions as a long-run action and organizations as trainers. Moreover, it is stressed in this approach that the role of ideas, meanings, and thoughts are all ignored as a part of policy making. What the epistemic society notion focuses on is the particular role of information or specialists in the policy making process. In the discourse unions, advocates, investigators, and analysts are supposed to formulate answers to policy questions that are put under the scope.<sup>191</sup>

To sum up, there are different approaches to analyze think tanks. Some of them could be labelled as grand theories such as Elite, Pluralist, Agenda Setting theories. These theories provide more comprehensive outlook for think tanks and their role on foreign policy making. Elite theory focuses on the interaction between policy makers (elites) and think tanks. Pluralist theory underlines the importance of plurality of think tanks for developing a more liberal foreign policy making. Agenda Setting theory indicates the role of think tanks on shaping the agenda of the society. On the other hand, there are other theories which have limited projection on the role of think tanks on foreign policy making such as Statist or Organizational approach. However, in the understanding of this dissertation, the most comprehensive approach to understand the social relationship between think tanks and foreign policy makers is the Gramscian perspective. The reason is that Gramscian perspective focuses on the purpose of think tanks on influencing foreign policy making and questions the base of interaction between think tanks and their sponsors.

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<sup>191</sup>Stone and Garnett, "Introduction: Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance," p. 17.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THINK TANKS**

Across the world, think tanks have been increasing in number and with every passing day, they are becoming more and more involved in the policy making processes of various states. Despite their significant role in shaping policies, think tanks have not been given the academic interest that they deserve.<sup>192</sup> As is the case with other social studies, most of the works concerning the think tanks done by American scholars. This leads academics to consider and analyze the improvements that only take place in the USA.<sup>193</sup> As a result of this, think tanks in the USA fit well to the definitions provided in those studies. However, a great number of books have been printed regarding different types of nongovernmental organizations, especially interest groups.<sup>194</sup> Moreover, comparative analyses have been quite limited. As for Turkey, apart from studies that are quite a few in numbers, there is literally a few numbers of studies had been conducted about this area.<sup>195</sup> The problem of having a consensus on

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<sup>192</sup> Diane Stone and Mark Garnett, “Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance,” in *Think Tanks Across Nations: A Comparative Approach*, ed. Stone, Diane, Denham, Andrew, and Garnett, Mark (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 1. Andrew Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 6.

<sup>193</sup> Stone and Garnett, “Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance,” p.1.

<sup>194</sup> Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise*, pp.6-7.

<sup>195</sup> The upcoming works could be considered as the beginning of the think-tank literature in Turkey: Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu and Ersin Onulduran, “Foreign Policy Institute and the Genesis of Think-Tank Culture in Turkey”, *Contemporary Issues in International Politics: Essay in Honour of Seyfi Taşhan*, (Ankara: Foreign Policy Institute, 2004), pp.1-4.; Serhat Güvenç, “Türkiye’nin Dış Politikası ve Düşünce Kuruluşları”, *Sivil Toplum Örgütleri ve Dış Politika*, eds. Semra Cerit Mazlum ve Orhan Doğan, (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 2020); Çağrı Erhan, “Düşünce Üretim Merkezleri ve Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol.2, No.6 (Summer 2005),

definition<sup>196</sup> and classification of such forms may well be the reason why there is a shortage of academic work about think tanks.<sup>197</sup>

### **3.1. Definition**

Having multiple plans and aims, think tanks differ to a great degree in their size, monetary funds, constitution, personnel structure, political importance, and field of expertise. The reason why think-tanks differ so much and take on various characters is due to the adaptation of these organizations to the conditions of the countries where they are located. With the Gramscian mindset, the think tank shapes itself towards the goal of serving. Considering that the level of capitalist maturity is not at the same level in every country and that each country is articulated differently at the center, it will be easier to understand why these structures are so diverse. On the other hand, it may not make sense to try to classify think tanks in a classification or typology. As the purpose of this dissertation is not to determine which organization is a think tank or not. Such an effort can only result in a descriptive study, and it will actually prevent us from understanding why these institutions are important and how they function in the continuation of today's capitalist system. In addition to this, it can also be said that the diverse systems and cultural margins of different countries affect the behavior of think tanks and their capacities or policies and influence. No single definition seems to be enough to explain all the actions carried out by think

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pp.59-63; and Suat Kiniklioğlu, "Turkey's Think Tank Scene", Turkish Daily News, 27 December 2005. Ekleme

<sup>196</sup> Denham and Garnett, "Think Tanks, British Politics and the 'Climate of Opinion'", p. 23. See also R. Kent Weaver, "The Changing World of Think Tanks", *PS:Political Science and Politics*, Vol.22, No.3 (September 1989), pp.563-564.

<sup>197</sup> Stone and Garnett, "Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance," p.1.

tanks.<sup>198</sup> In this sense, each definition has a different angle to pick and use in this study.

The term think tank was first put into use in the course of the Second World War to define the safe conditions where military and civilian specialists were placed to procure military tactics. When the war was over, the term was used for the “charter research foundations”, like the Rand Corporation, which were founded by the US military.<sup>199</sup> The first emergence and first use of the concept actually gives clues about think tanks. The gathering of military and civilian experts to prioritize specific interests and to formulate tactics, to form an opinion on how to protect certain class interests, coincides with the end of the war and a time when it is revealed that the means of war, the coercion, will not be sufficient for success. A change in the international system jeopardized the sustainability of the system. Coming together with the soldiers and civilians in the think tank, Gramsci's emphasis is an indication that the consent has come to life at the tactical level. As before 1945, it was understood that the world order could not be protected only with conventional weapons, and a new order was needed. At this point, it was seen that hard power was not enough.

In Gramsci's words, it was understood that coercion or force was insufficient in maintaining the capitalist order, and the consent of the mass was needed for this purpose. Think tanks are the products of this necessity and goal to ensure the sustainability of the international system by adapting themselves to the conditions of the host country. These explanations are not valid for every organization that presents itself as a think tank, because not every non-governmental organization that tries to label itself as a think tank is one. Due to

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<sup>198</sup> Donald E. Abelson, *American Think-Tanks and their Role in US Foreign Policy*, (London: MacMillan Press, 1996), p. 4 and Stone and Garnett, “Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance”, pp.1-2.

<sup>199</sup> Kent R. Weaver and James G. McGann, “Think Tanks and Civil Societies in a Time of Change,” in *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalysts for Ideas and Action*, ed. James G. McGann and Kent R. Weaver (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2000), p. 2.

the attractiveness of the name, different organizations try to wear this guise. What creates the appeal of the name is that the qualities of the think tank are seen as extremely attractive under the name. Nevertheless, to have a common definition, available literature will be summarized.

There are different descriptions offered by different academics for the concept of think tank in terms of their dimensions, funds, foundation, personal structures, field of expertise or political importance. According to Rich, “think tanks are free, stake free-based, not-for-profit, politic foundations that generate and specifically dependent on expertise and opinions to acquire back up and to affect the policy making procedure”<sup>200</sup>. On the other hand, Abelson describes think tanks as “not-for-profit, free from partisanship, investigate organizations among whose immediate goal is to affect opinion and policy of the community”.<sup>201</sup> Weaver and McGann see think tanks as “policy research foundations with important freedom from state and from public stakes like companies, interest groups, and political parties”.<sup>202</sup> Another description is made by Hames and Feasy arguing that think tanks are “unattached education foundations with the aim of affecting policy of community by means of multi-educational research”.<sup>203</sup> According to Wollmann, think tanks are “investigative organizations that are organizationally and economically free and generating and especially disseminating the policy related information is considered as their

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<sup>200</sup> Andrew Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 23

<sup>201</sup> Donald E. Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2000), p. 19

<sup>202</sup> R. Kent Weaver and James G. McGann. “Think Tanks and Civil Societies in a Time of Change”. in *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalyst for Ideas and Action*, eds. James G. McGann and R. Kent Weaver, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2000), p. 2

<sup>203</sup> Tim Hames and Richard Feasey, “Anglo-American Think Tanks under Reagan and Thatcher” in *A Conservative Revolution? The Thatcher-Reagan Decade in Perspective*, eds. Andrew Adonis and Tim Hames, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 217

tasks and hence providing impact on political discussion and agenda setting”.<sup>204</sup> Lastly, Sudarshan claims that think tanks are policy research organizations with the aim of setting agendas and to contribute to management by means of information support and specialty”.<sup>205</sup>

When various definitions are covered, it can be seen that the common point is the emphasis on independence, freedom, contribution to political discussions, and academic qualities.

Throughout the 1960s, the name “think tank” was already embedded into the Anglo-American language as a word belonging to the policy analysis and independent research organizations with their attention centered on foreign policy and defense tactics as well as on daily political, financial, and communal matters. It is important to keep in mind that the term “think tank” may be used for a variety of different private research units.<sup>206</sup>

In the Anglo-American discourse, “think tanks” are considered comparatively semi-free organizations having distinct legitimate personalities that embark upon the comparative investigation of policy matters free of state, political parties, and NGO-like organizations.<sup>207</sup> It is doubtful how free think tanks are while they are conducting their research or how independent they are from parties and political structures. However, the most basic condition for the acceptance of the products or ideas of think tanks is due to the acceptance that they act independently and

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<sup>204</sup> Hellmut Wollmann, “Policy Knowledge and Contractual Research”. <http://www2.rz.hu-berlin.de/verwaltung/down/cont.rtf>, (18 December 2020).

<sup>205</sup> Ratna M. Sudharsan, “New Partnership in Research: Activists and Think Tanks: An Illustration from the NCAER in New Delhi”. in *Banking on Knowledge: The Genesis of the Global Development Network* ed. Diane Stone, (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 97

<sup>206</sup> Denham and Garnett, “Think Tanks, British Politics and the ‘Climate of Opinion’”, p. 8.

<sup>207</sup> Aziz Aydin, *The Genesis of Think-Tank Culture In Turkey: Past, Present and Future* (Ankara: Middle East Technical University, 2006), p. 24.

that they are impartial. Otherwise, nobody will want to listen to a biased opinion. Impartiality constitutes the credibility and the perception of objectivity of think tanks.

Think tanks are described by Rich, Abelson, Weaver and McGann and Simon James respectively as follows: 1) “free, stake free-based, not-for-profit, politic foundations that generate and specifically depend on expertise and opinions to acquire back up and to affect the policy-making procedure”<sup>208</sup>, 2) “not-for-profit, free from partisanship (which does not mean non-ideological), investigative organizations among whose immediate goal are to affect opinion and policy of the community”<sup>209</sup>, 3) “policy research foundations with important freedom from state and public stakes like companies, interest groups, and political parties”<sup>210</sup>, 4) “an unattached foundation to affect the policy of community by multi-educational research.”<sup>211</sup>. In view of Hames and Feasy “a general description for a think tank could be a not-for-profit policy research organization for community with significant organizational autarchy”.<sup>212</sup> In the US, however, state research institutions like the Congressional Research Service and the General Accounting Office are acknowledged under the description of “think tanks” by some

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<sup>208</sup> Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise*, p. 11.

<sup>209</sup> Donald E. Abelson, “Think Tanks and U.S. Foreign Policy: An Historical Perspective,” *U.S. Foreign Policy Agenda an Electronic Journal of the U.S. Department of State* Vol. 7, No. 3 (November 2002), p. 11.

<sup>210</sup> Weaver and McGann, “Think Tanks and Civil Societies in a Time of Change,” p. 5.

<sup>211</sup> Simon James, “The Idea Brokers: The Impact of Think Tanks on British Government,” *Public Administration* Vol. 73, No. 4 (1993), p. 492.

<sup>212</sup> Tim Hames and Richard Feasy, “Anglo-American Think Tanks under Reagan and Thatcher,” in *A Conservative Revolution? The Thatcher-Reagan Decade in Perspective*, ed. Andrew Adonis and Tim Hames (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 216.

academics.<sup>213</sup> Some others also hint at certain universities that sustain close connections with research organizations as think tanks.<sup>214</sup>

German scholar Wollmann describes think tanks as follows “investigative organizations that are organizationally and economically free and generating and especially disseminating the policy-related information is considered as their tasks and hence providing an impact on political discussion and agenda designing.”<sup>215</sup> Wollmann actually points out a very important point in this definition. The think tank should have organizational and economic freedom, together with an effort to generate knowledge in connection with certain policies. The impact of this product is on the political debate and consequently the setting of the agenda. Financial constraint is the biggest obstacle to think tanks’ independence. On the other hand, there are legal restrictions. Without sufficient financial means, think tanks will not be able to recruit qualified researchers and experts. Without a target and strategy, it is not possible to determine the policy or the agenda. The definitions themselves show that think tanks actually act within a certain strategy. The common goal of these organizations is to create consent in line with the interests they serve. It can be seen that important think tanks are linked to other think tanks and non-governmental organizations in a global network, regardless of their country of residence.

Indian scholar, Sudarshan defines think tanks as “policy research organizations to set agendas and to contribute to management using information support and

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<sup>213</sup> See William H. Robinson, “The Congressional Research Service: Policy Consultant, Think Tank, and Information Factory”, in *Organizations for Policy Analysis: Helping Government Think*, ed. Carol

H. Weiss (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1992), pp.181-200; and James G. McGann, “Academics to Ideologues: A Brief History of the Public Policy Research Industry,” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 25, no. 4 (1992), p.736.

<sup>214</sup> Nelson Polsby, “Tanks but No Tanks”, *Public Opinion*, (April/May 1983), pp.14-16.

<sup>215</sup> Hellmut Wollmann, *Comparing Public Sector Reform in Britain and Germany*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 12

proficiency".<sup>216</sup> In this definition, an emphasis on agenda setting draws attention. It is this particular feature of think tanks which leads scholars to use agenda setting theory while dealing with think tanks.

Against this backdrop, this dissertation argues for a necessity to examine think tanks from a holistic perspective. What this dissertation means by holistic is that: It is not possible for a single theory or perspective to fully explain the phenomenon of think tanks or the role they play. In order to provide a better explanation, this dissertation uses the Gramscian perspective by acknowledging the fact that the other theories have different features to understand the functions of think tanks. However, none of them grasps the essence of relationship between think tanks, foreign policy makers and think tanks' sponsors Gramscian concepts such as hegemony, organic intellectual will be used to understand the relationship between think tanks, foreign policy elites and sponsors of think tanks. In this regard, plurality of think tanks and its relationship with the capital owners will be analyzed through Gramscian concepts. On the other hand, the question of how think tanks are used in setting the agenda will be answered through the concept of hegemony.

Stone and Garnett claim that the concept that insists on the freedom or autonomy of think tanks from the government to stand as an "unattached" organization seems only belonging to the Anglo-American culture that introduces quite distinctive features compared to other political cultures.<sup>217</sup> However, it is not always possible to state that think tanks are independent and autonomous.

There are a lot of countries in the world with hardly visible borders between their academic circles and the government so any struggle to insert the notion of freedom into the description of think tanks in such countries seems to be in

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<sup>216</sup> Sudarshan, "New Partnership in Research: Activists and Think Tanks", p.87.

<sup>217</sup> Stone and Garnett, "Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance", p.3

vain.<sup>218</sup> When the political structures and institutions in underdeveloped countries are examined and the culture of tolerance is taken into account, it would be naive to think that an institution that generates ideas about foreign policy is independent in these countries. Foreign policy includes sensitivity and privacy for many countries. In this sense, reaching a level of expertise is an endeavor that takes years. Despite all these restrictions, it is not possible to find many organizations which claim that they operate as think tanks even in many less developed countries.

Ueno asserts that when research branches of private sector are kept out of the description and when only a Western kind of understanding for think tanks is considered, it will be quite difficult to find any such organization in East Asia.<sup>219</sup> While it is obvious that the qualities of think tanks idealized by Western thinkers do not match examples from other parts of the world, we will either not call these organizations as think tanks or create more comprehensive but conflicting definitions for think tanks. On the other hand, it can be stated that, wherever they are, think tanks are in an effort to generate consent top-down or in different directions. This clearly reveals the effectiveness of Gramsci's point of view in perceiving these structures. In fact, the limitation in a particular geography is due to the fact that other qualities of that country will not allow existence of an independent think tank. In other words, we cannot talk about the existence of a think tank that expresses its independence in a geography where political and democratic freedoms do not exist. There are a lot of organizations operating as part of state organizations known as "think tanks".<sup>220</sup> Examples for these kinds

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid., p. 5

<sup>219</sup> Makiko Ueno, "Northeast Asian Think Tanks: Toward Building Capacity for More Democratic Societies", in *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalysts for Ideas and Action*, eds. James G. McGann and R. Kent Weaver, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2000), p.223.

<sup>220</sup> Stone, "Recycling Bins, Garbage Cans or Think Tanks? Contesting Three Myths Regarding Policy Analysis Institutes", pp.8-9.

of organizations may be seen in countries such as France<sup>221</sup>, South Korea<sup>222</sup>, China<sup>223</sup>, Russia<sup>224</sup> and the Philippines.<sup>225</sup> In particular countries, like Germany<sup>226</sup>, and Malaysia<sup>227</sup>, certain organizations sustain official connections with political parties. It would be meaningless to say that it produces free and impartial ideas. On the other hand, it is an obligation to say that a quality product produced by any think tank, whether it is dependent or associated, is extremely valuable and should be considered. In other words, not being fully independent does not require to ignore those think tanks' importance or quality of their products. Think tanks can produce extremely useful information in the fields they are dealing with, and offer those products to the service of the state or other institutions. However, the point to be taken into consideration here is that the produced information should be used with the awareness that it creates power. The connection of think tanks with the state, party or other structures can ensure

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<sup>221</sup> See Cathrine Fieschi and John Gaffney, "French Think Tanks in Comparative Perspective", in *Think Tanks Across Nations: A Comparative Approach*, eds. Diane Stone, Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp.42-58.

<sup>222</sup> See Il-Dong Koh, "Restructuring Korea's Think Tanks", <http://www.nira.go.jp/publ/review/98autumn/koh.html>, (17 September 2017).

<sup>223</sup> See David Shambaugh, "China's International Relations Think Tanks: Evolving Structure and Process", *The China Quarterly*, (2002), pp.575-596 and Murray Scot Tanner "Changing Windows on a Changing China: The Evolving "Think Tank" System and the Case of the Public Security Sector", *The China Quarterly*, (2002), pp.559-574.

<sup>224</sup> See Vladimir B. Yakubovsky, "A Short History of Russian Think Tanks", <http://www.nira.go.jp/publ/review/95winter/yakubo.html>, (17 September 2017).

<sup>225</sup> See Herman Joseph S. Kraft, "A Look at Think Tanks in the Philippines", <http://www.nira.go.jp/publ/review/99winter/kraft.html>, (25 September 2017).

<sup>226</sup> Winard Gellner, "Think Tanks in Germany", in *Think Tanks Across Nations: A Comparative Approach*, eds. Diane Stone, Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp.82-106.

<sup>227</sup> See Su-ming Koo, "Think Tanks and Intellectual Participation in Malaysian Discourses of Development", in *Think Tanks Across Nations: A Comparative Approach*, eds. Diane Stone, Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp.166-187.

that the end product is offered to the use of the end buyer. Otherwise, a researcher in the think tank will not be different from experts who produce independent research outside. In order for the state to find out what information it needs and how to meet this need, it is a necessity to find a link between think tanks and state institutions and the superstructures they are affiliated with. In this sense, think tanks perform a very important task, but it does not seem right to say that they are independent and objective while performing these tasks. It will turn into a spokesperson for the government and a means for legitimizing its political decisions in order to establish or sustain its hegemony. Although scope of the relationship and level of commitment changes from time to time, this network of relationships will become an important tool for creating consent, in Gramsci's words, between members and affiliates. If the country is at a higher level of economic and political development, which has a say in the world, the think tank will be able to position itself at a different point in an instant. In addition to the fact that it is possible to talk about the structure of think tanks operating in parallel with party policies in the USA, it is not wrong to say that these think tanks coincide with the government from time to time. If our example continues to be the United States, it will be seen that the think tank in question may become a means of recreating hegemony. The think tank will attempt to make media setting and agenda setting through national and/or international media organizations that it owns or is associated with. The international network it is in will provide instant dissemination of information or strategy all over the world. Organic intellectual groups within its body will continue to carry the demands of hegemony to all different platforms and provide a curtain of objectivity.

In Japan,<sup>228</sup> for example, profit-based companies enjoy a connection with research organizations. Consequently, think tanks are apprehended incrementally more from the standpoint of a policy research function, and a group of comparative investigation or suggestion applications than a particular legitimate

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<sup>228</sup> See Madoka Nakamura, "Toward the Public Interest? Transformation of the Policy Community in Japan", NIRA Review, Vol.7, No.4 (Autumn 2000), pp.42-47; and Tomochika Shimizu, "Japanese Think Tanks: An Overview", <http://www.nira.go.jp/publ/review/97spring/shimizu.html>, (25 September 2017).

institutional establishment without any governmental or partisan attachments.<sup>229</sup>

Another set of definitions is made by Robin Niblett to highlight a different perspective of definitions on think tanks. According to Niblett, first, ‘the original main goal of think tanks is to infuse political debate with analysis based on facts and expertise, not on opinions or bias’.<sup>230</sup> If there is an illusion in the nature of the product produced by the think tank, the very reason for existence will disappear. The information produced is not erroneous, but must indicate a specific interest so that it can maintain its relationship with the superstructure to which it is connected. Moreover, as a second parameter, he argues that think tanks need is to think big. In his words, “new ideas are needed to promote more inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth, and to reinvigorate existing governance systems and propose new ones, lest societies across the world slip back into the darker periods of the twentieth century”.<sup>231</sup> The obligation of think tanks to produce new ideas comes from the necessity of determining the strategies that will ensure the continuity of the existing system as Gramsci puts it. If the crisis in the current system is not eliminated, power will change hands. For instance, they should engage in “confidence-building and de-escalation measures in aspects of global and political tension”. Thirdly, Niblett claims that think tanks must be a “force for positive change”. In this sense, think tanks tend to focus “instinctively on risks and pay less attention to positive developments”.<sup>232</sup> According to him, another way is that think tanks have to

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<sup>229</sup> Stone, “Think Tanks and Policy Advice in Countries in Transition”, p.3. According to Stone, “due to the varieties of think tank that have emerged, equating the term ‘think tank’ with scientific expertise and policy analytic mission becomes increasingly untenable.” See Stone, “Recycling Bins, Garbage Cans or Think Tanks? Contesting Three Myths Regarding Policy Analysis Institutes”, p.2.

<sup>230</sup> Robin Niblett, “Rediscovering a Sense of Purpose: The Challenge for Western Think-Tanks,” *International Affairs* Vol. 94, No. 6 (2018), p. 1423.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., p. 1424

invest in innovation. In his words, ‘they should put more time and resources at risk in the directions in which sub state, NGOs, and other independent actors can lead to positive change’.<sup>233</sup>

Lastly, he underlines that “think tanks’ ability to offer credible and sustainable solutions will depend on their ability to engage a greater diversity of voices in their research and policy recommendations”.<sup>234</sup> In terms of methodology that think tanks use, he argues that:

Think tanks should also broaden the scope of their research methodologies so as to incorporate the ways in which individuals acting in concert have the potential to be more powerful than institutions in responding to complex policy challenges, such as climate change, resource overconsumption and rising health costs.<sup>235</sup>

According to the implementations and conventional customs of various countries, it seems impossible to contain all the “think tanks” scattered around the world into one type of description. Plus, no agreement is reached in Turkey about the qualities of a think tank. In Turkey, to come up with a common definition of think tanks is quite difficult. As stated before, think tanks adapt themselves to the conditions of the host countries. Yet they claim that they are independent and impartial even if they do not have these qualities since these qualities are universally valid. Otherwise, their credibility will disappear. To talk about the independence of a think tank, it must be self-sufficient, at least financially, in order to run its activities. However, even if there are any think tanks with this opportunity, it is extremely limited. On the other hand, bonding or dependence on any institution naturally eliminates the possibility of criticizing that organization. The more the think tank is connected to an institution, the

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<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid. p. 1426

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

more it remains weak towards that institution or organization and hence biased.

Naturally, it is not possible to talk about full independence of think tanks. On the other hand, since think tanks are not pure academic institutions, they act within the framework of the acceptance of their products. Otherwise, the think tank will have to take on a completely different organizational structure. In simple economic terms, the think tank, acting in line with the demands of the customer, acts to please the customer. In Turkey, where there is high dependency relationship at this stage to mention the existence of a think tank is extremely difficult. However, one should not deny the existence of think tanks with different qualities.

Another important distinction that has to mentioned here is the difference between a lobby group and a think tank. On the one hand, lobby group pressures the decision makes to take measurements in line with the lobbyist depending on their position. However, they do not recommend policies or have instruments to shape or influence public consent. In other words, they don't function as legitimization tool in the process of decision making. Instead, they focus only to persuade decision makers to take a decision in accordance with their interests.

Still, against this backdrop, this dissertation adopts the following definition which would suit better for its purposes: think tank is “a foundation or establishment with policy-based research and analysis assignments to affect the thought and policy of the community in Turkey with no attention spared on the consideration of its being nongovernmental or not”.<sup>236</sup> Although it is not possible to talk about a Western-style think tank in Turkey yet since this tradition started in the West, the process in Turkey has come a long way.

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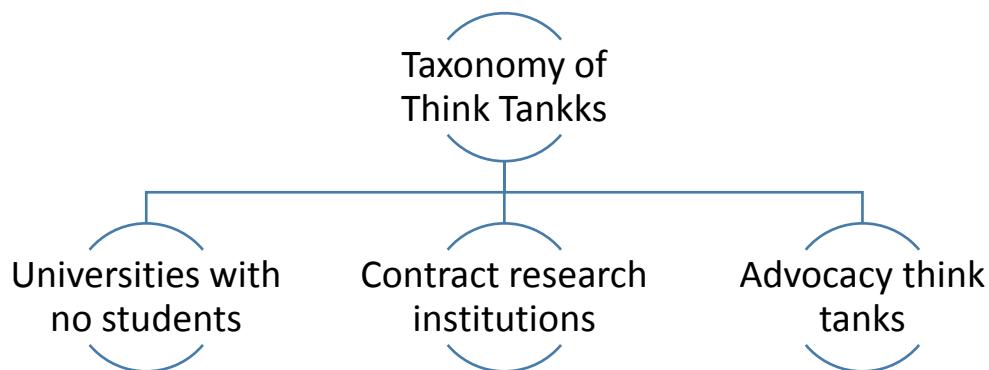
<sup>236</sup> Stone, “Recycling Bins, Garbage Cans or Think Tanks? Contesting Three Myths Regarding Policy Analysis Institutes”, p. 11

### 3.2. Taxonomy of Think Tanks

There are different organizational settings and legitimate regulations in which think tanks pursue their activities. Categorizing think tanks in terms of their research plans, personnel structure, and principal organizational goals will help create typologies. The taxonomies rendered by Weaver and McGann are the most often quoted ones among others.<sup>237</sup>

In Weaver's view, universities with no students, contract research institutions, and advocacy think-tanks comprise the three principal models of think tanks in the US.<sup>238</sup>

**Table 3.** Taxonomy of Think Thanks



The universities with no students emerged as a result of serious dependency on scholars as functionaries, supported financially by the private sector, and bound to produce book-like research as their main output. It can be seen that many academics, whom we can see as organic intellectuals, work in this type of think tanks that format themselves. These types of academics are used as a means of providing the objectivity that think tanks need, as well as increasing the product

<sup>237</sup> Maarten A. Hager and Wytske Versteeg, "Performing Networks," *European Political Science* Vol. 4, No. 3 (2005), p. 347.

<sup>238</sup> Kent R. Weaver, "The Changing World of Think Tanks," *PS: Political Science & Politics* Vol. 22, No. 3 (1989), p. 563.

quality. They sell the knowledge they have acquired throughout their academic career in return for the opportunities offered by think tanks. It will not be possible to say that the information produced by these researchers is objective now. It can be said that the researchers working in these organizations now have a new notion and have started to use their qualities in the service of the private sector or think tanks. These academics shape all their talents within the interests of think tanks. They have made themselves an instrument of hegemony. While making these criticisms, it is necessary to admit that some think tanks can actually turn into a university without students as expressed in the definition. The statement made is not valid for all think tanks. This typology has a definitional conflict within itself. Because one side cannot have two qualities at the same time. Either one or the other. It can be stated that an organization that claims to be both does not have all the features of both but assumes a third structure. The emphasis on university reflects this effort of think tanks that want to gather on the positive meanings of the word. If a think tank wants to be a student-less university, it can easily be understood that it is not a think tank, or that it is not a university at all. It might mean that it tries to create a perception. In that case, it reveals that think tanks do not serve pure academic thought.

However, efforts are being made to explain the general course of action. The diversity of think tanks makes it impossible to fully explain these organizations with a single theory and understanding. Whichever theory is more effective in any given country should be examined on a case-by-case basis. It is especially necessary if one tries to adhere to the holistic perspective.

Their difference stems from policy adaptation of their studies. This adaptation, which takes interest in eventual inference of lengthy policy options, tends to be a long-ranged one. The father of the earliest kind of think tank is the Brookings Institution itself. Other think tanks can also be added to this classification of universities with no students, such as the American Enterprise Institute; the Hoover Institution; the Cato Institute; the Institute for Policy Studies; the

Institute for International Economics; the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Carnegie Endowment.<sup>239</sup>

The contract research organization is another kind of think tank. Instead of books or monographs, contract researchers more often than produce papers for particular state establishments. Government bodies, or in short, decision makers, resort to such think tanks when they need expert advice but where conventional sources of information are insufficient. Universities are slower compared to think tanks and the information or report produced by universities is not directly suitable for the use of decision makers. The decision maker will want to use a report that can be used for specific, instant policy production. The report should be useful for him, offering practical solutions, and helping him in the face of a problem s/he encounters. As can be seen here, think tanks emerge or adapt their activities as a result of the needs of the decision maker. However, the need to have a high level of expertise and quality underscores the need for academics who have worked in universities for many years. Otherwise, the decision maker will try to meet his/her needs through bureaucrats. Bureaucrats generally do not have the qualifications to compete with experts in think tanks because they do not improve their professional qualities due to job guarantee. However, as one observes, bureaucrats who are experts in their fields can work in think tanks after their retirement.

Indeed, if the agency decides to keep the reports off the public, it may be impossible to reach them. As is the case with the Rand Corporation, which is the main contract researcher for the US Defense Department, and with the Urban Institute, which depends on the US Government to produce jobs, these organizations choose to sustain special connections with certain state agencies. It can be used when the decision maker wants to seek the opinions of impartial experts on a particular issue. This is because such organizations do not have to sell their products, and they may not have to reflect the thoughts of a

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid., pp.564-565.

superstructure to their products. More can be said for objective information. Both the rule of objectivity and economic reliance of the organization to sometimes more than one agency put unavoidable pressure internally over the contract research organization model.<sup>240</sup>

The advocacy think tank is the third and last kind. It is the youngest, biggest, and quickest growing type. An endeavor to affect recent policy arguments, a biased or ideological orientation with a belligerent dealership, and a powerful policy are put together in the advocacy think tank. It would be much easier to say that such think tanks are the Gramscian, ruling elites, a means of creating social consent for the sustainability of the ideology. It may be easier to see and understand the function of the think tank due to its typology. It can be expressed as a means of legitimizing the structure to which it depends. It can be said that Gramscian explanations are easier to apply to such think tanks than others. As elite theorists express, such organizations have become an instrument of certain interest groups. The other feature of the think tank stems only from the effort to increase the quality of the work done or from the effort to reach their goals. Organizations that qualify as think tanks of less developed countries are included in this typology. However, it would not be correct to say that such think tanks are only seen in underdeveloped countries. Think tanks acting within the framework of party ideologies are also seen in some developed western economies. Because their aim is to provide legitimacy to the decision maker rather than creating original ideas and thoughts, instead of carrying out original studies, advocacy think tanks make synthesis and bring different features of the available studies into the light. There are a few motives regarding their establishment. As in the case of the right-wing Heritage Foundation, explicit partisanship and ideological tendencies can be observed in most of them.<sup>241</sup> The ones like the Public Policy Institute and the Economic Policy Institute are intimately dependent on special

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid., pp.564-565.

<sup>241</sup> Abelson, "Think Tanks in the United States.", p. 112

stakes or institutions. There are also hardships faced by advocacy think tanks through their struggle to shape policy arguments. The most crucial hardship they face is the transparency of their point to avoid being pushed aside or dismissed owing to the organization's perception of firmness and foreseeability.<sup>242</sup>

According to Abelson's claim, one may encounter some problems when trying to categorize the think tanks as regards to particular organizational conditions.<sup>243</sup> Some properties may be included in more than one class of think tanks for certain institutions. Abelson's view is agreed upon the other academics because of his conviction that a think tank should not be enclosed in a single typology. Because a think tank can be evaluated in more than one typology in terms of time and the product it produces. The studies are done, and the outputs are sold, but the level of such activities change. For this reason, instead of sealing off the incomparable sides of these think tanks, clarifying their principal task would be a lot more suitable.<sup>244</sup>

Even though Weaver's taxonomy seems helpful in the US, it is difficult to apply it to all different kinds of think tanks in the world like a political party-affiliated and government-affiliated think tanks. It is not a very meaningful struggle to try to classify think tanks or to put any think tank into a certain mold. Rather than creating a general typology by creating a single pattern, it would be useful to highlight which typologies stand out for each country. Think tanks shape themselves according to the political, economic and social characteristics of the countries in which they are located. In other words, they turn into hybrid structures in line with the needs.

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<sup>242</sup> Weaver, "The Changing World of Think Tanks," pp.567-568.

<sup>243</sup> Abelson, "Think Tanks in the United States.", p. 113

<sup>244</sup> Donald E. Abelson and Christine M. Carberry, "Following Suit or Falling Behind? A Comparative Analysis of Think Tanks in Canada and the United States", *Canadian Journal of Political Science* Vol. 31, No.3 (1998), pp.531-532.

In an effort to cover the complete span of think tanks all over the world, McGann set up six categories by paying attention to the analytical discrepancies in political regimes and civil communities.<sup>245</sup>

1. The first type is named Political Party Affiliated. As may well be understood from its name, this is the type of think tank enjoying close connections with a political party. The Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) (Germany), the Jaures Foundation (France), and the Progressive Policy Institute (USA) can be cited among the kinds.
2. State Affiliated. It is the kind of think tank that comprises of some political body or organ of any establishment in a state. Think tanks like the China Development Institute (China), the Institute for Political & International Studies (Iran), and the Congressional Research Service (USA) can be cited as some examples of the state connected ones.
3. Autonomous and Neutral. It is the kind of think tank that enjoys an important degree of independence from any unit or benefactor and enjoys autonomy in its activities and financial resources of the state.
4. Semi-State Affiliated. It is the kind of think tank that is financially supported both by state donations and agreements with special arrangements, but in no way does it have ties to any official establishment of the state.
5. Semi-Neutral. This is a kind of think tank that enjoys autonomy from the state but it is for the most part financially supported by an interest group, benefactor, or contractor and that is why its activities are directed to a great extent by those actors.
6. University Affiliated. A policy research section in any university can be included in this type.

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<sup>245</sup> McGann, “Think Tanks and the Transnationalization of Foreign Policy”, p.14.

All definitions point to a degree of dependence regardless of the category. This largely justifies the understanding of elite theory. Regardless of the category and quality of the think tank, it is necessary to put forward how it functions, to whom it serves, what goals it aims to achieve, rather than the typology of the think tank. Otherwise, it is okay to get lost in the details instead of having a wider perspective.

**Table 4.** Classification of Think Tanks Affiliations<sup>246</sup>

CLASS	DESCRIPTION
AUTONOMIC AND NEUTRAL	Enjoys great deal of freedom from any units or benefactor and autonomous in its activities and financial issues from government.
SEMI NEUTRAL	Financially supported by some units and that is why there is an important influence exercised by them over its activities.
STATE AFFILIATED	component of any official establishment in a state.
SEMI STATE AFFILIATED	The state support is privately provided for this kind, but it does not comprise any official structure of the state.
UNIVERSITY AFFILIATED	A policy research organ at a university.
POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATED	Enjoys an official affiliation with a political party.
CORPORATE (FOR PROFIT)	Enjoys close relations with private sector and it is a public policy research institution with a profit oriented base.

<sup>246</sup>James G. McGann, "2017 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report" (2017). TTCSP Global Go To Think Tank Index Reports, pp.8-9,  
<https://www.diis.dk/files/media/documents/activities/2017-go-to-think-tank-report-ggtti-2017.pdf>

Stone's taxonomy shares similar aspects with that of McGann and according to his taxonomy think tanks are categorized under five headings:<sup>247</sup>

1. “Free civil society think tanks, institutions with no profit expectations;
2. Policy research institutes, based in or linked to a university;
3. Founded by state or Government-sponsored think tanks;
4. Founded by the private sector or business linked think tanks;
5. Political party think tanks.”

**Table 5.** Stone's Typology

Stone's typology				
Free civil society think tanks	Policy research institutions	Founded by state or government	Founded by the private	Political party think tanks

Even though pluralist scholars use different expressions, they try to describe more or less the same groups when they come to explain the typologies. The underlying reason for such diversity of think tanks is the economic levels, political structures and cultures of the countries in which they exist. Think tanks act according to and adapt to the conditions of the country in which they are located.

A completely new classification is provided by Weaver and McGann.<sup>248</sup> These new think tanks are named as vanity and legacy-based think tanks. The whims of

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<sup>247</sup> Diane Stone, “Think Tanks and Policy Advice in Countries in Transition” (Asian Development Bank Institute Symposium: “How to Strengthen Policy-Oriented Research and Training in Vietnam, Hanoi, 2005), pp. 4–5,  
<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/156673/adbi-dp36.pdf>.

the state officials (or their backers) and the aims of the previously elected managers to promote their ideological and political ideas serve as the cause for emergence of these new think tanks.<sup>249</sup>

Some European scholars make a kind of country-specific categorization according to the think tank culture in those countries. Think tanks in Germany are classified as “universities with no students”, “interest-based” and “interest-bound” organization by Gellner.<sup>250</sup> The motivation of the interest-based think tanks which are structurally free organizations is to stay away from any type of political party or group dominance and to work for the public with zero profit expectations. What is common to all these is the fictitious institutional freedom together with visible political and ideological tendencies. Experts in establishing a basis for systems, it is almost impossible for interest-based think tanks to bring out any scholarly work.<sup>251</sup> Interest-bound think tanks make the third classification. All they do is just provide research to support partisan political actors and managers. A generation of a scholarly study falls behind the institutional operation. These types of think tanks usually work in parallel with political parties or organizations of specific interest units. The employer associations’ Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft (IW), the trade unions’ Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut (WSI), CDU’s KAS, and

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<sup>248</sup> Weaver and McGann, “Think Tanks and Civil Societies in a Time of Change.”, in *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalysts for Ideas and Action*, eds. James G. McGann and Kent R. Weaver, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2000), p. 34

<sup>249</sup> Donald E. Abelson, “Think Tanks in the United States”, in *Think Tanks Across Nations: A Comparative Approach*, eds. Diane Stone, Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p.114.

<sup>250</sup> Gellner, “Think Tanks in Germany”, p. 84.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid, pp.85-86

SPD's Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) may all be included in this kind of think tank classification.<sup>252</sup>

When think tanks in Europe and the USA are compared categorically, it can be seen how they differ dramatically. Political culture and economic development cause this. However, no matter how different they are, the interests of hegemonic interest groups concern the entire world. But also, regardless of this reason, a network of indirect or direct relations between think tanks and other non-governmental organizations can be witnessed. This relationship fits within the framework of the concept of integral state.<sup>253</sup>

The farther away from the democratic tradition, the easier it will be to identify the think tank and its affiliated structure (whether this is a state, a party, or an interest group). Think tanks trying to come to life in the Middle Eastern countries as an extension of their western examples are in contact with their western counterparts and build themselves according to the format of their western predecessors.

Krastev classifies the think tanks, according to their objectives, in the Middle and East European countries as follows: "government-oriented", "legislation-oriented" and "media-oriented".<sup>254</sup>

The first type characteristically enjoys imminent connections with a political party or with a politician personally. The future of these think tanks mostly

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid., pp.86 and 92-94

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., p. 95

<sup>254</sup> Krastev, "Post-Communist Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence." in *Banking on Knowledge: The Genesis of the Global Development Network*, ed. Diane Stone, (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 152

depends on these political figures in the way that both emerge and fall almost at the same time.

The second one, which is called Legislation-oriented think tanks, as a principle, makes use of the benefactor's interest in issuing new legislation. They strive to maintain their status as impartial organizations anyways.

Media-oriented think tanks are the third ones. Their main tool to exert impact is their popularity in media. The distinguishing characteristics of the media-oriented think tanks is their easy-to-adjust research agenda.

### **3.3. Policy Making and Think Tanks**

The impression of the think tanks to a great extent is related to their capability to work mutually within the policy systems such as policy communities, advocacy coalitions, and discourse coalitions. To create an opportunity for decision making and application, the players from inside or outside of the state are included in a policy system. This is how the think tanks can be embedded in policy making processes through systems. The publicity and unofficial attendance by systems in a decision-making process is generally emphasized by Pluralists. However, that policy system can hinder the requests for alteration to maintain the interests and concessions of the state for foreign policy makers or interest groups. By excluding the voters, systems hamper the political task.<sup>255</sup>

As it is indicated, think tanks have been considered as elite foundations enjoying imminent and perdurable links with policy makers, or just like pluralists as state-free foundations among others with the intention of affecting public policy, or as foundations comprised of specialists attending in policy and epistemic societies by scholars.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> R.A.W Rhodes and David Marsh, "New Studies in the Study of Policy Networks," *European Journal of Policy Research* Vol. 21, No. 1 (2006), p. 182.

<sup>256</sup> David M. Ricci, *The Transformation of American Politics: The New Washington and the Rise of Think Tanks* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 14.

Despite pluralists' claim in terms of definition for the public policy showing it as a product of group rivalry, their analysis does not consider the question of whether certain organizations can be situated in a better way to affect the policy decisions than others because they have an immense number of associates, major income sources and greater number of personnel. To suppress the status and reputation of their rival's status in the policy making society, think tanks depend on their proficiency and connections with policy makers.<sup>257</sup> As a reflection of Gramscian understanding a substructure, which sustains relations and lets the players be acknowledged through their research, is constructed by organizations. In this regard, it is seen that systems cannot be equated solely with a political impression; however, they certainly have the capacity of increasing the influence level of the think tanks in affecting policies. Systems are thought of as centers for the creation of new ideas in which academic or scholarly heavy hands can make use of promoting policy resolutions.

The answer to the question of "how the information is politicized by think tanks" lies in the systemizing attempt of policy entrepreneurs to seize the political agenda. To be able to activate the system and union structures, it is very important to establish relations with mass media, trade groups, political parties, high ranking officials, and divisions. Beliefs and views are enhanced by capable experts through unofficial connections. At this stage, proficiency assets are presented to the public sector by think tanks working through state organizations and conventional commissions. The task of public policy research organizations is to produce policy-oriented studies, analysis, designs, and suggestions regarding the internal and intranational matters with no-profit expectations.<sup>258</sup> What is more, these research products are made explicit to the policymakers by

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<sup>257</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, p. 25

<sup>258</sup> Diane Stone and Mark Garnett, "Introduction: Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance," in *Think Tanks Across Nations*, ed. Diane Stone, Andrew Denham, and Mark Garnett (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 16–17.

public policy research organizations assuming the connective role between the scholar and policy environments.<sup>259</sup>

The think tanks work on foreign policy with the responsibility of intermediation of thoughts between the ‘fantastic world of scholars’ and ‘policy making circles of the state’ in the ever-growing vying emporium of opinions.<sup>260</sup> They function by themselves to exert an impact on decision making. There is a rivalry between think tanks to draw attention of mass media and politics together with the funding sources. As a result, strategic points in the political discussions are promoted by think tanks to get an appearance in the media. Hence, they acquire followers in the state and media sphere. A system of academics settled in universities, bureaucracies, and industries is put to use by think tanks to formulate answers to related issues. Think tanks endeavor to create an environment in which players from the states, parliaments, military, or bureaucracy can meet through conferences, seminars, or workshops in an attempt to align them with mutual goals and benefits.<sup>261</sup>

Diane Stone asserts that ‘a clearer account is given by the notion of the epistemic societies regarding the role of think tanks in between parties of policy specialists’<sup>262</sup>. What an epistemic community is an interdisciplinary web of experts with a joint philosophy of life and goals of applying their ideas to the public policy. Thus, it is a matter of time before these organizations start to exert influence on the politics and change the public view as soon as the subject is raised by an epistemic society. In having from political powerholders, epistemic

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<sup>259</sup> James G. McGann, *The Competition for Dollars, Scholars and Influence in the Public Policy Research Industry* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1995), pp. 31–32.

<sup>260</sup> Stone and Garnett, “Introduction: Think Tanks, Policy Advice and Governance,” p. 17.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., p. 18

societies can make use of research organizations. The objective of the think tanks is to legitimize their answers in the eyes of the state is to focus public attention on the new questions. Nonetheless, it cannot be claimed that the capacity of epistemic societies to reform political planning will ever be indefectible.

What is more, there are several ways to influence the public view such as printed works, mass media offerings, lectures, seminars, or through the internet. Although think tanks use a wide variety of methods to shape the public opinion, it does not seem possible in the short term to determine the degree of this influence. This effect may be achieved only in certain limited areas as a result of very detailed and costly studies. However, it can still be argued that think tanks can be influential in forming public opinion at least to a certain extend. This effect may vary from case to case or in different time frames. We can say that think tanks are more effective in countries with an open approach to policy making processes. On the contrary, in countries where political making processes are closed, this rate of efficiency decreases. What matters here is not the degree of influence, but the extent of influence and the efforts of think tanks to increase their influence vis-a-vis decision makers and the public. When the policies faced by the countries become more complicated and when standard information units do not function effectively, there will be more need for think tanks in more specific areas. It does not seem very meaningful to ask for detailed information on a specific subject from a bureaucrat or from a foreign policy maker who does his standard job and has a certain level of experience. Especially in such matters, bureaucrats need the opinions of experts. As a result of the cumbersome structures of bureaucrats' institutions, they cannot quickly adapt to new problems. Think tanks have the opportunity and capability to meet this requirement. The only problem that can be faced here is how reliable the information created by the think tank is.

As noted by Diane Stone, there is a need for institutions, academics, and intellectuals to transmit the opinions to decision makers. Moreover, they have the

capability of changing public's view with their ideas in an unstraightforward way. However, this capability does not mean that think tanks shapes public opinion on foreign policy issues since foreign policy is not an issue that everyone in the society interested. Instead, they use their capability to influence foreign policy makers and organic intellectuals who have an important role on creation of consent. The views of the research organizations are fed into policy making. There is an opportunity presented by think tanks for the prominent scholars, administrators, and journalists of market-placing their policy improvements. Diane Stone blames the low-profile visions of the political scientists who frequently underestimate the gains made by the organizations as the reason for the policy renewal, as trainers of the community and as policy counselors.<sup>263</sup>

Despite this denouncement, Diane Stone keeps asserting that epistemic societies work as intermediaries evaluating the political agenda, restricting the discussions to essential issues, and promoting the consciousness awareness of powerful political actors.<sup>264</sup> There is an opportunity for research organizations to demonstrate their overall capacity within the epistemic society. In this respect, Stone also addresses policy enterprisers with a façade of charitable training centers, which have assumed the political partisanship of a purpose in the clash of opinions. For this reason, an investigation must be put into practice regarding their opinions, policy offers, and effects on the public view.<sup>265</sup> If Gehlen's views of this issue are considered, it will be seen that there is no difference in functions of these organizations' policy offerings in the policy-making process.<sup>266</sup> There

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>264</sup> Stone, "Think Tanks and Policy Advice in Countries in Transition," p. 6.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., p. 7

<sup>266</sup> Martin Gehlen, *Policy advice in the USA. The Influence of Think Tanks on American Social Policy*, (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2005): p. 18

are no longer any other proficiency options presented by them. In contrast, all they do is to get hidden behind the goal of enhancing their private accounts.

To sum up, this chapter summarized the discussions concerning the definition of the concept of think tank. There are different approaches to understand this phenomenon. In this sense, Gramscian concepts bring a fresh perspective to grasp the role of think tanks in foreign policy making by using concepts such as hegemony or organic intellectuals in addition to the role of think tanks in agenda setting and their relationship with the elites. Moreover, taxonomy of think tanks is very crucial to understand how think tanks are organized and operate. McGann's taxonomy provides a necessary framework to analyze the concept of think tanks through Gramscian understanding.

## CHAPTER 4

### THINK TANKS AND FOREIGN POLICY MAKING IN THE WORLD

For most of the 20th century, think tanks (nongovernmental, non-profit-making organizations that perform analysis and supply recommendations of public policy) were a structured development found primarily within the US, with a way smaller variety in the North American continent and Western Europe. According to the Gramscian theory, in order for think tanks to exist, the capitalist economic order must reach a certain level of saturation and qualified classes that will need the service provided by think tanks must be formed.<sup>267</sup> When think tanks fulfill their duties properly, they actually do a complicated job. This requires a high level of expertise. As the idea that will ensure the continuity of the current order must be presented to the target audience or to the decision maker in the most acceptable format producing it in a timely and appropriate manner. Otherwise, the work done will have no value. In order for the think tank to fulfill this function properly, it must have sufficient and strong ties with decision makers and their immediate surroundings. This is one of the features that distinguishes think tanks from universities, which are academic institutions. The academic at the university does not need to conduct his/her research with political considerations or to present it in a format that the decision maker can understand. Many valuable scholarly works do not get the value they deserve because they are not produced on the time that political conditions require, do not reach the appropriate audience, or because their producer does not have sufficient connections.

The products of think tanks should also be shared with the departments related with the public opinion in order to ensure the consent of the public, an agenda

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<sup>267</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*, p. 22.

should be created in the public sphere, the issue should be discussed, and efforts should be made to ensure that the most accepted ideas are in line with the arguments of think tanks. This whole process has only one purpose, and that is the understanding of the parties that have interests in the continuation of the current order. Otherwise, differences may be experienced in sharing the surplus generated by the capitalist system. As a matter of fact, despite all efforts, it will not be possible to avoid breaking the system when the time comes.

There has been a veritable proliferation of “think tanks” since the 1970s. Abelson states that ‘two-thirds of all the think tanks that exist these days were established after 1970, and over fifty percent of them were established after 1980’<sup>268</sup>. In regions such as continental Europe, Japan, and Central Asia, think tanks are a more modern phenomenon, and most institutions were created in the last decade. .<sup>269</sup>

Think tanks now operate in various political systems, engage in a number of policy-related activities, and are comprised of various organizations with various organizational forms.<sup>270</sup> The reason why think tanks have developed into such different structures is to keep up with the political, economic and social conditions of the country they are in. McGann argues that ‘while all think tanks perform the same basic function – i.e., to bring knowledge and expertise to endow on the policy making process – not all think tanks have the same degree of financial, intellectual, and legal independence’.<sup>271</sup> All think tanks serve the same purpose, but the classes and political structures of every environment in

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<sup>268</sup> Ibid., p. 22

<sup>269</sup> Ibid., p. 23

<sup>270</sup> James G. McGann, *Comparative Think Tanks, Politics and Public Policy*, (London: Edward Elgar, 2004): p. 35

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., p. 36

which they exist do not have the same qualities and needs. It will be seen that the more integrated with the international system, the more similarity is achieved.

The test taking all think tanks is how to get and maintain their independence so they can speak “truth to power”.<sup>272</sup> Many policymakers and NGOs around the world are trying to establish free think tanks to assist their governments design policies.

Nevertheless, the potential of think tanks to assist and maintain democratic governments and NGOs around the globe is far from knackered. Abelson argues that ‘the challenge for the new millennium is to harness the vast reservoirs of knowledge, information, and associational energies that exist in public policy research organizations so that it can support self-sustaining economic, social, and political progress in every region of the world’.<sup>273</sup>

#### **4.1. Think Tanks in the USA**

The reason why the examples from the United States and the UK are chosen for comparative analysis is that think tanks were born due to the developed economic orders and political structures of both countries. It is possible to see real examples of think tanks in these countries. The aim is not to demonize think tanks and their functions or to impose a negative perception. In fact, by looking at the functions they perform, the functions of protecting the capitalist order will be better understood. The most distinctive characteristic of American think tanks is their independence. To grasp the exceptional nature of the think tank

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<sup>272</sup> Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes* , p. 31

<sup>273</sup> Donald Abelson, ‘Think Tanks, Public Policy and Constitutional Politics in Canada’, in *The Myth of the Sacred: The Charter, the Courts and the Politics of the Constitution in Canada*, eds. Patrick James, Donald E. Abelson, and Michael Lusztig, (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s Press, 2002), p. 114

landscape within the US, one must solely consider that there are currently 736 freelance think tanks operational within the US.

Think tanks have competed for a vital role in making of domestic or foreign policy in America. The reason why think-tanks take such an aggressive approach in determining their policies is that they prioritize the interests of the groups they represent. As can easily be assumed, as the types and status of think tanks matured, academics and journalists began to pay close attention to the various factors that led to their proliferation:

- division of power
- political system
- highly developed charity understanding
- public preferring a limited role for government
- citizens who support interest groups rather than political parties to represent their interests
- preference for independent experts over politicians or bureaucrats.<sup>274</sup>

As it can be said at the first glance, the qualifications listed above can only be attained in certain countries in the world. If these qualities are necessary for the formation of think tanks, then one might ask what organizations in other countries really are. In this respect, it can be argued that having multiple financial sources and different types of think tanks for years could be basically named as a think tank culture. In this sense, think tank culture develops over years through having multiple and variable resources. Naturally, it is not possible to say that a complete think tank culture has been formed in every country. This is also true in Turkey.

Yet, as may be ascertained, the expansion in the variety of think tanks was far from equal over the 20th century. Most think tanks were established in waves.

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<sup>274</sup> McGann, *Comparative Think Tanks, Politics and Public Policy*, p. 34

After all, it is known that there are four major periods of think tank growth within the United States: the tip of the primary warfare, the tip of the second warfare, the early Sixties, and the Eighties.<sup>275</sup> Based on these periods of change, it can be said that think tanks renew themselves within the framework of the changing conditions that they adapt to the new structure in every crisis of the capitalist economic system.<sup>276</sup> Throughout the latter, a median of around thirty-five establishments was created each year, making it the biggest growth amount for the United States' think tanks.<sup>277</sup> Conversely, within the past decade, there has been a pointy decrease within the variety of think tanks established annually.<sup>278</sup> The explanations for the decreasing numbers do not seem to be well-known. However, intuition suggests that reason partially lies in a "crowding out", new policy influence channels that are favored at the expense of think tanks, therefore newcomers should struggle to seek out their place.<sup>279</sup> Moreover, the recent worsening in the economy caused fundraising difficulties which have had an adverse effect on the creation of new think tanks, for which it is troublesome to vie with a lot of stable and well-established organizations.<sup>280</sup>

Think tanks try to influence the mindset of the target audience with different publication scales and create a consent for the continuation of the hegemonic order, as Gramsci framed. These institutions often act as bridges between the educational and policy-making communities, serving the interests of the general

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<sup>275</sup> James G. McGann, *The Fifth Estate: Think Tanks, Public Policy, and Governance*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2016), p. 112

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., p. 113

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., p. 115

<sup>279</sup> Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, p. 45

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., p. 47

public as autonomous, interpreting applications and basic analysis as a language and types that are perceptible, reliable, and user-friendly by policy makers and naturally the public. The connection of think tanks with these other structures is in line with Gramsci's concept of integral state. Organizations do not try to create a tyranny independently of each other, all structures are instruments with the same purpose.

As a permanent institution, unlike unplanned think tanks or committees, think tanks use much of their financial and human resources for authorization and corporate analysis in the field of social science and policy analysis: politics, economics, public management and affairs.<sup>281</sup> McGann claims that “attempts to outline and/or reason think tanks raise a dialogue over which means of such basic terms as ‘public policy analysis,’ ‘think tank,’ and ‘advocacy’”.<sup>282</sup> The classes provided below are designed to bring these variations into focus for enlightened dialogue to occur. McGann also describes think tanks in the United States as taking one of three forms:

Firstly, there are traditional think tanks which concentrates its resources exclusively on scholarly policy research such as Hoover Institution and Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars. Secondly, Think-and-Do Tanks conduct research, policy analysis, and public outreach (Brookings Institution, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Economic Policy Institute, American Enterprise Institute, and Heritage Foundation). Finally, there are think tanks which focus all of their energies on the repacking and disseminating of other think tanks’ ideas and policy proposals (Demos, Capital Research Center, and Free Congress Foundation).<sup>283</sup>

The reason why think tanks differ so much is that the uniform message, thought, idea or ideology created by the think tank cannot be effective in gaining the consent of different social layers. The think tank tries to reach all segments by

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<sup>281</sup> McGann, *The Fifth Estate: Think Tanks, Public Policy, and Governance*, p. 131

<sup>282</sup> Ibid., p. 132

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., p. 133

diversifying its own structure and message in an effort to create consent. The message will not be transmitted only to extremes with little or no effect. This will not create a significant risk in the continuation of the order.

Nevertheless, they diversify in terms of affiliation, structure and culture, and political and philosophical orientation<sup>284</sup>. They relish from intellectual, financial, and legal independence. Their ability to formulate and publicize positions without government or business influence and intervention makes these NGOs very important participants in civil society and provides them with a higher quality audience.

While within the USA there is a tendency towards freelance think tanks, the bulk of the think tanks throughout the remainder of the planet are related to political parties, governments, or companies. However, the quantity of freelance think tanks worldwide is currently growing because the advantages of actual independent public policy analysis are completed, and as alternative civil society organizations grow in number and influence.

In the US, the norm for an outsized think tank is to be headed by a president or business executive, either one is the public face of the organization and during this capability is the chief voice, fundraiser, and strategies for the organization.<sup>285</sup> To achieve success, this individual should have a rare set of skills, such as solid educational credentials, management and promotion expertise, and political acumen.

Generally, the varied topics of analysis are appointed to workers who concentrate on a low variety of fields or geographical areas. Medvetz states that:

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid., p. 135

<sup>285</sup> Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, p. 51

The degree of autonomy afforded to researchers is set by the structure and culture (academic, consulting, advocacy, policy enterprise) of the organization. Students at academic-oriented establishments have nearly complete management over their analytical interests and priorities, whereas policy analysts at consulting and advocacy-oriented think tanks tend to own quantity over the amount of freedom.<sup>286</sup>

Typically, the members of educational workers have numerous skilled backgrounds and have typically had victorious careers in social science, security studies, affairs, public administration, journalism, or legal affairs. Frequently, they hold degrees and are recognized specialists in their field. Assistants, librarians, promotion specialists, and journalists supply support for his or her activities. Though an inquiry topic could typically take the shape of a private project and go by a fellow, cooperation is common. Sometimes, in the framework of a large in-depth analysis, the program will be a field of knowledge, involving not only experts in think tanks, but also professors and experts elsewhere. This will even generate collaboration between a variety of think tanks within a separate study center – i.e., the AEI–Brookings Joint Center for regulative Studies, or the Urban Institute–Brookings tax program Center, that has been victorious at reaching policy and media elites.<sup>287</sup>

Think tanks are classified loosely within the classes of the conservative, philosopher, centrist, and progressive/liberal.<sup>288</sup> The political and philosophical foundations of think tanks will have an effect on not solely the angle in which that analysis is conducted, but also its outcome. Some think tanks supply forthright explanations of their philosophical bent, whereas others like to maintain a minimum of the looks of impartiality better.

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid., p. 53

<sup>287</sup> Ibid., p. 66

<sup>288</sup> McGann, *The Fifth Estate: Think Tanks, Public Policy, and Governance*, p. 76

Even more astounding is that the overwhelming majority of those organizations are publicly supported, one thing that is unequaled within the rest of the world. One of the explanations for this can be that the US incorporates an extremely developed civic and philanthropic culture and a group of state and federal tax credits that incentives and encourages companies and people to support think tanks and alternative civic organizations. Additionally, no alternative country incorporates policy surroundings that can support such an outsized variety of freelance establishments. A number of these donors are following their own personal and political agendas; however, several philanthropists are target-hunting by enlightened self-interest and want to assist in improving international conditions.<sup>289</sup> As in-camera supported organizations, think tanks get pleasure from the special tax standing of non-profit-making organizations, that make them exempt from state and federal financial gain taxes.<sup>290</sup> This standing, additionally, makes it doable for people and companies to create contributions to think tanks and receive a deduction reciprocally for his or her charitable contribution.

Over the years, the difficulty of funding has become an increasing concern for the bulk of think tanks. While for a protracted time think tanks may depend upon a passive angle towards the financial facet of their operations – that the assembly of quality analysis would invariably bring donors to fund a given establishment – this can be not the case. The expansion within the variety and kinds of think tanks as well as changes in the funding policies of most donors has forced all think tanks to find the way to effectively package and gift their establishment and concepts. This enlarged competition for charitable money has forced several think tanks to concentrate on order to effectively distinguish themselves from their competitors. Enlarged competition is, in part, a result of the proliferation of generalized and specialized policy analysis organizations.

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<sup>289</sup> McGann, *Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the US: Academics, Advisors and Advocates*, p. 42

<sup>290</sup> Ibid., p. 43

The Brookings establishment may be a non-public non-profit-making organization dedicated to the freelance analysis and innovative policy solutions. Brookings analyzes current and rising problems and produces new concepts that matter – for the state and also the world. Analysis at the Brookings establishment is conducted to tell the general public discussion, not advance a political agenda.<sup>291</sup> Its students are drawn from the US and abroad – with expertise in government and the world – and hold numerous points of readings. Brookings' mission is to supply prime quality analysis and suggestions for call manufacturers within the US and abroad on the complete variety of policy challenges facing an ever more mutually beneficial world.<sup>292</sup>

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace was established in 1910. It can be a nonprofit, nonpublic organization dedicated to promoting cooperation between countries and promoting the active participation of the United States in international affairs. Through analysis, publication, convening, and the occasional establishment of new international institutions and networks, Endowment Fund colleagues have developed the latest policy methods.

The Center for International Strategic Research aims to promote international security and prosperity in the age of economic and political transformation by providing strategic insights and wise political solutions to decision makers. It is the government's strategic design partner, providing analysis and formulating policy measures that can be effective in the long term and are expected to be reviewed.

The Century Foundation conducts public policy analysis and analyses of economic, social, and policy problems, as well as differences, retirement

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<sup>291</sup> Abelson, *A Capitol Idea: Think Tanks and US Foreign Policy*, p. 156

<sup>292</sup> McGann, *Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the US: Academics, Advisors and Advocates*, p. 122

security, election reform, media studies, independent agency, and affairs.<sup>293</sup> It produces books, reports, and alternative publications; convenes task forces and teams and operates eight informational internet sites. With offices in New York and Washington DC, the Century Foundation is non-profit-making and bipartisan.

The Committee on External Relations (CFR) is a national membership organization, bipartisan center and publisher. Founded in 1921, CFR is committed to creating and disseminating concepts so that individuals and company members, as well as legislators, journalists, students, and stakeholders, understand the policy choices facing the planet and the United States.

Founded in 1963, the Institute for Policy Studies may be an analysis institute connected to national organizations that are operating for peace, justice, and also their surroundings. The Institute engages with progressive lecturers, non-profit-making organizations, native non-appointive officers, and members of Congress. The most ways in which the Institute has control is through the artistic assembly of new networks and coalitions across sectors and problems and borders, catalyzing and empowering social movements through analysis, incubating outcomes and “social experiments” that become new organizations, responding apace to new developments and crises, fostering realistic alternatives, and building bridges from the support community to progressive lecturers.<sup>294</sup>

The Wilson Center “may be a non-partisan analysis establishment that investigates vital problems within the humanities, social sciences, and public policy. Established by Congress in 1968 as the nation’s official and living memorial to the US’ twenty-eighth President, the Wilson Center provides a link

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<sup>293</sup> Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, p. 139

<sup>294</sup> Abelson, *A Capitol Idea: Think Tanks and US Foreign Policy*, p. 162

between the planet of concepts and also the world of policy making".<sup>295</sup> Students from all around the planet are invited to the middle to perform in-depth freelance analysis on specific problems, and profit from the tremendous personal, historical, and repository resources that exist within the town. In the middle, "policymakers, scholars, and alternative leaders will take a step back from the frenzy of politics, academia, and also the marketplace to look at problems from a broad and objective viewpoint. Higher choices will be created, and simpler actions taken, as a result of the intense dialogue that takes place in a commonplace at the Wilson Center."<sup>296</sup> The Wilson Center's mission to sponsor frank, open, and truthful discussions of the key public policy problems with the present in their full historical and international context reflects its standing as a means for advanced analysis. These qualities set it apart from the other lot of think tanks in Washington.<sup>297</sup>

The New American Century Project (PNAC) is a Washington, DC-based neoconservative think tank that focuses on US foreign policy. It was established as a non-profit educational organization in 1997, and founded by William Kristol and Robert Kagan. PNAC's stated goal was "to promote American global leadership."<sup>298</sup> The organization stated that "American leadership is good both for America and for the world," and sought to build support for "a Reaganite policy of military strength and moral clarity."<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America*, p. 175

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., p. 177

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Abelson, *A Capitol Idea: Think Tanks and US Foreign Policy*, p. 165

<sup>299</sup> Ibid., p. 166

In 1998, Kristol and Kagan advocated regime change in Iraq throughout the Iraq disarmament process through articles that were published in the New York Times. Following perceived Iraqi unwillingness to co-operate with UN weapons inspections, core members of the PNAC including Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, R. James Woolsey, Elliot Abrams, Donald Rumsfeld, Robert Zoellick, and John Bolton were among the signatories of an open letter initiated by the PNAC to President Bill Clinton calling for the removal of Saddam Hussein.<sup>300</sup> Portraying Saddam Hussein as a threat to the United States, its Middle East allies, and oil resources in the region, and emphasizing the potential danger of any weapons of mass destruction under Iraq's control, the letter asserted that the United States could "no longer depend on our partners in the Gulf War to continue to uphold the sanctions or to punish Saddam when he blocks or evades UN inspections."<sup>301</sup> Stating that American policy "cannot continue to be crippled by a misguided insistence on unanimity in the UN Security Council," the letter's signatories asserted that "the U.S. has the authority under existing UN resolutions to take the necessary steps, including military steps, to protect our vital interests in the Gulf."<sup>302</sup> Believing that UN sanctions against Iraq would be an ineffective means of disarming Iraq, PNAC members also wrote a letter to Republican members of the U.S. Congress Newt Gingrich and Trent Lott, urging Congress to act, and supported the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 which President Clinton signed into law in October 1998.<sup>303</sup>

In January 1999, the PNAC circulated a memo that criticized the December 1998 bombing of Iraq in Operation Desert Fox as ineffective. The memo questioned the viability of Iraqi democratic opposition, which the U.S. was supporting

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<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., p. 167

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., p. 168

through the Iraq Liberation Act, and referred to any "containment" policy as an illusion.<sup>304</sup>

Shortly after the September 11, 2001 attacks, the PNAC sent a letter to President George W. Bush, specifically advocating regime change through "a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq."<sup>305</sup> The letter suggested that "any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq," even if no evidence surfaced linking Iraq to the September 11 attacks.<sup>306</sup> The letter warned that allowing Hussein to remain in power would be "an early and perhaps decisive surrender in the war on international terrorism. From 2001 through the invasion of Iraq, the PNAC and many of its members voiced active support for military action against Iraq, and asserted leaving Saddam Hussein in power would be "surrender to terrorism".<sup>307</sup>

Overall, think tanks first emerged in the US and today the US hosts thousands of think tanks in different policy areas. Financial relations between think tanks and US capital groups are very vital to understand how think tanks are used to create consent in foreign policy making. In Gramscian terms, American culture of think tanks indicates how public opinion is shaped through think tanks in foreign policy. Think tanks could be labelled as legitimization tools for policy makers in the US.

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid., p. 169

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., p. 170

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

## 4.2. Think Tanks in Britain

Academic interest in think-tanks is growing, but it has not kept pace with their remarkable rise to public prominence on both sides of the Atlantic. American literature is far more substantial than the British and continues to dominate the international discourse on the subject.<sup>308</sup> There seem to be three main reasons for the comparative shortfall in the academic analysis of British think tanks. The first is that these groups are widely assumed to be predominantly, if not uniquely, an American phenomenon. Only American think tanks are “quintessentially American”; as recent studies have shown, even if think tanks in other countries betray the influence of the US model to some degree, they are all adapted to their diverse national contexts.<sup>309</sup> However, the scale of think tank development in the United States is certainly unique.

Most other western democracies, by contrast, had only a handful of such groups in the 1980s, and despite a recent upsurge in numbers in many countries, there are still far more think tanks in the United States than elsewhere. Explanations for the unique scale of think tank development in the United States point to the “exceptional” features and characteristics of the American political system. Think tanks, it is argued, “bloom according to the political compost in which they grow”.<sup>310</sup> The situation in the United States is held to reflect such “elemental political realities” as America’s constitutional separation of powers, a party system historically grounded in electoral and political ambitions rather than ideology and “a civil service tradition that gives leeway to numerous political

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<sup>308</sup> Andrew Denham, *Think-tanks of the New Right*, (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1996), p. 47

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., p. 49

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

appointees”.<sup>311</sup> Bodies of this sort have grown and continue to flourish in the United States to an extent unknown elsewhere because they fill certain gaps in the American political structure. Congress does not automatically adopt the President’s program; it, too, initiates legislation.<sup>312</sup>

This situation cannot arise in Britain, and although private members enjoy the opportunity to introduce legislation of their own, the chances of piloting their bills through a parliamentary timetable decided by the government are generally very slim.

The American system has also produced weak parties in the legislature. Thereafter, each parliament member is subject to the pressures of interest groups and constituents but decides on his or her policy positions. The parties themselves have not undertaken a serious effort at policy development and have few resources at their disposal to help them even if they were to try. Campaign finance reforms have limited the ability of American parties to raise money for such purposes and they have few resources to dispense or call in as past favors to candidates as a result. For all these reasons, individual politicians in the US have strong incentives to consult outside policy advisers.

American administrative elites are also exceptionally “permeable” to outsiders.<sup>313</sup> Unlike the British civil service, which despite recent developments still selects the vast majority of its high-flyers through a competitive examination, the American civil service tradition is far more welcoming to

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<sup>311</sup> Ibid., p. 50

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., p. 51

<sup>313</sup> Ibid., p. 43

political appointees, and a high proportion of these are think-tank members who have previously worked with decision makers.<sup>314</sup>

A final element of American “exceptionalism” is that, although Britain has a similar set of rules governing tax-exempt donations, in the United States there is ample private funding available to support the activities of think tanks.<sup>315</sup> The difference in the budgets boosted by American and British groups is largely the “result of a much stronger tradition of corporate, foundation, and individual donations to private research institutions in the United States”.<sup>316</sup>

While these factors indicate why the largest think tanks are in America rather than Britain, and why they are much more numerous there, circumstances in the latter country have not prevented the emergence of think tanks. As we have seen, even in America the academic literature has developed relatively slowly. One possible explanation for this which also applies in the context of British politics is the difficulty of establishing a precise definition of a “think tank”. Indeed, the confusion about the nature and role of think tanks extends beyond academic commentators and is “sometimes shared by the managers, trustees, and researchers at these institutions”. Hence, for most of the past 25 years, “think tank” has usually been synonymous in Britain with one particular “policy planning and research unit” within the central government.<sup>317</sup> Denham argues that:

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<sup>314</sup> Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett, “Think Tanks, British Politics and the ‘Climate of Opinion’”, in *Think Tanks Across Nations: A Comparative Approach*, eds. Diane Stone, Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p.23

<sup>315</sup> Denham and Garnett, “Think Tanks, British Politics and the ‘Climate of Opinion’” p. 24

<sup>316</sup> Ibid., p. 25

<sup>317</sup> Andrew Denham, “Influence without Responsibility? Think-Tanks in Britain”, *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 52, No.1 (January 1999), p. 47

1980s progressed, however, the phrase acquired a different meaning, closer to American usage; it was increasingly applied to ideologically-charged, free-market bodies which were outside government (and whose conclusions were, therefore “deniable”), and which supported Margaret Thatcher in her efforts to shift British public policy away from the post-war “consensus”.<sup>318</sup>

The term was then reflected backward in time to denote other organizations, like the Fabian Society which had never been called a think-tank in its heyday.<sup>319</sup>

These characteristics of the British political system compensate, to some degree at least, for the fact that think tanks on that side of the Atlantic are smaller and poorer than their American counterparts. Besides, those British think tanks that publish the work of outside contributors from academia, journalism or politics need not find their lack of resources a crippling handicap, because there are sufficient numbers of people in these categories for whom the chance to disseminate their ideas, rather than any financial motive, is a sufficient incentive. Oddly enough, this applies with equal force to the economic liberals who have written for New Right think tanks in recent years, even though by their theory it would seem rather eccentric to labor so hard for minimal cash rewards.<sup>320</sup> With the advent of technological innovations, notably the Internet, which facilitates the cheap dissemination of the text, the high cost of more traditional forms of publication need not be a handicap.<sup>321</sup>

The history of outside policy advice in Britain can be traced back to the Fabians and beyond. As it was noted, the Fabians emerged against a background of growing economic malaise in Britain, when existing government institutions

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<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett, "The nature and impact of think tanks ", *Contemporary British History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1996), p. 101

<sup>320</sup> Ibid., p. 103

<sup>321</sup> Richard Higgott and Diane Stone, "The limits of influence: foreign policy think-tanks in Great Britain and the USA", *Review of International Studies* Vol. 20, No. 1, (1994), p. 107

were seen by some energetic thinkers as inadequate to meet the challenges of a mass industrialized democracy. However, for the present purpose, history begins in the 1930s, when a more discernible pattern emerged.<sup>322</sup>

In response to the global economic crisis which began with the Wall Street crash, several talented individuals with backgrounds in government service, academia, and journalism (in some cases, like that of Keynes, a combination of all three) concluded that expert advice was necessary for the successful conduct of economic policy in an increasingly complicated and interdependent world. At the same time, demand began to be heard that the whole range of government activity should be placed on a more systematic basis —that Britain, like other European countries, should embrace the concept of planning, as opposed to what was perceived as its traditional ad hoc and amateurish approach.<sup>323</sup>

The second wave arose in response to the oil shock of 1973–74, which brought British post-war history to an end which is usually described as the era of consensus.<sup>324</sup> As we have seen, the ideas of John Maynard Keynes were deployed to win elections rather than as a tool for long-term economic management; the Conservative victory of 1979 brought to office a government which at times seemed to pursue economic policies because they ran directly counter to Keynes' teaching.<sup>325</sup> When events finally moved its way, it continued to expound the free-market message which was taken up by other second wave organizations. The most notable change was a new tendency to crow about its part in the downfall of the consensus, and in this respect, it emphasized its

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<sup>322</sup> Higgott and Stone, “The limits of influence: foreign policy think-tanks in Great Britain and the USA”, p. 110

<sup>323</sup> Ibid., p. 111

<sup>324</sup> Denham, “Influence without Responsibility? Think-Tanks in Britain”, p. 49

<sup>325</sup> Ibid., p. 50

differences from the first wave groups, which tended to exaggerate their influence but could never be accused of triumphalism.<sup>326</sup>

It seems that there is a need for think tanks in order to re-establish social consensus in times of crisis. Gramsci states that in developed capitalist economies, the crisis cannot only be overcome by force, but consensus is also needed. Instead of expressing that the crisis can be overcome by using economic policies successfully in the period of economic crisis, the consent creator effect of the think tank is applied to create a new order. At this point, it can be argued that Gramsci actually took the analysis to the next level, leaving Marxist understanding.

The hopes of the first wave think tanks had been broken after 1945 because governments were reluctant to commit themselves to full-scale planning. Economic liberals in the mid-1990s are still torn between boasting about their success in the war of ideas and bemoaning the same pragmatic considerations which prevented the Thatcher Governments from establishing a laissez-faire Utopia.<sup>327</sup> In fact, despite the significant advantage of intimate access to key decision makers, the second wave (or New Right) project suffered from the same kind of handicap as its predecessor. While the extent of the changes introduced by these governments cannot be denied, many economic liberals, rightly or wrongly, were worried that the full-blooded implementation of a systematic program would meet opposition from the conservative majority within the political body. Like the suggestions of the first wave, the ideas of the economic liberals were only implemented when they chimed in with the government's purposes, and although that happened more frequently during the 1980s than ever before, for most of the period there were still defined limits. However, the

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<sup>326</sup> Higgott and Stone, "The limits of influence: foreign policy think-tanks in Great Britain and the USA", p. 115

<sup>327</sup> Ibid., p. 113

experience of the poll tax, when the Thatcher Government itself began to act as if it were a New Right think-tank, suggests that the politicians were correct.<sup>328</sup>

A third wave of think tanks began in the late 1980s and is continuing today.<sup>329</sup> This wave was inspired by the perceived success of the second one; the Institute for Public Policy Research (1988) was founded to give the Labour Party its CPS, and the Social Market Foundation (1989) emerged to do the same job for the Social Democrats.<sup>330</sup> Apart from organizations like Conservative 2000—small groups devoted mainly to serving the interests of individual politicians, aptly described as vanity tanks—the other new bodies, such as Politeia (1996) and the European Policy Forum (1992) have arisen either because of splits in the second wave institutions or in response to problems which the second wave groups failed to address. At present, the most salient characteristic of the new bodies is their lukewarm (or openly nonexistent) ideological inspiration.<sup>331</sup>

After the New Right, one could have expected a return to the painstaking research of the first wave groups, but members of the new bodies have been deeply impressed by the success of the second wave think tanks in achieving their objective of saturation media coverage. Rather than complementing and informing major parties, the best-known of the new think tanks are now duplicating their functions almost exactly, in that they tend to court the media with policy ideas which focus on problems of current, short-term vogue; in most cases, interestingly, they also avoid questions of fierce political controversy (such as Europe), while the old, more objective think tanks felt no such restraint.

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<sup>328</sup> Denham and Garnett, “The nature and impact of think tanks”, p. 103

<sup>329</sup> Ibid., p. 104

<sup>330</sup> Higgott and Stone, “The limits of influence: foreign policy think-tanks in Great Britain and the USA”, p.113

<sup>331</sup> Ibid., p. 114

To put in a nutshell, think tanks operate in accordance with the general framework that this thesis argues. Not only they act to create public consent, but also their function in foreign policy making is very limited. When they are compared to American think tanks, European think tanks have limited financial resources and their interaction with political and business actors are more visible. On the other hand, in general aspects, they reflect similar characteristics with American think tanks as it is mentioned above. Last but not least, European think tanks have also more obvious political linkages with the political parties compared to American ones.

#### **4.3. Think Tanks in Central Asia**

Geopolitics, financial matters, and natural resources of Central Asia are the characteristics that make this region crucial. When it comes to the other regions of the world, though, it is underrated and under-researched politically. When the United States', Russia's or China's focus on this region changed, an opportunity appeared to set up relations with the region through regional powers like Turkey or Iran with the end of the Cold War. A need in having the proper knowledge about the region and the countries within the region made middle powers like Turkey or Iran good candidates to produce knowledge about the region. Lack of knowledge was a great risk. In this respect, authorities within the state departments or ministries demanded knowledge about the region in Central Asian states. Think tank experts in Central Asia started to work specifically in this region to provide the best data to the decision makers who would determine the policies to be implemented for this region in the new period. While doing this, the decision maker does not tolerate wasting time because of the complex historical and political structure of the region. Looking at the developments in the region with a Gramscian perspective, the USA, which wants to expand its hegemony towards the region, should first be able to analyze the region in the best way as it would be accepted in this region, political decision makers should determine their decisions in this direction, and then the peoples and politicians of

the region should consent to the policies of the west, and at the latest stage they should be turned into the advocates of those policies. Think tanks are one of the tools that can set such a system in the best way. The necessary infrastructure will be prepared for both transferring the required information to the center in the most practical way and for receiving the crafted policies to be followed in this direction. By the way, think tanks in Central Asia are not subject to discussion specifically, particularly in this study. To comprehend the contrasts and likenesses between Turkish and Central Asian think tanks, their common positions, highlights, and characteristics are subject to the discussion rather than studying them one by one.

Difficulties and opportunities for Central Asian nations have become obvious because of the destruction of the bipolar world system. There were wicked situations for those recently independent states that did not even have essential information to overcome the new problems, such as just like climate change, illegal trade, and international terrorism. Due to the great change in the newly established states in the region, external interventions have become obvious in all aspects. In this sense, think tanks that do not pose any threat at first glance will easily find a place for themselves in these countries.

This time within Central Asian countries, the subject of discussion was different from the alteration of the organization of the think tanks. There have still been expanding numbers of independent think tanks from the state despite their restricted number. In the next paragraph, some questions are going to be answered in terms of how much we acknowledge their independence from the state.

Establishing ‘independent’ think tanks with their own means in this region was unlikely due to financial reasons, logistical insufficiencies, insufficient number of experts, unsuitable political, social and legal structure. Think tanks that are established in such geographies also try to imitate the western examples.

Although these organizations may get stronger over time, they have to overcome many problems. However, it is possible to say that think tanks, which are articulated with their pioneers in the west due to the strategic importance of the region, will become more effective in this geography in Central Asia.

The end of the Cold War which increased the number of think tanks is the second aspect. There was a gap in having information for opportunities and challenges that new world order brought. To get rid of that gap, new think tanks in Turkey have pushed the button by transforming themselves with the post-Cold War era just like Central Asian nations. New regimes have emerged with the collapse of Communist regimes in these nations. With this, think tanks have appeared within the political arena. Just like in Turkey as mentioned before, Central Asian nations consider their think tanks as essential with the end of the Cold War.<sup>332</sup>

Comprehending the distinctness and uniqueness of the think tanks in Turkey is both vital and requires a comparison with Central Asia where the regime changes give rise to think tanks that also required to have a comparison in understanding the development of think tanks in Turkey. At this point, Turkey was like Central Asian nations from the perspective of the widespread numbers of think tanks. The relation between think tanks and the government which caused an impact in Central Asian nations is of great importance to comprehend what is happening in Turkey in terms of government relations causing impact.

Since 1989, there are lots of independent Central Asian policy institutes. When they were governed with communism, policy-oriented research entities were not self-managed in designating the research agendas. In pre-1989, the policy

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<sup>332</sup> Ann Feuerbach, "Eurasian Think Tanks: Concerns and Considerations," in *Think Tanks in Eurasia*, (Ankara: Nobel Yayıncılık, 2013) p. 24.

landscape was controlled by the state.<sup>333</sup> Independent policy research institutes were devised to organize democratic and market reformulations. A contrast and an alternative are the related terms to the old policy research units. While recent institutes that were horizontally structured in contrast to hierarchical old ones are not great enough, the state think tanks were not small in the number. The adjective "oppositional" is the way of introducing the independent think tanks which are generally liberal, while the state ones were conformist and Marxist in their political view.<sup>334</sup>

It can be said that think tanks operating in a state-dependent state are used by political decision makers as a means of legitimizing foreign policy. On the other hand, it can be thought that there is a dependence on financial resources due to the financial dependence of think tanks trying to operate in the liberal field. In this sense, it is not easy to find think tanks that produce information independently, objectively and bring criticized approaches. In addition, the democratic and political environment in the country should transform into a structure that can accept think tanks that can criticize the decisions of political decision makers. Capital accumulation is not sufficient for think tanks to fully demonstrate their assets. At the same time, there should be openness to the products of these organizations, political decision makers, democratic environment and transition between institutions.<sup>335</sup>

Looking like laboratories for democracy and market reforms, think tanks that were post-communist were decreed with the titles in their writings. "Academic refugee camps" would properly name the think tanks who were decreed with

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<sup>333</sup> Ivan Kratsev, "Post-Communist Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence," in *Banking on Knowledge: The Genesis of the Global Development Network*, ed. Diane Stone (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 147.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid., p. 148

<sup>335</sup> Ibid., p. 144

their personnel, and have young and middle-aged researchers who sometimes have political experience<sup>336</sup>. Besides, think tanks who are effective policy advisers for governments and the public, were also faced with judgment because of their reports. With the condition of a full-time basis, Central Asian policy institutes employed more than 1,000 investigators.<sup>337</sup> Less than 50 employees, more than 5 in-house researchers, and over \$50,000, out of the 101 think tanks merely sixty-eight had annual budgets in 1999.<sup>338</sup> With academically-neglected studies, the post-communist think tanks have not any relations with long-term academic research. Not having lots of work in significant journals and academic books, the post-communist think tanks found a place with only twenty-nine of the institutes allocating the time for policy research.<sup>339</sup> There are recently founded policy institutes' which are not accepting Western model think tanks as "university model without students".<sup>340</sup> The other different feature for post-communist's fifth property is a money source.<sup>341</sup> Lots of money is obtained from the West as well as external obtainers are problematic when getting money in terms of these institutes' financial sustainability. The independent institutes' research agenda is pondered by Western sources. At this point, it can be said that with the Gramscian perspective, the western finance source created a relationship of dependency and the hegemonic power elements.

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<sup>336</sup> Ibid., p. 149

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., p. 151

<sup>338</sup> Freedom House, "Think Tanks in Central and Eastern Europe: A Comprehensive Directory", Freedom House, 1999, p. 2

<sup>339</sup> Ibid., p.3

<sup>340</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>341</sup> Craufurd D. W Goodwin, "The Fifth Estate: Institutions for Extending Public Policy Debate in Emerging Democracies," in *Beyond Government: Extending the Public Policy Debate in Emerging Democracies*, eds. Michael Nacht and Craufurd D. W Goodwin (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), p. 156.

In post-communist think tank areas, donors can be easily found. The influence of think tanks on foreign policy making was not seen as it is indicated by the policy makers.<sup>342</sup> Policy adjusters can behave in a good manner to policy institutes in some nations in contrast to some other ones. Regardless of this situation given above, the decision that says "a vital addition to policy making" is not the subject of discussion or study for think tanks.<sup>343</sup> At the same time, think tanks believe themselves to be the vital effect and so do media by wanting it mostly.

Diane Stone draws in her book a way of shaping public discourse including differences in two ways of making think tanks have an effort on the policy making process.<sup>344</sup> With a Gramscian perspective, it points to the stage of establishing social consent.

If it is not observed in enough attention, policy study institutes' effect on legislation or specific government decisions would be comprehended as the word is written above "effort" which would be explained as "the power to change the prevailing consensus or to preserve the existing climate of opinion if it is observed in enough attention".<sup>345</sup> A desire to alter the dominant policy paradigm caused the appearance of some think tanks. Occurred in 1989–91, the policy reversal was not ready by think tanks in Central Asia, however in defining it, they were vital. Status quo was not about to alter the object, in contrast, it purposed to cover the policy paradigm created in 1990–91<sup>346</sup> or economic management that was anti-Keynesian in the Washington consensus with the

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<sup>342</sup> Raymond J. Struyk, *Reconstructive Critics: Think Tanks in Post-Soviet Bloc Democracies*, (Washington D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1999), p. 27.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid., p. 29

<sup>344</sup> Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, p. 109.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid., p. 110

<sup>346</sup> Kratsev, "Post-Communist Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence," p. 147.

purpose of privatization, limited state intervention in functioning the market, support for private initiatives and anti-inflationary measures.<sup>347</sup>

Think tanks from Central Asia would not be comprehended outside the dominance of the Washington consensus in the policy. In Central Asia, there was recent liberal orthodoxy attracted to the notice of the best-known institutes. The 1990s were different and would be observed in the terms of the consensus as being prosperous for poor nations.<sup>348</sup> In the first phase, the institution of the Washington consensus was fulfilled by a lot of post-communist think tanks. Transmitted from the “IMF and World Bank as the merely legitimate or workable policy paradigm”, the original prescription has to be continued as an essential role for the think tanks in the region.<sup>349</sup> To find a new populist consensus, powerful political forces were driven, whereas think tanks held the aim of covering the liberal version of it. The radical oppression of market formulas from think tanks had been seen as a need to atone for causing weakness in pressure to further reforms in local business communities.

Creating a new sense of public opinion which conserved their effect on the policy-making process was a piece of cake for think tanks.<sup>350</sup> As a voice to introduce, policy analysts opened a way in having good relations, with the help of media, in a situation in which a senior policy definer has a way of reading the newspapers rather than memos. Think tanks have good people with them as Western donors and international organizations required them to have a good

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<sup>347</sup> Williamson, J. ‘What Washington means by policy reform’, in J.Williamson (ed.) “Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened?”, (Washington: Institute for International Economics, 1990), p. 104

<sup>348</sup> Moen Naím, ‘Washington consensus or Washington confusion’, *Foreign Policy*, (Spring, 2000), p.89

<sup>349</sup> Kratsev, “Post-Communist Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence,” p. 156

<sup>350</sup> Ibid., p. 149

relationship with the liberal orthodoxy. As a defender of the liberal orthodoxy to preserve the economic prosperity, they had not been agents of innovative policy thinking or troublemaking in the policy debate. The 1990s' economic reunion in development and mainstream was the theoretical background for alignment of think tanks with the donors' paradigm. Experts say, let the think tanks who know themselves as policy innovators and advisers, not the in-depth study work. As communicators, practical to government press offices, think tanks have a place in the eyes of the policymakers.<sup>351</sup> When a foreign policy analysis prepared by a strong western think tank is examined, it is seen that there are direct recommendations to the decision maker and the policies that should be followed in terms of various aspects of the problem and the interests of the country. Here, it can be easily seen that the think tank is not a pure academic effort, it tries to guide the decision maker / buyers. The report is produced in pill form ready for end use. There is also a great deal of accuracy. Otherwise, it will not be accepted by any sector. However, ultimately, the main purpose is to direct the decision maker in the direction of the interests of certain interest groups, as stated by Gramsci.

The currency board instance would be for think tanks as the role of policy fashion agents. Policy enthusiasm and fashions are the choices that would be an effect on policy making.<sup>352</sup> Legitimate cause for policy alteration would be attached with affectedness in some policy paradigm and the trivialization of certain policy ideas. What changed for no reason is the idea. One policy paradigm's alteration has not been because of the incomprehensible occurrence of recent troubles in the old paradigm, or the recent information which questions the day.<sup>353</sup> An alteration or reorganizations of the ruling ideas and language used

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<sup>351</sup> Ibid., p. 150

<sup>352</sup> Hood, Christopher. "Explaining Economic Policy Reversals", Buckingham: Open University Press., 1994, p. 73

<sup>353</sup> Ibid.

in policy are subject of discussion by the public particularly democratic in trend sayings. As big agents in the 1990s' Central Asia think tanks had roles in the rhetorical alteration. They are responsible for ending the Marxist paradigm and suspicion of the market and private property. Think tanks have grasped the chance to persuade the public about the failure of the old system. The IMF, the World Bank, and think tanks have supported the radical change in policy language is an instance to show the weird fade in the economic and political concept behind the 'human face of socialism'. Washington consensus has been a must to be followed by the opponents of the reforms to have a voice. However, that must be nothing but an absurdity. Washington trend came to depletion of challenging post-communist think tanks right now.<sup>354</sup>

The 1990s' big policy duality was in shock therapy and gradualist policies. That was not confidential for achievement in reforms. At the end of the first alteration, the finding is also not confidential over shock therapy when compared to a new one that has no information in the terms of countries' achieving something better than others in reforms.<sup>355</sup>

In winning nations, the common thing is the insistence of policy implementation instead of commonality in policies. When observed in not successful ones, it is not surprising to see them with the lack of policy consistency. The success is nothing but the most thought of policy, much more than the adopted one. Founding policy consensus to find the success will newly alter the interest of think tanks. In this research, it can be found anywhere as a capacity for 'policy learning' or 'consensual knowledge'<sup>356</sup>. When economic success trace is compared to the first policy choice, the structure of policy making is better.

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<sup>354</sup> Kratsev, "Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, (2001), p. 21

<sup>355</sup> Ibid., p. 22

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., p. 27

Three respectable discoveries in the past shook the “post-communist think tanks by recreating their mindset and practical behavior”:

- Uncovering of globalization;
- Uncovering of Washington consensus' invalidity; and
- Uncovering of institutions' significance.<sup>357</sup>

How unusual, grievous, stimulating, and inescapable was the uncovering of globalization. In alteration, the singularity in the changing of Central Asia was pondered by post-communist think tanks. Working with policy organizations is the theoretical and existential context in Post-communism. With uncovering on globalization, its situation was altered within a reform.<sup>358</sup> Common in post-communist groups in the first steps of the 1990s, the paradigm of resembling the West turned into having the chance paradigm referring to relative pros and modern methods. There is a statement by Thomas Friedman saying that "instead of a phenomenon or just some passing trend, globalization is something different. A significant effect in the domestic politics and foreign relations with every country is a power of the foremost international system".<sup>359</sup> Think tanks with global problems come to the meaning of restating study fields, methods and re-evaluation of the strength in communicating ideas. Policy-related information can be seen as both globalization itself and not. What ended in the seminar rooms and intellectual journals was Ulrich Beck's 'risk society' just like other speculations two decades ago.<sup>360</sup> "Risk society" mentioned above has been a map to the insurance industry today by having Ulrich Beck invited to lecture with

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid., p 30

<sup>358</sup> Ibid., p. 37

<sup>359</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux., 1999), p. 7

<sup>360</sup> Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society. Towards a New Modernity*, (London: Sage Publications., 1992), p. 22

business executives.<sup>361</sup> Uncovering globalization's other aspect was uncovering the global governance itself. Despite that phenomenon, it turns itself into a new effect in concept. So, as to take place on a global scale with a will to study the effect, local think tanks were allured.<sup>362</sup>

In Central Asia, what was taken with agony was not working for its purpose properly. Washington consensus was perceiving that there were unconditional economists and having progress in holding a mood in the economy at the end of the 1980s by placing an area as a mere system for conserving economy. Given by the IMF and others, the policy ideas in theoretical foundations caused hesitation in August 1998 Asian and Russian crisis. In Central and Eastern Europe, Washington consensus' other dispute was the public influence. A need for different policies or languages was aroused because of the collapse in altering decades to have durable economic development in most areas of the region. Restructuring pro-market policy consensus was the only way to have it conserved. In dealing with the old policies, people needed new arguments.<sup>363</sup>

Uncovering of the institutions has the meaning of uncovering the second generation with obstacles in reforms that are also uncovering of the local context. Economists and political scientists made a deal with the institutional areas as well as fulfilling market reforms of the state through the collapse of orthodox liberal policies in nations like Russia. Altering the economy and society, there was an objection with a weak post-communist state. Capability and rivalry terms are not living for the cause of failed conveying in the property. According to experimental studies, we can see no change in the quality of privately and publicly owned industrial foundations within a weak institutional environment.

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<sup>361</sup> Ibid., p. 23

<sup>362</sup> Kratsev, "Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence", p. 35

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., p. 36

Instead of effect in adjusting the market, prerequisite has been the term of legal order and law enforcement.<sup>364</sup>

Strategies of the chief Central Asian think tanks, big changes in the manner and an answer to the effect caused with these un-coverings would be observed with these: transition to networking and activity with latest knowledge technology, the transition from paradigm keepers to consensus builders and alteration in study agendas and restored interest in local knowledge.<sup>365</sup>

After the great change, it is seen that think tanks have developed organic ties with their pioneers in the west in order to prepare the politicians of their countries, peoples and decision makers. This is an important determination that the main purpose of think tanks operating in this region is not knowledge production, but rather serving a social transformation. The important thing is that who determines which direction society will move. At this point, think tanks step in with their will. The efforts to achieve social consent, which can also be expressed as the preparation of the mind structure of the society for transformation, reveals how competent the Gramscian perspective is regarding the activities of think tanks.

A desire to recreate post-communist think tanks comes from intellectuals of the Washington consensus' crisis. In the first few years, with the collapse of reform policies in various countries and public criticism in the IMF prescription, think tanks had to have different areas. Think tanks had tasks fulfilling the policies in the Washington consensus with first reforms by not wanting to change policies. To obtain more of them, reforms were cured instead of having them changed. With the situation of policy position which has progressed to alter and associated

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<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Kratsev, "Post-Communist Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence", p. 67

with orthodoxy, lots of eminent think tanks observe them.<sup>366</sup> New difficulties and agendas which are from the policy institutes have been an instance to think tanks who are interested in good governance and transparency.

In the different reform exertions way, policy institutes were helped with anti-corruption research to alter tired pro-market rhetoric and rally help. By the post-communist think tanks, anti-corruption policies were showed within the recreating important policies at the beginning of the 1990s: privatization, competition, and deregulation.<sup>367</sup> Within uncovering the corruption, however, the state's situation and its importance in altering were explored by the policy institutes. New significance within advancement issues of policy consensus was also shown with the anti-corruption's effort in institutes. With that, think tanks have got access to other NGO groups and strategies to be in advocacy coalitions. A will to open markets and more democracy, anti-corruption campaigns have been a bridge. "Fighting corruption" was a slogan for investors and democratic activists that are a supporter of each other. Think tanks comprehended to be proponents of the best policies in the 1990s' beginning.<sup>368</sup> Instead of focusing on best ones, think tanks have got an opportunity in dealing with reforming the policy process. Central Asia's area is not proper for policy talks. What mostly divided is political life, and rational argument is not emphasized one. Policy talks' achievement was restricted with Russia and international factors in the policy.<sup>369</sup> The legislative process is shorter thanks to the integration agenda, and the time would not be much for enlightened policy debates in Central Asia when compared to the USA. New legislations were followed mostly in Central Asia than in other nations. With that, the IMF and the World Bank purposed to limit

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<sup>366</sup> Kratsev, "Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence", p. 37

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid., p. 38

<sup>369</sup> Ibid.

the possible policy choices that not new for the world. Public comprehending about the policies and IMF's priorities were the tasks for most of the think tanks to affect them. In contrast as fashion would be today as a think tanks' task to clarify the interest in the public to international private and public players. The change of that is seen as good.<sup>370</sup> Close companions and wise critics in Central Asia were required by the IMF and the World Bank.

In most think tanks' study, consistency or ineffectualness of certain policies and its' system within the local environment is the subject of discussion. Found in alterations of study agenda and the move within the direction of local coalition building, local knowledge is filled with an idiomatic saying that it is think tanks' task to interpret. Economics-oriented think tanks were not with the studies of the informal sector and social capital formation in their early years.<sup>371</sup> Instead of being participants in the policy process, think tanks define a place for themselves as commentators thanks to profound universal solutions. Institutes' name finding and alteration of publicity were created with theoretical information of policy options and not-enough case researches by presenting trouble in local fulfillment.<sup>372</sup> What is not a trend is local disrespect. "The local" is not known by think tanks anymore. The policy environment's knowledge is not dispensable for think tanks' study. With the help of direct participation in the policy process, they have put themselves in a good position in the age of science. Expounding local knowledge's strength is adjusting corruption magnificently. Wall Street analysts are going to have the information of an undeniable offer for a company going for privatization. To obtain opportunities for that privatization deal, a successful think tank needs to work for it by obeying the following: invisible parties that are interested in them, how much that privatization will cause something on the

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<sup>370</sup> Kratsev, "Post-Communist Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence", p. 69

<sup>371</sup> Beck, *Risk Society. Towards a New Modernity*, p. 56

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

corruption market and how we can sell that attempt with maximum profit for society. Think tanks can use these data to advance local daily reform policies.<sup>373</sup>

The Kazakh Institute for Strategic Studies under the leadership of the President of Kazakhstan (KazISS) is a national institution of Kazakhstan. Its goal is to provide analysis and research support to the President and the government of Kazakhstan. KazISS provides research related to national and international affairs and Kazakhstan's social and economic development. KazISS aims to provide predictive research and analysis to the leadership of the country. Initially, in terms of foreign policy analysis, KazISS focused on national concerns and threats to Kazakhstan's security. Increasingly pressing internal issues have gradually attracted the attention of KazISS experts.<sup>374</sup>

The Center for Social and Economic Research (CASE Kyrgyzstan) was established in 1998 and is an independent non-profit research organization. The goal of CASE Kyrgyzstan is to assist the social and economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic through research, training and consulting activities. The center hires independent local experts and works closely with government agencies and various international development organizations. The center is dedicated to researching a wide range of topics, including macroeconomic forecasts, fiscal, monetary and social policy issues, foreign trade, and changes in the economic system. CASE Kyrgyzstan's consulting activities focus on providing technical assistance to various government agencies in the economic analysis of existing problems and the development of appropriate analytical tools.<sup>375</sup>

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<sup>373</sup> Kratsev, "Post-Communist Think Tanks: Making and Faking Influence", p. 71

<sup>374</sup> <http://www.kisi.kz/index.php/en/>, accessed on 25th July, 2021

<sup>375</sup> <http://www.case-research.eu/en/case-kyrgyzstan>, accessed on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2021

The Center for Economic Research (CER) is a non-profit independent research institution jointly established by the Uzbekistan government and the United Nations Development Program in April 1999. The center provides policy advice to the government and conducts research for other development agencies on a wide range of socio-economic development issues. The center contributes to national capacity building and public awareness of key development and reform issues. After years of activities, CER has become a leading think tank in Uzbekistan, and has accumulated considerable and to some extent unique capabilities in the field of social and economic policy recommendations<sup>376</sup>.

To sum up, think tanks in Central Asia emerged after the demise of the Soviet Union. From that day, think tanks try to grasp the new challenges and opportunities that the new world order brought. However, think tanks in Central Asia are highly dependent on the states. Not only economically, but also politically, think tanks survive only by the support of the government. Thus, they have almost no influence on foreign policy making. Instead, in Gramscian terms, they function as legitimization tools of governments' foreign policy decision in order to create public consent.

#### **4.4. Think Tanks in Latin America**

At the start of the 1900s, the first wave of think tanks was observed in the United States. However, until the early 1960s in Latin America, no such organizations appeared. Think tanks were established after dictatorships' expulsions of important scientists from major universities.

These scholars have established intellectually active organizations. The Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning (CEBRAP), in Brazil, established in the 70's

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<sup>376</sup> <https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/fr/node/391010>, accessed on 25th July, 2021

by Fernando Henrique Cardoso, is one of the most well-known examples.<sup>377</sup> La Corporación de Estudios para Latinoamérica (CIEPLAN) in Chile brought together those who would ultimately re-establish democracy in the late eighties and would turn out to be the main leader of the ruling coalition of political parties.<sup>378</sup>

Think tanks in other countries resulted from private-sector alliances with scholars who were interested in founding political establishments free from the government. This is the case with Fedesarrollo, which was founded in Colombia in 1970, thanks to the financial support of entrepreneurs who established an endowment fund that contributed to its sustainable development. .<sup>379</sup>

Sherwood claims that:

The return of democracy allowed for the emergence of new actors, among them the centers for policy analysis; and also, for the growing importance of symbolic techniques and “symbolic analysts” in the design of the economic reforms that was to be implemented in the region at the time. Some of the factors explaining the growing number and influence of think tanks in Latin America are presented below.<sup>380</sup>

In recent decades, the functioning of Latin American national institutions, the socioeconomic structure, and civil society organizations have changed due to political and economic changes. First of all, during the region's democratic transformations in the late 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, several constitutional and legal reforms were introduced that, among other objectives,

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<sup>377</sup> Nancy Sherwood Truitt, “Think Tanks in Latin America”, in *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalysts for Ideas and Action*, eds. James G. McGann and Kent R. Weaver (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2000), p. 529.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid., p. 530

<sup>380</sup> Ibid., p. 531

allowed new players to join the public agenda.<sup>381</sup> For the first time in decades, political parties, municipalities, and civil society organizations have been able to participate in the public decision-making process and become active subjects. Such new players, who have historically been barely mentioned, have helped to introduce new topics in the public arena and called for a more inclusive and open state when it comes to the needs of its people. Second, the economic crisis of the early 1980s required a reduced technical bureaucratic community and a high level of expertise, demanding economic and structural adjustment reforms in pursuit of trade expansion with financial discipline.<sup>382</sup>

This dual process demonstrated the difficulty of combining the implementation of political reforms requiring power distribution through the incorporation of new actors and increased transparency into economic reforms requiring the ‘concentration of power in a small group of technocrats isolated from political pressures’.<sup>383</sup> But it has made clear the main lack of ability to respond to local challenges.<sup>384</sup> Civil society, organizations–universities, and think tanks in often cases have thus created a space to engage in different stages within the reform and policy process. In contrast, bribery and inefficiency gradually delegitimized Latin-American states and mobilized numerous civil-society groups in search of public answers.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> Orazio Belletini, *Influencing as a learning process: think tanks and the challenge of improving policies and promoting social change*, Working paper was prepared for the Conference “Think Tank Exchange” organized by the Think Tank Initiative in South Africa, June 18-20, 2012 p. 9

<sup>382</sup> Ibid., p. 10

<sup>383</sup> Ibid., p. 11

<sup>384</sup> Truitt, “Think Tanks in Latin America”, p. 531.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid., p. 532.

States in that region are more centralized, more capable of withstanding social demands, and have a more autonomous approach to society. In this sense, presidents have therefore always had a great deal of room to pursue external affairs.<sup>386</sup> This has generally reduced the number of foreign policy entry points. The legislature and NGOs play a secondary role in foreign policy, but there are notable exceptions.<sup>387</sup> Certainly, their foreign policy roles have increased over the past ten years or so, although they are not yet central to the decision-making process. Therefore, private Foreign Lobby Groups tend to present their requests directly before presidents and foreign ministers and have seldom worked through think tank channels to communicate their messages.<sup>388</sup> This could explain why think tanks are a recent phenomenon in Latin America. In 1978 in Latin America, the Argentine Council for International Relations (CARI) only had one think tank focus on foreign policy. There were 3 in 1993, and today in 10 countries in Latin America there were 10 such think tanks.<sup>389</sup> Another important one in Brazil is the Fundação Getulio Vargas, created on 20 December 1944.<sup>390</sup> Its initial aim was to train skilled people in Brazil to work in both public and private administration. At the time, the nation was already setting the groundwork for the development that would come in the decades that followed.

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<sup>386</sup> Andrés Malamud, “Presidential Diplomacy and the Institutional Underpinnings of MERCOSUR: An Empirical Examination”, *Latin American Research Review*, Vol.40, No. 1, (2005), p. 138

<sup>387</sup> Janina Onuki, Amâncio de Oliveira y Pedro Feliú, “Political Parties, Foreign Policy and Ideology: Argentina and Chile in Comparative Perspective”, *Brazilian Political Science Review* Vol.3, No. 2, (2009), p. 127

<sup>388</sup> Ibid., p. 128

<sup>389</sup> Federico Merke and Gino Pauselli, ‘In the shadow of the state: Think tanks and foreign policy in Latin America’, *International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis*, Vol. 70, No. (4), p. 615

<sup>390</sup> Ibid., p. 616

These think tanks are the most important centers in Latin America. The Argentine Council for International Relations (CARI), the Brazilian Center of International Relations (CEBRI), and the Mexican Council of International Affairs (COMEXI). In these think tanks there are five variables, namely “(1) board composition; (2) public activities; (3) media presence; (4) social media presence, and (5) publications”.<sup>391</sup> Under this knowledge background of the discipline of International Relations, the role of research think tanks in shaping foreign policy has attracted more and more attention. For instance, CARI is an academic non-profit organization that assesses the political, economic, cultural, and social aspects of international relations and how they could affect Argentina. The council is also working to promote international cooperation and stability through its various activities. In other words, foreign policy is based on information, ideas, and knowledge about the globe, and think tanks are key players. They are the interlinkage that connects the world of political thought by indulging research, analysis and public policy advice to the government and political parties.<sup>392</sup> By doing so, they assist governments to grasp and make informed policy decisions. In short, think tanks provide long-term vision and expertise that government officials lack or don't have time for. Therefore, there are good reasons to study think tanks in depth and regard them as an increasingly important role in foreign policy.

In the case of Brazil, Marcos Alan S. V. Ferreira claims that the role of think tanks is very little in the field of public protection and crime expertise.<sup>393</sup> While discussion and public hearings are held, the Itamaraty, a closed bureaucracy that

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<sup>391</sup> Feliu, p. 129

<sup>392</sup> Tatiana Teixeira da Silva, ‘Brazilian think tanks and their search for identity and recognition’, in *Policy Analysis in Brazil: The State of the Art*, p. 132

<sup>393</sup> Marcos Alan S. V. Ferreira, personal communication, June 23, 2020

leaves little space for civil society entities, remains in practice.<sup>394</sup> Even so, organizations such as the Brazilian Public Security Forum (FBSP), the IPEA and the Instituto Igarapé, which are trying to play a strong advocacy role in these particular issues, deserve to be highlighted. On the other hand, in the discussion with foreign organizations, they end up with more control than with the Federal administration itself. In this respect, Brazil's political system, which is federal and gives States considerable power in public security matters, it is also an obstacle.

Another expert, who wants to remain anonymous, claims that think tanks have a function in Argentina's policy making processes; however, the context, framework, actors and issues (issue linkage) of the function in question are important.<sup>395</sup>

In addition, although there are no nominal think-tanks, there are also organizations that perform this function from time to time. Ethnic / religious organizations / foundations / NGOs and economic organizations also have an impact, which varies from country to country.

Naturally, the subject is quite wide. It is possible to evaluate this by placing a concrete and specific topic / time period / actors / places (countries-regions) in the determined conceptual / theoretical framework<sup>396</sup>

The Latin American case tells us a different story. State institutions in this continent show more centralized political institutions that can better resist society's demands. Therefore, in these circumstances, the president has always

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<sup>394</sup> Ibid.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

enjoyed various maneuvers for diplomacy.<sup>397</sup> Of course, their role in foreign policy has grown over the past decade or so but is still far from being the focus of the decision-making process. As such, private lobbying groups in diplomacy tend to make requests directly to the president and foreign ministers, and few deliver their message through the channels of think tanks.<sup>398</sup> This may clarify why think tanks focusing on foreign affairs in Latin America are a contemporary case.

However, for different reasons, foreign policy is not a problem for the decision makers. As Merke and Pauselli present, ‘although Brazil might be an exception, Argentina and Mexico do not have (federal) industrial-military complexes that demand grand strategies with budgetary impact. Argentinian presidents have theretofore relied more on loyal politicians than on expert diplomats.’<sup>399</sup>

A top-level bureaucrat who wants to remain anonymous from Mexico underlines that in order to understand the think tanks in Latin America, it is important to understand the cultures of the common qualities of these countries, since it is important to remember that countries do not fight with each other in the continent of Latin America and that countries struggle within themselves. On the other hand, there is a Mexican fellowship table in almost every think tank in the USA, the issues related to Mexico and Latin America are closely followed, the lack of a culture of think tank in Mexico is filled through its presence in the USA.<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>397</sup> Federico Merke and Gino Pauselli, “In the Shadow of the State: “Think Tanks and Foreign Policy in Latin America”, *International Journal*, Vol. 70, No. 4 (December 2015), p. 614

<sup>398</sup> Ibid., p. 615

<sup>399</sup> Ibid., p. 616

<sup>400</sup> Interview, personal communicaton, June 22, 2020

When it comes to Brazil, the situation looks disparate. For most of its modern history, Itamaraty (the name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) deployed a powerful set of resources to capture Brazil's diplomatic imagination, which was defined by a considerable degree of autonomy relative to the Presidency's national interest.<sup>401</sup> In summary, for different grounds, the policy network of Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico appears to be monopolized by the state and the president, especially in terms of foreign policy. Think tanks must deal with a foreign policy circle that is still very limited to the president and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (such as Brazil) or the ruling party (such as Mexico).

Of course, this is a very big picture and we understand that Latin America is too broad an area to be generalized. Nevertheless, it is suggested that these characteristics are of particular importance in the case of Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. First, these three countries have a long tradition of leadership in the design and implementation of foreign policy. Similar to the United States, these three countries are federations as well, which means that states (or provinces) are important power loci.<sup>402</sup> However, for different reasons, foreign policy is hardly a matter for governors. Among various reasons, however, foreign policy is not a problem among Governors.<sup>403</sup> While Brazil may be an exception, Argentina and Mexico have no industrial-military (federal) complexes that require major budgetary-effective strategies.

Second, these three countries have developed a skilled diplomatic bureaucracy that serves as gatekeepers of national interest. Argentina is likely the nation with fewest limitations to exercise presidential leadership in foreign policy. The Institute for Foreign Service Training was established in 1963 and provided

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<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

<sup>402</sup> Merke and Pauselli, "Think Tanks and Foreign Policy in Latin America", p. 617

<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

highly qualified diplomats to the Ministry but did not achieve the highest position as Foreign Minister.<sup>404</sup> The Mexican case may seem alike, but the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) ruling has left the role of parties in foreign policy for seventy years to override or even shape their preferences. Mexico's Matias Romero Institute was established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1974 and has been at the top since then.<sup>405</sup> The situation is different in Brazil's case. For most of its history, in the diplomatic imagination of Brazil, Itamaraty has deployed powerful resources. For different reasons, the political networks of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico seem to be dominated by the state and the president, especially in foreign policy matters. In other words, the political networks of the countries of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico seem to be dominated by the states and their presidents.<sup>406</sup>

Think tanks in Latin America were not able to use all their qualified work force to help in the development of the nation, intensifying trade relations, partnerships with defense industries, strengthening antiterrorist struggles, promoting strategic and high-quality cooperation, due to bureaucratic problems.

Bijos focuses on analyzing Latin American think tanks and when they were organized in the 1960s, we may emphasize the dictatorial regimes in the region, and how repressive military officers entered into the universities to take professors, torture, imprison them and kill some of them, while others were expelled of the country.<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Bellettini, *Influencing as a learning process: think tanks and the challenge of improving policies and promoting social change*, p. 12.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>406</sup> Ibid., pp. 13-14.

<sup>407</sup> Leila Bijos, personal communication, July 17, 2020

Bijos claims that ‘other think tanks were established in the Southern Cone as independent policy research institutions, aiming to effect positive change in their environment, generating and analyzing credible local data, enhancing public policy debates and promoting more objective evidence-based decision-making that makes real, sustained improvement in people’s lives’.<sup>408</sup>

As an example, *the Think Tank Initiative* was established and grew out of a desire to unlock the potential of Southern policy research institutions, working with core funding and capacity development.<sup>409</sup>

Think tanks of the foreign policy face several challenges in these three countries. First, think tanks must deal with foreign policy areas that are still very limited to the president and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (like Brazil) or the ruling party (like Mexico)<sup>410</sup>. Secondly, additional measures are required to penetrate the press, political circles, and companies, which, for many reasons, are not dedicated to promoting an agenda for foreign policy.<sup>411</sup> Thirdly, more government action is the outcome of their research interests other than social demands because there are no diverse channels, think tanks have fewer funding options.<sup>412</sup> The most important extreme consequence, when the State becomes the main boss of the think tanks, is that a majority of its foreign policy scholarships simply reflect the interest of the state and its regime. Considering the incentive mechanism, think tanks consider that it is more necessary to

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<sup>408</sup> Ibid.

<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

<sup>410</sup> Merke and Pauselli, “Think Tanks and Foreign Policy in Latin America”, p. 618

<sup>411</sup> Ibid., p. 619

<sup>412</sup> Truitt, “Think Tanks in Latin America”, p. 533

establish a potential perspective than to objectively analyze past and current foreign policies.<sup>413</sup>

Reforms and foreign policies cannot be created in line with a sequence or established order, as it's a dynamic process in which various forces and interests interact at the same time. Nevertheless, in ideal policy making, the following five stages can be identified: "1) visualizing the problem and its integration into the public agenda; 2) policy draft; 3) making decisions; 4) implementing and 5) sustainability or evaluating or monitoring foreign policy."<sup>414</sup>

Introduction to the public agenda is often preceded by the visualization or identification of public problem issues. This indicates that there is not a "decree" government issue, but rather a social one. In democracies, as citizen spokespersons and political representatives are responsible for identifying these foreign policy problems affecting society and place them under the state's responsibility. Their desires and intent to comply with the electorate and/or political partners, as well as the institutional framework regulating their conduct, however, also influence this practice. Think tanks have also managed to identify not only the foreign policy scourges that recently have arisen in Latin American communities but also those that should be moved from the government to the private sector by using their neutrality and autonomy.<sup>415</sup>

The second phase—i.e., its formulation—of the foreign policy making is the translation of the public problem to a set of policy logic and the development of a legal text or action when the problem needs to be identified and proposed, and

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<sup>413</sup> Merke and Pauselli, "Think Tanks and Foreign Policy in Latin America", p. 620

<sup>414</sup> Bellettini, Influencing as a learning process: think tanks and the challenge of improving policies and promoting social change, p. 15

<sup>415</sup> Truitt, "Think Tanks in Latin America", p. 532

potential and realistic solutions suggested.<sup>416</sup> Here, think tanks have played a dominant role as development organizations since their inception, and they have contributed to their creative skill and innovation. Also, by organizing the activities of thinking groups overseas or by implementing policies that are already well-developed or have similar characteristics in other countries of the region. In reality, the ability of think tanks to formulate creative strategies offers reformist politicians, who can profit from them, clear leadership opportunities.<sup>417</sup> Foreign policies are enforced at the time of the decision-making – the third stage – if the executive or legislative will it as such. Indeed, Latin American countries' hybrid presidential/legislative system of government prohibits the direct involvement of think tanks in decision-making processes.<sup>418</sup> Although it is difficult to measure its influence on final decision making, due to the methodological barriers, through the negotiations and information activities of the think tanks, obviously, many think tanks have different influences on public decision-making in the region.

Think tanks themselves have also had an increasing impact on the formulation of external policy. In this way, they have become nothing more than simple "factories of ideas" ("think and do tanks"). This is partly due to the weak systems in Latin American countries for translating good ideas into successfully implemented policies.<sup>419</sup> It provides technical assistance and advice to innovation research centers to compensate for the weaknesses of the system inherent to Latin American countries and prevent them from carrying out

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<sup>416</sup> Bellettini, *Influencing as a learning process: think tanks and the challenge of improving policies and promoting social change*, p. 16

<sup>417</sup> Ibid., p. 17

<sup>418</sup> Merke and Pauselli, "Think Tanks and Foreign Policy in Latin America", p. 627

<sup>419</sup> Miguel Braun, Antonio Cicioni, and Nicolás Ducoté. "Should Think Tanks do Policy Implementation in Developing Countries?", in *Think Tank Traditions: Policy research and the politics of ideas*, ed. Diane Stone and Andrew Denham. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 341

structural changes and ambitious reforms. In addition to addressing the shortage of specialists and expertise at this governmental level, policy tanks are also helping to ensure that reformist leaders can effectively execute programs and projects.<sup>420</sup>

On the other hand, Uruguay has relatively limited set of think tanks when it is compared with the other Latin American countries. Basically, there are four well known think tanks dealing with the foreign policy in Uruguay. Thus, they have very limited influence on foreign policy making. CURI (Consejo Uruguayo para las Relaciones Internacionales), CERES (Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social), CLAEH (Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana) (University) and CED (Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo) are the ones mentioned above.<sup>421</sup>

In the case of Paraguay, think tanks are still budding. Paraguay, among all Latin American countries, is the last country which overthrew the dictatorship only in 1989. Emergence of think tanks is even later.

After many years of dictatorship, the idea of think tanks apparently had come to Paraguay very late. For example, Paraguay Political Science Association-ACIPP and Comité Paraguayo de Ciencias Históricas are the most well-known think tanks and have few years of history and their membership and their publications are very limited. Both are established in 2015.<sup>422</sup>

Turkey's Ambassador to Paraguay, Armağan İnci Ersoy claims that given the fact that level of democratic maturity and economic income is key to the

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<sup>420</sup> Ibid., pp. 342-344

<sup>421</sup> Truitt, "Think Tanks in Latin America", p. 532

<sup>422</sup> Ibid., p. 533

development of think tanks.<sup>423</sup> Establishing think tanks in an isolated, undemocratic country with scarce financial sources was quite difficult. However, with establishment of democracy and developing economy now she observes more interest towards the country's own history and its international environment.

Moreover, she states that when analyzing think tanks, we have to remember that since its establishment as an independent state in 1811 Paraguay has chosen to isolate itself to defend the country from its powerful neighbors. Important turning points and historical figures are still source of contention. In Paraguayan newspapers it is hard to see news about international developments even news about developments in Latin America is very short.

However, as Paraguayan society is more interested in their region, the focus of the think tanks is about Paraguay, Paraguayan history and more recently about its foreign relations.

Lastly, she argues that think tanks are still very academic and she has not observed any cooperation between the policy makers and think tanks.<sup>424</sup> Paraguay still maintains the tradition of the very closed and confidential diplomacy. However, as Paraguay opens more to the other regions, she believes they will also need a Paraguayan perspective on international developments and may develop a cooperation with the think tanks.

Paraguay has very close economic ties with Brazil, but on cultural issues Paraguay still look at Argentine. Argentine is known as the most developed country in Latin America in cultural field. Spain has a very developed civil society and think tanks. Her observation is that not only Paraguayans but also

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<sup>423</sup> Armağan İnci Ersoy, personal communication, July 22, 2020

<sup>424</sup> Ibid.

many Latin American countries follow the international news and academic studies through the newspapers and think tanks in Argentina and Spain.<sup>425</sup>

The role of civil society in Latin America has grown rapidly over the last 10 years. This has led to a widespread and nuanced debate on civil society in the region. The study of think tanks in Latin America, although with rather limited results, has also increased in a wide variety of civil society research. On the other hand, it is more recent that modern think tanks are in operation in the area than civil society itself, and the very idea of “think tank” is still disputed.

Bengü Yiğitgüden, Turkey’s ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, has a different perspective on Latin American think tanks by comparing them with the Caribbean think tanks in general.<sup>426</sup> She claims that the USA, England and partially the Netherlands are the states that the countries in the region take as an example. Therefore, these effects are seen in academic circles. Historically, the cultural influence of Britain is widespread in the region, it is still possible to see British influence in the state administration and certain institutions. This also applies to associations and think tanks. On the other hand, it seems that later on, the cultural influence of the USA here began to weigh heavily. In Suriname, however, the Dutch example and culture continues to be the benchmark. Universities' foreign policy institutes or foreign relations institutes etc. they have units and certainly the USA etc. They are looking at examples. Academics are people who are consulted on various issues, seen on social media, and articles in newspapers. It can be said that they are more effective if they are affiliated with a think tank. According to the examples in the USA, the opportunities of think tanks here are much more limited. Caribbean countries do not have much weight in global foreign policy. Therefore, if the countries in the region can compromise, they try to act together and make their voices heard in this way.

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<sup>425</sup> Ibid.

<sup>426</sup> Bengü Yiğitgüden, personal communication, September 8, 2020

Think tanks dealing with foreign policy are continuing their work, and they have limited external connections. However, its effects in foreign policy or globally are considered very modest.<sup>427</sup>

Yiğitgüden argues that associations in the region are increasingly inclined to work in the US style. The fact that events, even virtual conferences, are held for money may reflect this.<sup>428</sup> On the other hand, the opinions of think tanks or experts working there can be seen side by side in the print media, on television and on social media. Different views are also shared with the public in this way. In addition, associations are more common in capitals, but there are large and small associations everywhere. She thinks that it is a normal development for think tanks to be located in university campuses.<sup>429</sup>

Lastly, she indicates that in small countries like Trinidad and Tobago, members of these groups personally know each other. She thinks that there is an exchange of opinions from time to time. On the other hand, the Government brings these groups together on specific issues. During the election period, it was observed that some associations acted with a particular political party, but think tanks had no visible support. Last but not least, she believes that they need to open up more. It seems that their external connections are limited. At this stage, it is understood that the countries in the region prefer to cooperate with each other first. Historical similarities, common regional culture, language similarity etc. This makes relationships easier. The global influence of the countries and think tanks here is limited.<sup>430</sup>

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<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid.

<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

After having examined various think tanks and the think tank culture in Latin American countries, it might be possible to come up with a number of conclusions. The first conclusion arises from the fact that CARI, CEBRI, and COMEXI were established by former ministers or vice-ministers of foreign affairs. In addition, the members of its board of directors have held positions in other departments, such as the Ministry of the Economy, the Ministry of National Defense or the Ministry of Military Affairs<sup>431</sup>. As a result, they have the support of state officials, retired diplomats, politicians, ex-military personals and businessmen. They were established, and keep acting in line with the establishment. This does not signify that they are free from the establishment, but it may impose limitations on what can be searched and argued.

The second conclusion is the existence of a common pattern that most of the activities think tanks carry on revolve around the national foreign policy agenda. Simply put, ‘they follow the government’s agenda’ and consequently fall short of thinking “outside the box”.<sup>432</sup>

To sum up, this chapter covers various think tanks in different countries all around the world. Think tanks in the United States and Britain have deep-rooted cultures when they are compared to the other parts in the world. In this sense, the US is the hometown of phenomenon of think tank. Almost over 100 years, think tanks played significant role in the US. In this respect, the US example indicates that think tanks are important to create a public consent in foreign policy making. Especially in the last fifty years, every crucial decision about foreign policy had been debated through think tanks to create a public consent within the society. It is important to underline that there are different think tanks in the US in line with the categorization of think tanks that were discussed in the previous chapters. Thus, this is race to set the agenda in accordance with the interests of

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<sup>431</sup> Truitt, “Think Tanks in Latin America”, p. 532

<sup>432</sup> Ibid., p. 533

the sponsors of the think tank. It is the same case in Britain. Multiple think tanks defend different positions in foreign policy in accordance with their affiliation. This means that developed countries, such as US or Britain, which have a long-lasting culture of think tanks shows a complex relationship between think tanks, their sponsors and foreign policy makers. In the case of Central Asia or Latin America, it is hard to talk about a rooted think tank culture unlike the US or Britain. In those cases, think tanks operate to sustain the hegemony on foreign policy through creating consent of the public. In Gramscian terms, think tanks in Latin America and Central Asia try to legitimize the decisions of foreign policy by their organic intellectuals which are linked with the hegemonic powers in those states.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **THINK TANKS IN TURKEY**

#### **5.1. Categorization of Think Tanks**

The multiplication of and differentiation of Turkish think tanks necessitate their categorization. The problem arises, however, when it comes to determining the criteria to be applied in order to categorize the think tanks.

According to the claims of some think tanks, they function like universities without students. Others claim to be functioning like advocacy tanks because of the properties of the think tanks in Turkey, however, it seems impossible to indicate a sharp distinction among them regarding their mode of functioning. For this reason, it is not easy to subsume the Turkish think tanks under three categories as argued by Weaver, in other words, universities without students, contract research organizations, and advocacy tanks.<sup>433</sup>

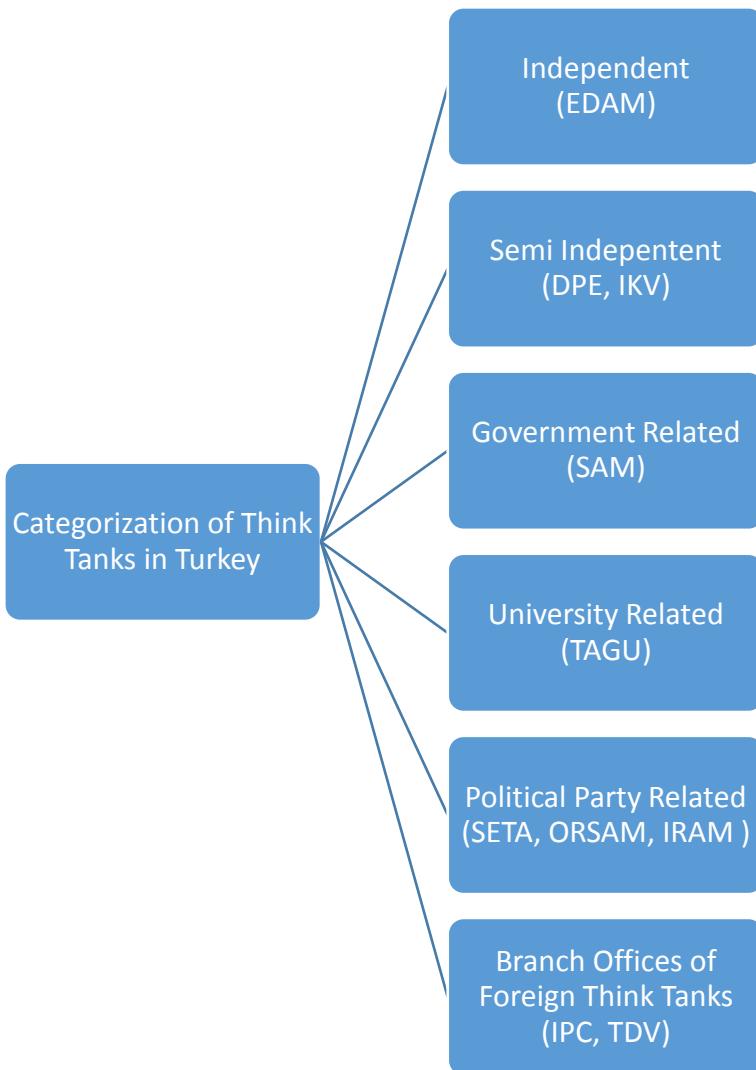
It is observed that when think tanks are discussed from the perspective of a Gramscian approach, these organizations adapt themselves to the political, social and economic conditions of their country. Think tanks are in a way a requirement of the situation generated by the needs of the developed capitalist economies. It is possible to say that these conditions occur at different levels in each country. Turkey, struggling with many international political and economic problems, has to overcome these problems to provide a suitable environment for think tanks. However, not only the development and strengthening of these organizations, but also their impact on decision makers is a matter of the power of these organizations, the quality of their products, and the direct and indirect

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<sup>433</sup> Aydin, "The Genesis of Think-Tank Culture in Turkey: Past, Present and Future", p. 46.

ties they create with political decision makers. This makes life difficult for think tanks operating in this field. However, if the classification, covered above, is applied to the Turkish case to reveal how think tanks operate in Turkey, it can be argued that the Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy (Ekonomi ve Dış Politika Araştırmalar Merkezi, EDAM) is an independent think tank, since it has no political or financial affiliation with any known political or economic group. On the other hand, Foreign Policy Institute (Dış Politika Enstitüsü, DPE) or Economic Development Foundation (İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı, IKV) could be named as semi-independent think tanks in this classification. Although, there is no official link between this think tanks and the state, it can be claimed that the state has always supported these think tanks in accordance with its policies. In terms of government related think tanks, obviously, Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (Strategic Research Center, SAM) is the perfect example in Turkey, since it operates under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the fourth category, Göç ve Uyum Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi (Turkish German University Migration and Integration Research Center,TAGU) is a good example of university related think tank in Turkey. Siyaset, Ekonomi ve Toplum Araştırmaları Vakfı (The Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research,SETA), Ortadoğu Araştırmaları Merkezi(The Center for Middle Eastern Studies,ORSAM), or İran Araştırmaları Merkezi (The Center for Iranian Studies, IRAM), could be labelled as political party related think tanks in Turkey because they are affiliated directly or indirectly with the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AK Party). In the past, it can be argued that there were think tanks related with political groups such as Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (Center for Eurasian Strategic Studies,ASAM). Lastly, İstanbul Politikalar Merkezi (Istanbul Policy Center,IPC) or Türk Demokrasi Vakfı (Turkish Democracy Foundation,TDV) could be named as branch offices of foreign think tanks in Turkey.

**Table 6.** Categorization of Think Tanks in Turkey



Moreover, it does not seem probable to come up with the same categorization put forward by McGann like the quasi-governmental think tanks.<sup>434</sup> What is more, it is not possible to determine which think tank is supported economically by the state or private sector, because there is no transparency concerning funding resources of Turkish think tanks. Thus, any effort to divide the Turkish think tanks as independent and semi-independent is in vain. McGann describes the independent think tank as the one which must be free in its exercise of power and funding from any governmental organization, interest group, or donor. He

<sup>434</sup> McGann, *Think Tanks and the Transnationalization of Foreign Policy*, p. 5

describes the semi-independent think tank as the one which enjoys full autonomy from the state, but makes use of some interest groups, donors, or contracting agencies to be able to fund great part of their activities and hence directed and left under their impression.<sup>435</sup> Generally, however, interest and pressure groups like Türkiye Ekonomi Politikaları Araştırma Vakfı [The Economy Policy Research Foundation of Turkey] (TEPAV) of Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği [The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey] (TOBB) and İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı [Economic Development Foundation] (İKV) of the business community, are the founders of think tanks in Turkey, or they only have one source to procure their funding.<sup>436</sup> So, these two categories should inevitably merged under one heading.

**Table 7.** Think Tanks in Istanbul (as of 2020)

Name of the TT	Active or Not	Journal	Interests	Location	No. of People
Wise People Center for Strategic Studies (BİLGESAM)	Yes	Strategist	IR	İstanbul	8
Global Relations Forum	Yes	x	Global Politics	İstanbul	x
South Asia Strategic Research Center	Yes	x	Asia	İstanbul	9
Istanbul Policy Center	Yes	x	EU, Security, IR	İstanbul	10
Economic Development Foundation (IKV)	Yes	IKV	EU	İstanbul	12

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<sup>435</sup> Ibid., p. 16

<sup>436</sup> Aydin, “The Genesis of Think-Tank Culture In Turkey: Past, Present and Future?”, p. 48.

**Table Cont'd**

İstanbul Strategic Thinking and Research Center	Yes	x	Economics , IR	İstanbul	7
Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation	Yes	x	IR, Economics	İstanbul	x
Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Research	Yes	x	Regional Politics, IR	İstanbul	11
Turkish Economic and Social Research Foundation (TESEV)	Yes	x	Democratization, FP	İstanbul	8
Center for Economic Political and Strategic Research	Yes	x	Foreign Policy, Regions	İstanbul	x

The capital city of Turkey, Ankara, and the commercial and financial center of Turkey, Istanbul, are the two main locations for most of the think tanks. Generally, think tanks focusing on financial issues are located in Istanbul with the particular exception of the Ankara-based TEPAV. Others, with an interest in foreign policy or security, are based in Ankara. But, of course, there are exceptions to this rule, like Türk Asya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Research,TASAM), or Stratejik Araştırmalar Enstitüsü (Institute of Strategic Thinking,SAE) which focus on specific policy areas.

In some of the think tanks based in Ankara, a geographical shift is witnessed as far as their areas of interest are concerned. Expert staff appear to be slightly more numerous. However, the number of think tanks in Ankara which publish a serial is relatively limited.

**Table 8.** Think Tanks in Ankara (as of 2020)

Name of the TT	Active or Not	Journal	Interests	Location	No. of People
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Turkish Institute	Yes	x	IR	Ankara	1 5
Ankara Thinking and Research Center (ADAM)	Yes	x	Economics, EU	Ankara	2 4
Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Research (ANKASAM)	Yes	x	Regional Politics, IR	Ankara	x
Ankara Policy Center	Yes	x	Security, Regional Politics	Ankara	1 4
Ankara Center for Political and Economic Research	Yes	x	IR	Ankara	2
Eurasian Studies Center	Yes	x	Eurasia	Ankara	7
Foreign Policy Institute (DPE)	Yes	Foreign Policy	IR	Ankara	9
Economic and Social Researches Center	Yes	x	Turkish Politics	Ankara	x
Center for Iranian Studies in Ankara	Yes	x	Iran	Ankara	1 6
Center for Black Sea Researches	Yes	x	Black Sea	Ankara	x
KÖK Social and Strategic Research Foundation	Yes	x	Central Asia, Turkic World	Ankara	x

**Table Cont'd**

Association for Liberal Thinking (LDT)	Yes	x	Turkish Politics	Ankara	x
Center for Middle Eastern Studies (ORSAM)	Yes	Middle East Analyses	Middle East	Ankara	9
Sahipkiran Center for Strategic Researches	Yes	x	IR	Ankara	x
SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research	Yes	Insight Turkey	IR, TFP	Ankara	70
Institute of Strategic Thinking (SDE)	Yes	x	IR	Ankara	11
Center for Strategic Research (SAM)	Yes	Perceptions	IR, TFP	Ankara	7
Turkish Academy Political Social Strategic Research Foundation (TASAV)	Yes	x	Turkic World	Ankara	x
The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV)	Yes	x	Economics	Ankara	51
Turkish Center for International Relations and Strategic Analysis (TÜRKSAM)	Yes	x	IR	Ankara	28
International Relation and Strategic Research Center	Yes	x	IR	Ankara	x
New Turkey Center for Strategic Research	Yes	x	IR, TFP	Ankara	x

## **5.2. Major Think Tanks in Turkey**

In the AK Party period, think tanks have increased in number in Turkey. This dissertation has covered the most influential ones. For instance, Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) is a ‘non-profit research institute dedicated to innovative studies on national, regional, and international issues as its official website states’.<sup>437</sup> The goal of SETA is to generate up-to-date and accurate knowledge and analysis in the political, economic and social fields, and to provide policy makers and the public with information on changing political, economic, social and cultural conditions<sup>438</sup>. SETA evaluates national and international issues in an historical and cultural context.<sup>439</sup>

According to the welcoming sign on their website, SETA with its assumed role of being a research and policy recommending institution prepares grounds into which various ideas converge in addition to meeting international academic standards. It also promotes the establishment of a mutual forum. SETA strives for directing the decision makers in government, civil society, and business through research, published work, brainstorming activities, seminars, and policy suggestions, and thus supports the acknowledged decision-making device of Turkey. It takes on the mission of extending the scope of cooperative and multi-disciplinary research, encouraging discussion and presenting authoritative and free information, analysis and offerings to decision-takers either in the community or private sector.<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>437</sup> <https://www.setav.org/en/about/>, accessed on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020

<sup>438</sup> Ibid.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

To present policy advice, research projects on recent political, financial, and social matters are carried out by SETA. According to their claim, SETA ‘takes into consideration the increasing interconnection of political, economic and socio-cultural matters at the national, local and international standards and looks to produce information leading to a social outlook with its basis on the rule of law, peace, justice, and equality while accepting a multi-disciplinary method’.<sup>441</sup> However, it is not secret that SETA has unofficial linkage with AK Party. Not only it operates to legitimize the foreign policy of AK Party, but also many members of SETA have been transferred to official government positions, such as İbrahim Kalın or Fahrettin Altun. Kalın became Presidential Spokesperson and Special Adviser to the President of Turkey whereas Altun was appointed as Presidency's Director of Communications.

The Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM) is another strikingly well-managed think tank established during the AKP period. It is especially important to point out at this stage that EDAM does not share similar aspects when it comes to its links to the AK Party government. When compared to SETA, EDAM is an impartial think tank. ‘External policy and security, Turkey-EU relations, energy, and climate change policies, economics and globalization, arms control and non-proliferation, and cyber policy all comprise the essential research area of EDAM’.<sup>442</sup>

To define Turkey’s stand in the existing global setting, the EDAM strives to support the policy making process both internally and externally by generating and spreading research on the related policy areas. Besides researching these areas, EDAM also holds seminars and round robin gatherings. What is more, it enables collaborative works both with internal and international actors to carry out mutual research and publications. In this sense, it can be argued that EDAM

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<sup>441</sup> Ibid.

<sup>442</sup> <https://edam.org.tr/en/about-us/>, accessed on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

has a different position when it is compared to the other think tanks. It is established by a former diplomat Sinan Ülgen, and it operates in technocratic ways. It is very hard to find its direct affiliation.

The Istanbul Policy Center (IPC)–Sabancı University–Stiftung Mercator Initiative is another significant think tank with its focus on the Turkish-German relationship, the transatlantic relationship, and Turkey-EU relationship. In this respect, founded under the auspices of Sabancı University, IPC can be taken as a significant example of university-based think tank in Turkey. It is also one of the few accomplished examples of think tanks in Turkey. What is important about IPC is that it shows how the German think tanks sustain their cooperation with their Turkish equivalents. IPC maintains formal links with one of the largest private organizations in Germany, Mercator Stiftung as is the case between KAS-TDV stated on the previous pages.

As it is stated in IPC's website:

The Istanbul Policy Center–Sabancı University–Stiftung Mercator Initiative aims to strengthen the academic, political, and social ties between Turkey and Germany as well as Turkey and Europe. The Initiative is based on the premise that the acquisition of knowledge and the exchange of people and ideas are preconditions for meeting the challenges of an increasingly globalized world in the 21st century. The Initiative focuses on two areas of cooperation which are of essential importance for the future of Turkey and Germany within a larger European and global context. These areas are: EU/German-Turkish relations, climate change”.<sup>443</sup> IPC is an example of think tank which is affiliated with foreign think tanks. There were examples of this kind of affiliation in the past as it is mentioned before but recently IPC has formal relationship with Mercator Initiative. Thus, its role on foreign policy making and debates on think tanks is highly linked with its foreign affiliation.<sup>444</sup>

Novel difficulties in foreign policy came into existence in modern Turkey in parallel with globalization and ever-changing world politics. Syrian Civil War

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<sup>443</sup> <http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/> accessed on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2020

<sup>444</sup> Ibid.

caused Turkey to encounter one of its most important difficult problem in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which is the refugee crisis. Following the commencement of the fighting in Syria, nearly 3.5 million Syrian took refuge in Turkey and that gave rise to a new challenge for Turkey to deal with.<sup>445</sup> In this context, new problems call for new regulations. The job of the Türk-Alman Üniversitesi (TAGU) Göç ve Uyum Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi, which is located in the Turkish-German University, is to work on the refugee crisis in Turkey. This is pretty unique for Turkish think-tanks as the focus is on a particular matter. Murat Erdoğan is the head of this organization and he presents various policy proposals for the problem of Syrian refugees. This center focused on a specific aspect of Turkish foreign policy. In this sense, like EDAM, it operates more technocratic when it compared to the other think tanks, especially, in the case of Syrian refugees,

Contrary to the previous practice, recently the think tanks in Turkey may center their attention on more specific matters. While one of them is addressing the refugee and integration issue, others may be addressing a particular country. One of the think tanks claiming expertise on a single country is the IRAM Center. As it is reflected in its name, Iran is IRAM's main research topic. According to the claims, it is the first of its kind in Turkey concentrated on Iran and its periphery. Generally, research centers in Turkey examine general or regional actors. In this context, IRAM is the first research center focusing singularly on Iran and Iran-linked matters. The center examines cultural, historical, social, political and economic aspects of Iran.

In the Turkish case, there are also think tanks with official links to governmental organizations. For instance, in 1995 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established the first example of a government-related think-tank, the Center for Strategic Research (Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi - SAM). The Higher Education Council, the Ministry of the Interior, the Turkish Military Forces, and Turkish

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<sup>445</sup> <http://tagu.tau.edu.tr/>, accessed on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Grand National Assembly followed the suit and established their own think tanks. The reason why some government bodies established organizations with direct or indirect links to themselves may be due to the lack of trust in external information. On the other hand, such organizations can find a more comfortable living space thanks to the financial resources. However, it is doubtful how objective the products of this kind of think tanks could be as long as they operate under a state body and it is difficult to see how they qualify as a think tank. For this reason, it can be said that although these organizations call themselves as think tanks, they generally do not possess the necessary quality of independent and impartial thinking. For the rise of this category of think tanks, we can point out some reasons. What is more, civil society in Turkey has been empowered by the widening scope of liberties, and the continuing process of democratization. Civil society foundations started the process of discussing societal problems and issues and provided different policy options as solutions to the state. So, this created the conditions under which above-stated government organs set up think tanks associated with themselves.

It is also seen that these organizations are sometimes used as an intermediary mechanism to represent the foreign policy adopted by official state bodies on platforms where the state thinks it cannot fully express itself. While think tanks, which act this way, justify the state policy, they also present the state policy in various different ways.

The foundation of government-related think-tanks is not without its critics, especially in the media. Seyfi Taşhan, who is the founder of Dış Politika Enstitüsü (Institute of Foreign Policy,DPE) sees the establishment of SAM as a barrier in front of the improvement of private think tanks.<sup>446</sup> According to some journalists, SAM is a tool in procuring monopoly of knowledge by the

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<sup>446</sup> Aydın, “The Genesis of Think-Tank Culture in Turkey: Past, Present and Future?” p. 81.

government, real kinds of think tanks are only possible when the monopoly of the state over knowledge and democratization of knowledge is settled in.<sup>447</sup>

**Table 9.** Active Think Tanks in Turkey (as of 2020)

Name of the TT	Website	Interests	No. of People
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Turkish Institute	<a href="http://www.21yyte.org/">http://www.21yyte.org/</a>	IR	15
Ankara Thinking and Research Center (ADAM)	<a href="http://www.adam.org.tr/">http://www.adam.org.tr/</a>	Economics, EU	24
Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Research (ANKASAM)	<a href="https://ankasam.org/">https://ankasam.org/</a>	Regional Politics, IR	x
Ankara Center for Political and Economic Research	<a href="http://asem.org.tr/">http://asem.org.tr/</a>	IR	22
Eurasian Studies Center	<a href="https://avim.org.tr/tr/">https://avim.org.tr/tr/</a>	Eurasia	7
Wise People Center for Strategic Studies (BİLGESAM)	<a href="http://www.bilgesam.org/">http://www.bilgesam.org/</a>	IR	8
Foreign Policy Institute	<a href="http://foreignpolicy.org.tr/">http://foreignpolicy.org.tr/</a>	IR	9
Tigris Social Research Center	<a href="http://www.ditam.org.tr">http://www.ditam.org.tr</a>	Ethnic	x
Economic and Social Researches Center	<a href="http://www.esam.org.tr/">http://www.esam.org.tr/</a>	Turkish Politics	x
Global Relations Forum	<a href="http://www.gif.org.tr/">http://www.gif.org.tr/</a>	Global Politics	x
South Asia Strategic Research Center	<a href="http://gasam.org.tr/">http://gasam.org.tr/</a>	Asia	9
Istanbul Policy Center	<a href="http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/">http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/</a>	EU, Security, IR	10
Economic Development Foundation	<a href="https://www.ikv.org.tr/">https://www.ikv.org.tr/</a>	EU	12

<sup>447</sup> Ibid.

**Table Cont'd**

Center for Iranian Studies in Ankara	<a href="https://www.iramcenter.org/">https://www.iramcenter.org/</a>	Iran	16
İstanbul Strategic Thinking and Research Center	<a href="http://www.isdam.org.tr/">http://www.isdam.org.tr/</a>	Economics, IR	7
Center for Black Sea Researches	<a href="http://www.karam.org.tr/">http://www.karam.org.tr/</a>	Black Sea	x
Association for Liberal Thinking	<a href="http://www.liberal.org.tr/">http://www.liberal.org.tr/</a>	Turkish Politics	x
Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation	<a href="http://www.marmaragrubu.org/">http://www.marmaragrubu.org/</a>	IR, Economics	x
Center for Middle Eastern Studies	<a href="http://orsam.org.tr/">http://orsam.org.tr/</a>	Middle East	9
Sahipkiran Center for Strategic Researches	<a href="http://sahipkiran.org/">http://sahipkiran.org/</a>	IR	x
SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research	<a href="http://www.setav.org/">http://www.setav.org/</a>	IR, TFP	70
Institute of Strategic Thinking	<a href="http://www.sde.org.tr">http://www.sde.org.tr</a>	IR	11
Turkish Academy Political Social Strategic Research Foundation	<a href="http://www.tasav.org/">http://www.tasav.org/</a>	Turkic World	x
Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies	<a href="http://www.tasam.org/">http://www.tasam.org/</a>	Regional Politics, IR	11
Türkiye Ekonomik ve Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi	<a href="http://tesam.org.tr/">http://tesam.org.tr/</a>	Foreign Policy, Regions	x
Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Research	<a href="http://turksam.org/">http://turksam.org/</a>	IR	28

**Table Cont'd**

International Analysis and Research Center	Strategic Research	<a href="http://www.ustad.org.tr">http://www.ustad.org.tr</a>	Regional Politics, Ethnic	x
New Turkey Center for Strategic Research		<a href="http://www.yeniturkiye.com">http://www.yeniturkiye.com</a>	IR, TFP	x

Most of these organizations have important works and they have extremely high-quality services. However, the main problem is whether these think tanks have the capacity to produce independent and impartial thinking. It is not logical to expect that think tanks which do not have financial independence would form opinions against a center that funds them. In this sense, the formation of a think tank again requires large capital accumulations, dependence on capital and business circles. This kind of dependence is not only financial, but also the legal and legal infrastructure needs to be prepared accordingly.

**Table 10.** Government-Related Think Tanks in Turkey

In terms of categorization, it is not possible to continue without mentioning the 'Global Go to Think Tank Index Report' which is prepared annually by the University of Pennsylvania and James C. McGann.<sup>448</sup> These annual reports include a sectoral category, especially after 2010. However, different categories and new criteria are added to the reports each year. The report is geographically

<sup>448</sup> McGann, *Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the United States: Academics, Advisors and Advocates*, p. 34

categorized and divides the world into continents and takes the think tanks that operate there to the forefront under their criteria. Thus, the emphasis is on the geographic location.

The 2020 rankings of think tanks outside the USA places the Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation,TESEV) as the 40<sup>th</sup>, while Liberal Düşünce Topluluğu (Association for Liberal Thinking ,ALT) ranks the 89<sup>th</sup> only. In the same year, for the Middle East and MENA region, EDAM ranks the 16<sup>th</sup>, LDT is ranked the 17<sup>th</sup>, European Stability Initiative (ESI) (Turkey) ranks the 20<sup>th</sup>, and Ekonomik Siyasal ve Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (Center for Economic, Political and Strategic Research,TESAM) the 69<sup>th</sup>, TEPAV the 75<sup>th</sup>, Al Sharq Forum (Turkey) the 80<sup>th</sup>, İstanbul Politikalar Merkezi (İstanbul Policy Center,IPM) the 88<sup>th</sup>, and SAM ranks the 90th.<sup>449</sup>

When the report is analyzed, it is seen that the facts of think tanks in Turkey are not fully reflected because the reality in Turkey does not match the report sets. Moreover, its methodology and criteria to rank the think tanks are highly debatable. On the other hand, some local and passive think tanks that are operating in Turkey are included randomly in the report. For instance, USAK which was closed by the Turkish government after the failed coup d'état attempt by FETÖ in 2016 is still on the list. On the other hand, it can be argued that some think tanks which were more active and influential some time ago but not anymore, like LDT, do not deserve to be included in the list as being influential think tanks.

Although it is claimed that the report is a co-product of scholars as well, the report seems to rely on a certain thought or ideological approach. It presents a picture that is far from being objective. Even this supports the point of view of

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<sup>449</sup> [https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=think\\_tanks](https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=think_tanks), accesed on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020

the Gramscian understanding. Although think tanks may have different reasons for operating, we can state that they reflect a direct or indirect contact with those who hold the power, and some think tanks are intentionally brought to the forefront.

### **5.3. Insider's View on Think Tanks**

Following the 2002 general elections in Turkey the AK Party came to power. Thus, a completely new era started and this change caused new think tanks to emerge in the meantime. Contrary to the previous governments, the AK Party government ascribed more importance to the role of think tanks in foreign policy making.<sup>450</sup> Therefore, the degree of involvement of think tanks in the policy making process in Turkey has increased more than ever. Furthermore, think tanks securing close links with the AK Party have tried to justify both internally and globally Turkey's foreign policy which has undergone great change together with the AK Party government. As a last remark, what was a novelty in this period was the economic involvement of the AK Party government to finance think tanks.

According to the claims of Ayşen Sözen Usluer, former Head of Foreign Relations Office in the Presidency, and Turkey's ambassador to Oman, the process of foreign policy making in Turkey has undergone substantial changes beginning in the 1990s and; Turkey has multiplied its options in retrospect.<sup>451</sup> In this regard, the issue range of the Turkish Foreign Policy has enlarged following the end of the Cold War. According to her claims, when making policy, the public view was not considered as an important factor during the Cold War years, but the foreign policy topics are no longer as simple as before, in that they are complicated matters, therefore, autonomous and self-autonomous

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<sup>450</sup> Ayşe Sözen Usluer, personal communication, December 3, 2018.

<sup>451</sup> Ibid.

organizations, like think tanks, recently got involved in this process. What is more, the mushrooming of think tanks in Turkey can be taken as a sign of their growing influence on policy making alongside with their product range; politics nowadays is more conveniently making use of the reports and studies undertaken by think tanks. Additionally, she argues that some of the organizations, like “Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluğu Başkanlığı, YTB)”, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (Türk İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Ajansı, TİKA), and Red Crescent (Kızılay), are also making their impacts visible on foreign policy-making; despite their official governmental connections, they also enjoy quasi-autonomous status, and these organizations are nowadays also having influence over think tanks, in addition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Turkey. To this end, a quite significant slot is filled by think tanks in Turkey by working directly on practical aspects of the foreign policy. What is more, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has investigated the requests for external missions as a case; but, in the new era, information is collected from various points, in addition to the official contacts, the reports are staged up after being investigated by cross-checking; throughout the external policy making process, this cross-check presents a better way to process complicated and technical deals.<sup>452</sup>

According to Ambassador Usluer, it is not viable anymore to procure foreign policy just by taking into consideration one aspect of the events. This has changed long ago. As it is accomplished nowadays, one can utilize various resources when making foreign policy in addition to a conventional outlook; today, organizations attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are of great help.<sup>453</sup>

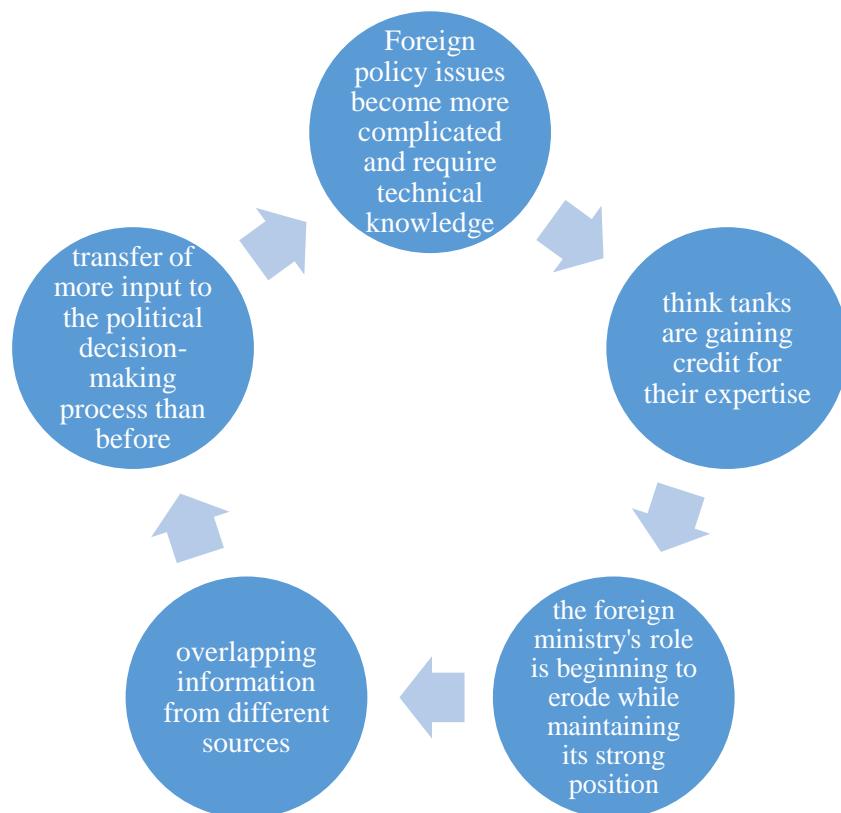
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<sup>452</sup> Ibid.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid.

Taking into consideration the recent increase in the number of think tanks and the quality of their products, it is understood that these organizations are being respected more by decision makers in Turkey. On the other hand, it is understood that the classical role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in foreign policy making has recently started to change. It is seen that normal bureaucracy remains insufficient in the face of complicated problems, therefore, think tanks and expert organizations are used concerning more technical issues. On the other hand, it is seen that the issues conveyed by the classical bureaucracy to the political decision maker are now controlled by other actors. These are the important signs of change in terms of Turkish foreign policy making processes. As a result, today the monopolist role of the classical bureaucracy in foreign policy making has been eroded, it has evolved into an institution lacking technical knowledge in certain fields but still considered as the most important source for foreign policy making.

**Table 11.** Insider's View-A



One of the leading figures who helped the promotion of think tank studies in Turkey is Sinan Ülgen. He is head of EDAM. He says that when it comes to the structure and activity of think tanks, Turkey acts similarly with that of Europe. He goes on saying:

The political channel is utilized in Turkey when it comes to the interaction between foreign policy makers and the think tanks as in the case of SETA; the links with political parties is used by think tanks in order to get involved into the foreign policy making process. Today it is SETA which assumed the role of advocating the relevant policies of the incumbent government and that application is pretty distinctive in its nature from Germany's the political party foundations. There is a culture of criticism in Germany which is dominant, but this is not the case in Turkey, thus it impossible to see the SETA as an advocacy foundation.<sup>454</sup>

Mr. Ülgen underlines SETA's ties with the AK party body during the AK Party rule and the use this think-tank as a legitimization tool for AK Party's foreign policy initiatives by the party. From the Gramscian point of view, the think tank has become a tool for legitimizing politics.

Furthermore, Ülgen asserts that regarding foreign policy, the organizations based in Turkey are not open to collaboration. Yet, the Foreign Affairs Ministry employs no organizational device. Ülgen argues that the Ministry should do so, just like in many other countries in which think tanks are appointed with certain tasks. According to his critical argument, apart from SETA, the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense give no economic support to any think tanks. Even so, the support that is given to SETA is transmitted through the political party, but that does not make it an advocacy think tank; think tanks need to be critical when functioning; yet, as it will be seen, the activities of SETA are all restrained by a political party and thus there is no room left for them to be critical.<sup>455</sup> The fact that Turkish foreign policy making processes are generally limited to a certain mass and is closed to the outside is also a rare situation, even though one

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<sup>454</sup> Sinan Ülgen, personal communication, April 3, 2018.

<sup>455</sup> Ibid.

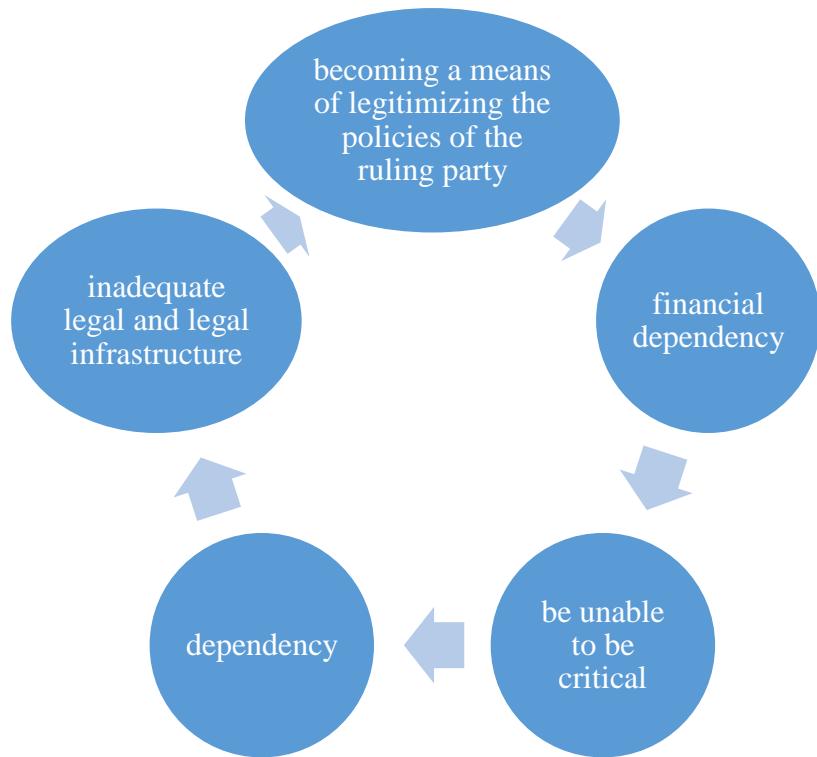
may observe similar cases in some countries. This kind of approach is observed in other Latin American countries, especially in Brazil, Mexico and Argentina. Lack of financial support for think tanks which act independently of the state mechanism creates a dependency relationship, and financial support turns into a control element. This dependency prevents think tanks from being objective and critical.

In Ülgen's view, what is necessary to be done in order to put things in the right way is not the legal arrangement. On the contrary, the correlation between public organizations and think tanks can be regulated by lower-level formations. He also suggests that constructing an organizational collaboration device and rendering a division of power is the best way for policymakers and it could be implemented best by the Office of Political Planning in Presidency because it is beyond the scope of a think tanks' capability and networking. Moreover, concerning the public opinion, the relationship between think tanks and the press can be studied. Social media has nowadays gained a crucial place next to conventional media.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>456</sup> Ibid.

**Table 12.** Insiders' View-B



The way how foreign policymakers and think tanks started to cooperate is also pointed out by İlker Kılıç, former Head of the Protocol Office in Prime Ministry and Turkey's Consulate General in Dubai. He indicates that bureaucracy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs interact with think tanks even starting from an early period, such as during the professional training sessions held in the ministry where the deliberations are simulated by think tanks like SETA and TEPAV.<sup>457</sup> What is more striking is that possible future policy makers in the ministry are influenced by think tanks at the moment when they commence their career. He states that workers of the ministry are influenced especially by publications that think tanks publish; think tank reports are influential over them while they undertake their duties and prepare the nation-related reports.<sup>458</sup> Because of the lack of information flow, annual reports prepared by think tanks are especially

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<sup>457</sup> İlker Kılıç, personal communication, interview, April 5, 2018.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid.

relied on. What is more, there is an individual touch between them, and the bureaucrats consider think tanks more reliable than the media. In this context, the think tanks enjoy some advantages that they have the opportunity to talk off the record and in a more convenient way and that their interaction is mostly grounded on bilateral confidence.

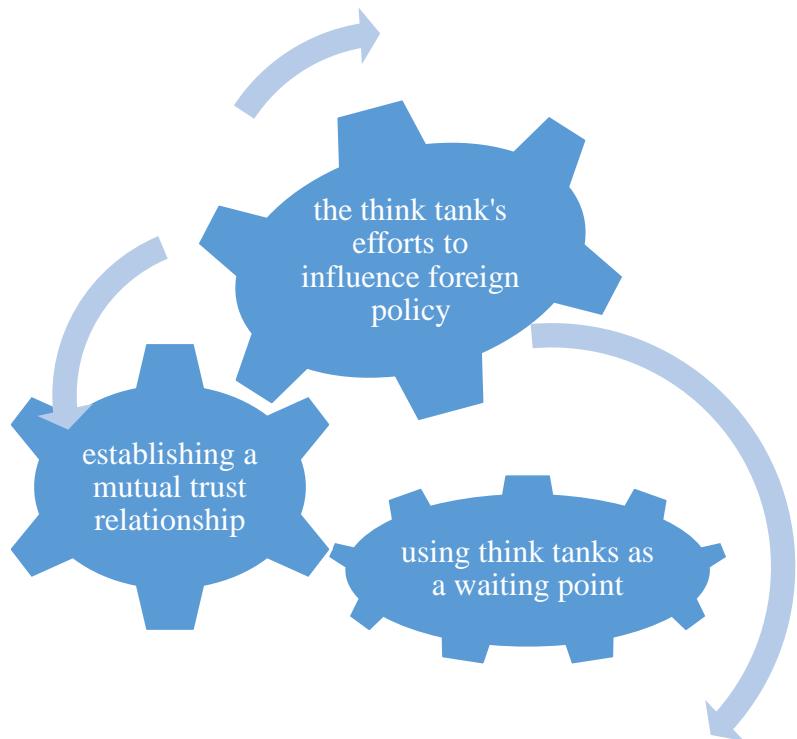
There is a comment made by Kılıç on the comparison between the Turkish and the US think tanks. According to his argument, the label used for think tanks in the US is “revolving doors”; there is a staff transfer among academia, the Pentagon, the State Department, and the CIA solely in the US. However, it is only observed in the early years of the government between SETA and the government in Turkey.<sup>459</sup>

Mr. Kılıç's statements on the influence of think tanks which felt by foreign policy bureaucrats since they take the office indicate how seriously think tanks take their job. It is understood that ministry bureaucrats rely more on think tanks than the media and that there is an unregistered contact with bureaucrats and this relationship is based on mutual trust rather than institutional links.

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<sup>459</sup> Ibid.

**Table 13.** Insiders' View-C



Hatem Ete, who worked for SETA as Director of Political Research and recently worked as Chief Advisor to Prime Minister of Turkey, underlined another aspect of think-tanks in Turkey and their relationship with foreign policy makers. According to him, the degree of the effect of think tanks is decided by the transparency of the political decision-making process.<sup>460</sup> That is to say, the more the decision makers deem public opinion as valuable, the more the influence of think tanks will be elevated and that is how the interaction between politics and public opinion takes place. To be able to make a comparison between the US and the Turkish think tanks, he states that they possess two-dimensional tasks in the US and Turkey. To put it in another way, think tanks lead the public opinion in the way that is parallel to the demands of politics and thus set the agenda. For example, when President Trump decides to initiate a policy, a cue is signaled to the think tank, and lastly, they render the road wide open for that policy. When seen from this angle, they do not seem to carry organizational roles. Their role is

<sup>460</sup> Hatem Ete, personal communication, April 10, 2018

being intermediaries in the process of decision making. However, the same thing cannot be asserted for Turkey. This is because public opinion is excluded from the decision-making mechanisms in Turkey, causing think tanks to possess closer cooperation with the decision makers, and so the data flow to decision makers without any disturbance.<sup>461</sup> Furthermore, both in the US and Turkey, personal close relations between think tanks and decision-making staff exist.<sup>462</sup> What we should understand at this point is that think tanks and the bureaucrats carry out their relations behind closed doors, and it is just a matter of comprehending the political culture. When it comes to decision-making within a political party in Turkey, you cannot deviate from an already set decision easily, because this is regarded as treachery, so when working on a decision, what think tanks do is to elaborate on it, not finding out or presenting alternative policies. After the collaborative work between the decision maker and think tanks, it is time to direct the community towards approving the decisions. The lobbies manage this process in the US so well and explicitly, but there is no US-revolving door system in Turkey except for the SETA. Some staff of SETA have been appointed to several governmental posts. Hence, it is quite normal that think tanks grow a political view intrinsically.<sup>463</sup>

According to Ete's commentary on think tanks and university cooperation, there is no clear academic line in the structure of think tanks. It is probably the result of this discontent with this structure. They are the outcome of a necessity; and they are, in comparison to academia, more active. The think tanks are more flexible and amenable structures. The public appearance of think tanks improves productivity thereby forming a demand for self-update. Moreover, it is

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<sup>461</sup> Ibid.

<sup>462</sup> Ibid.

<sup>463</sup> Ibid.

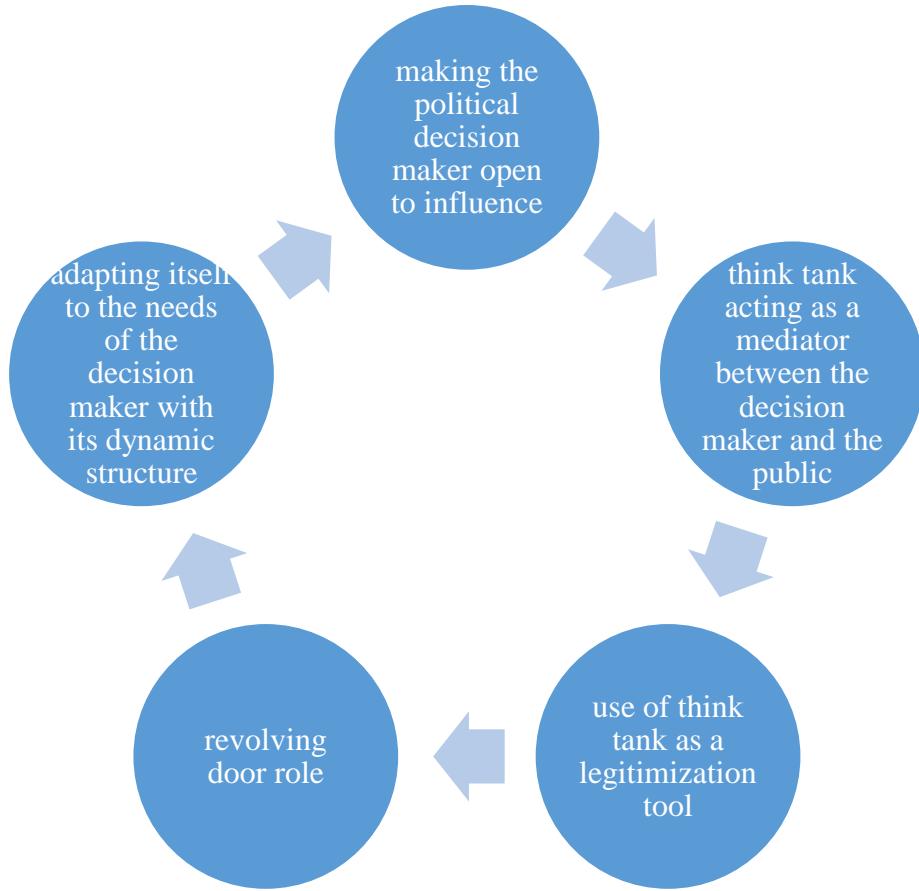
problematic to sustain cooperation with the government. It is impossible to share the job done by think tanks via a contract with the community.<sup>464</sup>

Unlike other interviewees, Mr. Ete points out that the political decision maker has started to become open to the influence of think tanks in proportion to the value s/he attaches to the opinion of the public. It also gives think tanks the role of a mediator between decision maker and society. On the other hand, Ete states that the think tank plays a major role in explaining the decision to the public as a legitimator after the final decision of the decision maker is revealed. As explained above, SETA assumed the role of revolving door during the AK Party rule. Also explained above is that think tanks have an advantage over universities due to their being more active in the supply of information to political decision makers. In addition to being an expert, it also requires an ideological convergence. This weakens the neutral and objective nature of the final product.

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<sup>464</sup> Ibid.

**Table 14.** Insiders' View-D



Gökhan Çetinsaya, former head of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), and a former Professor at Istanbul Sehir University argues that there are many differences between Turkey and the United States. In the case of the USA, there is institutionalization and continuity, both corporate and financial continuity, and the mechanisms that will provide it. This, of course, is compatible with other social aspects of the US. In Turkey, neither financial nor institutional continuity can be seen. On financial issues, Çetinsaya claims that in the United States, usually, a rich person donates money to a foundation, and a think tank will continue to work to advance that person's interest in the long-term. In Turkey, most financiers prefer to donate small amounts each year. This situation leads to

destroy independence and makes institutionalization and long-term work impossible.<sup>465</sup>

Financial institutions and the lack of institutional continuity of thought in Turkey increase the fragility of these organizations. This makes them weak compared to other examples from different countries. Çetinsaya's emphasis on the financial dependence of the think tank supports the Gramscian perspective. It is unlikely that think tanks will be freed of the suspicious glances directed at them unless they are freed from financial dependence.

According to Prof. Deniz Ülke Arıboğan, an eminent scholar on International Relations in Üsküdar University, in continental Europe there is a two-dimensional relationship between think tanks and the state.<sup>466</sup> The state keeps an equipollent think tank either linked to the state or a multi-national corporation; but idea generation always takes place. The interaction in Turkey's case is one-sided. Think tanks are utilized by the state as a political tool to justify its policies. They are used to put into effect the resolutions rendered by the state, and to translate them to English or any other language required. There is no Turkish think tank in its genuine sense. There is no production by them, they merely function as units of marketing.

The objective of think tanks is described by her in general terms are in line with the Gramscian perspective. From this standpoint, think tanks strive to ask for permission to form an indefinite sphere, and to form the physical effort to establish a ground to create a non-state dominance.

Furthermore, Arıboğan argues that some think tanks work for the military-industrial organizations in the US. If the military spending decline, there is a

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<sup>465</sup> Gökhan Çetinsaya, personal communication, April 21, 2018.

<sup>466</sup> Deniz Ülke Arıboğan, personal communication, July 3, 2018.

particular type of interference. At this point, the overlap is observed with the conditions of the Turkish think tanks. If one wants to follow the direction towards which the world is spinning, s/he should watch and control the think tanks, and the intelligence agencies should employ a division within their organizations which will pay particular attention to the dealings of think tanks. While there is always a possibility of assigning pro-active stance to the intelligence agencies, in Turkey they generally assume reactionary stance, people in Turkey are super Dionysian and reactive; thus, in Turkey, the problem is waited to be encountered and then post-fact action is taken, in lieu of taking pro-active measures.<sup>467</sup>

Think tanks may also transfer the information they gather in the field to the decision makers they are already in close contact with or to other institutions and organizations of the state. For this reason, Western-based think tanks with very large budgets and networks in many countries of the world, send their experts to these countries and try to collect all kinds of information from the field. It should be noted that all kinds of information gathering activities that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucrats cannot do, may be carried out by the experts of think tanks in the best way. Furthermore, academics or experts who are struggling with the political structure in their country can easily present all kinds of political, social and economic information about their countries in the format and language desired by the country in which they are located, as experts in a think tank in western countries. While Prof. Aribogañ points out that think tanks can be scrutinized with a Gramscian perspective, she also refers to how these organizations serve the military industrial complex.

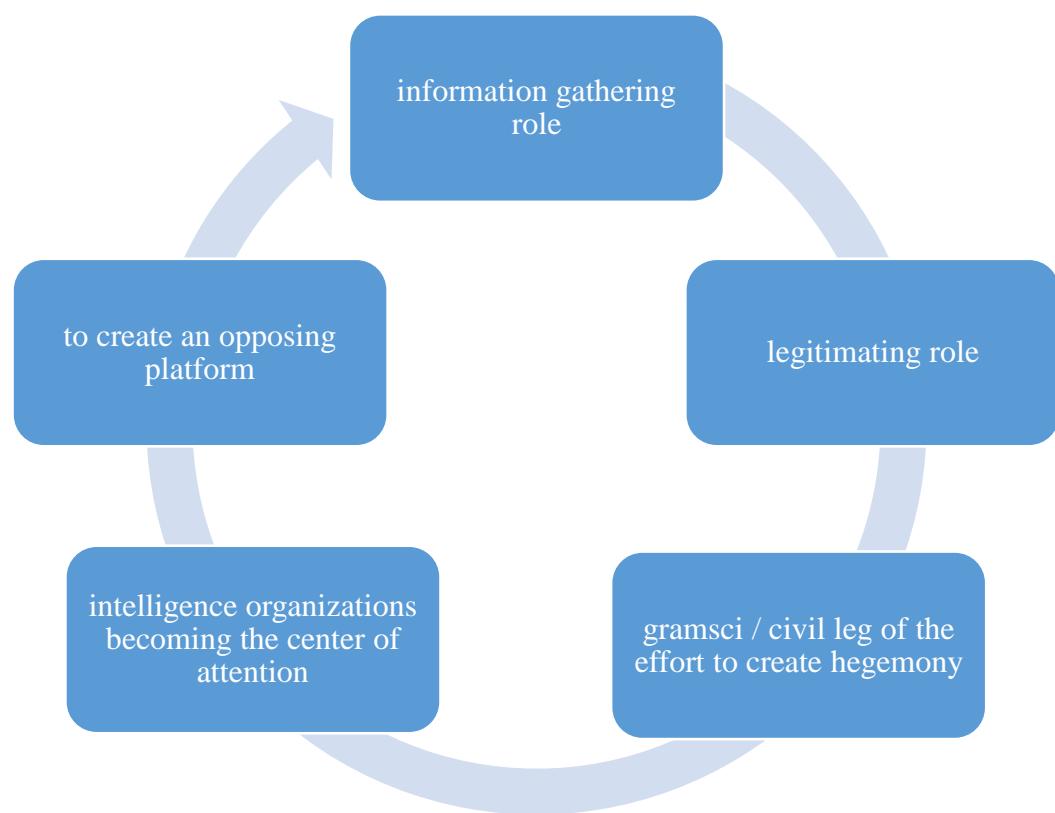
Another important issue that Prof. Aribogañ draws attention to is the possible interest of intelligence organizations in think tanks. As it is a known fact that intelligence organizations try to collect information in a wide variety of fields. It is not very difficult to think that think tanks that do business with the state

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<sup>467</sup> Ibid.

contracts are directly trying to meet the overt or covert needs of intelligence organizations. To change the political power by bringing together academics, experts, politicians and bureaucrats, instilling new ideas, creating new platforms, trying to design the politics of the countries, using different arguments in line with the ideology to which think tanks are bound, without feeling any pressure, seems to work. Political opposition elements find a space to struggle against the government with the opportunities created all over the world through think tanks.

**Table 15.** Insiders' View-E



Turkey's Ambassador to Paraguay, Armağan İnci Ersoy argues that compared to 30 years ago when she joined the Foreign Ministry, she sees that there is a growing cooperation between the Foreign ministry and think tanks. Sometimes this cooperation is more institutional sometimes sporadic.<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> Armağan İnci Ersoy, personal communication, July 7, 2018

The Strategic Research Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SAM) is now the main institutional link between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the academic world. In the past the head of SAM was a diplomat, but for some 10-15 years the president of the center is from academia.

In the information society, possibilities to access to information are plenty. Newspapers have all kind of information on international developments. However, practitioners need qualitative, i.e., processed information. A thorough analysis by think tanks of this information to distinguish trends and the context can be a useful food for thought for the practitioners, in other words, think tanks can provide practitioners with the important input.<sup>469</sup>

In this sense, think tanks should have a more pragmatic approach and their work should differentiate itself from purely academic research.

Ambassador Ersoy also agrees with the idea that Mrs. Usluer has previously stated, that there is a closer bond between think tanks and decision-making mechanisms compared to the past, and that interaction increases. Unlike other interviewees, Ambassador Ersoy points out the reliability and accuracy of information, and in this respect, she also draws attention to the general view of the ministry bureaucrats regarding the reliability of the information produced by think tanks. When this context is evaluated from the Gramscian point of view, it is understood that the idea that think tanks can be the steering tool of a particular center is actually embraced by the ministry bureaucrats. Think tanks carry out the work of state bureaucrats, whose duty is exactly this, almost free of charge, and present all their research on a specific subject or field for free.

Beril Dedeoğlu, who was a scholar and consultant to the President of Turkey, was another interviewee and unfortunately, she recently passed away. She

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<sup>469</sup> Ibid.

asserted that despite the relatively informative property of Turkish think tanks, what was missing was their immediate effect.<sup>470</sup> After a little while, because of their tendency to provide approval for the ruling governments, people rightfully started to be suspicious about them and this reduced their effect. In addition to this, we face ambiguities regarding the objectives of these kinds of organizations. Whether they operate to form public opinion, to help the public, or to present information to the policymakers, is a matter of question begs for an answer. In order to compare Turkish think-tanks with others, Prof. Dedeoğlu mentioned the countless number of economic and structural distinctions. In countries with accomplished samples and political parties, business circles keep these kinds of institutions. A considerable number of them set up cooperative schemes with their counterparts from different countries, and their working style is mainly project-based. Here what is more important is who the project implementer is, not the president of the think tank. They not only possess enough degree of power to be able to make themselves known in the international arena but also maintain links to media organs and they function as if they are lobbies or interest groups. This is what separates them from scholarly bodies (research centers or institutions).<sup>471</sup>

The interaction between think tanks and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is described by Dedeoğlu as in the following lines: “during the course of policy making, from now and then a cooperative work takes place between think tanks and the Ministry to justify the implementations in domestic and external public view”.<sup>472</sup> Nonetheless, no impressive relation occurs above this point.

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<sup>470</sup> Beril Dedeoğlu, personal communication, November 3, 2018.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid.

<sup>472</sup> Ibid.

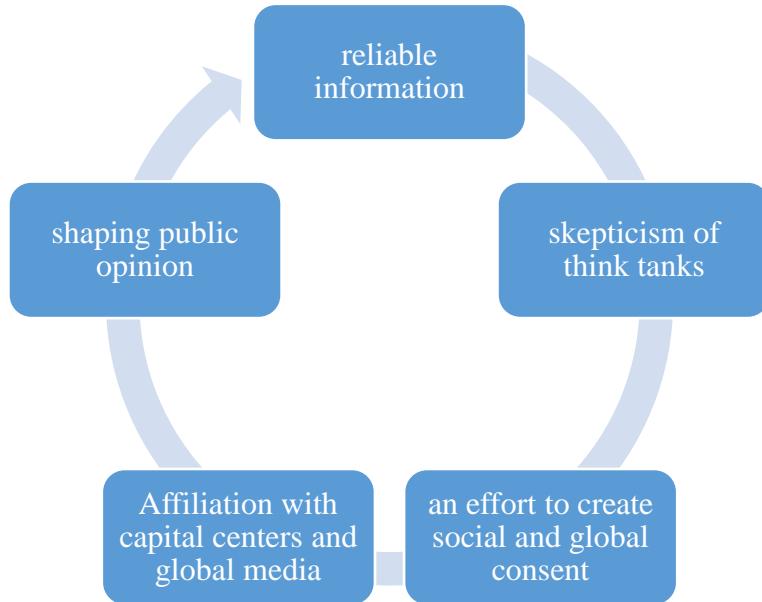
She also added that when it came to shaping public opinion and procuring contacts with internal and external circles, the structure of think tanks remained thin.<sup>473</sup> For this reason, it would possibly be better to employ numeral studies in lieu of non-graphic ones when procuring contacts with the public.

Prof. Dedeoğlu, like Mrs. İnci, referred to the security of information and expressed the prejudice and suspicion against think tanks. The suspicion here stems from not knowing what the source of the information is. In addition to creating a social consent, think tanks try to create a consent for the continuation of the existing order on the political mechanisms of the countries through their global networks, to accept the existing order as it exists, or to allow the order to change within the framework specified by the owners of the order. An approach compatible with Gramsci's many concepts such as hegemony and social consent can be expressed from this point. Even the relationship of these organizations with capital centers and global media conglomerates supports Gramscian approach. With these qualities, she distinguished think tanks from academic structures. Prof. Dedeoğlu, like other interviewees, drew attention to the fact that think tanks were a means of legitimizing decisions of the government and financial dependency. Finally, we can see that the reference to the role of think tanks in shaping the public opinion corresponds exactly to the concept of Gramscian consent.

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<sup>473</sup> Ibid.

**Table 16.** Insiders' View-F



Another contribution was made by the high-level bureaucrat that was mentioned in Latin America chapter. He claims that the think tank's mission is to make medium and long-term forecasts to the bureaucracy or politicians in time, which may be static and dynamic. Though the think tanks are professional when they are first established, they change over time and turn into tools for expressing certain thoughts, cases and missions.<sup>474</sup>

Moreover, he/she argues that the think tanks in the USA have changed their mission and activity in the last two decades. It can be claimed that partisanship has come to the fore in the last period. There are only a few organizations that count as real think tanks, and that politics has put pressure on think tanks clearly. In the case of think tanks in Turkey, like the United States, Turkey has a global and regional agenda that carries weight.<sup>475</sup>

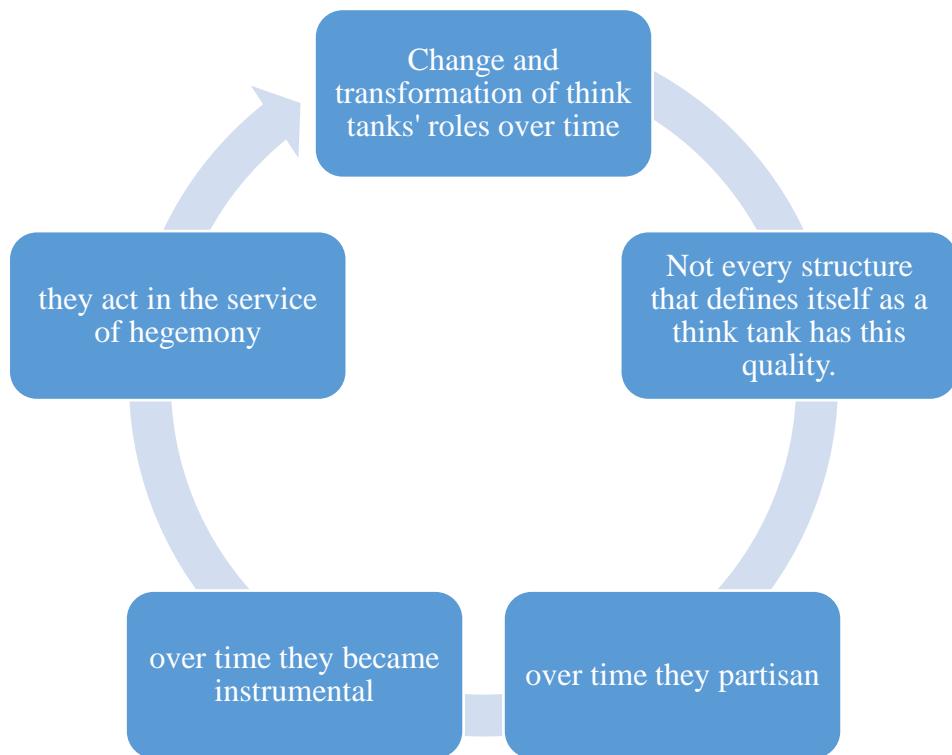
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<sup>474</sup> High Level Bureaucrat, personal communication, June 22, 2020

<sup>475</sup> Ibid.

Referring to the role that think tanks should play, the senior bureaucrat in foreign policy making emphasizes that these structures have become a means of spreading certain ideas over time. At least it is an argument valid for the period in which these examples are established. This supports this dissertation's assumption that these think tanks are products of developed western economies based on their own necessities. More or less all interviewed participants felt the need to distinguish between the "real" think tank and the organizations that present themselves as think tanks. This also means, that at least some of these organizations can actually generate ideas and at least carry out valuable works. We also see that the think tanks in the USA have been transformed and become partisan over time. Due to Turkey's historical, political, geographical features it commands a global foreign policy agenda. Therefore, in Turkey's case expert knowledge is especially valuable. The foreign ministry bureaucrats, who are trying to provide adequate service to the political decision makers of the country struggling with the global agenda, should abandon their classical understanding and adapt themselves to the new order. While the global agenda points to the USA as being the hegemonic power and its desire to maintain this status, it coincides with the Gramscian concept of hegemony. It supports this dissertation's argument that think tanks are tools of the hegemonic power centers of the countries where they are located.

**Table 17.** Insiders' View-G



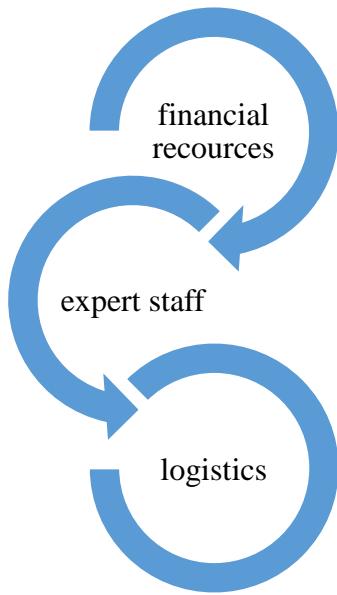
Çiğdem Tenker Köksal, a diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, states that with the data they gather in their expertise areas, and the analyses they make based on these, the think tanks in Turkey support the policy making institutions. When their history is examined, it is obvious that their number has increased in a short time, and their interest areas have expanded.<sup>476</sup> She argues that the think tanks in the world, especially the ones in the West, are in a better position than the Turkish ones in terms of financial sources, expert staff, and logistics. Besides, as in the example of the US foundations, it is often expressed in the international press that they contribute to policies and strategies set by secret services and that they try to shape the politics of other countries. On the other hand, the think tanks in Turkey are usually influenced by the structure and the work of similar foundations in Western countries.<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>476</sup> Çiğdem Tenker Köksal, personal communication, April 21, 2018.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid.

**Table 18.** Insiders' View-H



As Ms. Köksal argues, Western think tanks in comparison with the Turkish ones in fact also shows the nature of the relationship of dependency. The Gramscian point of view also reveals the existence of this dependency relationship, arguing that the stronger that dependence is, the more instrumental think tanks become.

She also states that the think tanks in Turkey do not receive personal bequest, unlike the common practice in foreign countries. The ones in Turkey operate mostly through the financial support of private firms and universities; and it is often thought that more support could be obtained from these institutions. Moreover, it is only possible to make think tanks more efficient and effective in Turkey on the condition that the human, financial, and logistic resources expand, the number and diversity of scientific publications increase, and closer relationships with the think tanks abroad are established.<sup>478</sup> Lastly, about SAM, she underlines that the SAM's publications titled Perceptions and SAM Papers, are sent to universities, to the think tanks, and relevant foundations-either private or state. They are also disseminated to similar foundations abroad, and the

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<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

opinion leaders of many countries through Turkish embassies. It is thought that the think tanks could also send their publications to Turkish and foreign people and foundations, and announce this via media outlets.<sup>479</sup>

It is possible to see the statements of Ms. Köksal regarding the distribution of the publications produced by SAM as an effort to legitimize the official foreign policy.

An expert on think tanks, Prof. Leila Bijos argues that think tanks have always been bridges to connect scholarly and decision-making worlds and are considered as possessing a strategic role of exploring and transferring empirical research into a language. Specifically, through their analysis and reports they present innovative ideas that are implemented by governments.<sup>480</sup> On the other hand, she claims that think tanks connect themselves with other research institutions and specialists all over the world and receive feedback for their projects. They give classes and discuss contemporary issues with the young generation who are eager to make the world a better place for the citizens. They are also invited to nominate lecturers to international congresses and round tables, sharing their ideas with top leaders and governmental staff. They put together a series of communications based on their lessons from international organizations and programs, which might lead to future initiatives, producing evidence-based research and policy recommendations. In terms of investment, she believes that think tanks attract investments and donors to the country, working in the fields of international cooperation and economic development. Subsidies are also allocated to their enterprises.

In terms of Turkey, she believes that the historical landmark of Turkey's development was an empire that dominated the Middle East, leading the

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<sup>479</sup> Ibid.

<sup>480</sup> Leila Bijos, personal communication, July 17, 2020

destinies of most Muslims in different times. Under the guidance of its leader, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk innovative measures were taken changing Turkey's place in a world of highly developed countries. Unfortunately, think tanks in Turkey present literally nothing about this area apart from studies that are quite a few in numbers. Moreover, they advise policy making leaders to implement programs aiming at social, economic and political development following updated technological advances; nonetheless, they should receive effective value in their roles. More importantly, they have a relationship with board members of the most important transnational enterprises, engaging and influencing public policy processes, but in some cases, they do not influence foreign policy; and their recommendations are not followed by governmental leaders.<sup>481</sup>

Bijos underlines that the relationship between think tanks and political parties should be modelled after advisers and counsellors guiding political parties to the best solutions for the country's problems. For her, think tanks like the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) (Germany), the Jaures Foundation (France), and the Progressive Policy Institute (USA) are examples to be followed. In addition, she describes Turkey as a powerful empire during the Ottoman Era, and therefore Turkish think tanks have an elitist behavior, due to the characteristics of their founders which were inherited from the Ottoman Empire. Then, they became influential institutions, and started making use of their qualified work force, engaging and mobilizing themselves towards public policy resolutions. They inserted themselves in decision-making processes, analyzing decrees, laws, and official nominations, urging the authorities to take actions in urgent tasks, contributing to efficient, transparent and organizational growth. Think tanks grappled with political realities in their local contexts and engaged themselves in volunteering actions, managing, pushing public members to improve laws,

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<sup>481</sup> Ibid.

programs, budgetary plans, policies in favor of the democracy and the development of the nation in general terms.<sup>482</sup>

Lastly, she argues that think tanks aims at contributing to democracy. Innovation and transference of technology place Turkey in an era of globalization. They bring their knowledge, experience and play a positive role in engaging citizens in policy process, but the historical establishment of think tanks since the 1990s should be analyzed and praised. Think tank culture should be part of Turkey's culture. On the other hand, think tanks show how democratic structures in Turkey have been set in several areas, especially concerning human rights alignment, civil protection, employment, high-level educational levels, security and humanitarian aid. They also observe the plans and programs of monetary institutions, constitutional juridical agencies, personnel contracting and political representatives. In terms of comparison between Ankara and Istanbul, she claims that Istanbul and Ankara are the core of the nation. Through political parties, governmental staff, senators and deputies, ministries, it is easier to keep an eye on their projects and officially connect to them.<sup>483</sup>

Ms. Bijos, unlike other interviewees, believes that think tanks contribute to the democratization of Turkey and in many ways serve the country's development.

Another prominent academic from Karadeniz Technical University who deals with think tanks in Turkey, Gökhan Koçer, claims that think tanks in Turkey could be labeled as amateurs which are inefficient, ineffective, and political. A very large part of the think tanks in Turkey does not rely on "absolute knowledge". Instead, they present their ideology, worldview, or perspective as 'knowledge' or 'opinion'. In this sense, Koçer claims that the history of these institutions was already very short in Turkey when compared to other examples

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<sup>482</sup> Ibid.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid.

in the world.<sup>484</sup> The first example of DPE was established in 1974 and it is no older than 50 years. Another important example is Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi [Center for Eurasian Strategic Studies] (ASAM), which was founded in 1999 and it does not exist anymore. He states that these facts generate the question of think tanks' independence in Turkey. Today's most influential think-tank in Turkey is SETA which is supported by the government. On the other hand, state-funded think tanks like SAM are naturally dependent on the state and its policies.<sup>485</sup>

Koçer also argues that in Turkey think tank culture is not yet fully formed and these organizations produce ideologically committed knowledge. The increase in the number of think tanks does not mean that a related cultural structure has emerged as well. Think tanks need to strengthen their corporate identities and reduce their dependency relationships. If they become organizations that produce information and ideas in the real sense, then we can call these organizations as think tanks.<sup>486</sup>

Koçer also lists some differences between think tanks in Turkey and think tanks in the USA. First of all, he claims that most of the think tanks in Turkey, in general, have a local/national thinking. In other words, they do not have a universal understanding. They assume that Turkey is the center of the world. Secondly, he defines financial and budget issues as probably the biggest problem for them, which differentiates them from their Western counterparts. They have very insufficient financial resources. Therefore, these organizations cannot sustain their assets. In this term, there is no transparency about the financial sources of think tanks in Turkey and this creates question marks about their

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<sup>484</sup> Gökhan Koçer, personal communication, April 19, 2018.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid.

<sup>486</sup> Ibid.

independence. Moreover, for most think tanks, it is not easy to find financial resources to conduct research and sustain their operations and this is the main reason why think tanks in Turkey have a shorter life time compared to other examples in the world.<sup>487</sup>

As long as there is no transparency regarding the financial resources of think tanks, activities of these institutions will be seen as suspicious by all segments no matter how well they do their job.

Mustafa Kibaroğlu who is a Professor at MEF University and the former head of BİLGESAM, is one of the important figures in Turkey on the issue of think tanks. According to Prof. Kibaroglu, there is no legal organizational structure for think tanks in Turkey; SETA, for instance, is affiliated to the government.<sup>488</sup> Nonetheless, what think tanks mostly do in Turkey is to reflect the views ordered to them rather than generating new ones, though reflecting ideas is more advantageous than creating new ideas to a certain degree. Furthermore, when compared to other countries, Turkish think tanks, except a few long-lived ones, are lagging behind as they could not reach the level at which they are supposed to be by now. The capacity and efficiency of Turkish think tanks are the factors that separate them from their counterparts in the world. Contrary to what should be expected, one side's coming to power does not mean that bureaucrats who are openly associated with the other party would be ousted. They keep utilizing their own experience by joining to the think tanks. They produce policy-occasional papers based on their previous knowledge and know-how. In various platforms, such as public conferences, they defend their positions.<sup>489</sup>

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<sup>487</sup> Gökhan Koçer, April 19, 2018.

<sup>488</sup> Kibaroğlu, personal communication, March 25, 2018

<sup>489</sup> Ibid.

Prior to the arrival of the AK Party government, as Prof. Kibaroğlu claims, there was not enough economic support available for the think tanks. Also, one can witness personnel change since then.<sup>490</sup> Moreover, as a general rule, important figures assume their previously held posts again. For instance, academics go back to their university posts and the businessmen to their particular jobs. Under these conditions, regarding the personnel capacity and effectiveness, it can be said that Turkey is lagging behind the modern standards. In this respect, England and India present good examples. Nonetheless, some Turkish think tanks share common aspects with those in continental Europe. Their organizational structure is based on area studies or regional studies, such as the case of ASAM, or SETA.<sup>491</sup>

In Prof. Kibaroğlu's view, there is not sufficient effort in Turkey to utilize the think tanks in the process of policy making. The policies approved solely by the government are advertised, no new ideas can be offered by think tanks. Instead, they merely explain the government's policies to the public by providing reasons. "Global İlişkiler Forumu (Global Relations Forum ,GİF)" might be the only exception to this rule. It is still alive thanks to the support of business owners. Among the attendees to the gatherings of Global Relations Forum are ex-ministers, parliamentarians, commanders or retired undersecretaries, and the attendees disseminate their works through various platforms and provide sound advice, and thus offer a realistic picture of Turkey.<sup>492</sup>

Assoc. Prof. Şebnem Uđum, from Hacettepe, emphasizes a different concept concerning the think-tank culture in Turkey: "resistance points". By "resistance points" she means bureaucratic resistance points which information coming from

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<sup>490</sup> Ibid.

<sup>491</sup> Ibid.

<sup>492</sup> Ibid.

research institutions should overcome first in order to reach the foreign policy decision-making centers. Resistance points are mostly products of bureaucratic culture.<sup>493</sup>

Nihat Ali Özcan, a member of TEPAV and TOBB Economy and Technology University, argues that there is a historical and symbolic relationship between political systems and think tanks.<sup>494</sup> Think tanks in America emerged as a result of a need. Over time, he claims that these structures have formed a particular culture, critical thinking, and other repercussions which do not exist in Turkey. He maintains that what is important is the approach towards science.<sup>495</sup> He also emphasizes the importance of ‘open source’ knowledge which can be perceived as intelligence production by the private sector.<sup>496</sup>

Murat Yeşiltaş, a member of SETA, argues that corporate culture is a political problem in Turkey and institutionalization reflects a political culture. He states that the main problem in Turkey is historically sociological.<sup>497</sup> He underlines that we do not have a think tank that was established with its own dynamics. Moreover, Yeşiltaş lists the duties of SETA as advocacy, agenda setting, timely production of policy papers and reports, creation of consent, and field research.<sup>498</sup>

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<sup>493</sup> Şebnem Uđum, personal communication, March 27, 2018.

<sup>494</sup> Nihat Ali Özcan, personal communication, March 23, 2018.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

<sup>497</sup> Murat Yeşiltaş, personal communication November 4, 2018.

<sup>498</sup> Ibid.

On the other hand, Aslan Yavuz Şir, a senior analyst at Avrasya İncelemeleri Merkezi (Center for Eurasian Studies, AVİM), claims that from a structural perspective, organizations that are named as think tanks in Turkey can be defined as some kind of NGO or non-profit organization working under different foundations.<sup>499</sup> It is difficult to subsume them under one category because think tanks in Turkey carry out their activities under the structures of different corporate establishments such as charities, endowments, and universities. From this stand of point, similarities can be observed between Turkish and foreign think tanks in the world. The difference is that the outputs of Turkish think tanks are regarded as less important than their counterparts. Besides, when compared to think tanks around the world, Turkish think tanks stay way behind in terms of their financial resources. In terms of think tanks' influence on foreign policy making in Turkey, he argues that, because of the active agenda of Turkish foreign policy, problems facing Turkey in its region, and some ongoing conflicts, the foreign policy making process in Turkey has always been busy.<sup>500</sup> After the cold war, due to the globalization and Turkey's efforts in terms of relocating itself in the region, the interest in the field of foreign policy has increased even more. It is not possible for decision makers to be on top of all foreign policy issues and developments, to be informed about all possible crises and to be able to decide effectively in the policy making process. Instead, agencies that are effective in shaping foreign policy making, like the Foreign Ministry, Turkish Armed Forces, National Security Council, National Intelligence Unit, take the responsibility of immediately informing decision makers in case of emergency in their own fields of expertise thus providing them with alternative outlooks. This, of course, is related to the capacity of think tanks in monitoring current events and getting well-educated experts to analyze them in detail. Today, there is no such mechanism, opportunity, and educated experts who have deep-seated

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<sup>499</sup> Aslan Yavuz Şir, personal communication, March 21, 2018.

<sup>500</sup> Ibid.

knowledge about global politics or financial issues on a global level in most of the think tanks of Turkey.<sup>501</sup>

Lastly, Şir states that, if such a limited function can be demonstrated, think tanks can often be effective in the field of foreign policy, if they manage to learn the perceptions of international opinion leaders or international experts on issues that are relevant to Turkish foreign policy. The main function of think tanks is not to write analyses about everyday events. Think tanks working in the field of foreign policy on the international arena does not only generate ideas, but they also function as guides. These can influence the approach of third countries (in line with the views of the interest groups that support them) either positively or negatively.<sup>502</sup>

Another interview was conducted with Bengü Yiğitgüden, Turkey's Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago. She states that think tanks in field of foreign policy may fulfill a significant function.<sup>503</sup> If this function is carried out accurately, it contributes to the promotion, defense, and forming of a country's arguments, by coming up with new ideas, in-depth analysis or detailed research of some issues, exchange of ideas, even concerning the legislation. In this respect, a lot of countries are providing support to the think tanks, either financially or in different forms. Thus, they try to keep the information flow to make good use of it in the best possible way.

In her words:

I think, think tanks in Turkey are different from the ones in the US. I also think that most of the US think tanks are enjoying the support of certain ideologies

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<sup>501</sup> Ibid.

<sup>502</sup> Ibid.

<sup>503</sup> Bengü Yiğitgüden, personal communication, April 13, 2018.

and /or they have the support of some interest-groups/political parties behind them and these are the things what make their job easier in finding the necessary financial sources. Moreover, there might even be think tanks having established for special ends. Think tanks with financial/moral backings may be exercising more power. It might be possible for them to do research, prepare papers and attend/undertake partnership or international events. There are think tanks in the US having close cooperation with the universities or directly under the structure of them and we can clearly observe that considerable numbers of them are advocating the generally accepted arguments in the country.<sup>504</sup>

About the position of SAM, she claims that SAM which is organically attached to the Foreign Ministry, attends international and bilateral events, and releases papers from time to time. Their published material is sent to foreign offices and distributed to relevant circles in other countries. There are also some think tanks formed by retired diplomats. Cooperation is established with them at times and their productions are closely followed. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also undertaking occasional cooperation and partnership activities with them.<sup>505</sup>

Ambassador Yiğitgüden also argues that especially in the west, attendance of personnel from NGOs to conferences, etc. instead of state officials is desired or even more preferred. With this, they might be aiming at collecting different information/ideas concerning a certain country. In this respect, attendance of the foreign policy organizations to this type of meetings is getting more important and encouraged.<sup>506</sup>

On the discussions about the role of think tanks in Turkish foreign policy making, Hasan Kanbolat, the head of Ankara Politikalar Merkezi (Ankara Policy Center, APM) was also interviewed. Kanbolat argues that in the 2000s, working

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<sup>504</sup> Ibid.

<sup>505</sup> Ibid.

<sup>506</sup> Ibid.

in a think tank became a profession in Turkey.<sup>507</sup> It has a short history. They do not function only in foreign policy making area but also in other fields, such as training of politicians. Over the last 10 years, more than 20 think tank experts have become deputies from various parties. This is a positive development. Abroad, think tanks are places where politicians make politics, and politicians who come out of active politics come to rest in think tanks where they improve themselves. Think tanks are now more active. They affect the Foreign Ministry and the political parties. Kanbolat claims that AK Party is the only political party that works in the Western-style. In Germany and the United States, there are think tanks with organic and inorganic ties to political parties. The think tanks are the kitchen of political parties.<sup>508</sup> Only AK Party has succeeded this in Turkey. Thanks to the think tanks, the party has produced better quality foreign policy as well as guided the domestic and international public opinion. SETA, Institute of Strategic Thinking, and more recently, Ortadoğu Araştırmaları Merkezi (Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies, ORSAM) and IRAM can be said to be directly connected to the AK Party. These think tanks support the AK Party directly or indirectly.

Lastly, Kanbolat argues that Turkey has a surplus of educated young population as its main source of wealth. This adds serious dynamism to Turkey.<sup>509</sup> Yet, the main problem in Turkey is the staff problem. One can only develop expertise in an area after at least five years of work. However, there is no future in think tanks for those who are experts in their fields. Experts with masters and PhD degrees either go to the academic field or bureaucracy afterwards.<sup>510</sup>

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<sup>507</sup> Hasan Kanbolat, personal communication, April 23, 2018.

<sup>508</sup> Ibid.

<sup>509</sup> Ibid.

<sup>510</sup> Ibid.

Kanbolat argues that state funding should be provided to think tanks that have an institutional structure in Turkey. But this has not been done. In Poland, for instance, the Prime Ministry helps think tanks with grants.

Kanbolat states that:

In Turkey, the Ministry of Culture gives grants every year to private theaters as they are seen as public area. But such assistance has not been made to the think tanks. There is a tradition of helping the private sector think tanks in the US and EU. We do not have such a culture. We have seen that private universities have been established recently and that such a culture has started to be formed. Under these conditions, it is a miracle that the think tanks continue their existence in Turkey.<sup>511</sup>

Another expert in think tank studies and the head of a prominent think-tank in Turkey, claims that the main problem in Turkey regarding think tanks is that think tank culture is still forming and that think tanks cannot be evaluated as part of the private sector. This restricts or hinders the role of think tanks in the foreign policy making process. He argues that there is no specialization in understanding of think tanks in Turkey. Under normal conditions, they are intended to create a certain impact. Turkish think tanks are for multiple aims.<sup>512</sup>

Lastly, he stresses that think tanks in Turkey are far from contributing to Turkish foreign policy making. They cannot come up with any alternative solutions to any problems. Their only function is to justify the policies of the government. Influencing public opinion is the task of think tanks, but this (legitimizing the policies of the government) is not their only function. Think tanks whose only task is to legitimize the activities of the government may face difficulties in the internal and international arenas when it comes to their dignity and legitimacy.<sup>513</sup>

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<sup>511</sup> Ibid.

<sup>512</sup> Expert, personal communication, April 20, 2018.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid.

When the statements of Mr. Kanbolat regarding the functions of think tanks are evaluated from a Gramscian point of view, it is seen that the think tanks serve to provide legitimacy and social consent in the eyes of the society as well as the purpose of creating legitimacy.

On the issue of having think tank culture in Turkey, Mesut Özcan, the head of the Diplomacy Academy which is the academic facility of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, argues that the number of universities in Turkey increases contributing to training of the think tank personnel. Some experts/academics working in think tanks move to universities because university jobs are tenured/guaranteed. The university provides the expert with a more permanent job opportunity. On the other hand, think tanks are considered as a springboard on the way to move to other sectors, thus emerges a dual structure at the research centers of universities, some experts even work for both as a part-time job.<sup>514</sup>

Moreover, Mr. Özcan states that think tanks in Turkey used to have more generalists in the past. They could not develop expertise in any specific field. However, it was quite important for the improvement of the sector that recent think tanks working on a specific region/field like ORSAM and IRAM have emerged. Think tanks working on specific regions/topics will empower the sector.<sup>515</sup>

Focusing on specific issues or topics is another issue that think tanks in Turkey face as a problem. In this area, Murat Erdoğan, a Professor at Turkish-German University who focuses on the migration issue, especially on Syrian immigrants in Turkey, claims that data-based policies are produced around the world, and the state should consult with experts through suitable channels on every subject during the policy making process. Previously, think tanks in Turkey operated and

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<sup>514</sup> Mesut Özcan, personal communication, April 22, 2018.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid.

developed on religious communities, religious organizations, and masonic structures, recently these organizations have limited effect.<sup>516</sup>

He argues that experts should give technical and data-based political advice to Turkey's Syria policy as much as they give emotionally regarding the Syrian crisis. Think tanks are trying to justify the policies of the government rather than warning the government. There can be emotions involved to some degree, but the ones who determine the level of this emotion should be think tanks and NGOs, different ideas should be included into the brainstorming process, correct information should be presented to decision makers.<sup>517</sup>

Lastly, Erdogan states that:

Governments should spare funds for the relevant think tanks in order to help them to undertake proper studies, there should be no oppression or limitation, in this respect it is the government which has a dual responsibility. Think tanks need money but on the other hand governments should not frame their studies in case they provide funds for them. If this is done so, it hampers the determination of think tanks for presenting their best possible work, the state should take responsibility in including best experts to state agencies, more space should be spared for think tanks.<sup>518</sup>

Oktay Aksoy, former ambassador, and expert in the Foreign Policy Institute claims that think tanks' activities are not sufficiently accepted yet. State organizations may well prefer to put some distance between themselves and any foundations with possible conflicting ideas when they produce policies with expert cadres. This is also a fact that is bound to change in time. Governments prefer to utilize think tanks not when they make policies but when they look for more support from the community for their ideas. In any case, taking advantage of these kinds of studies is quite an improvement. However, think tanks'

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<sup>516</sup> Murat Erdogan, personal communication, April 25, 2018.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid.

<sup>518</sup> Ibid.

research is found helpful to the degree that it is not in conflict with the implemented policies that may sometimes upset the dependability of think tanks.<sup>519</sup>

Comparing global think tanks with Turkish think tanks, Talha Köse, Assoc. Prof. in İbni Haldun University, who worked as a Research Coordinator at SETA DC, claims that Turkey has its own experience of think tanks. Turkish think tanks have a different structure compared to other examples in the world. It is quite common in Germany that think tanks work in cooperation with or supported by parties or government, this situation can be observed in other European countries as well, think tanks may exist with the support of private companies.<sup>520</sup>

For instance, according to him, in England, think tanks have multiple sources for funds than Turkey. Business life and international actors are influential in this regard.

He claims that:

Situation in the US is little bit more complicated; the impact of private sector, lobbies, interest-groups, large companies and other actors can be seen in procuring funds for think tanks. Super power effect of the US is felt in this wide array. Compared to other countries, the US and England share some similar properties regarding the funding of think tanks.<sup>521</sup>

According to Köse, think tanks certainly influence governmental policy making to some extent. This takes place in two ways. Firstly, people working in governmental positions create an impact by working in think tanks in later stages. Secondly, experts working in think tanks start to get acquaintance with

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<sup>519</sup> Oktay Aksoy, personal communication, November 29, 2020

<sup>520</sup> Talha Köse, personal communication, April 22, 2018.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid.

government people and policies to some extent during their term, improving their level of expertise, and later taking on governmental positions, they transmit their knowledge and create an impact. Tenancy in Turkey is limited, for example. It is freer in England, the direct transfer of an expert to public service is a sound process, but the reverse of this argument is also possible.<sup>522</sup>

Lastly, Köse underlines that the phenomenon of the shadow government in the US reflects this situation. Personal networks are effective in Turkey, and this line of action should be included in the institutional structure. In this aspect, unfortunately, no think tank culture has been able to emerge in Turkey. There are no organizations in Turkey which can claim unrivalled expertise when certain political or economic topics are being discussed.<sup>523</sup>

Last but not least, Yasin Aktay, the former head of SDE, claims that SDE was supported only by the Anatolian capital, in order to protect its independent position. SETA is currently trying to do similar things, but working with the government. Unlike the SETA, SDE is not tied to the government, it has undertaken the functions of legitimization and forming public opinion. In this context, working with the government would reduce the quality of their work. Turkey needs work that will reveal the vision of the future.<sup>524</sup>

As it can be observed from the chart, think tanks in Turkey have a great diversity in terms of their expertise. Think tanks in Turkey cover quite a large number of sub-branches of International Relations.

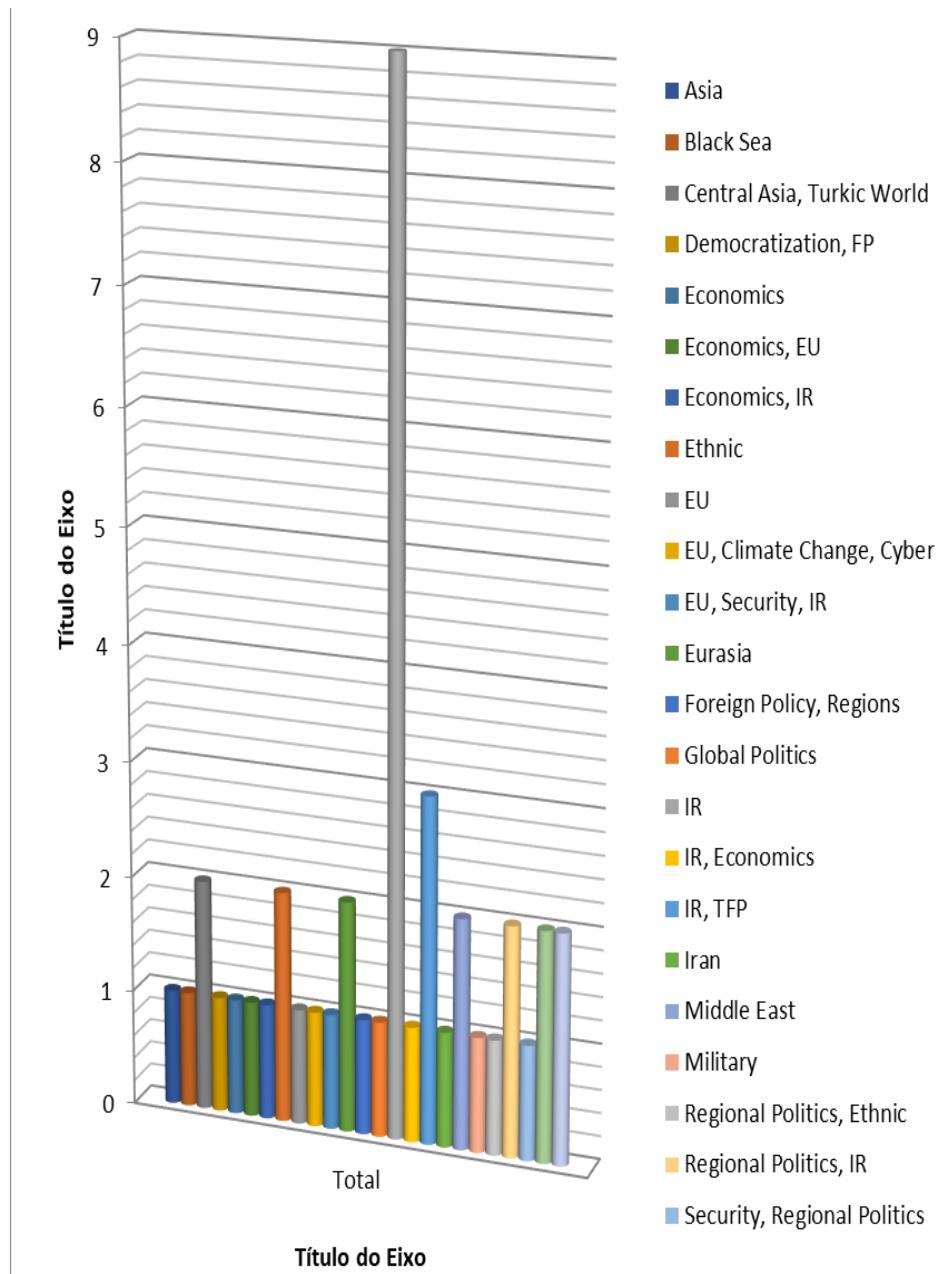
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<sup>522</sup> Ibid.

<sup>523</sup> Ibid.

<sup>524</sup> Yasin Aktay, personal communication, April 29, 2018.

**Table 19.** Diversity of Think Tanks in Turkey



#### 5.4. Security and Foreign Policies Board

Constitutional change in Turkey proved that think tanks could be labeled as more influential than it is claimed in the existing literature on think tanks in Turkey. After the constitution was changed with a referendum on April 16, 2017, Turkey has switched to the Presidential system for the first time.

After the change, Recep Tayyip Erdogan was elected as the first President of the new system on June 24, 2018. The new system brings new institutions. In this aspect, the Security and Foreign Policy Advisory Board is a new tool for shaping Turkish foreign policy in the new system. New members of this board were appointed by President Erdogan.

**Table 20.** Board Members

<p style="text-align: center;">Adnan Tanrıverdi ASSAM Justice Advocates Strategic Research Center</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Burhanettin Duran General coordinator of SETA</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Çağrı Erhan Strategic Research and Study Center (SAREM) Executive Board, Strategic Research Center (SAM) Editorial Board, Head of USAK Transatlantic Research Center and USAK Coordinator</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Gülnur Aybet Visiting researcher at Woodrow Wilson Center Bahçeşehir University Political Science and International Relations Department and founding director of BAUCESS Security Research Center</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Doç. Dr. İbrahim Kalın Founder of SETA Foundation</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Dr. İsmail Safi the President of the Eurasia Civil Society Cooperation Association and Vice President of the International Peace and Development Foundation (IFSPD).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Doç. Dr. Mehmet Akif Kireççi Ankara Political and Economic Research Center (President)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Mesut Hakkı Caşın Vice President of Yeditepe University Strategic Research Center</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney A member of Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey and The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Seyit Sertçelik Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi History Department</p>

As it is seen in the Table, most of the members of the Board worked or participated in think tanks. This proves that a new system brings new opportunities for think tanks to be directly involved in foreign policy-making in Turkey. On the other hand, this indicates that think tanks and their members could easily create personal links with the policy makers in the new system. In other words, the new system in Turkey could be seen as a positive development for think tanks to influence the process of foreign policy making in the future. In fact, these councils are formed because of the inadequacy of classical foreign policy making processes. The political decision maker apparently does not consider technocratic information from classical sources sufficient to decide. Finally, Prof. Dr. Aygun Attar was appointed as a member of the Presidential Security and Foreign Policy Board.

As an example of how think tanks legitimize foreign policy decisions in Turkey is the case of the concept of ‘precious loneliness’. the concept of ‘precious loneliness’ was created for the ‘new Turkish foreign policy’ by İbrahim Kalın. After 2010, Turkey’s relationship with the USA, the EU, Greece, Egypt, Syria, Israel got worsened for many reasons. From zero-problem policy towards neighboring countries to having problem with neighboring countries, Turkish foreign policy dramatically was changed and this shift was described by Erdoğan advisor, Kalın, as ‘precious loneliness’. In this respect, SETA did not initiate or pressure the AKP government for this new kind of foreign policy. Instead, SETA tried to legitimize this decision in order to get the consent of elites and, in some cases, public. This is an example of creation of consent and sustainment of hegemony. To illustrate, an article was published by SETA to legitimize the situation in Turkish foreign policy; named as ‘Number of Friends Is Not a Unit of Measure in Diplomacy’ by Hasan Basri Yalçın<sup>525</sup>. He claims that as Turkey gets stronger and prefers a more independent foreign policy, of course, the number of its enemies will increase and because other countries are afraid of

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<sup>525</sup> <https://www.sabah.com.tr/yazarlar/hasan-basri-yalcin/2020/09/14/dostlarin-sayisi-diplomaside-bir-olcu-birimini-degildir>, accessed on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2021

Turkey's power and getting stronger. He states that "the right decision is to choose to be feared. Being loved is insecure because it depends on the lover. The powerful are feared and it is safer to be feared. Trusting friends is deadly".<sup>526</sup>

In summary, think tanks in Turkey emerged during the 1950s and today think tank industry develops in line with the political atmosphere. In this sense, Turkish case is still behind Western examples such as the United States or Britain. However, when it is compared to the Latin American or Central Asian cases, which are analyzed in this thesis, Turkish case is quite different. First of all, plurality of Turkish think tanks resembles more to Western examples unlike Latin American or Central Asian cases. In accordance with McGann's categorization, in Turkey every type of think tank could be observed. There are independent think tanks such as EDAM or there are semi-independent think tanks like DPE or IKV. On the other hand, SAM is very good example of state affiliated think tank in Turkey. Especially, after the 1980s party affiliated think tanks emerged and after AK Party period, the number and influence of the party affiliated think tanks increased. SETA, ORSAM or IRAM are the examples of this type of think tanks in Turkey. In addition, university related think tanks can be found in Turkey and like TAGU Uyum ve Göç Çalışmaları Merkezi they focus on specific areas of the foreign policy.

In this sense, it is hard to claim that Turkey has a rooted culture of think tanks. In the United States, the influence and the financial power of think tanks are much higher than the ones in Turkey. In the United States, there are different think tanks that are affiliated with different political, business or interest groups which get involved in foreign policy making. Moreover, the structure of think tanks is much transparent than the think tanks in Turkey. However, in Turkey, the number of think tanks that are related with different groups is very limited. Most of the think tanks are highly dependent on either state funds or state related funds. In addition, in Turkey, it is very hard to claim that think tanks are

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<sup>526</sup> Ibid.

influential on foreign policy making. Instead, some of the think tanks in Turkey function as tools for legitimization of foreign policy decisions made by the government. The other ones might have different opinions or critical about foreign policy but their opinions are neglected by the foreign policy makers.

When the Turkish case is compared to Britain, think tanks are still relatively in a weak position on influencing foreign policy making in Turkey. However, the basic difference between the Turkish and British cases is the fact that in Britain, party affiliated think tanks have a deep and long-lasting relationship with the parties that they are related. However, in Turkey, since think tanks are still emerging, the linkage between political parties and think tanks are not powerful. On the other hand, the situation concerning finance, transparency or influence resembles a lot to the comparison between American and Turkish think tanks.

For Central Asian and Latin American cases, it can be argued that Turkish case has both similarities and differences. In all three cases, think tanks are highly dependent on state in financial terms. Moreover, instead of trying to influence the foreign policy making, in three cases, think tanks act as a legitimization tool of foreign policy decisions that are made by the governments. Also, think tanks that are independent from the government are neglected by their governments on foreign policy making. However, the Turkish case differs from Central Asian and Latin American cases by;

- Having different think tanks in spectrum of different political or ideological groups in Turkey
- Having more established culture of think tanks in Turkey
- Having more apparent relationship between think tanks and business or interest groups in Turkey.

Last but not least, the Turkish case could be explained much better by Gramscian concepts. Elitist and Pluralist approaches miss the essence of the relationship

between think tanks and their sponsors. In this sense, think tanks in Turkey operate as tools of their sponsors. This could be the government such as in the case of SETA, or could be private sector such as in the cases of TOBB and IKV. Thus, they act as organic intellectuals for the sustainment of hegemony. In addition, think tanks in Turkey lack influence on foreign policy making. Instead, they try to legitimize the decisions that are made by the government. It is important to underline that in the Turkish case; the role of state is very important for the sake of think tanks. In financial terms, state directly or indirectly is the main money holder for the think tanks in Turkey. Hence, think tanks act in accordance with the state's and state related interest groups' interests.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

Think tanks have recently become a popular topic among social scientists who work on foreign policy making. Yet it seems that there is no consensus on a certain definition of “think tank” among scholars. This thesis asked who the think tanks serve and tried to answer this research question with the help of the Gramscian approach by focusing on the Turkish case in a comparative manner. The dissertation also asked whether think tanks aim to affect decision makers or public opinion, and whether think tanks aim to produce objective knowledge or manipulate the public opinion. The multiplication of think tanks was caused by several elements throughout the world. Some of those factors may be given as the spread of democracy, constitutional alterations and government reform, lively political discussions, the lessening of illiteracy and freedom of the press, the improvement of an internal grounded academic elite. Besides, the multiplication of think tanks moves hand in hand with the rise of multinational corporations and the demands of the world capital to be able to embed into new locations or regions and also to gain legitimacy.

As shown above, there is no single definition for the concept of think tank. The reason for why there is no common definition, is that many organizations which define themselves as think tanks, do not have the general characteristics of this category to qualify as think tanks. This dissertation has tried to overcome this problem by using a holistic perspective based on the Gramscian approach. The Gramscian perspective provides a general understanding that would enable us to understand the role of these organizations in foreign policy making processes rather than dealing with defining what think tanks are or should be. If only one of the available theoretical perspectives in the literature, i.e., Pluralist, Elitist and

Agenda Setting theories etc., is used excluding others, one cannot fully assess the nature of the think tanks.

According to the conventional Anglo-American understanding of think tanks, they are considered as essentially free organizations enjoying separate legality which deal with social, economic, and political matters free from state, political parties, and other similar groups. Nevertheless, the understanding of the Anglo-American perspective claiming that ‘free’ think tanks should conduct their activities independent of the state does not correspond to other states’ experiences. Nowadays, there are many governmental agencies which call themselves “think tanks”. What is more, there are also research organizations which pursue profit-making.

As a whole, while these organizations claim that they produce academic quality knowledge, they also defend that they are independent and impartial. They also assert that the knowledge they produce is clearer and more readily available than that of the universities provide. This kind of understanding and the appeal of the name have caused many organizations to define themselves as think tanks. Therefore, there has been a recent increase in the number of think tanks all around the globe.

However, considering the economic dependency relationship, it can be easily seen that there is a double-sided illusion. For all these reasons, it seems difficult to offer a single description of think tanks that would fit-for-all around the world. This dissertation defines think tanks as organizations or institutes which engage in policy-related research and analysis to affect the public view or public policy with no consideration given to whether they are nongovernmental or not. Especially in Turkey, there is quite a difference between various organizations that call themselves as think tanks. This conclusion is particularly evident once the comparison is done with other case studies covered in this dissertation.

Nonetheless, the dissertation essentially concentrates on how exactly these functions serve the distinctive aims in Turkey.

Even though the USA and Britain are the countries where the earliest think tanks emerged, there is still a controversy among academics about the exact location and time of their emergence. According to the argument of some analysts, these are think-tanks peculiar to the US. This impression owes its fame to the unprecedented enlargement of think tanks in number after WWII in the US. In recent times, almost more than half of the think tanks are located in the US. According to a mutual understanding of some academics working on the US think tanks, what promoted the growth of think tanks in the US to a great extent is the country's particular organizational establishment and its tax policy. The efforts of the USA to become hegemony and the ambition to preserve and maintain this superiority all over the world, the need for an organization that will enable think tanks to come up with new ideas, to present reports ready for the direct use of decision makers, and the consent of the USA's global hegemony all over the world, justifies Gramscian understanding.

Pluralists and elitists have their own perceptions of think tanks. According to pluralists, think tanks are regarded as agents between ideas which bring together the ideas and their implementation. This mindset is actually not wrong, but it is not enough. It is true that think tanks act as a bridge, can generate new ideas, and many qualities are true, but the main thing to look at is what these organizations ultimately serve. Narrow thought patterns may focus on the definitions, typologies, reliability, and how effective they are, but the main point to look at is what ultimately, they act on. We can only have a better understanding of the phenomenon from a Gramscian perspective. Long-run stakes of political and economic figures are concerns of think tanks. While the efforts of elite theory to explain the activities of think tanks are extremely useful, they are not sufficient cover the whole framework. It is true that think tanks are instrumentalized, but this discussion should be carried forward and a holistic perspective should be

used. Think tanks work as tools to come to an agreement among elites and to address political tensions and discrepancies. What is true for Turkey's case is that the elitist approach cannot afford to explain the complete account. Diverging from other existing studies on Turkish think tanks, this dissertation applies a holistic approach to comprehend the political, financial, and social basis of think tanks in Turkey. Turkey's political, social and historical background has led to a peculiar political order to generate distinctive features of the think tanks in Turkey. In this respect, as an attachment to the elitist approach, Gramscian theoretical approach is quite significant to shed light on think tanks in Turkey. Particularly, Gramscian terms such as 'dominance', 'consent', 'organic intellectuals' are pretty helpful to comprehend the complicated correlation between think tanks and the state in Turkey.

For the Turkish case, when insights from the interviews are analyzed, the following results can be reached:

- Although there is not yet a well-established think tank culture in Turkey, important steps have been taken towards that end.
- In particular, foreign ministry bureaucrats are skeptical of think tanks and their activities.
- Interviewees compare Turkish think tanks to those in the US and emphasize the differences how think tanks operate in Turkey and in the USA.
- While in the US think tanks shadow governmental functions, in other countries and in Turkey they have extremely limited permeability.
- Financial problems, lack of trained experts and logistics are among the main problems of think tanks.
- The dependency relation of think tanks to the state, party and capital groups harms their legitimacy.
- While think tank representatives claim that they produce unbiased and objective ideas, other actors respond with hesitation.

- In order for think tanks to be sufficiently strong, substantial capital accumulation is needed, as well as a mature political structure and sociological culture to allow it.
- Think tanks in the West have a global network. Think tanks in other countries are directly or indirectly attached to these centers which imposes asymmetrical relationship.
- An idea created, defended and voiced by a think tank in a country has also an impact outside the country.
- It is seen that the typologies of think tanks differ from country to country. These organizations adapt themselves to each country, and sometimes become hybrid institutions.
- While decision makers try to use think tanks, think tanks try to use decision makers to advance their own interests. There is a mutual relationship. Sometimes one side of this relationship may outweigh the other.
- In the process, it is more likely that think tanks and experts with specializations such as IRAM will be taken into consideration by decision makers.

A single theoretical approach is not enough to understand what think tanks really are and to whom or which interest groups they serve, if the researcher is willing to go deeper than dealing with think tanks' own narratives or with what they say about themselves. From a Gramscian perspective, it would be more helpful to focus on the relationships of dependence on which these organizations sit, the dilemmas they live in, and how they position themselves according to their host countries. It is the contention of this study, the Gramscian perspective brings the researcher one step closer to understanding the true nature of this phenomenon. In general, the idea that think tanks exert direct or indirect influence on public policies is recognized. There are many tactics on which think tanks depend on transmitting their ideas to policy makers and the community. Organizing lectures, seminars to talk about different internal and external policy matters; emphasizing their display in the print and social media; spreading their products;

designing web sites may be contained in these tactics. In any case, it is more difficult to define the impact than to determine what the impact is. There are many confusing elements that can mediate and change the impact of the analysis, these elements obscure any causal relationship that is discovered between think tanks and government decisions. For this reason, it is not easy to qualify for this influence. On the other hand, trying to determine the degree of influence of think tanks will distract the researcher from understanding the essential points. To spend effort in an extremely ambiguous and difficult-to-detect point, trying to create a correlation network, at least with current methods, is not considered very feasible.

There are a lot of difficulties in the world that think tanks have to deal with. Among them, funding comes first and stands as the biggest problem. Private foundations, institutions, individuals, and government payments and contracts and benevolence payments are the main resources for think tanks when financing their activities. It is not possible for a think tank to be able to cover its expenses just by depending on membership fees, sales of publications, or gifts. For this reason, the resources that are fundamental to their livelihood are philanthropy, corporate support, and government contracts. Most of the think tanks, whether in developed or developing countries, rely on scanty budget and under-capacity personnel whose incomes are mostly provided by other jobs. Due to the low level and badly organized endowments in their countries, most of the Asian and Eastern European think tanks require external support, particularly from industrialized countries. At this point, think tanks located in the periphery develop direct or indirect relations with the center's think tanks, and as the dimension of the relationship gets stronger, dependence on the center also increases. As it is clear, Turkish think tanks are also facing the same problem which is funding. There are also cases in which Turkish think tanks make use of foreign funders by carrying out research projects for them. The think tanks with an annual budget of over one million dollars are not unlimited. Compared to their American and Western European counterparts, the Turkish think tanks

enjoy quite fewer chances for funding. As can be understood from this point of view, Turkish think tanks rely on the state for funding in terms of rendering or directing economic assistance from the private sector. Therefore, their independence and functioning become questionable in Turkey.

In Latin American countries, foreign policy is generally under the control of the Head of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucrats and to some extent the soldiers. On the other hand, Mexican experts are trying to have a say in this field by deploying themselves in think tanks in the USA. Another situation is that the think tanks established in these countries develop an area of expertise on a more limited geography, considering the political and economic policies of their countries. Those working in these think tanks are also former diplomats or bureaucrats. Dependence on the state continues.

The appointment of İbrahim Kalin as the head of Security and Foreign Policy Board of Presidency indicates that think tanks could play an effective role in foreign policy making in Turkey. Also, it reveals that the influence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the other aspects of bureaucracy in Turkey is diminished with the system. If the careers of the members of the board are considered, it could be argued that there will be no dominant perspective in the foreign policy as opposed to previous eras. There will be more opportunities for different aspects and subjects that new foreign policy makers would try to experience. Just the background of the members of the board and their affiliations with think tanks indicates the significance of think tanks in Turkey on foreign policy making.

Apart from that, there are the opinions of interviewees bringing different perspectives and significant facts about the think tanks in Turkey for today and the future. First, it can be stated that Turkey has no specific think tank culture when it is compared to the United States and the other examples in the world as was discussed in this study. While some of the think tanks in the world go back

to the beginning of the 20th century, the oldest think tank that is active today in Turkey is 50 years old. Secondly, as interviewees rightly indicate, the financial and human resource problems are the biggest challenges that think tanks in Turkey are facing today. Thirdly, only a few think tanks in Turkey could operate without relying on the government. However, lastly, interviewees have a positive expectation for the future of think tanks in Turkey.

The effect of think tanks in Turkey on the policy making process so far has not been sufficiently felt. It is important to point out at this stage the unwillingness of governmental organizations in taking suggestions from think tanks harms the will of think tanks on the way of acquiring their primary target. Nonetheless, there are two crucial means by which Turkish think tanks are indirectly striving to exert influence on the policy making course. One is through media and other is by forming public opinion. On the other hand, it can be said that the effectiveness of think tanks has increased during the foreign policy making process with the AK Party government, at least in this context, they are more respected. There are many reasons for this change such as the diversification of the foreign policy, foreign policy's becoming more complicated, the inadequacy of foreign affairs bureaucrats on certain issues, and the need to obtain consent for the government's foreign policy goals. In the Turkish case, it is obvious that think tanks do not involve in foreign policy making process. Policy makers neglect what think tanks claim or argue. Instead, think tanks that affiliated with the government and the state act as a legitimization tool for policy makers. These think tanks try to set the agenda according to the policy maker's demand. If government takes a decision on a foreign policy issue, these think tanks function in order to legitimize this decision for the public. In addition, for some cases like the European Union or the trade, think tanks act in accordance with interests of their sponsors, if the sponsor is the business sector in Turkey. Thus, it can be argued that think tanks do not try to create objective knowledge for decision makers. Although there are similarities and the differences between the cases that are analyzed in this thesis are mentioned before, it is crucial to underline that

the question how think tanks influence the foreign policy making could be answered properly by Gramscian concepts in general. This dissertation's answer to its research question is that think tanks are operated as legitimization tool of foreign policy decision makers because think tanks have an important role on creating public consent on foreign policy issues for the sake of continuation of the hegemony

To sum up, considering theoretical terms, various dimensions of theoretical outlines are simplified by diverse theoretical perspectives when think tanks are put under comparative examination. This is the reason why this dissertation makes use of a holistic approach when analyzing the think-tank phenomenon in Turkey and the other parts of the world. Interaction between the military industry and business and their dependents with external policy making are all expounded by the elitist approach. However, it does not seem to be sufficient to comprehend the sinuous connection between government and think tanks. What is important in the new century is the close relationship between power and information. In this regard, Turkish think tanks are quite successful in gaining approval of the community and legalizing the implemented external policy steps. Dependency relationship of think tanks in Turkey makes the Gramscian perspective more useful. To put it in another way, the agenda-setting function of think tanks is seen clearly in this respect. On the other hand, as the influence of the government's decisions on foreign policy issues within the country increases, the need to craft consent among the society in this context reveals the effectiveness of the Gramscian perspective in explaining this phenomenon once again. As a result of their reliance on the government and the private sector, when compared to the US think tanks and the other think tanks in the world, Turkish ones display distinctiveness. What is more, the impact of think tanks on foreign policy making is growing in Turkey together with its varying dimensions and it seems like more discussions will be coming in the following years on think tanks, their role in, and impact on foreign policy making.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **A. CURRICULUM VITAE**

#### **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Surname, Name: GÜNEL, Özgür

Nationality: Turkish

Date and Place of Birth: July 15, 1978, Kırıkkale

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#### **EDUCATION**

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU International Relations	2012
BS	Istanbul Uni. International Rel.	1999
High School	Justice Vocation High School, Ankara	1995

#### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Year	Place	Enrollment
2019-	Foreign Ministry	Second Secretary

Present

2017- 2019	Turkish Presidency	Branch Manager
2003-2017	Prime Ministry	Senior Analyst/Expert

#### FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Portuguese, French (intermediate), Hebrew (basic)

#### PUBLICATIONS

1. Günel, Özgür "NATO", İSEAD, 1(01), 30-32, (April 2010)

#### HOBBIES

Reading, Swimming, Chess,

## B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Düşünce kuruluşları kime hizmet ediyor? Bu tez, karşılaştırmalı bir şekilde Türkiye örneğine odaklanarak bu araştırma sorusunu Gramsciyen yaklaşımın yardımıyla yanıtlamaya çalışacaktır. Tez ayrıca düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapıcısı mı yoksa kamuoyunu mı etkilemeyi amaçladığını ve düşünce kuruluşlarının nesnel bilgi üretmeyi mi yoksa kamuoyunu manipüle etmeyi mi amaçladığını soracaktır. Bu tez, düşünce kuruluşlarının, hegemonyanın sürdürülmesi için kamuoyunda bir rıza oluşturmak için dış politika yapıcıların meşrulaştırma aracı olarak hizmet ettiğini savunuyor.

Dünya genelinde düşünce kuruluşları sayıca artmakta ve her geçen gün çeşitli devletlerin politika oluşturma süreçlerine daha fazla katılım göstermektedirler. Bunun nedeni, tezin ilerleyen aşamalarında da görüleceği gibi, Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının tam olarak düşünce kuruluşları olmayıp, hibrit ve özgün bir yapıya sahip olmalarıdır. Düşünce kuruluşlarıyla ilgili çalışmaların çoğu Amerikalı bilim adamları tarafından yapılıyor ve bu da akademisyenleri yalnızca ABD'de meydana gelen gelişmeleri düşünmeye ve analiz etmeye yönlendiriyor. Rich'in görüşüne göre, 1970'den beri merkezlerinde Amerikan düşünce kuruluşları bulunan bir düzineden biraz daha az akademik çalışma yayınlandı. Aksine, düşünce kuruluşları dışındaki sivil toplum kuruluşlarının farklı türleri, özellikle çıkar grupları hakkında çok sayıda kitap basılmıştır. Bu formların karşılaştırmalı bir analizi oldukça sınırlı olmuştur. Politikaları etkilemedeki önemlerine rağmen, düşünce kuruluşlarına hak ettikleri akademik ilgi gösterilmemiştir. Aslında düşünce kuruluşları, Türkiye'de daha da az akademik ilgi görüyor. Temel sorun, sınırlı sayıda çalışmadan ziyade çalışmaların kalitesidir. Ne yazık ki düşünce kuruluşları hakkındaki tartışmalar, Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının tanımı konusundaki tartışmalar etrafında toplanıyor. Bu tür formların tanımı ve sınıflandırılması konusunda bir fikir birliğini sağlamayanın

karmaşıklığı, düşünce kuruluşları hakkında akademik çalışma eksikliğinin nedeni olabilir.

Küresel çapta dağılmış düşünce kuruluşlarının genel bir resmini sunmak bu tezin ana amacıdır. Merkezinde “düşünce kuruluşu” tanımının tartışıması yer almaktadır. Dünyanın dört bir yanındaki düşünce kuruluşlarının tasarım, politik önem, organizasyon yapısı ve ilgi alanı açısından önemli ölçüde farklılık gösterdiği göz önüne alındığında, birden fazla türde düşünce kuruluşu için yalnızca bir tür tanımlama yapmak yeterli değildir. Bu nedenle düşünce kuruluşlarının tek bir tanımı veya sınıflandırmasının olmadığı iddia edilmektedir. Ve yine bu nedenle, tek bir teorik çerçeve yerine daha bütüncül bir bakış açısı benimsenmiştir. Mevcut yaklaşımlar arasında bu tez, düşünce kuruluşlarını anlamadan en etkili yolunun Gramsciyen teorik anlayış olduğunu savunur. Bu bağlamda, dünyanın dört bir yanından düşünce kuruluşlarını sıralamak için çeşitli “düşünce kuruluşu” tanımları ve sınıflandırma türleri analiz edilmektedir. Bu tez, düşünce kuruluşlarının gerçekleştirdiği eylemleri ve bunların sonuçlarını incelemeye geçmeden önce, bu düşünce kuruluşlarının nasıl ve hangi yollarla ortaya çıktıklarının ve dünya başında nasıl çoğaldıklarının nedenlerini araştırmaktadır. Bu tezin bir diğer kaygısı da düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politikadaki rollerini ve etkilerini ortaya koymaktır. Bu bağlamda, dış politika yapımının teorik boyutlarına ışık tutmak için analitik bir yöntem kullanır.

Düşünce kuruluşlarının hızlı yükselişi son zamanlarda küresel olarak görülebilir. Düşünce kuruluşlarının sayı ve kalitesindeki bu artışın, uluslararası sistemdeki değişimin, konuların karmaşıklaşması ve karar vericilere bilgi sağlamak için gereken yapıların yetersiz kalmasından kaynaklandığı söylenebilir. 1990'ların sonundan bu yana çok sayıda düşünce kuruluşunun kuruluşuna bakıldığından, sürecin Türkiye için hemen hemen aynı olduğu görülmektedir. Türkiye'de düşünce kuruluşlarının sayıca çoğalmasına ve epeyce çalışma dışında, henüz bir dizi çalışma yapılmamıştır. Dolayısıyla bu tezin amacı hem Türkiye'deki hem de ABD, İngiltere, Orta Asya ve Latin Amerika'daki düşünce kuruluşlarının siyasi

etkilerinin karşılaştırmalı bir incelemesini yapmaktadır. Ayrıca kuruluş ve evrimlerini de inceleyecektir. Son olarak, Türkiye'de bir düşünce kuruluşu kültürünün gelişip gelişmediği incelenecektir.

Birden fazla plan ve amaca sahip olan düşünce kuruluşları büyüklükleri, parasal kaynakları, yapıları, personel yapıları, siyasi önemleri ve uzmanlık alanları bakımından büyük ölçüde farklılık göstermektedir. Aslında asıl sorun, gerçek anlamda düşünce kuruluşu niteliklerine sahip olmayan ve bu anlamda yeterli kriterleri yerine getirmeyen kurum veya kuruluşların kendilerine düşünce kuruluşu demeleridir. Buna ek olarak, farklı ülkelerdeki çeşitli kurumsal ve kültürel kuruluşların düşünce kuruluşları gibi etkide bulundukları, benzer etki ve politika yeteneklerine veya şanslarına sahip oldukları da söylenebilir. Bir yandan, bazı düşünce kuruluşları finansal ve sosyal sorumlara herhangi bir "önyargılı" veya "ideolojik" saik olmaksızın "akademik" veya "teknik" çözümler sunmakta ısrar edebilirken, geri kalanının açıkça önyargılı veya ideoloji temelli olduğu görülüyor. Bazı düşünce kuruluşları "akademik" bir görünümde sahipken, diğerleri daha düzenli olarak politika duruşlarına katılıyor. Terimin küresel kullanımı çarpıcı biçimde değişir. Tanım, düşünce kuruluşlarının STK olarak sınıflandırılması olarak kullanılmıştır. Düşünce kuruluşları tarafından gerçekleştirilen tüm eylemleri ve uygulamaları açıklamak için mevcut tek bir açıklama yeterli görünmemektedir.

Bu tezin bir diğer amacı, aşağıdakiler arasındaki uluslararası korelasyonların ayırt edici bekłentilerini göstermektir:

- Düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımına etkisi nedir;
- Dış politika yapıçıları etkilemek için kullandıkları başlıca yollar nelerdir;
- Politika ipuçları verme (danışmanlık) ile lobcılık arasındaki fark nedir?

Domhoff' "Amerika'yı Kim Yönetiyor?" kitabında kâr amacı gütmeyen her kurumun toplumun genel hatlarının şu ya da bu şekilde ortaya çıkarılmasında ve

böylece siyasi atmosferin tasarılanmasına yardımcı olmada rol aldığıını iddia eder. Neyin hoş, önemli ve “zarif” olduğuna dair normlar, kültürel ve kentsel temelli temeller tarafından belirlenir. Neyin öğretileceğinin, öğrenileceğinin ve aranacağının önemine karar vermede bile seçkin üniversiteler tarafından önemli bir rol oynanır ve ülkede uzmanlar ve profesyoneller çoğunlukla onlar tarafından eğitilir. Ancak yine de en acil ve önemli etki kurumlardan, düşünce kuruluşlarından ve politika müzakere kuruluşlarının kendisinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Onlar tarafından sağlanan fikir, eleştiri ve politika tavsiyeleri, broşürler, kitaplar, bölgesel tartışma ekipleri, kitle iletişim araçları ve hatta büyük şirketlerin kamuoyunu bilgilendirme bölümleri gibi çeşitli kurslarla sıradan insanlara doğru yol alıyor. Ayrıca sahip oldukları erzakları aşağıda özetlenen farklı kanallardan devlet kuruluşlarına iletmektedir.

Mali ve idari konularla ilgili olarak benimsenecek yeni politikaları tavsiye etmek düşünce kuruluşlarının üstlendikleri bir görevdir. Düşünce kuruluşlarının özellikle önemli dış politika ve mali konularda karar vericilere yol göstermeye çalışıkları, kendi gündemlerini veya finansörlerinin gündemlerini ve hassasiyetlerini öne çıkarmaya çalışıkları yadsınamaz bir gerektir. Bu işlevi yerine getirirken, düşünce kuruluşlarının ele aldıkları konu hakkında karar vericiler için hazırladıkları raporlar elbette tavsiye niteliğinde ve değerlidir. Mesele şu ki, düşünce kuruluşları önemlidir, yaptıkları işin kalitesiyle orantılı olarak değer görürler, ancak bunu yaparken her zaman tarafsız davranışmazlar. Düşünce kuruluşları, seçkin üniversitelerin ana bölümleri tarafından oluşturulan uzmanları kiralamanak için varlıklı hayırseverler, kurumlar ve kuruluşlardan yararlanarak fon temin eder. Uzmanlar tarafından hazırlanan kavramlar ve öneriler, broşürler, kitaplar, popüler dergi ve gazetelerdeki makaleler ve hepsinden önemlisi, uzmanların katılımıyla farklı politika tartışma kuruluşları tarafından düzenlenen konferanslar aracılığıyla yayılmaktadır.

Düşünce kuruluşları çok farklı organizasyon tarzlarında ve meşru çerçevelerde çalışır. Düşünce kuruluşlarını araştırma planlarına, personel yapılarına ve temel örgütsel hedeflere göre kategorize eden taksonomiler oluşturmak faydalıdır.

Düşünce kuruluşları gelişmiş ve gelişmekte olan ülkelerde daha yaygın olduğu için, akademisyenler düşünce kuruluşlarının politika geliştirme sürecine dahil olma mekanizmasını ve bunların sonuçlarını kavramak için çeşitli teoriler kullandılar. Bazıları, düşünce kuruluşlarının siyasi alana nasıl yerleştirildiğini açıklamak için seçkin teorilere ve çoğulculuğa dayansa da, bunların etkilerine ışık tutmak için diğer örgütsel yaklaşımlar da kullanılmaktadır.

Elitist yaklaşım, düşünce kuruluşlarının, uzmanlarına ve politika yapıcılarla yakın ilişkilere dayalı olarak siyasi ve finansal çıkarlarını geliştirmek için kurumlar ve hayırsever sponsorlar lehine çalışan seçkin vakıflar olduğunu savunur. Elitist teorinin bu anlayışı, düşünce kuruluşlarının işleyişini açısından doğru olsa da araştırılması gereken toplumsal gerçeklik bağlamında analiz edilmelidir. Bu anlayış bizi Gramsciyen bakış açısına yaklaştıracak ve düşünce kuruluşlarının konumuna ilişkin gerçeğin ne olduğunu daha iyi anlamamızı sağlayacaktır.

Elite teorisinin uygulanmasına örnek olarak Ricci, Dye, Domhoff ve Pescheck'in çalışmaları gösterilebilir. Bu çalışmalar, düşünce kuruluşlarının siyasi bağlantısı olmayan ve sadece bilgi aktarma rolünü üstlenen vakıflar olmadığını iddia etmekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda demokrasinin kalitesini yükseltmekle hiçbir ilgilerinin olmadığını da iddia eder. Burada dikkat edilmesi gereken nokta, düşünce kuruluşlarının faaliyetlerinin çok farklı sonuçlar doğurduğu ancak bu kuruluşların temel amacının ne ülkelere demokrasi getirmek ne de bilgi üretmek olduğunu. Onlar (seçkinler), siyasi ve mali liderlerin uzun vadeli çıkarları için düşünce kuruluşlarını istismar ettiğini savunuyorlar. Tez, sömürü ilişkisinin tek taraflı olmadığını, benimsenen politika duruşunun zamana ve bağlama göre değiŞebileceğini, hatta bazı durumlarda bir tarafın her iki duruşun özelliklerini

taşındığını ifade etmeye çalışmaktadır. Kurumsal, askeri ve yönetsel politika ortamlarının idari yapılarını birbirine bağlamayı vurgularlar. Düşünce kuruluşlarının görevlerinden biri, seçkinler arasında anlaşma sağlamak ve onlara siyasi ilişkilerinde ve anlaşmazlıklarında yardımcı olmaktadır. Ayrıca, özellikle savunuculuk meseleleriyle ilgilenen düşünce kuruluşları, dış politika yapıcılar etkilemek için daha çok bir grubun sözcüsü gibi görünen eylemleri nedeniyle saldırıyla uğruyor. Bu bağlamda Neo-Marksist bakış açısı yardımcı olabilir. Neo-Marksist bakış açısı, düşünce kuruluşlarının siyasi-ekonomik yapının sorunlarına ışık tutma ve bu sorunları daha kolay yönlendirilebilir toplum politikalarına dönüştürmek için uzun vadeli projeler üretme kabiliyetini göstermektedir. Bu nedenle, kapitalizmin baskın rolü, düşünce kuruluşları tarafından desteklenmektedir. Neo-Marksist bakış açısı da bizi gerçeğe bir adım daha yaklaştırırken, Gramsciyen bakış açısıyla düşünce kuruluşları bağlamında en net fotoğrafı ancak elde edebiliriz. Gramsciyen perspektifin Neo-Marksist perspektiften daha iyi olmasının nedeni, Neo-Marksistler dış politika yapımında sosyal ilişkiyi görmezden gelirken, Gramsciyen perspektifin dış politika yapımının sosyal parametrelerini kapsamasıdır.

Tuğrul Keskin ve Patrick R. Halpern'in görüşüne göre, seçkin çalışanlar hükümet koltuklarını kendilerine ayırmayı gerekli görmemektedir. Aksine, işlerini onların yerine yapmak için seçilmiş ve atanmış hükümet yetkililerine güvenirler. Burada araştırmacılar, düşünce kuruluşlarının yönetici seçkinler tarafından nasıl kullanıldığına veya gücün nasıl devredildiğine odaklıyor. Ancak asıl araştırılması gereken nokta, düşünce kuruluşlarının nasıl hareket ettikleri değil, hangi amaçla hareket ettikleridir. Seçkinler, iyilik gibi semboller kullanarak veya seçim gibi demokrasinin olanaklarından faydalananarak, kitlesel olarak insanları siyasi ve mali çıkarlarına göre yönlendirmeyi başarabilirler.

Elite teori düşünce kuruluşlarının Capitol Hill'de yer alacak çalışmalar ve öneriler sunduğuına inanıyor. Domhoff'a göre akademisyenleri düşünce kuruluşları hakkında cezbeden şey şudur:

“Farklı akademik çevrelerdeki uzmanların, düzenli öğretim, komisyon toplantıları ve normal çalışma koşullarını oluşturan diğer benzer faaliyetlerden herhangi bir kesinti olmaksızın alternatif politika çalışmalarına tam olarak katılmalarına izin verecek bir ortam sağlamaşı”

İkinci teorik yaklaşımı gelince, mevcut literatürde Çoğulcu (Pluralist) bakış açısı hakimdir. Düşünce kuruluşları, Çoğulcular tarafından, yalnızca pratik tartışmaların gerçek bir parçası olmayan fikirler için tasarlanmış, fikirlerle dolu bir pazar olarak kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Ardından, seçkin teorisyenler tarafından yapılan daha fazla yorumla, bu fikirler bir araya getirilir. Çoğulcu teorinin düşünce kuruluşları açısından bu kadar popüler olması ve birçok yayının bu teoriye başvurması yine Gramsciyen anlayışı desteklemektedir. Düşünce kuruluşları kendilerini zaten Çoğulcu teorinin savunduğu argümanlar doğrultusunda sunmaya çalışıyorlar. Bu bağlamda Çoğulcu teorisyenler ile düşünce kuruluşları arasında bir ilişki kurulmaktadır. Bu nedenle araştırmacılığın nasıl göründüğünden çok ne olduğunu araştırmalıdır. Bu anlayışı ancak Gramsciyen bakış açısından elde edebiliriz. Çoğulcu yaklaşımalar, özellikle gözlemlenebilir anlaşmazlıklar ve gücün açık bir şekilde kullanılmasıyla ilgilenir. Bu bağlamda, düşünce kuruluşları, dış politika yapımını etkilemek için kendi aralarında ve diğer aktörlerle rekabeti sürdürdükleri sürece, tartışma ajanlarından başka bir şey değildir. Fikirler alanındaki güçlü rekabet ile birlikte fon sağlama yarışı, küresel düşünce kuruluşlarının sayısı ve çeşitliliği ile yansımaktadır. Abelson, Stone, McGann ve Weaver'ın çalışmaları çoğulcu bakış açılarına örnek olarak verilebilir. Çalışmalarında, düşünce kuruluşlarının görüşler üzerinde hakemlik yaptığını ve fikirler ve uygulamalar arasında bağlantı sağlayarak arabulucu rolü oynadığını öne sürerler. Düşünce kuruluşları çok sayıda olduğundan ve hepsi de fikirlerin çoğulluğunu temsil ettiğinden, tek bir düşünce kuruluşu veya herhangi bir grup yalnızca diğerlerine üstün gelemez. Düşünce kuruluşları arasında finansal ve diğer türdeki kaynaklar üzerinde bir rekabet var. Dolayısıyla bu teori, düşünce kuruluşlarının mantar gibi

çoğalmasının demokrasinin geleceği için faydalı olduğunu iddia ediyor. Bu çerçevede, karar vericiler çok çeşitli fikirlere aşina olma şansına sahip olurlar. Coğulcu teoriye göre, düşünce kuruluşları, her geçen gün daha da sıkışık hale gelen fikir pazarındaki pek çok kişi arasında bir grup olarak etiketlenir. İnsanlardan ve politika yapıcılardan ilgi ve sempati için rekabet halinde olan farklı aktör grupları olarak kavramsallaştırılırlar.

Devletçi Yaklaşım, düşünce kuruluşlarının politikaları tasarlamada oldukça mütevazi rollere sahip olduğunu savunuyor. Bu anlayışa göre düşünce kuruluşlarının temsilcileri hükümet adına konuşmamalıdır. "Devletçi paradigma"nın ısrarla sürdürdüğü şey, hükümetin çeşitli toplumsal ve bürokratik baskılar olmaksızın özgürce hareket edebilme yeteneğine sahip olması gerektidir. Devletçi anlayıştaki hata, devletin düşünce kuruluşlarının çeşitli ürünleri arasından istediğini seçebilmesi konusunda ısrar etmesidir. Çünkü düşünce kuruluşları, serbest piyasada fikir üreten bağımsız yapılar gibi sunuluyor. Bu mantıksal olarak mümkün değildir. Çünkü işlerini yürütmek için sadece ticari kaynaklara ihtiyaç duymaz, aynı zamanda bilgiye ulaşmaya veya hazırladıkları ürünü karar vericiye iletmeye de ihtiyaç duyar. Bu koşullar altında, karar vericilerle iyi ilişkiler içinde olmayan bir düşünce kuruluşunun sürdürülebilir olmadığı açıkça görülmektedir. Mali destekçilerin çıkarlarına uygun teklifler ve ürünler, fon verenin iradesine rağmen var olmayacağıdır. Birçok düşünce kuruluşu, devlet tarafından kabul edildiği sürece güclü kabul edilir.

Düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımında çok önemli unsurlar olduğu iddia edilmektedir. Ancak, bunların dış politika yapımı üzerindeki etkilerinin veya sonuçlarının derecesini değerlendirmek o kadar basit değildir. Bu bağlamda, bu tez, düşünce kuruluşlarını incelemek için farklı bir teorik perspektif kullanır. Bu tezdeki ana kanaat, mevcut teorik yönlerin, düşünce kuruluşları ve dış politika yapıcılar arasındaki karmaşık bağlantıları açıklamak için yeterli olmadığıdır. Bu nedenle, düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımında oynadığı rolleri daha iyi anlamak için mevcut teorik yaklaşımları yeniden değerlendirmek gerekmektedir.

Diger bir deyişle, örneğin askeri-sanayi kompleksini anlamak için elit teorisi oldukça önemli olsa da Gramscici yaklaşımı kullanarak düşünce kuruluşları ve dış politika yapımına yeni bir yaklaşım getirmek önemlidir.

Bu çalışma, araştırmacı bir sosyal anket teknigini kullanır. Sorular, düşünce kuruluşlarının işlevleri, yapıları vb. ile ilgili olacaktır. Sorular akademisyenler, karar vericiler, politikacılar, bürokratlar tarafından cevaplanacak şekilde tasarlanmıştır. Böylece bu örgütlerin gerçek hayatı teorinin ötesinde doğru bir resmi çizilmeye çalışılır. Görüşülen kişiler sorulara kendi bakış açılarını yansıtarak yanıt verse de araştırmacı tüm bilgileri tek bir potada eriterek bağımsız bir duruş sergilemeye ve olabildiğince doğru bir resim çizmeye çalışır. Bu şekilde, araştırma araştırması modelleri tanımlamamıza yardımcı olur ve bu sosyal fenomenleri adlandırmamızı sağlar.

Düşünce kuruluşları dünyasını tam olarak anlayabilmek için bu tezde çok önemli bir araştırma tasarımlı kullanılacaktır. Araştırmalarım sırasında arşivlerde ve kuruluşlarda “kısıtlı” kayıtlara rastladım. Onları bir araya getirip ders çalışma şansım çok azdı. Olayların kronolojik akışını elde edebilmek için birkaç düşünce kuruluşu kurucusunun özel anılarından da yararlandım. Arşiv kaynaklarının yetersizliğinden dolayı, bu konuda mevcut her türlü ikincil çalışmaya başvurmak gerekmıştır.

Düşünce kuruluşları dünyasının dört bir yanından uzmanlar, araştırmacılar, üst düzey yetkililer de dahil olmak üzere çok çeşitli insanlarla tanıştım ve sözlü görüşmeler yapma şansım oldu. Görüşülen kişinin adanmışlığına ve konuşkanlığına bağlı olarak, en kısa görüşme otuz dakikadan az değildi. Görüşmeler için seçilen yerlerin büyük bir kısmı görüşülen kişilerin çalışma yerleri olup, görüşmeden önce kayıtlara ilişkin onayları alınmıştır.

Ceşitli düşünce kuruluşları ortamlarında tarafimca doğrudan bir araştırma uygulandı. Paneller, tartışmalar, konferanslar, sempozyumlar gibi farklı düşünce

kuruluşlarına katıldım. Bu olaylar sırasında dersleri ve tartışmaları izledim ve düşünce kuruluşu personeli, işçileri, katılımcıları ve düşünce kuruluşu faaliyetleri için bekçiler ile resmi olmayan görüşmeler yaptım.

Bu tezin temel amacı, düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımındaki işlevlerine ilişkin konumunu araştırmaktır. Düşünce kuruluşunun rolü, karar vericileri nasıl etkilediğini açıklamak anlamına gelmez. Düşünce kuruluşları hem etkileyen hem de etkilenen kuruluşlardır. Karar vericileri kendi gündemleri doğrultusunda karar almaya zorlarken, siyasi yapının diğer unsurlarının da etkisi altındadırlar. Sadece düşünce kuruluşlarının tek taraflı etkisinin söz konusu olduğu tek yönlü bir sokaktan ziyade karşılıklı ve ikili bir ilişki söz konusudur. Devlet aygıtı kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda çeşitli düşünce kuruluşlarını kullanırken, düşünce kuruluşları kendi gündemlerini siyasi karar alıcıların önüne çıkarıyor. Bir yandan karar vericinin kararlarına meşruiyet sağlanmaktadır. Öte yandan, karar vericinin kararları, tamamen küçük bir çıkar grubunun düşünce kuruluşu aracılığıyla oluşturduğu gündem tarafından yönlendirilebilir. Bazı durumlarda, karar vericinin gündemi ile düşünce kuruluşunun gündemi örtüşmekte ve bir iş birliği ortamı yaratmaktadır. Düşünce kuruluşu iş birliği ortamını ne kadar geliştirirse, karar verici tarafından o kadar fazla kabul görecektir.

Düşünce kuruluşlarının bir ülkeden diğerine bu kadar farklı olmasının nedenleri arasında siyasi kültürler, sosyoloji, farklı görüşlere açıklık, ekonomik gelişmişlik seviyeleri, o ülkenin dünya siyasetinde ne kadar aktif olduğu ve düşünce ile sağlanabilecek spesifik bilgilerin eksikliği yer almaktadır. Bu bağlamda ABD ve dünyadaki diğer örneklerle karşılaştırıldığında Türkiye'nin bir düşünce kuruluşu kültürüne sahip olma olasılığı nedir? Mevcut teorik perspektifleri Türk düşünce kuruluşlarına uygulamak nasıl mümkün olabilir? Yoksa düşünce kuruluşlarının rolünü ve devlet kurumlarıyla olan yakın ilişkilerini anlamak için yeni bakış açılarına sahip olmak mı gerekiyor? Bu tez, bu yakın ilişkiye ışık tutmak için düşünce kuruluşlarının finansal ve politik boyutlarını incelemeye çalışmaktadır. Türkiye'de düşünce kuruluşlarının bilgi üretebileceği bağımsız bir kuruluş var

mı? Yoksa düşünce kuruluşları mali ve siyasi konularda hükümete tamamen sadık mı? Bu tez, Türkiye'de devletten ya da seçkinlerden bağımsız bir düşünce kuruluşuna sahip olmanın imkânsız olduğunu, çünkü düşünce kuruluşlarının gündemlerini hayatı geçirmenin bir aracı olarak görüldüğünü tartışmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma bir soruyu daha ortaya koymaktadır: düşünce kuruluşları ile dış politika yapıcılar arasındaki ilişkinin doğası nedir, tek taraflı mı yoksa karşılıklı mı? Bu sorunun cevabı, düşünce kuruluşlarını nasıl algıladığımızla yakından ilgilidir. Düşünce kuruluşlarının seçkinlerin tek yönlü araçları olduğunu söylemek gerçeği doğru yansıtmez. Sonuç olarak, Türk düşünce kuruluşları yabancı muadilleriyle karşılaşıldığında, eşsiz yapıları hemen ortaya çıkıyor.

Birinci bölüm teorik yaklaşımı tanıtmaktadır. Bu bölümde diğer yaklaşımalar tartışılırsa da bu tez dış politika yapımında düşünce kuruluşlarının rolünü kavramak için Gramsciyen yaklaşımı kullanır. Diğer yaklaşımalar, düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapıcılar üzerindeki etkisine odaklanırken, politika yapıcılar ve düşünce kuruluşları arasındaki karşılıklı bağlantının sosyal ve ekonomik yönlerini ihmal ederler. Bu tez, kapitalist sistemin sürdürülmesi için hayatı önem taşıyan toplumsal rızanın yeniden yaratılmasında düşünce kuruluşlarının rolünü göstererek, düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımındaki rolünü ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır.

Düşünce kuruluşlarını analiz etmek için farklı yaklaşım vardır. Bazıları Elitist, Çoğulcu, Gündem Belirleme (Agenda Setting) teorileri gibi büyük teoriler olarak etiketlenebilir. Bu teoriler, düşünce kuruluşları ve dış politika yapımındaki rolleri için daha kapsamlı bir bakış açısı sağlar. Elit teorisi, politika yapıcılar (elitler) ve düşünce kuruluşları arasındaki etkileşime odaklanır. Çoğulcu teori, daha liberal bir dış politika yapımı geliştirmek için çok sayıda düşünce kuruluşunun öneminin altını çizer. Gündem Belirleme teorisi, düşünce kuruluşlarının toplumun gündemini şekillendirmedeki rolüne işaret eder. Öte yandan, Devletçi veya ÖrgütSEL yaklaşım gibi düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımındaki

rolüne ilişkin öngörülerini sınırlı olan başka teoriler de vardır. Ancak bu tezin anlaşılmasıında, düşünce kuruluşları ile dış politika yapıcılar arasındaki sosyal ilişkiyi anlamak için en kapsamlı yaklaşım Gramsciyen bakış açısındandır. Bunun nedeni, Gramscici bakış açısından düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımını etkileme amacıyla odaklanması ve düşünce kuruluşları ile sponsorları arasındaki etkileşimin temelini sorgulamasıdır.

İkinci bölümün amacı, tüm dünyadaki düşünce kuruluşları için kapsamlı bir bakış açısından oluşturmaktır. Her şeyden önce bir “düşünce kuruluşu” tanımını vermemi amaçlamaktadır. Bunun temel nedeni, dünyadaki düşünce kuruluşlarının personel, ekonomik boyut, uzmanlık ve politik önemdeki farklılıklara bağlı olarak önemli ölçüde farklılaşmasıdır. Bu tür ayırt edici özelliklere sahip herhangi bir organizasyon için tek bir tanım yeterli görünmüyork. Bu bölümde düşünce kuruluşlarının farklı tanımları incelenmektedir. Düşünce kuruluşları için kullanılan taksonomi türleri araştırılarak ve bu bağlamda sınıflandırmak için uygulanan yöntemler analiz edilerek Türk düşünce kuruluşları için kullanılan tanımlara özel bir önem verilmektedir. Bu bölüm, uzmanların Batı Dünyası, Orta Asya, Latin Amerika ve Türkiye'deki rolleri ve müşterilerinin karşılaşmalıdır bir incelemesiyle, müşterilerin ilk nerede gösterdiklerine ve çoğaldıklarına tutacak. Bu bölümdeki eğitim planlamasının dış politikalarını nasıl planamanız gereği gibi analizler yapılacak. Düşünce uygulamalarının politika oluşturmayı geliştirmek için eğitmek ve bu etkiyi değerlendirebileceksiniz. Sürücüler için güç kaynağı temini sorunu, ikinci bölümün son görüşme noktasıdır. Bunu için, kullanım amaçlı uygulamalardan kullanılan uygulamalar için iyi ve ekonominin kullanımlarının üst kısmından kullanımların üzerinden bahseder.

Bu bölüm, düşünce kuruluşu kavramının tanımına ilişkin tartışmaları özetlemiştir. Bu fenomeni anlamak için farklı yaklaşımlar vardır. Bu anlamda Gramsciyen kavramlar, düşünce kuruluşlarının gündem belirlemedeki rolü ve seçkinlerle ilişkilerine ek olarak hegemonya veya organik entelektüeller gibi kavramları kullanarak düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımındaki rolünü

kavramak için yeni bir bakış açısı getiriyor. Ayrıca, düşünce kuruluşlarının sınıflandırması, düşünce kuruluşlarının nasıl organize edildiğini ve çalıştığını anlamak için çok önemlidir. McGann'in sınıflandırması, düşünce kuruluşları kavramını Gramsciyen anlayışıyla analiz etmek için gerekli bir çerçeve sağlar.

Üçüncü bölümde ABD, İngiltere, Orta Asya ve Latin Amerika'daki tarihsel gelişmelere özel bir yer verilmiştir. Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının gelişimini anlamak için bu eyalet ve bölgelerdeki düşünce kuruluşlarının incelenmesinin genel bir çerçeve sağlayacağına inanılmaktadır. Bir tarafta ABD ve İngiltere, geleneksel ve köklü düşünce kuruluşlarının nasıl kurulduğunu ve faaliyet gösterdiğini gösterecek. Öte yandan Orta Asya ve Latin Amerika düşünce kuruluşları, geliştirilmeleri ve dış politika yapımıyla bağlantılı olmaları bakımından Türk düşünce kuruluşlarına oldukça benzerler. Son olarak, Türkiye gibi düşünce kuruluşları hala gelişmekte olduğundan, bu bölgelerde incelenen bir ülke seçmek zor. Bu nedenle, tek tek devletler yerine, bir bütün olarak bölgeler seçilir. ABD'deki düşünce kuruluşları, dünyadaki geri kalanlardan oldukça farklıdır. Dış politika yapım süreci üzerinde doğrudan veya dolaylı bir etki sağlama yeteneğine sahiptirler. Ayrıca düşünce kuruluşları, ülkede oluşan karşılıklı güven sayesinde politika yapıcıların kendileri tarafından siyasi öneriler için işlevsel hale getirilmektedir. ABD'deki düşünce kuruluşları, dış politika yapım sürecine beş önemli şekilde müdahale edebilir: 1) Yeni kavramlar ve politika seçimleri onlar tarafından üretilir, 2) Düşünce kuruluşları tarafından devlet olarak kullanmak için çok sayıda uzman desteklenir. 3) Müzakereler için önemli müzakere aşamaları öneriliyor, 4) Vatandaşlar, dünyanın gerçekleri hakkında onlar tarafından eğitiliyor, 5) Amacı çözüm bulmak olan yetkililerin çabalarına olumlu katkı sağlıyorlar. Bahsedilen tüm bu görevlerin dışında, onlar için aynı zamanda en önemli olan bir iş daha vardır; yakın gelecekte ABD'nin gündemine gelebilecek özgün ve önemli konuları belirlemek ve yeni konu hakkındaki bilgilerini politika yapıcılara bilgi olarak sunmaktır. Ayrıca, ikinci bölümde incelenen diğer düşünce kuruluşları örnekleri, Türkiye deneyimini dünyadaki diğer düşünce kuruluşlarıyla karşılaştırmak için bir temel oluşturmaktadır.

Bu açıdan Türkiye örneği dışında Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarıyla karşılaşılacak başka örnekler de olacaktır. Genel çerçeveyi anlamak için batı dünyasındaki düşünce kuruluşlarını incelemek çok önemlidir. Bu durumda, aşağıdaki bölümde Amerikan ve İngiliz örnekleri inceleneciktir. Bu vakalara ek olarak, bu tezde Orta Asya ve Latin Amerika vakaları da inceleneciktir. Orta Asya ve Latin Amerika örneklerinin seçilmesinin nedeni, Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşları ile kıyaslandığında her ikisinin de benzer bir geçmişe sahip olmasıdır. Üç durumda düşünce kuruluşlarının nasıl kurulduğu, geliştiği ve konumlandığı oldukça benzerdir, dolayısıyla düşünce kuruluşları ile dış politika yapıcılar arasındaki sosyal ve ekonomik ilişkileri kavramak için onları analiz etmek çok önemlidir.

Düşünce kuruluşları ilk olarak ABD'de ortaya çıktı ve bugün ABD, farklı politika alanlarında binlerce düşünce kuruluşuna ev sahipliği yapıyor. Düşünce kuruluşları ve ABD sermaye grupları arasındaki finansal ilişkiler, düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımında rıza oluşturmak için nasıl kullanıldığını anlamak için çok önemlidir. Gramsci'nin terimleriyle, Amerikan düşünce kuruluşları kültürü, dış politikada kamuoyunun düşünce kuruluşları aracılığıyla nasıl şekillendiğini gösterir. Düşünce kuruluşları, ABD'deki politika yapıcılar için meşrulaştırma araçları olarak etiketlenebilir.

İngiltere'deki düşünce kuruluşları, bu tezin savunduğu genel çerçeveye göre faaliyet göstermektedir. Sadece kamuoyunun rızasını oluşturmak için hareket etmekte kalmazlar, aynı zamanda dış politika yapımındaki işlevleri de çok sınırlıdır. Amerikan düşünce kuruluşları ile karşılaşıldığında, Avrupalı düşünce kuruluşlarının finansal kaynakları sınırlıdır ve siyasi ve ticari aktörlerle etkileşimleri daha belirgindir. Öte yandan, genel olarak, yukarıda bahsedildiği gibi Amerikan düşünce kuruluşları ile benzer özellikleri yansıtmaktadırlar. Son olarak, Avrupalı düşünce kuruluşlarının siyasi partilerle Amerikalılara kıyasla daha açık siyasi bağlantıları var.

Orta Asya'daki düşünce kuruluşları Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasından sonra ortaya çıktı. O günden itibaren düşünce kuruluşları, yeni dünya düzeninin getirdiği yeni zorlukları ve fırsatları kavramaya çalışıyor. Ancak Orta Asya'daki düşünce kuruluşları büyük ölçüde devletlere bağlılıdır. Sadece ekonomik olarak değil, aynı zamanda siyasi olarak da düşünce kuruluşları ancak hükümetin desteğiyle ayakta kalabiliyor. Bu nedenle, dış politika yapımında neredeyse hiçbir etkileri yoktur. Bunun yerine, Gramsciyen terimlerle, kamu rızası oluşturmak için hükümetlerin dış politika kararlarının meşrulaştırma araçları olarak işlev görürler.

Özetlemek gerekirse, bu bölüm dünyanın her yerindeki farklı ülkelerdeki çeşitli düşünce kuruluşlarını kapsamaktadır. Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve İngiltere'deki düşünce kuruluşları, dünyanın diğer bölgelerine kıyasla köklü kültürler sahiptir. Bu anlamda düşünce kuruluşu fenomeninin anavatani ABD'dir. Neredeyse 100 yılı aşkın bir süredir, düşünce kuruluşları ABD'de önemli bir rol oynadı. Bu açıdan ABD örneği, düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımında kamuoyunda bir rıza oluşturmak açısından önemli olduğunu göstermektedir. Özellikle son elli yılda, dış politikayla ilgili her önemli karar, toplumda kamuoyunun rızasını oluşturmak için düşünce kuruluşları aracılığıyla tartışıldı. Önceki bölümlerde tartışılan düşünce kuruluşlarının sınıflandırılması doğrultusunda ABD'de farklı düşünce kuruluşlarının olduğunun altını çizmek önemlidir. Dolayısıyla bu, düşünce kuruluşunun sponsorlarının çıkarları doğrultusunda gündemi belirleme yarışıdır. İngiltere'de de durum aynı. Birden fazla düşünce kuruluşu, bağlantılarına göre dış politikada farklı pozisyonları savunur. Bu, uzun süreli bir düşünce kuruluşu kültürüne sahip olan ABD veya İngiltere gibi gelişmiş ülkelerin, düşünce kuruluşları, sponsorları ve dış politika yapıcılari arasında karmaşık bir ilişki gösterdiği anlamına gelir. Orta Asya veya Latin Amerika örneğinde, ABD veya İngiltere'den farklı olarak köklü bir düşünce kuruluşu kültüründen bahsetmek zor. Bu durumlarda düşünce kuruluşları, kamuoyunun rızasını oluşturarak dış politikadaki hegemonyayı sürdürmek için çalışırlar. Gramsciyen terimlerle Latin Amerika ve Orta

Asya'daki düşünce kuruluşları, bu devletlerdeki hegemonik güçlerle bağlantılı organik entelektüelleri tarafından dış politika kararlarını meşrulaştırmaya çalışırlar.

Dördüncü bölümde, Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının evrim süreci tartışılmaktadır. Türkiye'de ortaya çıkışlarının zamanlaması ve koşulları incelenmiştir. Evrim süreci dört farklı aşamada incelenir. Her aşamanın kendine özgü koşullarının Türkiye'de yeni düşünce kuruluşlarının ortaya çıkışını nasıl etkilediğini açıklamaya özel bir önem verilmektedir. Bunu yaparken, önce Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşu sahnesini betimliyor, ardından Türkiye'de bir düşünce kuruluşu kültürü oluşturma olasılığını değerlendiriyor. Türk düşünce kuruluşlarının bir tipolojisini sağlar ve beş grup oluşturur. Ayrıca yasal durumlarını ve mali kaynaklarını da araştırır. Bu doğrultuda düşünce kuruluşlarının Türkiye'de üstlendikleri rol ve faaliyet türleri açısından karşılaştırmalı bir incelemesi yapmaktadır.

Türkiye'de düşünce kuruluşları 1950'li yıllarda ortaya çıkmış ve günümüzde düşünce kuruluşları siyasi atmosfere uygun olarak gelişmektedir. Bu anlamda Türkiye örneği halen Amerika Birleşik Devletleri veya İngiltere gibi Batılı örneklerin gerisindedir. Ancak bu tezde incelenen Latin Amerika veya Orta Asya vakaları ile karşılaştırıldığında Türkiye vakası oldukça farklıdır. Her şeyden önce, Türk düşünce kuruluşlarının çoğu, Latin Amerika veya Orta Asya örneklerinden farklı olarak Batı örneklerine daha çok benziyor. McGann'in sınıflandırmamasına göre Türkiye'de her tür düşünce kuruluşu gözlemlenebiliyordu. EDAM gibi bağımsız düşünce kuruluşları veya DPE veya IKV gibi yarı bağımsız düşünce kuruluşları vardır. Öte yandan SAM, Türkiye'deki devlet bağlantılı düşünce kuruluşlarının çok iyi bir örneğidir. Özellikle 1980'lardan sonra partiye bağlı düşünce kuruluşlarının ortaya çıkması ve AK Parti döneminden sonra partiye bağlı düşünce kuruluşlarının sayısı ve etkisi artmıştır. SETA, ORSAM veya IRAM bu tür düşünce kuruluşlarının Türkiye'deki örnekleridir. Ayrıca Türkiye'de üniversitelerle ilgili düşünce kuruluşları

bulunabilir ve TAGU Uyum ve Göç Çalışmaları Merkezi gibi dış politikanın belirli alanlarına odaklanırlar.

Bu anlamda Türkiye'nin köklü bir düşünce kuruluşu kültürüne sahip olduğunu söylemek güçtür. Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde düşünce kuruluşlarının etkisi ve mali gücü Türkiye'dekinden çok daha fazladır. Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde, dış politika yapımında yer alan farklı siyasi, ticari veya çıkar gruplarına bağlı farklı düşünce kuruluşları vardır. Ayrıca düşünce kuruluşlarının yapısı Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarına göre çok daha şeffaftır. Ancak Türkiye'de farklı gruplarla ilgili düşünce kuruluşlarının sayısı oldukça sınırlıdır. Düşünce kuruluşlarının çoğu ya devlet fonlarına ya da devletle ilgili fonlara büyük ölçüde bağlıdır. Ayrıca Türkiye'de düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımında etkili olduğunu iddia etmek oldukça güçtür. Bunun yerine, Türkiye'deki bazı düşünce kuruluşları, hükümetin aldığı dış politika kararlarının meşrulaştırılması için birer araç işlevi görmektedir. Diğerlerinin dış politika hakkında farklı görüşleri olabilir veya eleştirel olabilir, ancak görüşleri dış politika yapıcılar tarafından göz ardı edilir.

Türkiye örneği için görüşmelerden elde edilen iç görüşler incelendiğinde şu sonuçlara ulaşılabilir:

- Türkiye'de henüz yerleşik bir düşünce kuruluşu kültürü olmasa da bu yönde önemli adımlar atılmıştır.
- Özellikle dışişleri bakanlığı bürokratları, düşünce kuruluşlarına ve faaliyetlerine şüpheyle yaklaşıyor.
- Görüşülen kişiler, Türk düşünce kuruluşlarını ABD'dekilerle karşılaştırıyor ve düşünce kuruluşlarının Türkiye ve ABD'deki çalışma biçimlerindeki farklılıklarını vurguluyor.
- ABD'de düşünce kuruluşları devlet işlevlerini gölgede bırakırken, diğer ülkelerde ve Türkiye'de son derece sınırlı geçirgenliğe sahiptirler.

- Finansal sorunlar, yetişmiş uzman eksikliği ve lojistik düşünce kuruluşlarının temel sorunları arasında yer almaktadır.
- Düşünce kuruluşlarının devlete, partiye ve sermaye gruplarına bağımlılık ilişkisi meşruiyetlerini zedelemektedir.
- Düşünce kuruluşu temsilcileri tarafsız ve objektif fikirler ürettiklerini iddia ederken, diğer aktörler tereddütle yanıt veriyor.
- Düşünce kuruluşlarının yeterince güçlü olabilmesi için önemli bir sermaye birikimine ve buna izin verecek olgun bir siyasi yapıya ve sosyolojik kültüre ihtiyaç vardır.
- Batı'daki düşünce kuruluşlarının küresel bir ağı var. Diğer ülkelerdeki düşünce kuruluşları, asimetrik ilişki empoze eden bu merkezlere doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak bağlıdır.
- Bir ülkede bir düşünce kuruluşu tarafından yaratılan, savunulan ve dile getirilen bir fikrin ülke dışında da etkisi vardır.
- Düşünce kuruluşlarının tipolojilerinin ülkeden ülkeye farklılık gösterdiği görülmektedir. Bu örgütler her ülkeye uyum sağlamakta ve bazen melez kurumlar haline gelmektedir.
- Karar vericiler düşünce kuruluşlarını kullanmaya çalışırken, düşünce kuruluşları karar vericileri kendi çıkarlarını ilerletmek için kullanmaya çalışır. Karşılıklı bir ilişki vardır. Bazen bu ilişkinin bir tarafı diğerinden daha ağır basabilir.
- Bu süreçte, IRAM gibi uzmanlıklara sahip düşünce kuruluşlarının ve uzmanların karar vericiler tarafından dikkate alınması daha olasıdır.

Türkiye örneği İngiltere ile karşılaştırıldığında, tankların Türkiye'de dış politika yapımını etkileme konusunda hala nispeten zayıf bir konumda olduğunu düşünüyor. Ancak Türk ve İngiliz örnekleri arasındaki temel fark, İngiltere'de partiye bağlı düşünce kuruluşlarının bağlı oldukları taraflarla derin ve uzun süreli bir ilişki içinde olmalarıdır. Ancak Türkiye'de düşünce kuruluşları hala ortaya çıktığı için siyasi partiler ve düşünce kuruluşları arasındaki bağ güçlü değildir.

Öte yandan finans, şeffaflık ya da nüfuz konusunda durum Amerikan ve Türk düşünce kuruluşlarının karşılaşmasına çok benziyor.

Orta Asya ve Latin Amerika örnekleri için Türkiye örneğinin hem benzerlikleri hem de farklılıklarını olduğu söylenebilir. Her üç durumda da, düşünce kuruluşları mali açıdan devlete oldukça bağımlıdır. Ayrıca, düşünce kuruluşları dış politika yapımını etkilemeye çalışmak yerine, üç durumda hükümetler tarafından alınan dış politika kararlarının meşrulaştırılması aracı olarak hareket eder. Ayrıca hükümetten bağımsız düşünce kuruluşları dış politika yapma konusunda hükümetleri tarafından ihmäl edilmektedir. Ancak Türkiye örneği, Orta Asya ve Latin Amerika örneklerinden;

- Türkiye'de farklı siyasi veya ideolojik grupların yelpazesinde farklı düşünce kuruluşlarına sahip olmak
- Türkiye'de daha yerleşik düşünce kuruluşları kültürüne sahip olmak
- Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşları ile iş veya çıkar grupları arasında daha belirgin bir ilişki olması.

Bunun dışında Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşları hakkında bugüne ve geleceğe farklı bakış açıları ve önemli gerçekler getiren görüşmecilerin görüşleri var. İlk olarak, bu çalışmada ele alındığı gibi, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve dünyadaki diğer örneklerle karşılaştırıldığında, Türkiye'nin kendine özgü bir düşünce kuruluşu kültürünün olmadığı söylenebilir. Dünyadaki bazı düşünce kuruluşlarının geçmişi 20. yüzyılın başlarına kadar uzanırken, Türkiye'de bugün faaliyet gösteren en eski düşünce kuruluşu 50 yaşıdadır. İkinci olarak, görüşmecilerin haklı olarak belirttiği gibi, bugün Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının karşı karşıya olduğu en büyük zorluklar mali ve insan kaynakları sorunlarıdır. Üçüncüsü, Türkiye'de sadece birkaç düşünce kuruluşu hükümete güvenmeden faaliyet gösterebiliyordu. Ancak son olarak, görüşülen kişilerin Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının geleceğine dair olumlu bir beklentisi var.

Son olarak, Türkiye örneği Gramsciyen kavramlarla çok daha iyi açıklanabilir. Elitist ve Çokulcu yaklaşımalar, düşünce kuruluşları ve sponsorları arasındaki ilişkinin özünü kaçırmaktadır. Bu anlamda Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşları, sponsorlarının aracı olarak faaliyet göstermektedir. Bu SETA örneğinde olduğu gibi devlet olabilir veya TOBB ve İKV davalarında olduğu gibi özel sektör olabilir. Böylece hegemonyanın sürdürülmesi için organik entelektüeller olarak hareket ederler. Ayrıca, Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımında etkisi yoktur. Bunun yerine hükümetin aldığı kararları meşrulaştırmaya çalışıiyorlar. Türkiye örneğinde şunun altını çizmek önemlidir; düşünce kuruluşları adına devletin rolü çok önemlidir. Mali açıdan devlet, Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşları için doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak ana para sahibidir. Bu nedenle düşünce kuruluşları devletin ve devletle ilgili çıkar gruplarının çıkarları doğrultusunda hareket eder.

Özetle, son yıllarda Türkiye'de düşünce kuruluşları ile ilgili literatürde bir artış var. Bununla birlikte, çalışmaların çoğu, düşünce kuruluşları ve politika yapıcılar arasındaki tanımlara veya siyasi ilişkilere odaklanarak kendilerini sınırlandırmaktadır. Bu çalışma öncelikle, hegemonya, rıza veya organik entelektüeller gibi Gramsciyen kavramları kullanarak düşünce kuruluşu çalışmalarına farklı bir yaklaşım getirmektedir. Bunu yaparken Türkiye örneğini bu tezde incelenen diğer örneklerle karşılaştırmak, Gramsci'nin öngördüğü gibi düşünce kuruluşları ile dış politika yapıcılar arasındaki ekonomik ve sosyal ilişkilere işaret etmektedir. İkinci olarak, bu tez literatürde Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarını ele alan diğer çalışmalarla karşılaştırıldığında Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarına da zıt bir bakış açısıyla bakmaktadır.

Araştırmacı, düşünce kuruluşlarının kendi anlatılarıyla veya kendileri hakkında söyledikleriyle uğraşmaktan daha derine inmeye istekliyse, düşünce kuruluşlarının gerçekte ne olduğunu ve kime veya hangi çıkar gruplarına hizmet ettiğini anlamak için tek bir teorik yaklaşım yeterli değildir. Gramsciyen bir bakış açısıyla, bu örgütlerin oturdukları bağımlılık ilişkilerine, içinde yaşadıkları

ikilemlere ve ev sahibi ülkelere göre kendilerini nasıl konumlandırdıklarına odaklanmak daha yararlı olacaktır. Bu çalışmanın iddiası, Gramsciyen bakış açısının araştırmacıyı bu olgunun gerçek doğasını anlamaya bir adım daha yaklaştırmasıdır.

Kuramsal terimler dikkate alınarak, düşünce kuruluşları karşılaştırmalı incelemeye tabi tutulduğunda, kuramsal çerçevelerin çeşitli boyutları, farklı kuramsal bakış açılarıyla sadeleştirilmektedir. Bu tezin Türkiye'deki ve dünyanın diğer bölgelerindeki düşünce kuruluşları olgusunu analiz ederken bütüncül bir yaklaşımından yararlanmasıının nedeni budur. Askeri sanayi ve iş dünyası ve onların bağımlıları ile dış politika oluşturma arasındaki etkileşimin tümü sezkinci yaklaşımıla açıklanır. Ancak hükümet ve düşünce kuruluşları arasındaki dolambaçlı bağlantıyı anlamak için yeterli görünmüyork. Yeni yüzyılda önemli olan güç ve bilgi arasındaki yakın ilişkidir. Bu bağlamda Türk düşünce kuruluşları, toplumun onayını alma ve uygulanan dış politika adımlarını yasallaştırma konusunda oldukça başarılıdır. Türkiye'deki düşünce kuruluşlarının bağımlılık ilişkisi Gramsciyen bakış açısını daha kullanışlı hale getiriyor. Bir başka deyişle düşünce kuruluşlarının gündem belirleme işlevi bu açıdan açıkça görülmektedir. Öte yandan, hükümet kararlarının ülke içindeki dış politika konularındaki etkisi arttıkça, bu bağlamda toplum arasında rıza oluşturma ihtiyacı, Gramsciyen bakış açısının bu olguya açıkladaki etkinliğini bir kez daha ortaya koymaktadır. Devlete ve özel sektörde olan güvenlerinin bir sonucu olarak, Türk düşünce kuruluşları, ABD ve dünyadaki diğer düşünce kuruluşları ile karşılaşıldığında farklılık göstermektedir. Dahası, düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımına etkisi değişen boyutlarıyla Türkiye'de giderek büyümektedir ve önumüzdeki yıllarda düşünce kuruluşlarının dış politika yapımındaki rolleri ve etkileri konusunda daha fazla tartışma yaşanacak gibi görünmektedir.

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